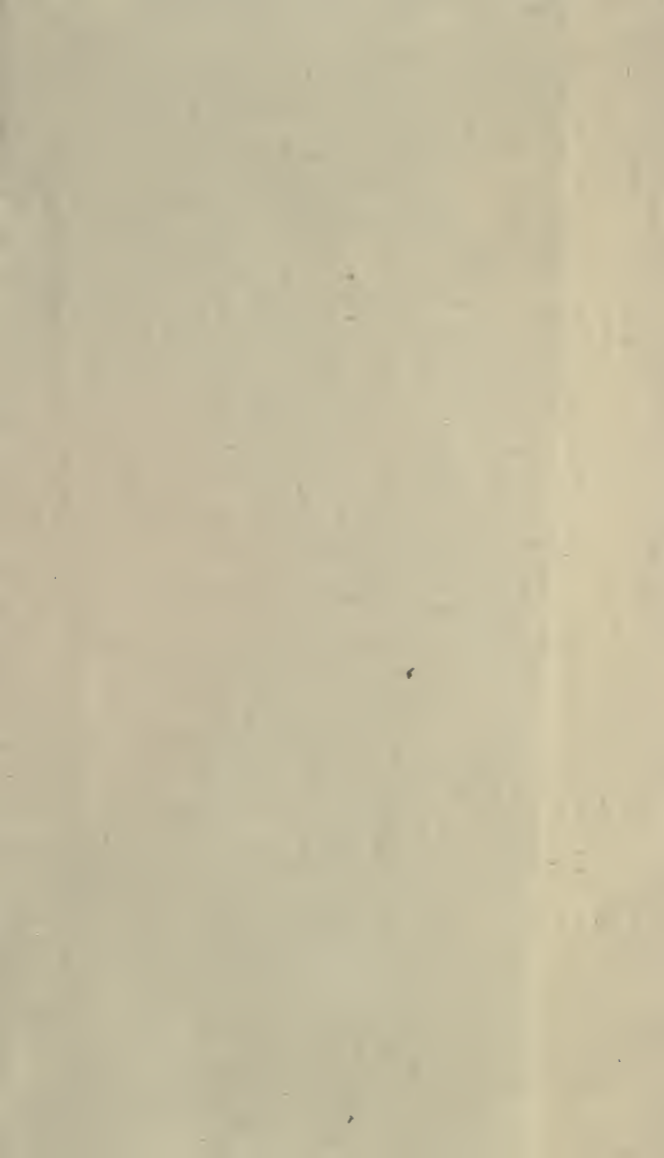
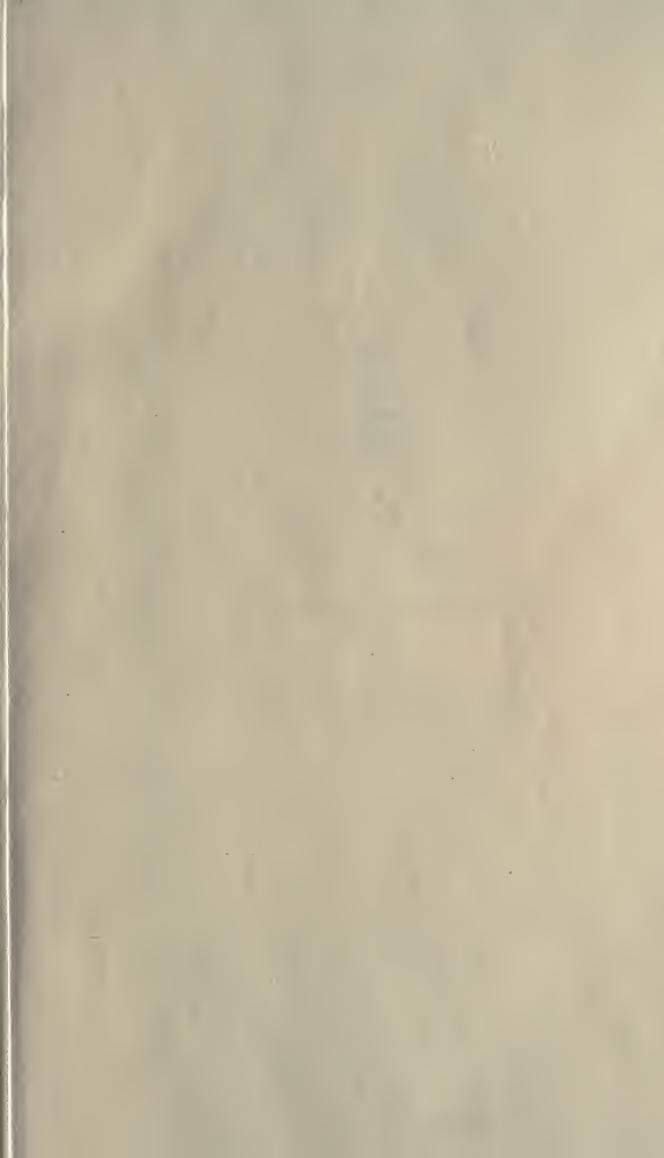


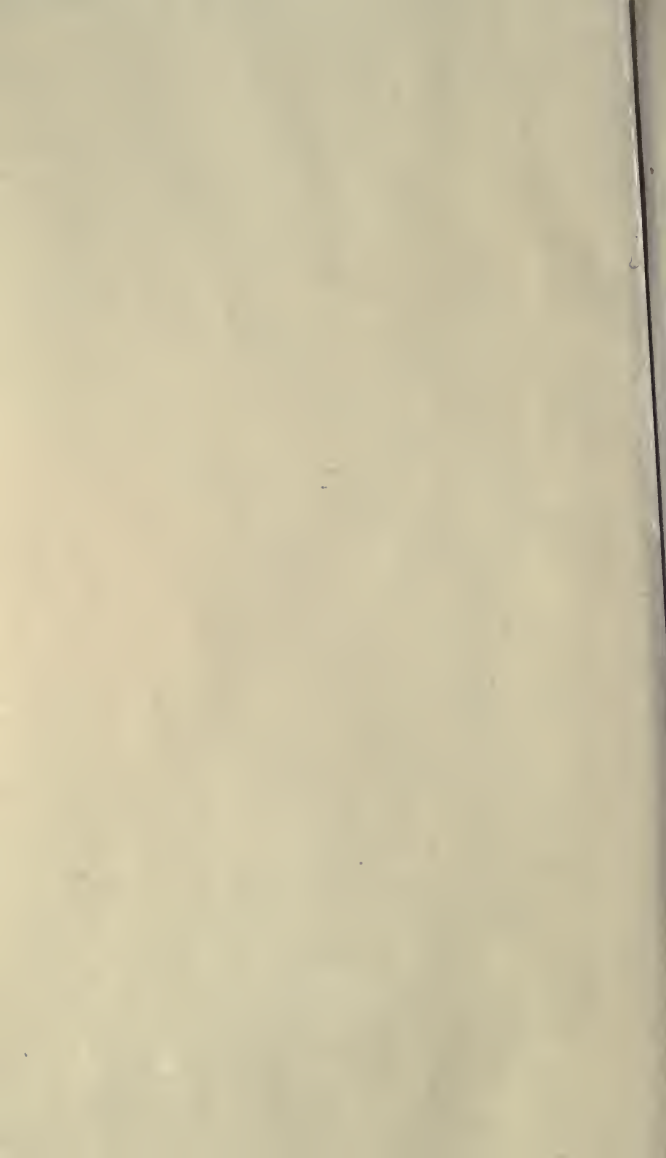


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FRANKENSTEIN.

*"By the glimmer of the half-extinguished
light, I saw the dull, yellow eye of the
creature open; it breathed hard, and a
convulsive motion agitated its limbs.
... I rushed out of the room."*

Page 43.

FRANKENSTEIN,

BY

MARY W. SHELLEY.



The day of my departure at length arrived.

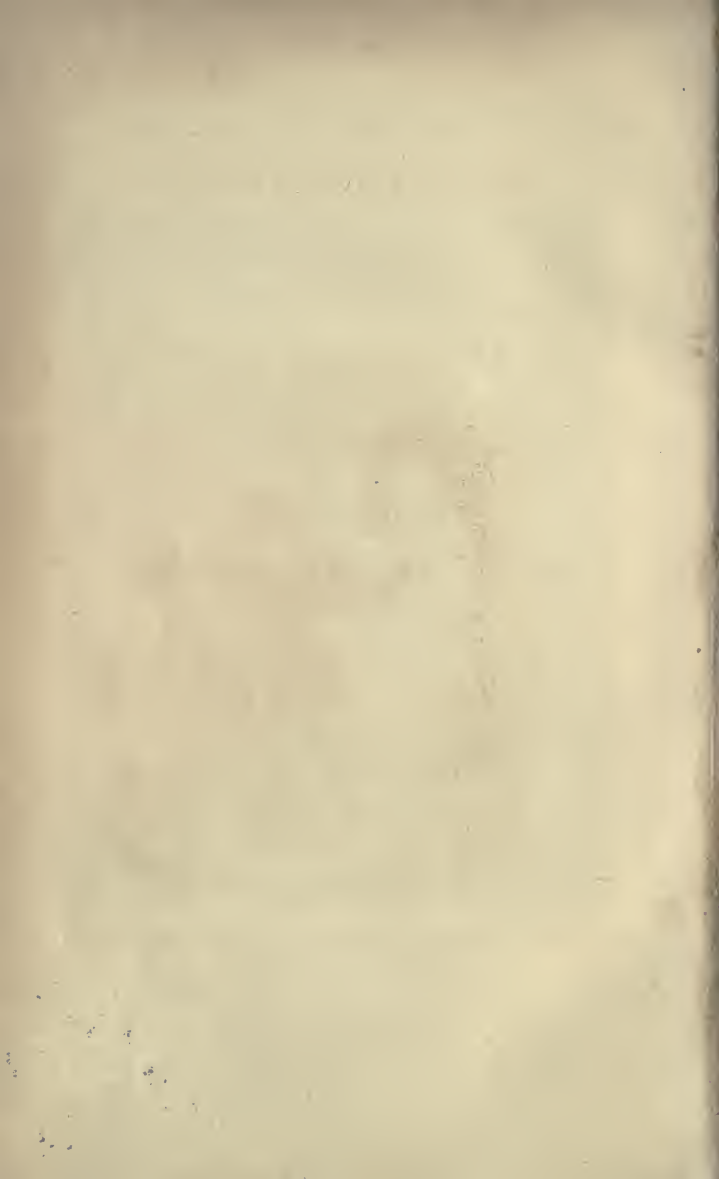
Page 31.

LONDON:
COLBURN AND BENTLEY,
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1831.

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would speak to the mysterious fears of our nature, and awaken thrilling horror — one to make the reader dread to look round, to curdle the blood, and quicken the beatings of the heart. If I did not accomplish these things, my ghost story would be unworthy of its name. I thought and pondered — vainly. I felt that blank incapability of invention which is the greatest misery of authorship, when dull Nothing replies to our anxious invocations. *Have you thought of a story?* I was asked each morning, and each morning I was forced to reply with a mortifying negative.

Every thing must have a beginning, to speak in Sanchean phrase; and that beginning must be linked to something that went before. The Hindoos give the world an elephant to support it, but they make the elephant stand upon a tortoise. Invention, it must be humbly admitted, does not consist in creating out of void, but out of chaos; the materials must, in the first place, be afforded: it can give form to dark, shapeless substances, but cannot bring into being the substance itself. In all matters of discovery and invention, even of those that appertain to the imagination, we are continually reminded of the story of Columbus and his egg. Invention consists in the capacity of seizing on the capabilities of a subject, and in the power of moulding and fashioning ideas suggested to it.

Many and long were the conversations between Lord Byron and Shelley, to which I was a devout but nearly silent listener. During one of these, various philosophical doctrines were discussed, and among others the nature of the principle of life, and whether there was any probability of its ever being discovered and communicated. They talked of the experiments of

Dr. Darwin, (I speak not of what the Doctor really did, or said that he did, but, as more to my purpose, of what was then spoken of as having been done by him,) who preserved a piece of vermicelli in a glass case, till by some extraordinary means it began to move with voluntary motion. Not thus, after all, would life be given. Perhaps a corpse would be re-animated; galvanism had given token of such things: perhaps the component parts of a creature might be manufactured, brought together, and endued with vital warmth.

Night waned upon this talk, and even the witching hour had gone by, before we retired to rest. When I placed my head on my pillow, I did not sleep, nor could I be said to think. My imagination, unbidden, possessed and guided me, gifting the successive images that arose in my mind with a vividness far beyond the usual bounds of reverie. I saw — with shut eyes, but acute mental vision, — I saw the pale student of unhallowed arts kneeling beside the thing he had put together. I saw the hideous phantasm of a man stretched out, and then, on the working of some powerful engine, show signs of life, and stir with an uneasy, half vital motion. Frightful must it be; for supremely frightful would be the effect of any human endeavour to mock the stupendous mechanism of the Creator of the world. His success would terrify the artist; he would rush away from his odious handywork, horror-stricken. He would hope that, left to itself, the slight spark of life which he had communicated would fade; that this thing, which had received such imperfect animation, would subside into dead matter; and he might sleep in the belief that the silence of the grave would quench for ever the transient existence of the hideous corpse

which he had looked upon as the cradle of life. He sleeps; but he is awakened; he opens his eyes; behold the horrid thing stands at his bedside, opening his curtains, and looking on him with yellow, watery, but speculative eyes.

I opened mine in terror. The idea so possessed my mind, that a thrill of fear ran through me, and I wished to exchange the ghastly image of my fancy for the realities around. I see them still; the very room, the dark *parquet*, the closed shutters, with the moonlight struggling through, and the sense I had that the glassy lake and white high Alps were beyond. I could not so easily get rid of my hideous phantom; still it haunted me. I must try to think of something else. I recurred to my ghost story,—my tiresome unlucky ghost story! O! if I could only contrive one which would frighten my reader as I myself had been frightened that night!

Swift as light and as cheering was the idea that broke in upon me. "I have found it! What terrified me will terrify others; and I need only describe the spectre which had haunted my midnight pillow." On the morrow I announced that I had *thought of a story*. I began that day with the words, *It was on a dreary night of November*, making only a transcript of the grim terrors of my waking dream.

At first I thought but of a few pages—of a short tale; but Shelley urged me to develop the idea at greater length. I certainly did not owe the suggestion of one incident, nor scarcely of one train of feeling, to my husband, and yet but for his incitement, it would never have taken the form in which it was presented to the world. From this declaration I must except the preface. As far as I can recollect, it was entirely written by him.

And now, once again, I bid my hideous progeny go forth and prosper. I have an affection for it, for it was the offspring of happy days, when death and grief were but words, which found no true echo in my heart. Its several pages speak of many a walk, many a drive, and many a conversation, when I was not alone; and my companion was one who, in this world, I shall never see more. But this is for myself; my readers have nothing to do with these associations.

I will add but one word as to the alterations I have made. They are principally those of style. I have changed no portion of the story, nor introduced any new ideas or circumstances. I have mended the language where it was so bald as to interfere with the interest of the narrative; and these changes occur almost exclusively in the beginning of the first volume. Throughout they are entirely confined to such parts as are mere adjuncts to the story, leaving the core and substance of it untouched.

M. W. S.

London, October 15. 1831.

P R E F A C E.

THE event on which this fiction is founded, has been supposed, by Dr. Darwin, and some of the physiological writers of Germany, as not of impossible occurrence. I shall not be supposed as according the remotest degree of serious faith to such an imagination; yet, in assuming it as the basis of a work of fancy, I have not considered myself as merely weaving a series of supernatural terrors. The event on which the interest of the story depends is exempt from the disadvantages of a mere tale of spectres or enchantment. It was recommended by the novelty of the situations which it developes; and, however impossible as a physical fact, affords a point of view to the imagination for the delineating of human passions more comprehensive and commanding than any which the ordinary relations of existing events can yield.

I have thus endeavoured to preserve the truth of the elementary principles of human nature, while I have not scrupled to innovate upon their combinations. The *Iliad*, the tragic poetry of Greece, — Shakspeare, in the *Tempest*, and *Midsummer Night's Dream*, — and most especially Milton, in *Paradise Lost*, conform to this rule; and the most humble novelist, who seeks to confer or receive amusement from his labours, may, without presumption, apply to prose fiction a licence, or rather a rule, from the adoption of which so many exquisite combinations of human feeling have resulted in the highest specimens of poetry.

The circumstance on which my story rests was suggested in casual conversation. It was commenced partly as a source of amusement, and partly as an expedient for exercising any untried resources of mind. Other motives were

mingled with these, as the work proceeded. I am by no means indifferent to the manner in which whatever moral tendencies exist in the sentiments or characters it contains shall affect the reader ; yet my chief concern in this respect has been limited to the avoiding the enervating effects of the novels of the present day, and to the exhibition of the amiableness of domestic affection, and the excellence of universal virtue. The opinions which naturally spring from the character and situation of the hero are by no means to be conceived as existing always in my own conviction ; nor is any inference justly to be drawn from the following pages as prejudicing any philosophical doctrine of whatever kind.

It is a subject also of additional interest to the author, that this story was begun in the majestic region where the scene is principally laid, and in society which cannot cease to be regretted. I passed the summer of 1816 in the environs of Geneva. The season was cold and rainy, and in the evenings we crowded around a blazing wood fire, and occasionally amused ourselves with some German stories of ghosts, which happened to fall into our hands. These tales excited in us a playful desire of imitation. Two other friends (a tale from the pen of one of whom would be far more acceptable to the public than any thing I can ever hope to produce) and myself agreed to write each a story, founded on some supernatural occurrence.

The weather, however, suddenly became serene ; and my two friends left me on a journey among the Alps, and lost, in the magnificent scenes which they present, all memory of their ghostly visions. The following tale is the only one which has been completed.

Marlow, September, 1817.

FRANKENSTEIN ;

OR,

THE MODERN PROMETHEUS.

LETTER I.

To Mrs. Saville, England.

St. Petersburg, Dec. 11th, 17—.

You will rejoice to hear that no disaster has accompanied the commencement of an enterprise which you have regarded with such evil forebodings. I arrived here yesterday ; and my first task is to assure my dear sister of my welfare, and increasing confidence in the success of my undertaking.

I am already far north of London ; and as I walk in the streets of Petersburg, I feel a cold northern breeze play upon my cheeks, which braces my nerves, and fills me with delight. Do you understand this feeling ? This breeze, which has travelled from the regions towards which I am advancing, gives me a foretaste of those icy climes. Inspirited by this wind of promise, my day dreams become more fervent and vivid. I try in vain to be persuaded that the pole is the seat of frost and desolation ; it ever presents itself to my imagination as the region of beauty and delight. There, Margaret, the sun is for ever visible ; its broad disk just skirting the horizon, and diffusing a perpetual splendour. There—for with your leave, my sister, I will put some trust in preceding navigators—there snow and frost are banished ; and, sailing over a calm sea, we may be wafted to a land surpassing in wonders and in beauty every region hitherto discovered on the habitable globe. Its productions and features may be without ex-

ample, as the phenomena of the heavenly bodies undoubtedly are in those undiscovered solitudes. What may not be expected in a country of eternal light? I may there discover the wondrous power which attracts the needle; and may regulate a thousand celestial observations, that require only this voyage to render their seeming eccentricities consistent for ever. I shall satiate my ardent curiosity with the sight of a part of the world never before visited, and may tread a land never before imprinted by the foot of man. These are my enticements, and they are sufficient to conquer all fear of danger or death, and to induce me to commence this laborious voyage with the joy a child feels when he embarks in a little boat, with his holiday mates, on an expedition of discovery up his native river. But, supposing all these conjectures to be false, you cannot contest the inestimable benefit which I shall confer on all mankind to the last generation, by discovering a passage near the pole to those countries, to reach which at present so many months are requisite; or by ascertaining the secret of the magnet, which, if at all possible, can only be effected by an undertaking such as mine.

These reflections have dispelled the agitation with which I began my letter, and I feel my heart glow with an enthusiasm which elevates me to heaven; for nothing contributes so much to tranquillise the mind as a steady purpose, — a point on which the soul may fix its intellectual eye. This expedition has been the favourite dream of my early years. I have read with ardour the accounts of the various voyages which have been made in the prospect of arriving at the North Pacific Ocean through the seas which surround the pole. You may remember, that a history of all the voyages made for purposes of discovery composed the whole of our good uncle Thomas's library. My education was neglected, yet I was passionately fond of reading. These volumes were my study day and night, and my familiarity with them increased that regret which I had felt, as a child, on learning that my father's dying injunction had forbidden my uncle to allow me to embark in a seafaring life.

These visions faded when I perused, for the first time, those poets whose effusions entranced my soul, and lifted

it to heaven. I also became a poet, and for one year lived in a Paradise of my own creation; I imagined that I also might obtain a niche in the temple where the names of Homer and Shakspeare are consecrated. You are well acquainted with my failure, and how heavily I bore the disappointment. But just at that time I inherited the fortune of my cousin, and my thoughts were turned into the channel of their earlier bent.

Six years have passed since I resolved on my present undertaking. I can, even now, remember the hour from which I dedicated myself to this great enterprise. I commenced by inuring my body to hardship. I accompanied the whale-fishers on several expeditions to the North Sea; I voluntarily endured cold, famine, thirst, and want of sleep; I often worked harder than the common sailors during the day, and devoted my nights to the study of mathematics, the theory of medicine, and those branches of physical science from which a naval adventurer might derive the greatest practical advantage. Twice I actually hired myself as an under-mate in a Greenland whaler, and acquitted myself to admiration. I must own I felt a little proud, when my captain offered me the second dignity in the vessel, and entreated me to remain with the greatest earnestness; so valuable did he consider my services.

And now, dear Margaret, do I not deserve to accomplish some great purpose? My life might have been passed in ease and luxury; but I preferred glory to every enticement that wealth placed in my path. Oh, that some encouraging voice would answer in the affirmative! My courage and my resolution is firm; but my hopes fluctuate, and my spirits are often depressed. I am about to proceed on a long and difficult voyage, the emergencies of which will demand all my fortitude: I am required not only to raise the spirits of others, but sometimes to sustain my own, when theirs are failing.

This is the most favourable period for travelling in Russia. They fly quickly over the snow in their sledges; the motion is pleasant, and, in my opinion, far more agreeable than that of an English stage-coach. The cold is not excessive, if you are wrapped in furs,—a dress which I have

already adopted ; for there is a great difference between walking the deck and remaining seated motionless for hours, when no exercise prevents the blood from actually freezing in your veins. I have no ambition to lose my life on the post-road between St. Petersburg and Archangel.

I shall depart for the latter town in a fortnight or three weeks ; and my intention is to hire a ship there, which can easily be done by paying the insurance for the owner, and to engage as many sailors as I think necessary among those who are accustomed to the whale-fishing. I do not intend to sail until the month of June ; and when shall I return ? Ah, dear sister, how can I answer this question ? If I succeed, many, many months, perhaps years, will pass before you and I may meet. If I fail, you will see me again soon, or never.

Farewell, my dear, excellent Margaret. Heaven shower down blessings on you, and save me, that I may again and again testify my gratitude for all your love and kindness.

Your affectionate brother,

R. WALTON.

LETTER II.

To Mrs. Saville, England.

Archangel, 28th March, 17—.

How slowly the time passes here, encompassed as I am by frost and snow ! yet a second step is taken towards my enterprise. I have hired a vessel, and am occupied in collecting my sailors ; those whom I have already engaged, appear to be men on whom I can depend, and are certainly possessed of dauntless courage.

But I have one want which I have never yet been able to satisfy ; and the absence of the object of which I now feel as a most severe evil. I have no friend, Margaret : when I am glowing with the enthusiasm of success, there will be none to participate my joy ; if I am assailed by disappointment, no one will endeavour to sustain me in dejection. I shall commit my thoughts to paper, it is true ; but that is a poor medium for the communication of

feeling. I desire the company of a man who could sympathise with me; whose eyes would reply to mine. You may deem me romantic, my dear sister, but I bitterly feel the want of a friend. I have no one near me, gentle yet courageous, possessed of a cultivated as well as of a capacious mind, whose tastes are like my own, to approve or amend my plans. How would such a friend repair the faults of your poor brother! I am too ardent in execution, and too impatient of difficulties. But it is a still greater evil to me that I am self-educated: for the first fourteen years of my life I ran wild on a common, and read nothing but our uncle Thomas's books of voyages. At that age I became acquainted with the celebrated poets of our own country; but it was only when it had ceased to be in my power to derive its most important benefits from such a conviction, that I perceived the necessity of becoming acquainted with more languages than that of my native country. Now I am twenty-eight, and am in reality more illiterate than many schoolboys of fifteen. It is true that I have thought more, and that my day dreams are more extended and magnificent; but they want (as the painters call it) *keeping*; and I greatly need a friend who would have sense enough not to despise me as romantic, and affection enough for me to endeavour to regulate my mind.

Well, these are useless complaints; I shall certainly find no friend on the wide ocean, nor even here in Archangel, among merchants and seamen. Yet some feelings, unallied to the dross of human nature, beat even in these rugged bosoms. My lieutenant, for instance, is a man of wonderful courage and enterprise; he is madly desirous of glory: or rather, to word my phrase more characteristically, of advancement in his profession. He is an Englishman, and in the midst of national and professional prejudices, unsoftened by cultivation, retains some of the noblest endowments of humanity. I first became acquainted with him on board a whale vessel: finding that he was unemployed in this city, I easily engaged him to assist in my enterprise.

The master is a person of an excellent disposition, and is remarkable in the ship for his gentleness and the mild-

ness of his discipline. This circumstance, added to his well known integrity and dauntless courage, made me very desirous to engage him. A youth passed in solitude, my best years spent under your gentle and feminine fosterage, has so refined the groundwork of my character, that I cannot overcome an intense distaste to the usual brutality exercised on board ship: I have never believed it to be necessary; and when I heard of a mariner equally noted for his kindness of heart, and the respect and obedience paid to him by his crew, I felt myself peculiarly fortunate in being able to secure his services. I heard of him first in rather a romantic manner, from a lady who owes to him the happiness of her life. This, briefly, is his story. Some years ago, he loved a young Russian lady, of moderate fortune; and having amassed a considerable sum in prize-money, the father of the girl consented to the match. He saw his mistress once before the destined ceremony; but she was bathed in tears, and, throwing herself at his feet, entreated him to spare her, confessing at the same time that she loved another, but that he was poor, and that her father would never consent to the union. My generous friend reassured the suppliant, and on being informed of the name of her lover, instantly abandoned his pursuit. He had already bought a farm with his money, on which he had designed to pass the remainder of his life; but he bestowed the whole on his rival, together with the remains of his prize-money to purchase stock, and then himself solicited the young woman's father to consent to her marriage with her lover. But the old man decidedly refused, thinking himself bound in honour to my friend; who, when he found the father inexorable, quitted his country, nor returned until he heard that his former mistress was married according to her inclinations. "What a noble fellow!" you will exclaim. He is so; but then he is wholly uneducated: he is as silent as a Turk, and a kind of ignorant carelessness attends him, which, while it renders his conduct the more astonishing, detracts from the interest and sympathy which otherwise he would command.

Yet do not suppose, because I complain a little, or because I can conceive a consolation for my toils which I

may never know, that I am wavering in my resolutions. Those are as fixed as fate; and my voyage is only now delayed until the weather shall permit my embarkation. The winter has been dreadfully severe; but the spring promises well, and it is considered as a remarkably early season; so that perhaps I may sail sooner than I expected. I shall do nothing rashly: you know me sufficiently to confide in my prudence and considerateness, whenever the safety of others is committed to my care.

I cannot describe to you my sensations on the near prospect of my undertaking. It is impossible to communicate to you a conception of the trembling sensation, half pleasurable and half fearful, with which I am preparing to depart. I am going to unexplored regions, to "the land of mist and snow;" but I shall kill no albatross, therefore do not be alarmed for my safety, or if I should come back to you as worn and woful as the "Ancient Mariner?" You will smile at my allusion; but I will disclose a secret. I have often attributed my attachment to, my passionate enthusiasm for, the dangerous mysteries of ocean, to that production of the most imaginative of modern poets. There is something at work in my soul, which I do not understand. I am practically industrious—pains-taking;—a workman to execute with perseverance and labour:—but besides this, there is a love for the marvellous, a belief in the marvellous, intertwined in all my projects, which hurries me out of the common pathways of men, even to the wild sea and unvisited regions I am about to explore.

But to return to dearer considerations. Shall I meet you again, after having traversed immense seas, and returned by the most southern cape of Africa or America? I dare not expect such success, yet I cannot bear to look on the reverse of the picture. Continue for the present to write to me by every opportunity: I may receive your letters on some occasions when I need them most to support my spirits. I love you very tenderly. Remember me with affection, should you never hear from me again.

Your affectionate brother,

ROBERT WALTON.

LETTER III.

To Mrs. Saville, England.

MY DEAR SISTER,

July 7th, 17—.

I WRITE a few lines in haste, to say that I am safe, and well advanced on my voyage. This letter will reach England by a merchantman now on its homeward voyage from Archangel ; more fortunate than I, who may not see my native land, perhaps, for many years. I am, however, in good spirits : my men are bold, and apparently firm of purpose ; nor do the floating sheets of ice that continually pass us, indicating the dangers of the region towards which we are advancing, appear to dismay them. We have already reached a very high latitude ; but it is the height of summer, and although not so warm as in England, the southern gales, which blow us speedily towards those shores which I so ardently desire to attain, breathe a degree of renovating warmth which I had not expected.

No incidents have hitherto befallen us that would make a figure in a letter. One or two stiff gales, and the springing of a leak, are accidents which experienced navigators scarcely remember to record ; and I shall be well content if nothing worse happen to us during our voyage.

Adieu, my dear Margaret. Be assured, that for my own sake, as well as yours, I will not rashly encounter danger. I will be cool, persevering, and prudent.

But success *shall* crown my endeavours. Wherefore not ? Thus far I have gone, tracing a secure way over the pathless seas : the very stars themselves being witnesses and testimonies of my triumph. Why not still proceed over the untamed yet obedient element ? What can stop the determined heart and resolved will of man ?

My swelling heart involuntarily pours itself out thus. But I must finish. Heaven bless my beloved sister !

R. W.

LETTER IV.

To Mrs. Saville, England.

August 5th, 17—.

So strange an accident has happened to us, that I cannot forbear recording it, although it is very probable that you will see me before these papers can come into your possession.

Last Monday (July 31st), we were nearly surrounded by ice, which closed in the ship on all sides, scarcely leaving her the sea-room in which she floated. Our situation was somewhat dangerous, especially as we were compassed round by a very thick fog. We accordingly lay to, hoping that some change would take place in the atmosphere and weather.

About two o'clock the mist cleared away, and we beheld, stretched out in every direction, vast and irregular plains of ice, which seemed to have no end. Some of my comrades groaned, and my own mind began to grow watchful with anxious thoughts, when a strange sight suddenly attracted our attention, and diverted our solicitude from our own situation. We perceived a low carriage, fixed on a sledge and drawn by dogs, pass on towards the north, at the distance of half a mile: a being which had the shape of a man, but apparently of gigantic stature, sat in the sledge, and guided the dogs. We watched the rapid progress of the traveller with our telescopes, until he was lost among the distant inequalities of the ice.

This appearance excited our unqualified wonder. We were, as we believed, many hundred miles from any land; but this apparition seemed to denote that it was not, in reality, so distant as we had supposed. Shut in, however, by ice, it was impossible to follow his track, which we had observed with the greatest attention.

About two hours after this occurrence, we heard the ground sea; and before night the ice broke, and freed our ship. We, however, lay to until the morning, fearing to

encounter in the dark those large loose masses which float about after the breaking up of the ice. I profited of this time to rest for a few hours.

In the morning, however, as soon as it was light, I went upon deck, and found all the sailors busy on one side of the vessel, apparently talking to some one in the sea. It was, in fact, a sledge, like that we had seen before, which had drifted towards us in the night, on a large fragment of ice. Only one dog remained alive ; but there was a human being within it, whom the sailors were persuading to enter the vessel. He was not, as the other traveller seemed to be, a savage inhabitant of some undiscovered island, but an European. When I appeared on deck, the master said, " Here is our captain, and he will not allow you to perish on the open sea."

On perceiving me, the stranger addressed me in English, although with a foreign accent. " Before I come on board your vessel," said he, " will you have the kindness to inform me whither you are bound ?"

You may conceive my astonishment on hearing such a question addressed to me from a man on the brink of destruction, and to whom I should have supposed that my vessel would have been a resource which he would not have exchanged for the most precious wealth the earth can afford. I replied, however, that we were on a voyage of discovery towards the northern pole.

Upon hearing this he appeared satisfied, and consented to come on board. Good God ! Margaret, if you had seen the man who thus capitulated for his safety, your surprise would have been boundless. His limbs were nearly frozen, and his body dreadfully emaciated by fatigue and suffering. I never saw a man in so wretched a condition. We attempted to carry him into the cabin ; but as soon as he had quitted the fresh air, he fainted. We accordingly brought him back to the deck, and restored him to animation by rubbing him with brandy, and forcing him to swallow a small quantity. As soon as he showed signs of life we wrapped him up in blankets, and placed him near the chimney of the kitchen stove. By slow degrees he recovered, and ate a little soup, which restored him wonderfully.

Two days passed in this manner before he was able to speak ; and I often feared that his sufferings had deprived him of understanding. When he had in some measure recovered, I removed him to my own cabin, and attended on him as much as my duty would permit. I never saw a more interesting creature : his eyes have generally an expression of wildness, and even madness ; but there are moments when, if any one performs an act of kindness towards him, or does him any the most trifling service, his whole countenance is lighted up, as it were, with a beam of benevolence and sweetness that I never saw equalled. But he is generally melancholy and despairing ; and sometimes he gnashes his teeth, as if impatient of the weight of woes that oppresses him.

When my guest was a little recovered, I had great trouble to keep off the men, who wished to ask him a thousand questions ; but I would not allow him to be tormented by their idle curiosity, in a state of body and mind whose restoration evidently depended upon entire repose. Once, however, the lieutenant asked, Why he had come so far upon the ice in so strange a vehicle ?

His countenance instantly assumed an aspect of the deepest gloom ; and he replied, "To seek one who fled from me."

"And did the man whom you pursued travel in the same fashion ?"

"Yes."

"Then I fancy we have seen him ; for the day before we picked you up, we saw some dogs drawing a sledge, with a man in it, across the ice."

This aroused the stranger's attention ; and he asked a multitude of questions concerning the route which the dæmon, as he called him, had pursued. Soon after, when he was alone with me, he said,—"I have, doubtless, excited your curiosity, as well as that of these good people ; but you are too considerate to make enquiries."

"Certainly ; it would indeed be very impertinent and inhuman in me to trouble you with any inquisitiveness of mine."

“ And yet you rescued me from a strange and perilous situation ; you have benevolently restored me to life.”

Soon after this he enquired if I thought that the breaking up of the ice had destroyed the other sledge ? I replied, that I could not answer with any degree of certainty ; for the ice had not broken until near midnight, and the traveller might have arrived at a place of safety before that time ; but of this I could not judge.

From this time a new spirit of life animated the decaying frame of the stranger. He manifested the greatest eagerness to be upon deck, to watch for the sledge which had before appeared ; but I have persuaded him to remain in the cabin, for he is far too weak to sustain the rawness of the atmosphere. I have promised that some one should watch for him, and give him instant notice if any new object should appear in sight.

Such is my journal of what relates to this strange occurrence up to the present day. The stranger has gradually improved in health, but is very silent, and appears uneasy when any one except myself enters his cabin. Yet his manners are so conciliating and gentle, that the sailors are all interested in him, although they have had very little communication with him. For my own part, I begin to love him as a brother ; and his constant and deep grief fills me with sympathy and compassion. He must have been a noble creature in his better days, being even now in wreck so attractive and amiable.

I said in one of my letters, my dear Margaret, that I should find no friend on the wide ocean ; yet I have found a man who, before his spirit had been broken by misery, I should have been happy to have possessed as the brother of my heart.

I shall continue my journal concerning the stranger at intervals, should I have any fresh incidents to record.

August 13th, 17—.

My affection for my guest increases every day. He excites at once my admiration and my pity to an astonishing degree. How can I see so noble a creature destroyed by misery, without feeling the most poignant grief ? He is so

gentle, yet so wise ; his mind is so cultivated ; and when he speaks, although his words are culled with the choicest art, yet they flow with rapidity and unparalleled eloquence.

He is now much recovered from his illness, and is continually on the deck, apparently watching for the sledge that preceded his own. Yet, although unhappy, he is not so utterly occupied by his own misery, but that he interests himself deeply in the projects of others. He has frequently conversed with me on mine, which I have communicated to him without disguise. He entered attentively into all my arguments in favour of my eventual success, and into every minute detail of the measures I had taken to secure it. I was easily led by the sympathy which he evinced, to use the language of my heart ; to give utterance to the burning ardour of my soul ; and to say, with all the fervour that warmed me, how gladly I would sacrifice my fortune, my existence, my every hope, to the furtherance of my enterprise. One man's life or death were but a small price to pay for the acquirement of the knowledge which I sought ; for the dominion I should acquire and transmit over the elemental foes of our race. As I spoke, a dark gloom spread over my listener's countenance. At first I perceived that he tried to suppress his emotion ; he placed his hands before his eyes ; and my voice quivered and failed me, as I beheld tears trickle fast from between his fingers,—a groan burst from his heaving breast. I paused ;—at length he spoke, in broken accents :—“Unhappy man ! Do you share my madness ? Have you drank also of the intoxicating draught ? Hear me,—let me reveal my tale, and you will dash the cup from your lips !”

Such words, you may imagine, strongly excited my curiosity ; but the paroxysm of grief that had seized the stranger overcame his weakened powers, and many hours of repose and tranquil conversation were necessary to restore his composure.

Having conquered the violence of his feelings, he appeared to despise himself for being the slave of passion ; and quelling the dark tyranny of despair, he led me again to converse concerning myself personally. He asked me the history of my earlier years. The tale was quickly told :

but it awakened various trains of reflection. I spoke of my desire of finding a friend—of my thirst for a more intimate sympathy with a fellow mind than had ever fallen to my lot ; and expressed my conviction that a man could boast of little happiness, who did not enjoy this blessing.

“ I agree with you,” replied the stranger ; “ we are unfashioned creatures, but half made up, if one wiser, better, dearer than ourselves—such a friend ought to be—do not lend his aid to perfectionate our weak and faulty natures. I once had a friend, the most noble of human creatures, and am entitled, therefore, to judge respecting friendship. You have hope, and the world before you, and have no cause for despair. But I—I have lost every thing, and cannot begin life anew.”

As he said this, his countenance became expressive of a calm settled grief, that touched me to the heart. But he was silent, and presently retired to his cabin.

Even broken in spirit as he is, no one can feel more deeply than he does the beauties of nature. The starry sky, the sea, and every sight afforded by these wonderful regions, seems still to have the power of elevating his soul from earth. Such a man has a double existence : he may suffer misery, and be overwhelmed by disappointments ; yet, when he has retired into himself, he will be like a celestial spirit, that has a halo around him, within whose circle no grief or folly ventures.

Will you smile at the enthusiasm I express concerning this divine wanderer ? You would not, if you saw him. You have been tutored and refined by books and retirement from the world, and you are, therefore, somewhat fastidious ; but this only renders you the more fit to appreciate the extraordinary merits of this wonderful man. Sometimes I have endeavoured to discover what quality it is which he possesses, that elevates him so immeasurably above any other person I ever knew. I believe it to be an intuitive discernment ; a quick but never-failing power of judgment ; a penetration into the causes of things, unequalled for clearness and precision ; add to this a facility of expression, and a voice whose varied intonations are soul-subduing music.

August 19. 17—.

Yesterday the stranger said to me, "You may easily perceive, Captain Walton, that I have suffered great and unparalleled misfortunes. I had determined, at one time, that the memory of these evils should die with me; but you have won me to alter my determination. You seek for knowledge and wisdom, as I once did; and I ardently hope that the gratification of your wishes may not be a serpent to sting you, as mine has been. I do not know that the relation of my disasters will be useful to you; yet, when I reflect that you are pursuing the same course, exposing yourself to the same dangers which have rendered me what I am, I imagine that you may deduce an apt moral from my tale; one that may direct you if you succeed in your undertaking, and console you in case of failure. Prepare to hear of occurrences which are usually deemed marvellous. Were we among the tamer scenes of nature, I might fear to encounter your unbelief, perhaps your ridicule; but many things will appear possible in these wild and mysterious regions, which would provoke the laughter of those unacquainted with the ever-varied powers of nature:—nor can I doubt but that my tale conveys in its series internal evidence of the truth of the events of which it is composed."

You may easily imagine that I was much gratified by the offered communication; yet I could not endure that he should renew his grief by a recital of his misfortunes. I felt the greatest eagerness to hear the promised narrative, partly from curiosity, and partly from a strong desire to ameliorate his fate, if it were in my power. I expressed these feelings in my answer.

"I thank you," he replied, "for your sympathy, but it is useless; my fate is nearly fulfilled. I wait but for one event, and then I shall repose in peace. I understand your feeling," continued he, perceiving that I wished to interrupt him; "but you are mistaken, my friend, if thus you will allow me to name you; nothing can alter my destiny: listen to my history, and you will perceive how irrevocably it is determined."

He then told me, that he would commence his narrative the next day when I should be at leisure. This promise drew from me the warmest thanks. I have resolved every night, when I am not imperatively occupied by my duties, to record, as nearly as possible in his own words, what he has related during the day. If I should be engaged, I will at least make notes. This manuscript will doubtless afford you the greatest pleasure : but to me, who know him, and who hear it from his own lips, with what interest and sympathy shall I read it in some future day ! Even now, as I commence my task, his full-toned voice swells in my ears ; his lustrous eyes dwell on me with all their melancholy sweetness ; I see his thin hand raised in animation, while the lineaments of his face are irradiated by the soul within. Strange and harrowing must be his story ; frightful the storm which embraced the gallant vessel on its course, and wrecked it — thus !

CHAPTER I.

I AM by birth a Genevese ; and my family is one of the most distinguished of that republic. My ancestors had been for many years counsellors and syndics ; and my father had filled several public situations with honour and reputation. He was respected by all who knew him, for his integrity and indefatigable attention to public business. He passed his younger days perpetually occupied by the affairs of his country ; a variety of circumstances had prevented his marrying early, nor was it until the decline of life that he became a husband and the father of a family.

As the circumstances of his marriage illustrate his character, I cannot refrain from relating them. One of his most intimate friends was a merchant, who, from a flourishing state, fell, through numerous mischances, into poverty. This man, whose name was Beaufort, was of a proud and unbending disposition, and could not bear to live in poverty and oblivion in the same country where he had formerly been distinguished for his rank and magni-

ficence. Having paid his debts, therefore, in the most honourable manner, he retreated with his daughter to the town of Lucerne, where he lived unknown and in wretchedness. My father loved Beaufort with the truest friendship, and was deeply grieved by his retreat in these unfortunate circumstances. He bitterly deplored the false pride which led his friend to a conduct so little worthy of the affection that united them. He lost no time in endeavouring to seek him out, with the hope of persuading him to begin the world again through his credit and assistance.

Beaufort had taken effectual measures to conceal himself; and it was ten months before my father discovered his abode. Overjoyed at this discovery, he hastened to the house, which was situated in a mean street, near the Reuss. But when he entered, misery and despair alone welcomed him. Beaufort had saved but a very small sum of money from the wreck of his fortunes; but it was sufficient to provide him with sustenance for some months, and in the mean time he hoped to procure some respectable employment in a merchant's house. The interval was, consequently, spent in inaction; his grief only became more deep and rankling, when he had leisure for reflection; and at length it took so fast hold of his mind, that at the end of three months he lay on a bed of sickness, incapable of any exertion.

His daughter attended him with the greatest tenderness; but she saw with despair that their little fund was rapidly decreasing, and that there was no other prospect of support. But Caroline Beaufort possessed a mind of an uncommon mould; and her courage rose to support her in her adversity. She procured plain work; she plaited straw; and by various means contrived to earn a pittance scarcely sufficient to support life.

Several months passed in this manner. Her father grew worse; her time was more entirely occupied in attending him; her means of subsistence decreased; and in the tenth month her father died in her arms, leaving her an orphan and a beggar. This last blow overcame her; and she knelt by Beaufort's coffin, weeping bitterly, when my father entered the chamber. He came like a protecting spirit to the

poor girl, who committed herself to his care ; and after the interment of his friend, he conducted her to Geneva, and placed her under the protection of a relation. Two years after this event Caroline became his wife.

There was a considerable difference between the ages of my parents, but this circumstance seemed to unite them only closer in bonds of devoted affection. There was a sense of justice in my father's upright mind, which rendered it necessary that he should approve highly to love strongly. Perhaps during former years he had suffered from the late-discovered unworthiness of one beloved, and so was disposed to set a greater value on tried worth. There was a show of gratitude and worship in his attachment to my mother, differing wholly from the doating fondness of age, for it was inspired by reverence for her virtues, and a desire to be the means of, in some degree, recompensing her for the sorrows she had endured, but which gave inexpressible grace to his behaviour to her. Every thing was made to yield to her wishes and her convenience. He strove to shelter her, as a fair exotic is sheltered by the gardener, from every rougher wind, and to surround her with all that could tend to excite pleasurable emotion in her soft and benevolent mind. Her health, and even the tranquillity of her hitherto constant spirit, had been shaken by what she had gone through. During the two years that had elapsed previous to their marriage my father had gradually relinquished all his public functions ; and immediately after their union they sought the pleasant climate of Italy, and the change of scene and interest attendant on a tour through that land of wonders, as a restorative for her weakened frame.

From Italy they visited Germany and France. I, their eldest child, was born at Naples, and as an infant accompanied them in their rambles. I remained for several years their only child. Much as they were attached to each other, they seemed to draw inexhaustible stores of affection from a very mine of love to bestow them upon me. My mother's tender caresses, and my father's smile of benevolent pleasure while regarding me, are my first recollections. I was their plaything and their idol, and something better—

their child, the innocent and helpless creature bestowed on them by Heaven, whom to bring up to good, and whose future lot it was in their hands to direct to happiness or misery, according as they fulfilled their duties towards me. With this deep consciousness of what they owed towards the being to which they had given life, added to the active spirit of tenderness that animated both, it may be imagined that while during every hour of my infant life I received a lesson of patience, of charity, and of self-control, I was so guided by a silken cord, that all seemed but one train of enjoyment to me.

For a long time I was their only care. My mother had much desired to have a daughter, but I continued their single offspring. When I was about five years old, while making an excursion beyond the frontiers of Italy, they passed a week on the shores of the Lake of Como. Their benevolent disposition often made them enter the cottages of the poor. This, to my mother, was more than a duty; it was a necessity, a passion,—remembering what she had suffered, and how she had been relieved,—for her to act in her turn the guardian angel to the afflicted. During one of their walks a poor cot in the foldings of a vale attracted their notice, as being singularly disconsolate, while the number of half-clothed children gathered about it, spoke of penury in its worst shape. One day, when my father had gone by himself to Milan, my mother, accompanied by me, visited this abode. She found a peasant and his wife; hard working, bent down by care and labour, distributing a scanty meal to five hungry babes. Among these there was one which attracted my mother far above all the rest. She appeared of a different stock. The four others were dark-eyed, hardy little vagrants; this child was thin, and very fair. Her hair was the brightest living gold, and, despite the poverty of her clothing, seemed to set a crown of distinction on her head. Her brow was clear and ample, her blue eyes cloudless, and her lips and the moulding of her face so expressive of sensibility and sweetness, that none could behold her without looking on her as of a distinct species, a being heaven-sent, and bearing a celestial stamp in all her features.

The peasant woman, perceiving that my mother fixed eyes of wonder and admiration on this lovely girl, eagerly communicated her history. She was not her child, but the daughter of a Milanese nobleman. Her mother was a German, and had died on giving her birth. The infant had been placed with these good people to nurse: they were better off then. They had not been long married, and their eldest child was but just born. The father of their charge was one of those Italians nursed in the memory of the antique glory of Italy, — one among the *schiaivi ognor frementi*, who exerted himself to obtain the liberty of his country. He became the victim of its weakness. Whether he had died, or still lingered in the dungeons of Austria, was not known. His property was confiscated, his child became an orphan and a beggar. She continued with her foster parents, and bloomed in their rude abode, fairer than a garden rose among dark-leaved brambles.

When my father returned from Milan, he found playing with me in the hall of our villa, a child fairer than pictured cherub — a creature who seemed to shed radiance from her looks, and whose form and motions were lighter than the chamois of the hills. The apparition was soon explained. With his permission my mother prevailed on her rustic guardians to yield their charge to her. They were fond of the sweet orphan. Her presence had seemed a blessing to them; but it would be unfair to her to keep her in poverty and want, when Providence afforded her such powerful protection. They consulted their village priest, and the result was, that Elizabeth Lavenza became the inmate of my parents' house — my more than sister — the beautiful and adored companion of all my occupations and my pleasures.

Every one loved Elizabeth. The passionate and almost reverential attachment with which all regarded her became, while I shared it, my pride and my delight. On the evening previous to her being brought to my home, my mother had said playfully, — “I have a pretty present for my Victor — to-morrow he shall have it.” And when, on the morrow, she presented Elizabeth to me as her promised gift, I, with childish seriousness, interpreted her words literally, and looked upon Elizabeth as mine — mine to protect, love, and

cherish. All praises bestowed on her, I received as made to a possession of my own. We called each other familiarly by the name of cousin. No word, no expression could body forth the kind of relation in which she stood to me — my more than sister, since till death she was to be mine only.

CHAPTER II.

WE were brought up together ; there was not quite a year difference in our ages. I need not say that we were strangers to any species of disunion or dispute. Harmony was the soul of our companionship, and the diversity and contrast that subsisted in our characters drew us nearer together. Elizabeth was of a calmer and more concentrated disposition ; but, with all my ardour, I was capable of a more intense application, and was more deeply smitten with the thirst for knowledge. She busied herself with following the aerial creations of the poets ; and in the majestic and wondrous scenes which surrounded our Swiss home — the sublime shapes of the mountains ; the changes of the seasons ; tempest and calm ; the silence of winter, and the life and turbulence of our Alpine summers, — she found ample scope for admiration and delight. While my companion contemplated with a serious and satisfied spirit the magnificent appearances of things, I delighted in investigating their causes. The world was to me a secret which I desired to divine. Curiosity, earnest research to learn the hidden laws of nature, gladness akin to rapture, as they were unfolded to me, are among the earliest sensations I can remember.

On the birth of a second son, my junior by seven years, my parents gave up entirely their wandering life, and fixed themselves in their native country. We possessed a house in Geneva, and a *campagne* on Belrive, the eastern shore of the lake, at the distance of rather more than a league from the city. We resided principally in the latter, and

the lives of my parents were passed in considerable seclusion. It was my temper to avoid a crowd, and to attach myself fervently to a few. I was indifferent, therefore, to my schoolfellows in general; but I united myself in the bonds of the closest friendship to one among them. Henry Clerval was the son of a merchant of Geneva. He was a boy of singular talent and fancy. He loved enterprise, hardship, and even danger, for its own sake. He was deeply read in books of chivalry and romance. He composed heroic songs, and began to write many a tale of enchantment and knightly adventure. He tried to make us act plays, and to enter into masquerades, in which the characters were drawn from the heroes of Roncesvalles, of the Round Table of King Arthur, and the chivalrous train who shed their blood to redeem the holy sepulchre from the hands of the infidels.

No human being could have passed a happier childhood than myself. My parents were possessed by the very spirit of kindness and indulgence. We felt that they were not the tyrants to rule our lot according to their caprice, but the agents and creators of all the many delights which we enjoyed. When I mingled with other families, I distinctly discerned how peculiarly fortunate my lot was, and gratitude assisted the development of filial love.

My temper was sometimes violent, and my passions vehement; but by some law in my temperature they were turned, not towards childish pursuits, but to an eager desire to learn, and not to learn all things indiscriminately. I confess that neither the structure of languages, nor the code of governments, nor the politics of various states, possessed attractions for me. It was the secrets of heaven and earth that I desired to learn; and whether it was the outward substance of things, or the inner spirit of nature and the mysterious soul of man that occupied me, still my enquiries were directed to the metaphysical, or, in its highest sense, the physical secrets of the world.

Meanwhile Clerval occupied himself, so to speak, with the moral relations of things. The busy stage of life, the virtues of heroes, and the actions of men, were his theme; and his hope and his dream was to become one among those

whose names are recorded in story, as the gallant and adventurous benefactors of our species. The saintly soul of Elizabeth shone like a shrine-dedicated lamp in our peaceful home. Her sympathy was ours; her smile, her soft voice, the sweet glance of her celestial eyes, were ever there to bless and animate us. She was the living spirit of love to soften and attract: I might have become sullen in my study, rough through the ardour of my nature, but that she was there to subdue me to a semblance of her own gentleness. And Clerval—could aught ill entrench on the noble spirit of Clerval?—yet he might not have been so perfectly humane, so thoughtful in his generosity—so full of kindness and tenderness amidst his passion for adventurous exploit, had she not unfolded to him the real loveliness of beneficence, and made the doing good the end and aim of his soaring ambition.

I feel exquisite pleasure in dwelling on the recollections of childhood, before misfortune had tainted my mind, and changed its bright visions of extensive usefulness into gloomy and narrow reflections upon self. Besides, in drawing the picture of my early days, I also record those events which led, by insensible steps, to my after tale of misery: for when I would account to myself for the birth of that passion, which afterwards ruled my destiny, I find it arise, like a mountain river, from ignoble and almost forgotten sources; but, swelling as it proceeded, it became the torrent which, in its course, has swept away all my hopes and joys.

Natural philosophy is the genius that has regulated my fate; I desire, therefore, in this narration, to state those facts which led to my predilection for that science. When I was thirteen years of age, we all went on a party of pleasure to the baths near Thonon: the inclemency of the weather obliged us to remain a day confined to the inn. In this house I chanced to find a volume of the works of Cornelius Agrippa. I opened it with apathy; the theory which he attempts to demonstrate, and the wonderful facts which he relates, soon changed this feeling into enthusiasm. A new light seemed to dawn upon my mind; and, bounding with joy, I communicated my discovery to my father.

My father looked carelessly at the titlepage of my book, and said, "Ah! Cornelius Agrippa! My dear Victor, do not waste your time upon this; it is sad trash."

If, instead of this remark, my father had taken the pains to explain to me, that the principles of Agrippa had been entirely exploded, and that a modern system of science had been introduced, which possessed much greater powers than the ancient, because the powers of the latter were chimerical, while those of the former were real and practical; under such circumstances, I should certainly have thrown Agrippa aside, and have contented my imagination, warmed as it was, by returning with greater ardour to my former studies. It is even possible, that the train of my ideas would never have received the fatal impulse that led to my ruin. But the cursory glance my father had taken of my volume by no means assured me that he was acquainted with its contents; and I continued to read with the greatest avidity.

When I returned home, my first care was to procure the whole works of this author, and afterwards of Paracelsus and Albertus Magnus. I read and studied the wild fancies of these writers with delight; they appeared to me treasures known to few beside myself. I have described myself as always having been imbued with a fervent longing to penetrate the secrets of nature. In spite of the intense labour and wonderful discoveries of modern philosophers, I always came from my studies discontented and unsatisfied. Sir Isaac Newton is said to have avowed that he felt like a child picking up shells beside the great and unexplored ocean of truth. Those of his successors in each branch of natural philosophy with whom I was acquainted, appeared even to my boy's apprehensions, as tyros engaged in the same pursuit.

The untaught peasant beheld the elements around him, and was acquainted with their practical uses. The most learned philosopher knew little more. He had partially unveiled the face of Nature, but her immortal lineaments were still a wonder and a mystery. He might dissect, anatomise, and give names; but, not to speak of a final cause, causes in their secondary and tertiary grades were

utterly unknown to him. I had gazed upon the fortifications and impediments that seemed to keep human beings from entering the citadel of nature, and rashly and ignorantly I had repined.

But here were books, and here were men who had penetrated deeper and knew more. I took their word for all that they averred, and I became their disciple. It may appear strange that such should arise in the eighteenth century; but while I followed the routine of education in the schools of Geneva, I was, to a great degree, self taught with regard to my favourite studies. My father was not scientific, and I was left to struggle with a child's blindness, added to a student's thirst for knowledge. Under the guidance of my new preceptors, I entered with the greatest diligence into the search of the philosopher's stone and the elixir of life; but the latter soon obtained my undivided attention. Wealth was an inferior object; but what glory would attend the discovery, if I could banish disease from the human frame, and render man invulnerable to any but a violent death!

Nor were these my only visions. The raising of ghosts or devils was a promise liberally accorded by my favourite authors, the fulfilment of which I most eagerly sought; and if my incantations were always unsuccessful, I attributed the failure rather to my own inexperience and mistake, than to a want of skill or fidelity in my instructors. And thus for a time I was occupied by exploded systems, mingling, like an unadep, a thousand contradictory theories, and floundering desperately in a very slough of multifarious knowledge, guided by an ardent imagination and childish reasoning, till an accident again changed the current of my ideas.

When I was about fifteen years old we had retired to our house near Belrive, when we witnessed a most violent and terrible thunder-storm. It advanced from behind the mountains of Jura; and the thunder burst at once with frightful loudness from various quarters of the heavens. I remained, while the storm lasted, watching its progress with curiosity and delight. As I stood at the door, on a sudden I beheld a stream of fire issue from an old and beautiful oak, which stood about twenty yards from our

house ; and so soon as the dazzling light vanished, the oak had disappeared, and nothing remained but a blasted stump. When we visited it the next morning, we found the tree shattered in a singular manner. It was not splintered by the shock, but entirely reduced to thin ribands of wood. I never beheld any thing so utterly destroyed.

Before this I was not unacquainted with the more obvious laws of electricity. On this occasion a man of great research in natural philosophy was with us, and, excited by this catastrophe, he entered on the explanation of a theory which he had formed on the subject of electricity and galvanism, which was at once new and astonishing to me. All that he said threw greatly into the shade Cornelius Agrippa, Albertus Magnus, and Paracelsus, the lords of my imagination ; but by some fatality the overthrow of these men disinclined me to pursue my accustomed studies. It seemed to me as if nothing would or could ever be known. All that had so long engaged my attention suddenly grew despicable. By one of those caprices of the mind, which we are perhaps most subject to in early youth, I at once gave up my former occupations ; set down natural history and all its progeny as a deformed and abortive creation ; and entertained the greatest disdain for a would-be science, which could never even step within the threshold of real knowledge. In this mood of mind I betook myself to the mathematics, and the branches of study appertaining to that science, as being built upon secure foundations, and so worthy of my consideration.

Thus strangely are our souls constructed, and by such slight ligaments are we bound to prosperity or ruin. When I look back, it seems to me as if this almost miraculous change of inclination and will was the immediate suggestion of the guardian angel of my life — the last effort made by the spirit of preservation to avert the storm that was even then hanging in the stars, and ready to envelope me. Her victory was announced by an unusual tranquillity and gladness of soul, which followed the relinquishing of my ancient and latterly tormenting studies. It was thus that I was to be taught to associate evil with their prosecution, happiness with their disregard.

It was a strong effort of the spirit of good ; but it was ineffectual. Destiny was too potent, and her immutable laws had decreed my utter and terrible destruction.

CHAPTER III.

WHEN I had attained the age of seventeen, my parents resolved that I should become a student at the university of Ingolstadt. I had hitherto attended the schools of Geneva ; but my father thought it necessary, for the completion of my education, that I should be made acquainted with other customs than those of my native country. My departure was therefore fixed at an early date ; but, before the day resolved upon could arrive, the first misfortune of my life occurred—an omen, as it were, of my future misery.

Elizabeth had caught the scarlet fever ; her illness was severe, and she was in the greatest danger. During her illness, many arguments had been urged to persuade my mother to refrain from attending upon her. She had, at first, yielded to our entreaties ; but when she heard that the life of her favourite was menaced, she could no longer control her anxiety. She attended her sick bed,—her watchful attentions triumphed over the malignity of the distemper,—Elizabeth was saved, but the consequences of this imprudence were fatal to her preserver. On the third day my mother sickened ; her fever was accompanied by the most alarming symptoms, and the looks of her medical attendants prognosticated the worst event. On her death-bed the fortitude and benignity of this best of women did not desert her. She joined the hands of Elizabeth and myself :—“ My children,” she said, “ my firmest hopes of future happiness were placed on the prospect of your union. This expectation will now be the consolation of your father. Elizabeth, my love, you must supply my place to my younger children. Alas ! I regret that I am taken from you ; and, happy and beloved as I have been,

is it not hard to quit you all ? But these are not thoughts befitting me ; I will endeavour to resign myself cheerfully to death, and will indulge a hope of meeting you in another world."

She died calmly ; and her countenance expressed affection even in death. I need not describe the feelings of those whose dearest ties are rent by that most irreparable evil ; the void that presents itself to the soul ; and the despair that is exhibited on the countenance. It is so long before the mind can persuade itself that she, whom we saw every day, and whose very existence appeared a part of our own, can have departed for ever—that the brightness of a beloved eye can have been extinguished, and the sound of a voice so familiar, and dear to the ear, can be hushed, never more to be heard. These are the reflections of the first days ; but when the lapse of time proves the reality of the evil, then the actual bitterness of grief commences. Yet from whom has not that rude hand rent away some dear connection ? and why should I describe a sorrow which all have felt, and must feel ? The time at length arrives, when grief is rather an indulgence than a necessity ; and the smile that plays upon the lips, although it may be deemed a sacrilege, is not banished. My mother was dead, but we had still duties which we ought to perform ; we must continue our course with the rest, and learn to think ourselves fortunate, whilst one remains whom the spoiler has not seized.

My departure for Ingolstadt, which had been deferred by these events, was now again determined upon. I obtained from my father a respite of some weeks. It appeared to me sacrilege so soon to leave the repose, akin to death, of the house of mourning, and to rush into the thick of life. I was new to sorrow, but it did not the less alarm me. I was unwilling to quit the sight of those that remained to me ; and, above all, I desired to see my sweet Elizabeth in some degree consoled.

She indeed veiled her grief, and strove to act the comforter to us all. She looked steadily on life, and assumed its duties with courage and zeal. She devoted herself to those whom she had been taught to call her uncle and

cousins. Never was she so enchanting as at this time, when she recalled the sunshine of her smiles and spent them upon us. She forgot even her own regret in her endeavours to make us forget.

The day of my departure at length arrived. Clerval spent the last evening with us. He had endeavoured to persuade his father to permit him to accompany me, and to become my fellow student; but in vain. His father was a narrow-minded trader, and saw idleness and ruin in the aspirations and ambition of his son. Henry deeply felt the misfortune of being debarred from a liberal education. He said little; but when he spoke, I read in his kindling eye and in his animated glance a restrained but firm resolve, not to be chained to the miserable details of commerce.

We sat late. We could not tear ourselves away from each other, nor persuade ourselves to say the word "Farewell!" It was said; and we retired under the pretence of seeking repose, each fancying that the other was deceived: but when at morning's dawn I descended to the carriage which was to convey me away, they were all there — my father again to bless me, Clerval to press my hand once more, my Elizabeth to renew her entreaties that I would write often, and to bestow the last feminine attentions on her playmate and friend.

I threw myself into the chaise that was to convey me away, and indulged in the most melancholy reflections. I, who had ever been surrounded by amiable companions, continually engaged in endeavouring to bestow mutual pleasure, I was now alone. In the university, whither I was going, I must form my own friends, and be my own protector. My life had hitherto been remarkably secluded and domestic; and this had given me invincible repugnance to new countenances. I loved my brothers, Elizabeth, and Clerval; these were "old familiar faces;" but I believed myself totally unfitted for the company of strangers. Such were my reflections as I commenced my journey; but as I proceeded, my spirits and hopes rose. I ardently desired the acquisition of knowledge. I had often, when at home, thought it hard to remain during my youth cooped up in one place, and had longed to enter the world, and take my

station among other human beings. Now my desires were complied with, and it would, indeed, have been folly to repent.

I had sufficient leisure for these and many other reflections during my journey to Ingolstadt, which was long and fatiguing. At length the high white steeple of the town met my eyes. I alighted, and was conducted to my solitary apartment, to spend the evening as I pleased.

The next morning I delivered my letters of introduction, and paid a visit to some of the principal professors. Chance — or rather the evil influence, the Angel of Destruction, which asserted omnipotent sway over me from the moment I turned my reluctant steps from my father's door — led me first to Mr. Krempe, professor of natural philosophy. He was an uncouth man, but deeply imbued in the secrets of his science. He asked me several questions concerning my progress in the different branches of science appertaining to natural philosophy. I replied carelessly; and, partly in contempt, mentioned the names of my alchymists as the principal authors I had studied. The professor stared: "Have you," he said, "really spent your time in studying such nonsense?"

I replied in the affirmative. "Every minute," continued M. Krempe with warmth, "every instant that you have wasted on those books is utterly and entirely lost. You have burdened your memory with exploded systems and useless names. Good God! in what desert land have you lived, where no one was kind enough to inform you that these fancies, which you have so greedily imbibed, are a thousand years old, and as musty as they are ancient? I little expected, in this enlightened and scientific age, to find a disciple of Albertus Magnus and Paracelsus. My dear sir, you must begin your studies entirely anew."

So saying, he stepped aside, and wrote down a list of several books treating of natural philosophy, which he desired me to procure; and dismissed me, after mentioning that in the beginning of the following week he intended to commence a course of lectures upon natural philosophy in its general relations, and that M. Waldman, a fellow-professor, would lecture upon chemistry the alternate days that he omitted.

I returned home, not disappointed, for I have said that I had long considered those authors useless whom the professor reprobated; but I returned, not at all the more inclined to recur to these studies in any shape. M. Krempe was a little squat man, with a gruff voice and a repulsive countenance; the teacher, therefore, did not prepossess me in favour of his pursuits. In rather a too philosophical and connected a strain, perhaps, I have given an account of the conclusions I had come to concerning them in my early years. As a child, I had not been content with the results promised by the modern professors of natural science. With a confusion of ideas only to be accounted for by my extreme youth, and my want of a guide on such matters, I had retrod the steps of knowledge along the paths of time, and exchanged the discoveries of recent enquirers for the dreams of forgotten alchemists. Besides, I had a contempt for the uses of modern natural philosophy. It was very different, when the masters of the science sought immortality and power; such views, although futile, were grand: but now the scene was changed. The ambition of the enquirer seemed to limit itself to the annihilation of those visions on which my interest in science was chiefly founded. I was required to exchange chimeras of boundless grandeur for realities of little worth.

Such were my reflections during the first two or three days of my residence at Ingolstadt, which were chiefly spent in becoming acquainted with the localities, and the principal residents in my new abode. But as the ensuing week commenced, I thought of the information which M. Krempe had given me concerning the lectures. And although I could not consent to go and hear that little conceited fellow deliver sentences out of a pulpit, I recollected what he had said of M. Waldman, whom I had never seen, as he had hitherto been out of town.

Partly from curiosity, and partly from idleness, I went into the lecturing room, which M. Waldman entered shortly after. This professor was very unlike his colleague. He appeared about fifty years of age, but with an aspect expressive of the greatest benevolence; a few grey hairs covered his temples, but those at the back of his head were

nearly black. His person was short, but remarkably erect ; and his voice the sweetest I had ever heard. He began his lecture by a recapitulation of the history of chemistry, and the various improvements made by different men of learning, pronouncing with fervour the names of the most distinguished discoverers. He then took a cursory view of the present state of the science, and explained many of its elementary terms. After having made a few preparatory experiments, he concluded with a panegyric upon modern chemistry, the terms of which I shall never forget : —

“The ancient teachers of this science,” said he, “promised impossibilities, and performed nothing. The modern masters promise very little ; they know that metals cannot be transmuted, and that the elixir of life is a chimera. But these philosophers, whose hands seem only made to dabble in dirt, and their eyes to pore over the microscope or crucible, have indeed performed miracles. They penetrate into the recesses of nature, and show how she works in her hiding places. They ascend into the heavens : they have discovered how the blood circulates, and the nature of the air we breathe. They have acquired new and almost unlimited powers ; they can command the thunders of heaven, mimic the earthquake, and even mock the invisible world with its own shadows.”

Such were the professor’s words — rather let me say such the words of fate, enounced to destroy me. As he went on, I felt as if my soul were grappling with a palpable enemy ; one by one the various keys were touched which formed the mechanism of my being : chord after chord was sounded, and soon my mind was filled with one thought, one conception, one purpose. So much has been done, exclaimed the soul of Frankenstein, — more, far more, will I achieve : treading in the steps already marked, I will pioneer a new way, explore unknown powers, and unfold to the world the deepest mysteries of creation.

I closed not my eyes that night. My internal being was in a state of insurrection and turmoil ; I felt that order would thence arise, but I had no power to produce it. By degrees, after the morning’s dawn, sleep came. I awoke, and my yesternight’s thoughts were as a dream. There only

remained a resolution to return to my ancient studies, and to devote myself to a science for which I believed myself to possess a natural talent. On the same day, I paid M. Waldman a visit. His manners in private were even more mild and attractive than in public; for there was a certain dignity in his mien during his lecture, which in his own house was replaced by the greatest affability and kindness. I gave him pretty nearly the same account of my former pursuits as I had given to his fellow-professor. He heard with attention the little narration concerning my studies, and smiled at the names of Cornelius Agrippa and Paracelsus, but without the contempt that M. Krempe had exhibited. He said, that "these were men to whose indefatigable zeal modern philosophers were indebted for most of the foundations of their knowledge. They had left to us, as an easier task, to give new names, and arrange in connected classifications, the facts which they in a great degree had been the instruments of bringing to light. The labours of men of genius, however erroneously directed, scarcely ever fail in ultimately turning to the solid advantage of mankind." I listened to his statement, which was delivered without any presumption or affectation; and then added, that his lecture had removed my prejudices against modern chemists; I expressed myself in measured terms, with the modesty and deference due from a youth to his instructor, without letting escape (inexperience in life would have made me ashamed) any of the enthusiasm which stimulated my intended labours. I requested his advice concerning the books I ought to procure.

"I am happy," said M. Waldman, "to have gained a disciple; and if your application equals your ability, I have no doubt of your success. Chemistry is that branch of natural philosophy in which the greatest improvements have been and may be made: it is on that account that I have made it my peculiar study; but at the same time I have not neglected the other branches of science. A man would make but a very sorry chemist if he attended to that department of human knowledge alone. If your wish is to become really a man of science, and not merely a petty ex-

perimentalist, I should advise you to apply to every branch of natural philosophy, including mathematics."

He then took me into his laboratory, and explained to me the uses of his various machines ; instructing me as to what I ought to procure, and promising me the use of his own when I should have advanced far enough in the science not to derange their mechanism. He also gave me the list of books which I had requested ; and I took my leave.

Thus ended a day memorable to me : it decided my future destiny.

CHAPTER IV.

FROM this day natural philosophy, and particularly chemistry, in the most comprehensive sense of the term, became nearly my sole occupation. I read with ardour those works, so full of genius and discrimination, which modern enquirers have written on these subjects. I attended the lectures, and cultivated the acquaintance, of the men of science of the university ; and I found even in M. Krempe a great deal of sound sense and real information, combined, it is true, with a repulsive physiognomy and manners, but not on that account the less valuable. In M. Waldman I found a true friend. His gentleness was never tinged by dogmatism ; and his instructions were given with an air of frankness and good nature, that banished every idea of pedantry. In a thousand ways he smoothed for me the path of knowledge, and made the most abstruse enquiries clear and facile to my apprehension. My application was at first fluctuating and uncertain ; it gained strength as I proceeded, and soon became so ardent and eager, that the stars often disappeared in the light of morning whilst I was yet engaged in my laboratory.

As I applied so closely, it may be easily conceived that my progress was rapid. My ardour was indeed the astonishment of the students, and my proficiency that of the

masters. Professor Krempe often asked me, with a sly smile, how Cornelius Agrippa went on? whilst M. Waldman expressed the most heartfelt exultation in my progress. Two years passed in this manner, during which I paid no visit to Geneva, but was engaged, heart and soul, in the pursuit of some discoveries, which I hoped to make. None but those who have experienced them can conceive of the enticements of science. In other studies you go as far as others have gone before you, and there is nothing more to know; but in a scientific pursuit there is continual food for discovery and wonder. A mind of moderate capacity, which closely pursues one study, must infallibly arrive at great proficiency in that study; and I, who continually sought the attainment of one object of pursuit, and was solely wrapt up in this, improved so rapidly, that, at the end of two years, I made some discoveries in the improvement of some chemical instruments, which procured me great esteem and admiration at the university. When I had arrived at this point, and had become as well acquainted with the theory and practice of natural philosophy as depended on the lessons of any of the professors at Ingolstadt, my residence there being no longer conducive to my improvements, I thought of returning to my friends and my native town, when an incident happened that protracted my stay.

One of the phenomena which had peculiarly attracted my attention was the structure of the human frame, and, indeed, any animal endued with life. Whence, I often asked myself, did the principle of life proceed? It was a bold question, and one which has ever been considered as a mystery; yet with how many things are we upon the brink of becoming acquainted, if cowardice or carelessness did not restrain our enquiries. I revolved these circumstances in my mind, and determined thenceforth to apply myself more particularly to those branches of natural philosophy which relate to physiology. Unless I had been animated by an almost supernatural enthusiasm, my application to this study would have been irksome, [and almost intolerable. To examine the causes of life, we must first have recourse to death. I became acquainted with the

science of anatomy : but this was not sufficient ; I must also observe the natural decay and corruption of the human body. In my education my father had taken the greatest precautions that my mind should be impressed with no supernatural horrors. I do not ever remember to have trembled at a tale of superstition, or to have feared the apparition of a spirit. Darkness had no effect upon my fancy ; and a churchyard was to me merely the receptacle of bodies deprived of life, which, from being the seat of beauty and strength, had become food for the worm. Now I was led to examine the cause and progress of this decay, and forced to spend days and nights in vaults and charnel-houses. My attention was fixed upon every object the most insupportable to the delicacy of the human feelings. I saw how the fine form of man was degraded and wasted ; I beheld the corruption of death succeed to the blooming cheek of life ; I saw how the worm inherited the wonders of the eye and brain. I paused, examining and analysing all the minutiae of causation, as exemplified in the change from life to death, and death to life, until from the midst of this darkness a sudden light broke in upon me — a light so brilliant and wondrous, yet so simple, that while I became dizzy with the immensity of the prospect which it illustrated, I was surprised, that among so many men of genius who had directed their enquiries towards the same science, that I alone should be reserved to discover so astonishing a secret.

Remember, I am not recording the vision of a madman. The sun does not more certainly shine in the heavens, than that which I now affirm is true. Some miracle might have produced it, yet the stages of the discovery were distinct and probable. After days and nights of incredible labour and fatigue, I succeeded in discovering the cause of generation and life ; nay, more, I became myself capable of bestowing animation upon lifeless matter.

The astonishment which I had at first experienced on this discovery soon gave place to delight and rapture. After so much time spent in painful labour, to arrive at once at the summit of my desires, was the most gratifying consummation of my toils. But this discovery was so

great and overwhelming, that all the steps by which I had been progressively led to it were obliterated, and I beheld only the result. What had been the study and desire of the wisest men since the creation of the world was now within my grasp. Not that, like a magic scene, it all opened upon me at once: the information I had obtained was of a nature rather to direct my endeavours so soon as I should point them towards the object of my search, than to exhibit that object already accomplished. I was like the Arabian who had been buried with the dead, and found a passage to life, aided only by one glimmering, and seemingly ineffectual, light.

I see by your eagerness, and the wonder and hope which your eyes express, my friend, that you expect to be informed of the secret with which I am acquainted; that cannot be: listen patiently until the end of my story, and you will easily perceive why I am reserved upon that subject. I will not lead you on, unguarded and ardent as I then was, to your destruction and infallible misery. Learn from me, if not by my precepts, at least by my example, how dangerous is the acquirement of knowledge, and how much happier that man is who believes his native town to be the world, than he who aspires to become greater than his nature will allow.

When I found so astonishing a power placed within my hands, I hesitated a long time concerning the manner in which I should employ it. Although I possessed the capacity of bestowing animation, yet to prepare a frame for the reception of it, with all its intricacies of fibres, muscles, and veins, still remained a work of inconceivable difficulty and labour. I doubted at first whether I should attempt the creation of a being like myself, or one of simpler organization; but my imagination was too much exalted by my first success to permit me to doubt of my ability to give life to an animal as complex and wonderful as man. The materials at present within my command hardly appeared adequate to so arduous an undertaking; but I doubted not that I should ultimately succeed. I prepared myself for a multitude of reverses; my operations might be incessantly baffled, and at last my work be imperfect: yet, when I

considered the improvement which every day takes place in science and mechanics, I was encouraged to hope my present attempts would at least lay the foundations of future success. Nor could I consider the magnitude and complexity of my plan as any argument of its impracticability. It was with these feelings that I began the creation of a human being. As the minuteness of the parts formed a great hinderance to my speed, I resolved, contrary to my first intention, to make the being of a gigantic stature; that is to say, about eight feet in height, and proportionably large. After having formed this determination, and having spent some months in successfully collecting and arranging my materials, I began.

No one can conceive the variety of feelings which bore me onwards, like a hurricane, in the first enthusiasm of success. Life and death appeared to me ideal bounds, which I should first break through, and pour a torrent of light into our dark world. A new species would bless me as its creator and source; many happy and excellent natures would owe their being to me. No father could claim the gratitude of his child so completely as I should deserve theirs. Pursuing these reflections, I thought, that if I could bestow animation upon lifeless matter, I might in process of time (although I now found it impossible) renew life where death had apparently devoted the body to corruption.

These thoughts supported my spirits, while I pursued my undertaking with unremitting ardour. My cheek had grown pale with study, and my person had become emaciated with confinement. Sometimes, on the very brink of certainty, I failed; yet still I clung to the hope which the next day or the next hour might realise. One secret which I alone possessed was the hope to which I had dedicated myself; and the moon gazed on my midnight labours, while, with unrelaxed and breathless eagerness, I pursued nature to her hiding-places. Who shall conceive the horrors of my secret toil, as I dabbled among the unhallowed damps of the grave, or tortured the living animal to animate the lifeless clay? My limbs now tremble, and my eyes swim with the remembrance; but then a resistless, and almost

frantic, impulse, urged me forward ; I seemed to have lost all soul or sensation but for this one pursuit. It was indeed but a passing trance, that only made me feel with renewed acuteness so soon as, the unnatural stimulus ceasing to operate, I had returned to my old habits. I collected bones from charnel-houses ; and disturbed, with profane fingers, the tremendous secrets of the human frame. In a solitary chamber, or rather cell, at the top of the house, and separated from all the other apartments by a gallery and staircase, I kept my workshop of filthy creation : my eye-balls were starting from their sockets in attending to the details of my employment. The dissecting room and the slaughter-house furnished many of my materials ; and often did my human nature turn with loathing from my occupation, whilst, still urged on by an eagerness which perpetually increased, I brought my work near to a conclusion.

The summer months passed while I was thus engaged, heart and soul, in one pursuit. It was a most beautiful season ; never did the fields bestow a more plentiful harvest, or the vines yield a more luxuriant vintage : but my eyes were insensible to the charms of nature. And the same feelings, which made me neglect the scenes around me caused me also to forget those friends who were so many miles absent, and whom I had not seen for so long a time. I knew my silence disquieted them ; and I well remembered the words of my father : “ I know that while you are pleased with yourself, you will think of us with affection, and we shall hear regularly from you. You must pardon me if I regard any interruption in your correspondence as a proof that your other duties are equally neglected.”

I knew well therefore what would be my father's feelings ; but I could not tear my thoughts from my employment, loathsome in itself, but which had taken an irresistible hold of my imagination. I wished, as it were, to procrastinate all that related to my feelings of affection until the great object, which swallowed up every habit of my nature, should be completed.

I then thought that my father would be unjust if he ascribed my neglect to vice, or faultiness on my part ; but I am now convinced that he was justified in conceiving that

I should not be altogether free from blame. A human being in perfection ought always to preserve a calm and peaceful mind, and never to allow passion or a transitory desire to disturb his tranquillity. I do not think that the pursuit of knowledge is an exception to this rule. If the study to which you apply yourself has a tendency to weaken your affections, and to destroy your taste for those simple pleasures in which no alloy can possibly mix, then that study is certainly unlawful, that is to say, not befitting the human mind. If this rule were always observed; if no man allowed any pursuit whatsoever to interfere with the tranquillity of his domestic affections, Greece had not been enslaved; Cæsar would have spared his country; America would have been discovered more gradually; and the empires of Mexico and Peru had not been destroyed.

But I forget that I am moralising in the most interesting part of my tale; and your looks remind me to proceed.

My father made no reproach in his letters, and only took notice of my silence by enquiring into my occupations more particularly than before. Winter, spring, and summer passed away during my labours; but I did not watch the blossom or the expanding leaves — sights which before always yielded me supreme delight — so deeply was I engrossed in my occupation. The leaves of that year had withered before my work drew near to a close; and now every day showed me more plainly how well I had succeeded. But my enthusiasm was checked by my anxiety, and I appeared rather like one doomed by slavery to toil in the mines, or any other unwholesome trade, than an artist occupied by his favourite employment. Every night I was oppressed by a slow fever, and I became nervous to a most painful degree; the fall of a leaf startled me, and I shunned my fellow-creatures as if I had been guilty of a crime. Sometimes I grew alarmed at the wreck I perceived that I had become; the energy of my purpose alone sustained me: my labours would soon end, and I believed that exercise and amusement would then drive away incipient disease; and I promised myself both of these when my creation should be complete.

CHAPTER V.

IT was on a dreary night of November, that I beheld the accomplishment of my toils. With an anxiety that almost amounted to agony, I collected the instruments of life around me, that I might infuse a spark of being into the lifeless thing that lay at my feet. It was already one in the morning; the rain pattered dismally against the panes, and my candle was nearly burnt out, when, by the glimmer of the half-extinguished light, I saw the dull yellow eye of the creature open; it breathed hard, and a convulsive motion agitated its limbs.

How can I describe my emotions at this catastrophe, or how delineate the wretch whom with such infinite pains and care I had endeavoured to form? His limbs were in proportion, and I had selected his features as beautiful. Beautiful!—Great God! His yellow skin scarcely covered the work of muscles and arteries beneath; his hair was of a lustrous black, and flowing; his teeth of a pearly whiteness; but these luxuriances only formed a more horrid contrast with his watery eyes, that seemed almost of the same colour as the dun white sockets in which they were set, his shrivelled complexion and straight black lips.

The different accidents of life are not so changeable as the feelings of human nature. I had worked hard for nearly two years, for the sole purpose of infusing life into an inanimate body. For this I had deprived myself of rest and health. I had desired it with an ardour that far exceeded moderation; but now that I had finished, the beauty of the dream vanished, and breathless horror and disgust filled my heart. Unable to endure the aspect of the being I had created, I rushed out of the room, and continued a long time traversing my bedchamber, unable to compose my mind to sleep. At length lassitude succeeded to the tumult I had before endured; and I threw myself on the bed in my clothes, endeavouring to seek a few moments of forgetfulness. But it was in vain: I slept, indeed, but I was disturbed by the wildest dreams. I thought I saw Elizabeth, in the bloom of health, walking in the streets of

Ingolstadt. Delighted and surprised, I embraced her ; but as I imprinted the first kiss on her lips, they became livid with the hue of death ; her features appeared to change, and I thought that I held the corpse of my dead mother in my arms ; a shroud enveloped her form, and I saw the grave-worms crawling in the folds of the flannel. I started from my sleep with horror ; a cold dew covered my forehead, my teeth chattered, and every limb became convulsed : when, by the dim and yellow light of the moon, as it forced its way through the window shutters, I beheld the wretch — the miserable monster whom I had created. He held up the curtain of the bed ; and his eyes, if eyes they may be called, were fixed on me. His jaws opened, and he muttered some inarticulate sounds, while a grin wrinkled his cheeks. He might have spoken, but I did not hear ; one hand was stretched out, seemingly to detain me, but I escaped, and rushed down stairs. I took refuge in the courtyard belonging to the house which I inhabited ; where I remained during the rest of the night, walking up and down in the greatest agitation, listening attentively, catching and fearing each sound as if it were to announce the approach of the demoniacal corpse to which I had so miserably given life.

Oh ! no mortal could support the horror of that countenance. A mummy again endued with animation could not be so hideous as that wretch. I had gazed on him while unfinished ; he was ugly then ; but when those muscles and joints were rendered capable of motion, it became a thing such as even Dante could not have conceived.

I passed the night wretchedly. Sometimes my pulse beat so quickly and hardly, that I felt the palpitation of every artery ; at others, I nearly sank to the ground through languor and extreme weakness. Mingled with this horror, I felt the bitterness of disappointment ; dreams that had been my food and pleasant rest for so long a space were now become a hell to me ; and the change was so rapid, the overthrow so complete !

Morning, dismal and wet, at length dawned, and discovered to my sleepless and aching eyes the church of Ingolstadt, its white steeple and clock, which indicated the

sixth hour. The porter opened the gates of the court, which had that night been my asylum, and I issued into the streets, pacing them with quick steps, as if I sought to avoid the wretch whom I feared every turning of the street would present to my view. I did not dare return to the apartment which I inhabited, but felt impelled to hurry on, although drenched by the rain which poured from a black and comfortless sky.

I continued walking in this manner for some time, endeavouring, by bodily exercise, to ease the load that weighed upon my mind. I traversed the streets, without any clear conception of where I was, or what I was doing. My heart palpitated in the sickness of fear; and I hurried on with irregular steps, not daring to look about me:—

“ Like one who, on a lonely road,
Doth walk in fear and dread,
And, having once turned round, walks on,
And turns no more his head;
Because he knows a frightful fiend
Doth close behind him tread.”*

Continuing thus, I came at length opposite to the inn at which the various diligences and carriages usually stopped. Here I paused, I knew not why; but I remained some minutes with my eyes fixed on a coach that was coming towards me from the other end of the street. As it drew nearer, I observed that it was the Swiss diligence: it stopped just where I was standing; and, on the door being opened, I perceived Henry Clerval, who, on seeing me, instantly sprung out. “ My dear Frankenstein,” exclaimed he, “ how glad I am to see you! how fortunate that you should be here at the very moment of my alighting!”

Nothing could equal my delight on seeing Clerval; his presence brought back to my thoughts my father, Elizabeth, and all those scenes of home so dear to my recollection. I grasped his hand, and in a moment forgot my horror and misfortune; I felt suddenly, and for the first time during many months, calm and serene joy. I welcomed my friend, therefore, in the most cordial manner, and we walked towards my college. Clerval continued talking for some time about our mutual friends, and his own

* Coleridge's “ Ancient Mariner.”

good fortune in being permitted to come to Ingolstadt. "You may easily believe," said he, "how great was the difficulty to persuade my father that all necessary knowledge was not comprised in the noble art of book-keeping; and, indeed, I believe I left him incredulous to the last, for his constant answer to my unwearied entreaties was the same as that of the Dutch schoolmaster in the Vicar of Wakefield:—'I have ten thousand florins a year without Greek, I eat heartily without Greek.' But his affection for me at length overcame his dislike of learning, and he has permitted me to undertake a voyage of discovery to the land of knowledge."

"It gives me the greatest delight to see you; but tell me how you left my father, brothers, and Elizabeth."

"Very well, and very happy, only a little uneasy that they hear from you so seldom. By the by, I mean to lecture you a little upon their account myself.—But, my dear Frankenstein," continued he, stopping short, and gazing full in my face, "I did not before remark how very ill you appear; so thin and pale; you look as if you had been watching for several nights."

"You have guessed right; I have lately been so deeply engaged in one occupation, that I have not allowed myself sufficient rest, as you see: but I hope, I sincerely hope, that all these employments are now at an end, and that I am at length free."

I trembled excessively; I could not endure to think of, and far less to allude to, the occurrences of the preceding night. I walked with a quick pace, and we soon arrived at my college. I then reflected, and the thought made me shiver, that the creature whom I had left in my apartment might still be there, alive, and walking about. I dreaded to behold this monster; but I feared still more that Henry should see him. Entreating him, therefore, to remain a few minutes at the bottom of the stairs, I darted up towards my own room. My hand was already on the lock of the door before I recollected myself. I then paused; and a cold shivering came over me. I threw the door forcibly open, as children are accustomed to do when they expect a spectre to stand in waiting for them on the other side; but

nothing appeared. I stepped fearfully in: the apartment was empty; and my bed-room was also freed from its hideous guest. I could hardly believe that so great a good fortune could have befallen me; but when I became assured that my enemy had indeed fled, I clapped my hands for joy, and ran down to Clerval.

We ascended into my room, and the servant presently brought breakfast; but I was unable to contain myself. It was not joy only that possessed me; I felt my flesh tingle with excess of sensitiveness, and my pulse beat rapidly. I was unable to remain for a single instant in the same place; I jumped over the chairs, clapped my hands, and laughed aloud. Clerval at first attributed my unusual spirits to joy on his arrival; but when he observed me more attentively, he saw a wildness in my eyes for which he could not account; and my loud, unrestrained, heartless laughter, frightened and astonished him.

"My dear Victor," cried he, "what, for God's sake, is the matter? Do not laugh in that manner. How ill you are! What is the cause of all this?"

"Do not ask me," cried I, putting my hands before my eyes, for I thought I saw the dreaded spectre glide into the room; "*he* can tell. — Oh, save me! save me!" I imagined that the monster seized me; I struggled furiously, and fell down in a fit.

Poor Clerval! what must have been his feelings? A meeting, which he anticipated with such joy, so strangely turned to bitterness. But I was not the witness of his grief; for I was lifeless, and did not recover my senses for a long, long time.

This was the commencement of a nervous fever, which confined me for several months. During all that time Henry was my only nurse. I afterwards learned that, knowing my father's advanced age, and unfitness for so long a journey, and how wretched my sickness would make Elizabeth, he spared them this grief by concealing the extent of my disorder. He knew that I could not have a more kind and attentive nurse than himself; and, firm in the hope he felt of my recovery, he did not doubt that, instead of doing harm, he performed the kindest action that he could towards them.

But I was in reality very ill ; and surely nothing but the unbounded and unremitting attentions of my friend could have restored me to life. The form of the monster on whom I had bestowed existence was for ever before my eyes, and I raved incessantly concerning him. Doubtless my words surprised Henry : he at first believed them to be the wanderings of my disturbed imagination ; but the pertinacity with which I continually recurred to the same subject, persuaded him that my disorder indeed owed its origin to some uncommon and terrible event.

By very slow degrees, and with frequent relapses, that alarmed and grieved my friend, I recovered. I remember the first time I became capable of observing outward objects with any kind of pleasure, I perceived that the fallen leaves had disappeared, and that the young buds were shooting forth from the trees that shaded my window. It was a divine spring ; and the season contributed greatly to my convalescence. I felt also sentiments of joy and affection revive in my bosom ; my gloom disappeared, and in a short time I became as cheerful as before I was attacked by the fatal passion.

“ Dearest Clerval,” exclaimed I, “ how kind, how very good you are to me. This whole winter, instead of being spent in study, as you promised yourself, has been consumed in my sick room. How shall I ever repay you ? I feel the greatest remorse for the disappointment of which I have been the occasion ; but you will forgive me.”

“ You will repay me entirely, if you do not discompose yourself, but get well as fast as you can ; and since you appear in such good spirits, I may speak to you on one subject, may I not ?”

I trembled. One subject ! what could it be ? Could he allude to an object on whom I dared not even think ?

“ Compose yourself,” said Clerval, who observed my change of colour, “ I will not mention it, if it agitates you ; but your father and cousin would be very happy if they received a letter from you in your own hand-writing. They hardly know how ill you have been, and are uneasy at your long silence.”

“ Is that all, my dear Henry ? How could you suppose

that my first thought would not fly towards those dear, dear friends whom I love, and who are so deserving of my love."

"If this is your present temper, my friend, you will perhaps be glad to see a letter that has been lying here some days for you: it is from your cousin, I believe."

CHAPTER VI.

CLERVAL then put the following letter into my hands. It was from my own Elizabeth:—

"My dearest Cousin,

"You have been ill, very ill, and even the constant letters of dear kind Henry are not sufficient to reassure me on your account. You are forbidden to write—to hold a pen; yet one word from you, dear Victor, is necessary to calm our apprehensions. For a long time I have thought that each post would bring this line, and my persuasions have restrained my uncle from undertaking a journey to Ingolstadt. I have prevented his encountering the inconveniences and perhaps dangers of so long a journey; yet how often have I regretted not being able to perform it myself! I figure to myself that the task of attending on your sick bed has devolved on some mercenary old nurse, who could never guess your wishes, nor minister to them with the care and affection of your poor cousin. Yet that is over now: Clerval writes that indeed you are getting better. I eagerly hope that you will confirm this intelligence soon in your own handwriting.

"Get well—and return to us. You will find a happy, cheerful home, and friends who love you dearly. Your father's health is vigorous, and he asks but to see you,—but to be assured that you are well; and not a care will ever cloud his benevolent countenance. How pleased you would be to remark the improvement of our Ernest! He is now sixteen, and full of activity and spirit. He is desirous to be a true Swiss, and to enter into foreign service;

but we cannot part with him, at least until his elder brother return to us. My uncle is not pleased with the idea of a military career in a distant country ; but Ernest never had your powers of application. He looks upon study as an odious fetter ;—his time is spent in the open air, climbing the hills or rowing on the lake. I fear that he will become an idler, unless we yield the point, and permit him to enter on the profession which he has selected.

“ Little alteration, except the growth of our dear children, has taken place since you left us. The blue lake, and snow-clad mountains, they never change ;—and I think our placid home, and our contented hearts are regulated by the same immutable laws. My trifling occupations take up my time and amuse me, and I am rewarded for any exertions by seeing none but happy, kind faces around me. Since you left us, but one change has taken place in our little household. Do you remember on what occasion Justine Moritz entered our family ? Probably you do not ; I will relate her history, therefore, in a few words. Madame Moritz, her mother, was a widow with four children, of whom Justine was the third. This girl had always been the favourite of her father ; but, through a strange perversity, her mother could not endure her, and, after the death of M. Moritz, treated her very ill. My aunt observed this ; and, when Justine was twelve years of age, prevailed on her mother to allow her to live at our house. The republican institutions of our country have produced simpler and happier manners than those which prevail in the great monarchies that surround it. Hence there is less distinction between the several classes of its inhabitants ; and the lower orders, being neither so poor nor so despised, their manners are more refined and moral. A servant in Geneva does not mean the same thing as a servant in France and England. Justine, thus received in our family, learned the duties of a servant ; a condition which, in our fortunate country, does not include the idea of ignorance, and a sacrifice of the dignity of a human being.

“ Justine, you may remember, was a great favourite of yours ; and I recollect you once remarked, that if you were in an ill-humour, one glance from Justine could dissipate

it, for the same reason that Ariosto gives concerning the beauty of Angelica — she looked so frank-hearted and happy. My aunt conceived a great attachment for her, by which she was induced to give her an education superior to that which she had at first intended. This benefit was fully repaid; Justine was the most grateful little creature in the world: I do not mean that she made any professions; I never heard one pass her lips; but you could see by her eyes that she almost adored her protectress. Although her disposition was gay, and in many respects inconsiderate, yet she paid the greatest attention to every gesture of my aunt. She thought her the model of all excellence, and endeavoured to imitate her phraseology and manners, so that even now she often reminds me of her.

“When my dearest aunt died, every one was too much occupied in their own grief to notice poor Justine, who had attended her during her illness with the most anxious affection. Poor Justine was very ill; but other trials were reserved for her.

“One by one, her brothers and sister died; and her mother, with the exception of her neglected daughter, was left childless. The conscience of the woman was troubled; she began to think that the deaths of her favourites was a judgment from heaven to chastise her partiality. She was a Roman catholic; and I believe her confessor confirmed the idea which she had conceived. Accordingly, a few months after your departure for Ingolstadt, Justine was called home by her repentant mother. Poor girl! she wept when she quitted our house; she was much altered since the death of my aunt; grief had given softness and a winning mildness to her manners, which had before been remarkable for vivacity. Nor was her residence at her mother’s house of a nature to restore her gaiety. The poor woman was very vacillating in her repentance. She sometimes begged Justine to forgive her unkindness, but much oftener accused her of having caused the deaths of her brothers and sister. Perpetual fretting at length threw Madame Moritz into a decline, which at first increased her irritability, but she is now at peace for ever. She died on the first approach of cold weather, at the beginning of this

last winter. Justine has returned to us ; and I assure you I love her tenderly. She is very clever and gentle, and extremely pretty ; as I mentioned before, her mien and her expressions continually remind me of my dear aunt.

“ I must say also a few words to you, my dear cousin, of little darling William. I wish you could see him ; he is very tall of his age, with sweet laughing blue eyes, dark eyelashes, and curling hair. When he smiles, two little dimples appear on each cheek, which are rosy with health. He has already had one or two little *wives*, but Louisa Biron is his favourite, a pretty little girl of five years of age.

“ Now, dear Victor, I dare say you wish to be indulged in a little gossip concerning the good people of Geneva. The pretty Miss Mansfield has already received the congratulatory visits on her approaching marriage with a young Englishman, John Melbourne, Esq. Her ugly sister, Manon, married M. Duvillard, the rich banker, last autumn. Your favourite schoolfellow, Louis Manoir, has suffered several misfortunes since the departure of Clerval from Geneva. But he has already recovered his spirits, and is reported to be on the point of marrying a very lively pretty Frenchwoman, Madame Tavernier. She is a widow, and much older than Manoir ; but she is very much admired, and a favourite with everybody.

“ I have written myself into better spirits, dear cousin ; but my anxiety returns upon me as I conclude. Write, dearest Victor, — one line — one word will be a blessing to us. Ten thousand thanks to Henry for his kindness, his affection, and his many letters : we are sincerely grateful. Adieu ! my cousin ; take care of yourself ; and, I entreat you, write !

“ ELIZABETH LAVENZA.

“ Geneva, March 18th, 17—.”

“ Dear, dear Elizabeth !” I exclaimed, when I had read her letter, “ I will write instantly, and relieve them from the anxiety they must feel.” I wrote, and this exertion greatly fatigued me ; but my convalescence had commenced, and proceeded regularly. In another fortnight I was able to leave my chamber.

One of my first duties on my recovery was to introduce Clerval to the several professors of the university. In doing this, I underwent a kind of rough usage, ill befitting the wounds that my mind had sustained. Ever since the fatal night, the end of my labours, and the beginning of my misfortunes, I had conceived a violent antipathy even to the name of natural philosophy. When I was otherwise quite restored to health, the sight of a chemical instrument would renew all the agony of my nervous symptoms. Henry saw this, and had removed all my apparatus from my view. He had also changed my apartment; for he perceived that I had acquired a dislike for the room which had previously been my laboratory. But these cares of Clerval were made of no avail when I visited the professors. M. Waldman inflicted torture when he praised, with kindness and warmth, the astonishing progress I had made in the sciences. He soon perceived that I disliked the subject; but not guessing the real cause, he attributed my feelings to modesty, and changed the subject from my improvement, to the science itself, with a desire, as I evidently saw, of drawing me out. What could I do? He meant to please, and he tormented me. I felt as if he had placed carefully, one by one, in my view those instruments which were to be afterwards used in putting me to a slow and cruel death. I writhed under his words, yet dared not exhibit the pain I felt. Clerval, whose eyes and feelings were always quick in discerning the sensations of others, declined the subject, alleging, in excuse, his total ignorance; and the conversation took a more general turn. I thanked my friend from my heart, but I did not speak. I saw plainly that he was surprised, but he never attempted to draw my secret from me; and although I loved him with a mixture of affection and reverence that knew no bounds, yet I could never persuade myself to confide to him that event which was so often present to my recollection, but which I feared the detail to another would only impress more deeply.

M. Krempe was not equally docile; and in my condition at that time, of almost insupportable sensitiveness, his harsh blunt encomiums gave me even more pain than the bene-

volent approbation of M. Waldman. "D—n the fellow!" cried he; "why, M. Clerval, I assure you he has outstript us all. Ay, stare if you please; but it is nevertheless true. A youngster who, but a few years ago, believed in Cornelius Agrippa as firmly as in the gospel, has now set himself at the head of the university; and if he is not soon pulled down, we shall all be out of countenance. — Ay, ay," continued he, observing my face expressive of suffering, "M. Frankenstein is modest; an excellent quality in a young man. Young men should be diffident of themselves, you know, M. Clerval: I was myself when young; but that wears out in a very short time."

M. Krempe had now commenced an eulogy on himself, which happily turned the conversation from a subject that was so annoying to me.

Clerval had never sympathised in my tastes for natural science; and his literary pursuits differed wholly from those which had occupied me. He came to the university with the design of making himself complete master of the oriental languages, as thus he should open a field for the plan of life he had marked out for himself. Resolved to pursue no inglorious career, he turned his eyes toward the East, as affording scope for his spirit of enterprise. The Persian, Arabic, and Sanscrit languages engaged his attention, and I was easily induced to enter on the same studies. Idleness had ever been irksome to me, and now that I wished to fly from reflection, and hated my former studies, I felt great relief in being the fellow-pupil with my friend, and found not only instruction but consolation in the works of the orientalist. I did not, like him, attempt a critical knowledge of their dialects, for I did not contemplate making any other use of them than temporary amusement. I read merely to understand their meaning, and they well repaid my labours. Their melancholy is soothing, and their joy elevating, to a degree I never experienced in studying the authors of any other country. When you read their writings, life appears to consist in a warm sun and a garden of roses, — in the smiles and frowns of a fair enemy, and the fire that consumes your own heart. How different from the manly and heroical poetry of Greece and Rome!

Summer passed away in these occupations, and my return to Geneva was fixed for the latter end of autumn ; but being delayed by several accidents, winter and snow arrived, the roads were deemed impassable, and my journey was retarded until the ensuing spring. I felt this delay very bitterly ; for I longed to see my native town and my beloved friends. My return had only been delayed so long, from an unwillingness to leave Clerval in a strange place, before he had become acquainted with any of its inhabitants. The winter, however, was spent cheerfully ; and although the spring was uncommonly late, when it came its beauty compensated for its dilatoriness.

The month of May had already commenced, and I expected the letter daily which was to fix the date of my departure, when Henry proposed a pedestrian tour in the environs of Ingolstadt, that I might bid a personal farewell to the country I had so long inhabited. I acceded with pleasure to this proposition : I was fond of exercise, and Clerval had always been my favourite companion in the rambles of this nature that I had taken among the scenes of my native country.

We passed a fortnight in these perambulations : my health and spirits had long been restored, and they gained additional strength from the salubrious air I breathed, the natural incidents of our progress, and the conversation of my friend. Study had before secluded me from the intercourse of my fellow-creatures, and rendered me unsocial ; but Clerval called forth the better feelings of my heart ; he again taught me to love the aspect of nature, and the cheerful faces of children. Excellent friend ! how sincerely did you love me, and endeavour to elevate my mind until it was on a level with your own ! A selfish pursuit had cramped and narrowed me, until your gentleness and affection warmed and opened my senses ; I became the same happy creature who, a few years ago, loved and beloved by all, had no sorrow or care. When happy, inanimate nature had the power of bestowing on me the most delightful sensations. A serene sky and verdant fields filled me with ecstasy. The present season was indeed divine ; the flowers of spring bloomed in the hedges, while those

of summer were already in bud. I was undisturbed by thoughts which during the preceding year had pressed upon me, notwithstanding my endeavours to throw them off, with an invincible burden.

Henry rejoiced in my gaiety, and sincerely sympathised in my feelings : he exerted himself to amuse me, while he expressed the sensations that filled his soul. The resources of his mind on this occasion were truly astonishing : his conversation was full of imagination ; and very often, in imitation of the Persian and Arabic writers, he invented tales of wonderful fancy and passion. At other times he repeated my favourite poems, or drew me out into arguments, which he supported with great ingenuity.

We returned to our college on a Sunday afternoon : the peasants were dancing, and every one we met appeared gay and happy. My own spirits were high, and I bounded along with feelings of unbridled joy and hilarity.

CHAPTER VII.

ON my return, I found the following letter from my father : —

“ My dear Victor,

“ You have probably waited impatiently for a letter to fix the date of your return to us ; and I was at first tempted to write only a few lines, merely mentioning the day on which I should expect you. But that would be a cruel kindness, and I dare not do it. What would be your surprise, my son, when you expected a happy and glad welcome, to behold, on the contrary, tears and wretchedness ? And how, Victor, can I relate our misfortune ? Absence cannot have rendered you callous to our joys and griefs ; and how shall I inflict pain on my long absent son ? I wish to prepare you for the woful news, but I know it is impossible ; even now your eye skims over the page, to seek the words which are to convey to you the horrible tidings.

“ William is dead ! — that sweet child, whose smiles de-

lighted and warmed my heart, who was so gentle, yet so gay! Victor, he is murdered!

“I will not attempt to console you; but will simply relate the circumstances of the transaction.

“Last Thursday (May 7th), I, my niece, and your two brothers, went to walk in Plainpalais. The evening was warm and serene, and we prolonged our walk farther than usual. It was already dusk before we thought of returning; and then we discovered that William and Ernest, who had gone on before, were not to be found. We accordingly rested on a seat until they should return. Presently Ernest came, and enquired if we had seen his brother: he said, that he had been playing with him, that William had run away to hide himself, and that he vainly sought for him, and afterwards waited for him a long time, but that he did not return.

“This account rather alarmed us, and we continued to search for him until night fell, when Elizabeth conjectured that he might have returned to the house. He was not there. We returned again, with torches; for I could not rest, when I thought that my sweet boy had lost himself, and was exposed to all the damps and dews of night; Elizabeth also suffered extreme anguish. About five in the morning I discovered my lovely boy, whom the night before I had seen blooming and active in health, stretched on the grass livid and motionless: the print of the murderer’s finger was on his neck.

“He was conveyed home, and the anguish that was visible in my countenance betrayed the secret to Elizabeth. She was very earnest to see the corpse. At first I attempted to prevent her; but she persisted, and entering the room where it lay, hastily examined the neck of the victim, and clasping her hands exclaimed, ‘O God! I have murdered my darling child!’

“She fainted, and was restored with extreme difficulty. When she again lived, it was only to weep and sigh. She told me, that that same evening William had teased her to let him wear a very valuable miniature that she possessed of your mother. This picture is gone, and was doubtless the temptation which urged the murderer to the deed. We

have no trace of him at present, although our exertions to discover him are unremitted ; but they will not restore my beloved William !

“ Come, dearest Victor ; you alone can console Elizabeth. She weeps continually, and accuses herself unjustly as the cause of his death ; her words pierce my heart. We are all unhappy ; but will not that be an additional motive for you, my son, to return and be our comforter ? Your dear mother ! Alas, Victor ! I now say, Thank God she did not live to witness the cruel, miserable death of her youngest darling !

“ Come, Victor ; not brooding thoughts of vengeance against the assassin, but with feelings of peace and gentleness, that will heal, instead of festering, the wounds of our minds. Enter the house of mourning, my friend, but with kindness and affection for those who love you, and not with hatred for your enemies.

“ Your affectionate and afflicted father,

“ ALPHONSE FRANKENSTEIN.

“ Geneva, May 12th, 17—.”

Clerval, who had watched my countenance as I read this letter, was surprised to observe the despair that succeeded to the joy I at first expressed on receiving news from my friends. I threw the letter on the table, and covered my face with my hands.

“ My dear Frankenstein,” exclaimed Henry, when he perceived me weep with bitterness, “ are you always to be unhappy ? My dear friend, what has happened ? ”

I motioned to him to take up the letter, while I walked up and down the room in the extremest agitation. Tears also gushed from the eyes of Clerval, as he read the account of my misfortune.

“ I can offer you no consolation, my friend,” said he ; “ your disaster is irreparable. What do you intend to do ? ”

“ To go instantly to Geneva : come with me, Henry, to order the horses.”

During our walk, Clerval endeavoured to say a few words of consolation ; he could only express his heartfelt sympathy. “ Poor William ! ” said he, “ dear lovely child,

he now sleeps with his angel mother! Who that had seen him bright and joyous in his young beauty, but must weep over his untimely loss! To die so miserably; to feel the murderer's grasp! How much more a murderer, that could destroy such radiant innocence! Poor little fellow! one only consolation have we; his friends mourn and weep, but he is at rest. The pang is over, his sufferings are at an end for ever. A sod covers his gentle form, and he knows no pain. He can no longer be a subject for pity; we must reserve that for his miserable survivors."

Clerval spoke thus as we hurried through the streets; the words impressed themselves on my mind, and I remembered them afterwards in solitude. But now, as soon as the horses arrived, I hurried into a cabriolet, and bade farewell to my friend.

My journey was very melancholy. At first I wished to hurry on, for I longed to console and sympathise with my loved and sorrowing friends; but when I drew near my native town, I slackened my progress. I could hardly sustain the multitude of feelings that crowded into my mind. I passed through scenes familiar to my youth, but which I had not seen for nearly six years. How altered every thing might be during that time! One sudden and desolating change had taken place; but a thousand little circumstances might have by degrees worked other alterations, which, although they were done more tranquilly, might not be the less decisive. Fear overcame me; I dared not advance, dreading a thousand nameless evils that made me tremble, although I was unable to define them.

I remained two days at Lausanne, in this painful state of mind. I contemplated the lake: the waters were placid; all around was calm; and the snowy mountains, "the palaces of nature," were not changed. By degrees the calm and heavenly scene restored me, and I continued my journey towards Geneva.

The road ran by the side of the lake, which became narrower as I approached my native town. I discovered more distinctly the black sides of Jura, and the bright summit of Mont Blanc. I wept like a child. "Dear

mountains ! my own beautiful lake ! how do you welcome your wanderer ? Your summits are clear ; the sky and lake are blue and placid. Is this to prognosticate peace, or to mock at my unhappiness ?”

I fear, my friend, that I shall render myself tedious by dwelling on these preliminary circumstances ; but they were days of comparative happiness, and I think of them with pleasure. My country, my beloved country ! who but a native can tell the delight I took in again beholding thy streams, thy mountains, and, more than all, thy lovely lake !

Yet, as I drew nearer home, grief and fear again overcame me. Night also closed around ; and when I could hardly see the dark mountains, I felt still more gloomily. The picture appeared a vast and dim scene of evil, and I foresaw obscurely that I was destined to become the most wretched of human beings. Alas ! I prophesied truly, and failed only in one single circumstance, that in all the misery I imagined and dreaded, I did not conceive the hundredth part of the anguish I was destined to endure.

It was completely dark when I arrived in the environs of Geneva ; the gates of the town were already shut ; and I was obliged to pass the night at Secheron, a village at the distance of half a league from the city. The sky was serene ; and, as I was unable to rest, I resolved to visit the spot where my poor William had been murdered. As I could not pass through the town, I was obliged to cross the lake in a boat to arrive at Plainpalais. During this short voyage I saw the lightnings playing on the summit of Mont Blanc in the most beautiful figures. The storm appeared to approach rapidly ; and, on landing, I ascended a low hill, that I might observe its progress. It advanced ; the heavens were clouded, and I soon felt the rain coming slowly in large drops, but its violence quickly increased.

I quitted my seat, and walked on, although the darkness and storm increased every minute, and the thunder burst with a terrific crash over my head. It was echoed from Salève, the Juras, and the Alps of Savoy ; vivid flashes of lightning dazzled my eyes, illuminating the lake, making it appear like a vast sheet of fire ; then for an instant every thing seemed of a pitchy darkness, until the eye recovered

itself from the preceding flash. The storm, as is often the case in Switzerland, appeared at once in various parts of the heavens. The most violent storm hung exactly north of the town, over that part of the lake which lies between the promontory of Belrive and the village of Copêt. Another storm enlightened Jura with faint flashes; and another darkened and sometimes disclosed the Môle, a peaked mountain to the east of the lake.

While I watched the tempest, so beautiful yet terrific, I wandered on with a hasty step. This noble war in the sky elevated my spirits; I clasped my hands, and exclaimed aloud, "William, dear angel! this is thy funeral, this thy dirge!" As I said these words, I perceived in the gloom a figure which stole from behind a clump of trees near me; I stood fixed, gazing intently: I could not be mistaken. A flash of lightning illuminated the object, and discovered its shape plainly to me; its gigantic stature, and the deformity of its aspect, more hideous than belongs to humanity, instantly informed me that it was the wretch, the filthy dæmon, to whom I had given life. What did he there? Could he be (I shuddered at the conception) the murderer of my brother? No sooner did that idea cross my imagination, than I became convinced of its truth; my teeth chattered, and I was forced to lean against a tree for support. The figure passed me quickly, and I lost it in the gloom. Nothing in human shape could have destroyed that fair child. *He* was the murderer! I could not doubt it. The mere presence of the idea was an irresistible proof of the fact. I thought of pursuing the devil; but it would have been in vain, for another flash discovered him to me hanging among the rocks of the nearly perpendicular ascent of Mont Salève, a hill that bounds Plainpalais on the south. He soon reached the summit, and disappeared.

I remained motionless. The thunder ceased; but the rain still continued, and the scene was enveloped in an impenetrable darkness. I revolved in my mind the events which I had until now sought to forget: the whole train of my progress towards the creation; the appearance of the work of my own hands alive at my bedside; its departure. Two years had now nearly elapsed since the night on which

he first received life ; and was this his first crime ? Alas ! I had turned loose into the world a depraved wretch, whose delight was in carnage and misery ; had he not murdered my brother ?

No one can conceive the anguish I suffered during the remainder of the night, which I spent, cold and wet, in the open air. But I did not feel the inconvenience of the weather ; my imagination was busy in scenes of evil and despair. I considered the being whom I had cast among mankind, and endowed with the will and power to effect purposes of horror, such as the deed which he had now done, nearly in the light of my own vampire, my own spirit let loose from the grave, and forced to destroy all that was dear to me.

Day dawned ; and I directed my steps towards the town. The gates were open, and I hastened to my father's house. My first thought was to discover what I knew of the murderer, and cause instant pursuit to be made. But I paused when I reflected on the story that I had to tell. A being whom I myself had formed, and endued with life, had met me at midnight among the precipices of an inaccessible mountain. I remembered also the nervous fever with which I had been seized just at the time that I dated my creation, and which would give an air of delirium to a tale otherwise so utterly improbable. I well knew that if any other had communicated such a relation to me, I should have looked upon it as the ravings of insanity. Besides, the strange nature of the animal would elude all pursuit, even if I were so far credited as to persuade my relatives to commence it. And then of what use would be pursuit ? Who could arrest a creature capable of scaling the overhanging sides of Mont Salève ? These reflections determined me, and I resolved to remain silent.

It was about five in the morning when I entered my father's house. I told the servants not to disturb the family, and went into the library to attend their usual hour of rising.

Six years had elapsed, passed as a dream but for one indelible trace, and I stood in the same place where I had last embraced my father before my departure for Ingolstadt. Beloved and venerable parent ! He still remained to me.

I gazed on the picture of my mother, which stood over the mantel-piece. It was an historical subject, painted at my father's desire, and represented Caroline Beaufort in an agony of despair, kneeling by the coffin of her dead father. Her garb was rustic, and her cheek pale; but there was an air of dignity and beauty, that hardly permitted the sentiment of pity. Below this picture was a miniature of William; and my tears flowed when I looked upon it. While I was thus engaged, Ernest entered: he had heard me arrive, and hastened to welcome me. He expressed a sorrowful delight to see me: "Welcome, my dearest Victor," said he. "Ah! I wish you had come three months ago, and then you would have found us all joyous and delighted. You come to us now to share a misery which nothing can alleviate; yet your presence will, I hope, revive our father, who seems sinking under his misfortune; and your persuasions will induce poor Elizabeth to cease her vain and tormenting self-accusations. — Poor William! he was our darling and our pride!"

Tears, unrestrained, fell from my brother's eyes; a sense of mortal agony crept over my frame. Before, I had only imagined the wretchedness of my desolated home; the reality came on me as a new, and a not less terrible, disaster. I tried to calm Ernest; I enquired more minutely concerning my father, and her I named my cousin.

"She most of all," said Ernest, "requires consolation; she accused herself of having caused the death of my brother, and that made her very wretched. But since the murderer has been discovered —"

"The murderer discovered! Good God! how can that be? who could attempt to pursue him? It is impossible; one might as well try to overtake the winds, or confine a mountain-stream with a straw. I saw him too; he was free last night!"

"I do not know what you mean," replied my brother, in accents of wonder, "but to us the discovery we have made completes our misery. No one would believe it at first; and even now Elizabeth will not be convinced, notwithstanding all the evidence. Indeed, who would credit that Justine Moritz, who was so amiable, and fond of all

the family, could suddenly become capable of so frightful, so appalling a crime?"

"Justine Moritz! Poor, poor girl, is she the accused? But it is wrongfully; every one knows that; no one believes it, surely, Ernest?"

"No one did at first; but several circumstances came out, that have almost forced conviction upon us; and her own behaviour has been so confused, as to add to the evidence of facts a weight that, I fear, leaves no hope for doubt. But she will be tried to-day, and you will then hear all."

He related that, the morning on which the murder of poor William had been discovered, Justine had been taken ill, and confined to her bed for several days. During this interval, one of the servants, happening to examine the apparel she had worn on the night of the murder, had discovered in her pocket the picture of my mother, which had been judged to be the temptation of the murderer. The servant instantly showed it to one of the others, who, without saying a word to any of the family, went to a magistrate; and, upon their deposition, Justine was apprehended. On being charged with the fact, the poor girl confirmed the suspicion in a great measure by her extreme confusion of manner.

This was a strange tale, but it did not shake my faith; and I replied earnestly, "You are all mistaken; I know the murderer. Justine, poor, good Justine, is innocent."

At that instant my father entered. I saw unhappiness deeply impressed on his countenance, but he endeavoured to welcome me cheerfully; and, after we had exchanged our mournful greeting, would have introduced some other topic than that of our disaster, had not Ernest exclaimed, "Good God, papa! Victor says that he knows who was the murderer of poor William."

"We do also, unfortunately," replied my father; "for indeed I had rather have been for ever ignorant than have discovered so much depravity and ingratitude in one I valued so highly."

"My dear father, you are mistaken; Justine is innocent."

"If she is, God forbid that she should suffer as guilty:

She is to be tried to-day, and I hope, I sincerely hope, that she will be acquitted."

This speech calmed me. I was firmly convinced in my own mind that Justine, and indeed every human being, was guiltless of this murder. I had no fear, therefore, that any circumstantial evidence could be brought forward strong enough to convict her. My tale was not one to announce publicly; its astounding horror would be looked upon as madness by the vulgar. Did any one indeed exist, except I, the creator, who would believe, unless his senses convinced him, in the existence of the living monument of presumption and rash ignorance which I had let loose upon the world?

We were soon joined by Elizabeth. Time had altered her since I last beheld her; it had endowed her with loveliness surpassing the beauty of her childish years. There was the same candour, the same vivacity, but it was allied to an expression more full of sensibility and intellect. She welcomed me with the greatest affection. "Your arrival, my dear cousin," said she, "fills me with hope. You perhaps will find some means to justify my poor guiltless Justine. Alas! who is safe, if she be convicted of crime? I rely on her innocence as certainly as I do upon my own. Our misfortune is doubly hard to us; we have not only lost that lovely darling boy, but this poor girl, whom I sincerely love, is to be torn away by even a worse fate. If she is condemned, I never shall know joy more. But she will not, I am sure she will not; and then I shall be happy again, even after the sad death of my little William."

"She is innocent, my Elizabeth," said I, "and that shall be proved; fear nothing, but let your spirits be cheered by the assurance of her acquittal."

"How kind and generous you are! every one else believes in her guilt, and that made me wretched, for I knew that it was impossible: and to see every one else prejudiced in so deadly a manner rendered me hopeless and despairing." She wept.

"Dearest niece," said my father, "dry your tears. If she is, as you believe, innocent, rely on the justice of our

laws, and the activity with which I shall prevent the slightest shadow of partiality."

CHAPTER VIII.

WE passed a few sad hours, until eleven o'clock, when the trial was to commence. My father and the rest of the family being obliged to attend as witnesses, I accompanied them to the court. During the whole of this wretched mockery of justice I suffered living torture. It was to be decided, whether the result of my curiosity and lawless devices would cause the death of two of my fellow-beings: one a smiling babe, full of innocence and joy; the other far more dreadfully murdered, with every aggravation of infamy that could make the murder memorable in horror. Justine also was a girl of merit, and possessed qualities which promised to render her life happy: now all was to be obliterated in an ignominious grave; and I the cause! A thousand times rather would I have confessed myself guilty of the crime ascribed to Justine; but I was absent when it was committed, and such a declaration would have been considered as the ravings of a madman, and would not have exculpated her who suffered through me.

The appearance of Justine was calm. She was dressed in mourning; and her countenance, always engaging, was rendered, by the solemnity of her feelings, exquisitely beautiful. Yet she appeared confident in innocence, and did not tremble, although gazed on and execrated by thousands; for all the kindness which her beauty might otherwise have excited, was obliterated in the minds of the spectators by the imagination of the enormity she was supposed to have committed. She was tranquil, yet her tranquillity was evidently constrained; and as her confusion had before been adduced as a proof of her guilt, she worked up her mind to an appearance of courage. When she entered the court, she threw her eyes round it, and quickly discovered where we were seated. A tear

seemed to dim her eye when she saw us ; but she quickly recovered herself, and a look of sorrowful affection seemed to attest her utter guiltlessness.

The trial began ; and, after the advocate against her had stated the charge, several witnesses were called. Several strange facts combined against her, which might have staggered any one who had not such proof of her innocence as I had. She had been out the whole of the night on which the murder had been committed, and towards morning had been perceived by a market-woman not far from the spot where the body of the murdered child had been afterwards found. The woman asked her what she did there ; but she looked very strangely, and only returned a confused and unintelligible answer. She returned to the house about eight o'clock ; and, when one enquired where she had passed the night, she replied that she had been looking for the child, and demanded earnestly if any thing had been heard concerning him. When shown the body, she fell into violent hysterics, and kept her bed for several days. The picture was then produced, which the servant had found in her pocket ; and when Elizabeth, in a faltering voice, proved that it was the same which, an hour before the child had been missed, she had placed round his neck, a murmur of horror and indignation filled the court.

Justine was called on for her defence. As the trial had proceeded, her countenance had altered. Surprise, horror, and misery were strongly expressed. Sometimes she struggled with her tears ; but, when she was desired to plead, she collected her powers, and spoke, in an audible, although variable voice.

“ God knows,” she said, “ how entirely I am innocent. But I do not pretend that my protestations should acquit me : I rest my innocence on a plain and simple explanation of the facts which have been adduced against me ; and I hope the character I have always borne will incline my judges to a favourable interpretation, where any circumstance appears doubtful or suspicious.”

She then related that, by the permission of Elizabeth, she had passed the evening of the night on which the

murder had been committed at the house of an aunt at Chêne, a village situated at about a league from Geneva. On her return, at about nine o'clock, she met a man, who asked her if she had seen any thing of the child who was lost. She was alarmed by this account, and passed several hours in looking for him, when the gates of Geneva were shut, and she was forced to remain several hours of the night in a barn belonging to a cottage, being unwilling to call up the inhabitants, to whom she was well known. Most of the night she spent here watching ; towards morning she believed that she slept for a few minutes ; some steps disturbed her, and she awoke. It was dawn, and she quitted her asylum, that she might again endeavour to find my brother. If she had gone near the spot where his body lay, it was without her knowledge. That she had been bewildered when questioned by the market-woman was not surprising, since she had passed a sleepless night, and the fate of poor William was yet uncertain. Concerning the picture she could give no account.

“ I know,” continued the unhappy victim, “ how heavily and fatally this one circumstance weighs against me, but I have no power of explaining it ; and when I have expressed my utter ignorance, I am only left to conjecture concerning the probabilities by which it might have been placed in my pocket. But here also I am checked. I believe that I have no enemy on earth, and none surely would have been so wicked as to destroy me wantonly. Did the murderer place it there ? I know of no opportunity afforded him for so doing ; or, if I had, why should he have stolen the jewel, to part with it again so soon ?

“ I commit my cause to the justice of my judges, yet I see no room for hope. I beg permission to have a few witnesses examined concerning my character ; and if their testimony shall not overweigh my supposed guilt, I must be condemned, although I would pledge my salvation on my innocence.”

Several witnesses were called, who had known her for many years, and they spoke well of her ; but fear, and hatred of the crime of which they supposed her guilty, rendered them timorous, and unwilling to come forward.

Elizabeth saw even this last resource, her excellent dispositions and irreproachable conduct, about to fail the accused, when, although violently agitated, she desired permission to address the court.

“I am,” said she, “the cousin of the unhappy child who was murdered, or rather his sister, for I was educated by, and have lived with his parents ever since and even long before, his birth. It may therefore be judged indecent in me to come forward on this occasion ; but when I see a fellow-creature about to perish through the cowardice of her pretended friends, I wish to be allowed to speak, that I may say what I know of her character. I am well acquainted with the accused. I have lived in the same house with her, at one time for five, and at another for nearly two years. During all that period she appeared to me the most amiable and benevolent of human creatures. She nursed Madame Frankenstein, my aunt, in her last illness, with the greatest affection and care ; and afterwards attended her own mother during a tedious illness, in a manner that excited the admiration of all who knew her ; after which she again lived in my uncle’s house, where she was beloved by all the family. She was warmly attached to the child who is now dead, and acted towards him like a most affectionate mother. For my own part, I do not hesitate to say, that, notwithstanding all the evidence produced against her, I believe and rely on her perfect innocence. She had no temptation for such an action : as to the bauble on which the chief proof rests, if she had earnestly desired it, I should have willingly given it to her ; so much do I esteem and value her.”

A murmur of approbation followed Elizabeth’s simple and powerful appeal ; but it was excited by her generous interference, and not in favour of poor Justine, on whom the public indignation was turned with renewed violence, charging her with the blackest ingratitude. She herself wept as Elizabeth spoke, but she did not answer. My own agitation and anguish was extreme during the whole trial. I believed in her innocence ; I knew it. Could the dæmon, who had (I did not for a minute doubt) murdered my brother, also in his hellish sport have betrayed the innocent

to death and ignominy? I could not sustain the horror of my situation ; and when I perceived that the popular voice, and the countenances of the judges, had already condemned my unhappy victim, I rushed out of the court in agony. The tortures of the accused did not equal mine ; she was sustained by innocence, but the fangs of remorse tore my bosom, and would not forego their hold.

I passed a night of unmingled wretchedness. In the morning I went to the court ; my lips and throat were parched. I dared not ask the fatal question ; but I was known, and the officer guessed the cause of my visit. The ballots had been thrown ; they were all black, and Justine was condemned.

I cannot pretend to describe what I then felt. I had before experienced sensations of horror ; and I have endeavoured to bestow upon them adequate expressions, but words cannot convey an idea of the heart-sickening despair that I then endured. The person to whom I addressed myself added, that Justine had already confessed her guilt. "That evidence," he observed, "was hardly required in so glaring a case, but I am glad of it ; and, indeed, none of our judges like to condemn a criminal upon circumstantial evidence, be it ever so decisive."

This was strange and unexpected intelligence ; what could it mean? Had my eyes deceived me? and was I really as mad as the whole world would believe me to be, if I disclosed the object of my suspicions? I hastened to return home, and Elizabeth eagerly demanded the result.

"My cousin," replied I, "it is decided as you may have expected ; all judges had rather that ten innocent should suffer, than that one guilty should escape. But she has confessed."

This was a dire blow to poor Elizabeth, who had relied with firmness upon Justine's innocence. "Alas !" said she, "how shall I ever again believe in human goodness? Justine, whom I loved and esteemed as my sister, how could she put on those smiles of innocence only to betray? her mild eyes seemed incapable of any severity or guile, and yet she has committed a murder."

Soon after we heard that the poor victim had expressed

a desire to see my cousin. My father wished her not to go ; but said, that he left it to her own judgment and feelings to decide. " Yes," said Elizabeth, " I will go, although she is guilty ; and you, Victor, shall accompany me : I cannot go alone." The idea of this visit was torture to me, yet I could not refuse.

We entered the gloomy prison-chamber, and beheld Justine sitting on some straw at the farther end ; her hands were manacled, and her head rested on her knees. She rose on seeing us enter ; and when we were left alone with her, she threw herself at the feet of Elizabeth, weeping bitterly. My cousin wept also.

" Oh, Justine !" said she, " why did you rob me of my last consolation ? I relied on your innocence ; and although I was then very wretched, I was not so miserable as I am now."

" And do you also believe that I am so very, very wicked ? Do you also join with my enemies to crush me, to condemn me as a murderer ?" Her voice was suffocated with sobs.

" Rise, my poor girl," said Elizabeth, " why do you kneel, if you are innocent ? I am not one of your enemies ; I believed you guiltless, notwithstanding every evidence, until I heard that you had yourself declared your guilt. That report, you say, is false ; and be assured, dear Justine, that nothing can shake my confidence in you for a moment, but your own confession."

" I did confess ; but I confessed a lie. I confessed, that I might obtain absolution ; but now that falsehood lies heavier at my heart than all my other sins. The God of heaven forgive me ! Ever since I was condemned, my confessor has besieged me ; he threatened and menaced, until I almost began to think that I was the monster that he said I was. He threatened excommunication and hell fire in my last moments, if I continued obdurate. Dear lady, I had none to support me ; all looked on me as a wretch doomed to ignominy and perdition. What could I do ? In an evil hour I subscribed to a lie ; and now only am I truly miserable."

She paused, weeping, and then continued — " I thought

with horror, my sweet lady, that you should believe your Justine, whom your blessed aunt had so highly honoured, and whom you loved, was a creature capable of a crime which none but the devil himself could have perpetrated. Dear William ! dearest blessed child ! I soon shall see you again in heaven, where we shall all be happy ; and that consoles me, going as I am to suffer ignominy and death."

" Oh, Justine ! forgive me for having for one moment distrusted you. Why did you confess ? But do not mourn, dear girl. Do not fear. I will proclaim, I will prove your innocence. I will melt the stony hearts of your enemies by my tears and prayers. You shall not die ! — You, my play-fellow, my companion, my sister, perish on the scaffold ! No ! no ! I never could survive so horrible a misfortune."

Justine shook her head mournfully. " I do not fear to die," she said ; " that pang is past. God raises my weakness, and gives me courage to endure the worst. I leave a sad and bitter world ; and if you remember me, and think of me as of one unjustly condemned, I am resigned to the fate awaiting me. Learn from me, dear lady, to submit in patience to the will of Heaven !"

During this conversation I had retired to a corner of the prison-room, where I could conceal the horrid anguish that possessed me. Despair ! Who dared talk of that ? The poor victim, who on the morrow was to pass the awful boundary between life and death, felt not as I did, such deep and bitter agony. I gnashed my teeth, and ground them together, uttering a groan that came from my inmost soul. Justine started. When she saw who it was, she approached me, and said, " Dear sir, you are very kind to visit me ; you, I hope, do not believe that I am guilty ?"

I could not answer. " No, Justine," said Elizabeth ; " he is more convinced of your innocence than I was ; for even when he heard that you had confessed, he did not credit it."

" I truly thank him. In these last moments I feel the sincerest gratitude towards those who think of me with kindness. How sweet is the affection of others to such a

wretch as I am ! It removes more than half my misfortune ; and I feel as if I could die in peace, now that my innocence is acknowledged by you, dear lady, and your cousin."

Thus the poor sufferer tried to comfort others and herself. She indeed gained the resignation she desired. But I, the true murderer, felt the never-dying worm alive in my bosom, which allowed of no hope or consolation. Elizabeth also wept, and was unhappy ; but her's also was the misery of innocence, which, like a cloud that passes over the fair moon, for a while hides but cannot tarnish its brightness. Anguish and despair had penetrated into the core of my heart ; I bore a hell within me, which nothing could extinguish. We stayed several hours with Justine ; and it was with great difficulty that Elizabeth could tear herself away. " I wish," cried she, " that I were to die with you ; I cannot live in this world of misery."

Justine assumed an air of cheerfulness, while she with difficulty repressed her bitter tears. She embraced Elizabeth, and said, in a voice of half-suppressed emotion, " Farewell, sweet lady, dearest Elizabeth, my beloved and only friend ; may Heaven, in its bounty, bless and preserve you ; may this be the last misfortune that you will ever suffer ! Live, and be happy, and make others so."

And on the morrow Justine died. Elizabeth's heart-rending eloquence failed to move the judges from their settled conviction in the criminality of the saintly sufferer. My passionate and indignant appeals were lost upon them. And when I received their cold answers, and heard the harsh unfeeling reasoning of these men, my purposed avowal died away on my lips. Thus I might proclaim myself a madman, but not revoke the sentence passed upon my wretched victim. She perished on the scaffold as a murderess !

From the tortures of my own heart, I turned to contemplate the deep and voiceless grief of my Elizabeth. This also was my doing ! And my father's woe, and the desolation of that late so smiling home—all was the work of my thrice-accursed hands ! Ye weep, unhappy ones ; but these are not your last tears ! Again shall you raise

the funeral wail, and the sound of your lamentations shall again and again be heard ! Frankenstein, your son, your kinsman, your early, much-loved friend ; he who would spend each vital drop of blood for your sakes — who has no thought nor sense of joy, except as it is mirrored also in your dear countenances — who would fill the air with blessings, and spend his life in serving you — he bids you weep — to shed countless tears ; happy beyond his hopes, if thus inexorable fate be satisfied, and if the destruction pause before the peace of the grave have succeeded to your sad torments !

Thus spoke my prophetic soul, as, torn by remorse, horror, and despair, I beheld those I loved spend vain sorrow upon the graves of William and Justine, the first hapless victims to my unhallowed arts.

CHAPTER IX.

NOTHING is more painful to the human mind, than, after the feelings have been worked up by a quick succession of events, the dead calmness of inaction and certainty which follows, and deprives the soul both of hope and fear. Justine died ; she rested ; and I was alive. The blood flowed freely in my veins, but a weight of despair and remorse pressed on my heart, which nothing could remove. Sleep fled from my eyes ; I wandered like an evil spirit, for I had committed deeds of mischief beyond description horrible, and more, much more (I persuaded myself), was yet behind. Yet my heart overflowed with kindness, and the love of virtue. I had begun life with benevolent intentions, and thirsted for the moment when I should put them in practice, and make myself useful to my fellow-beings. Now all was blasted : instead of that serenity of conscience, which allowed me to look back upon the past with self-satisfaction, and from thence to gather promise of new hopes, I was seized by remorse and the sense of guilt, which hurried me away to a hell of intense tortures, such as no language can describe.

This state of mind preyed upon my health, which had perhaps never entirely recovered from the first shock it had sustained. I shunned the face of man ; all sound of joy or complacency was torture to me ; solitude was my only consolation—deep, dark, deathlike solitude.

My father observed with pain the alteration perceptible in my disposition and habits, and endeavoured by arguments deduced from the feelings of his serene conscience and guiltless life, to inspire me with fortitude, and awaken in me the courage to dispel the dark cloud which brooded over me. “Do you think, Victor,” said he, “that I do not suffer also? No one could love a child more than I loved your brother ;” (tears came into his eyes as he spoke ;) “but is it not a duty to the survivors, that we should refrain from augmenting their unhappiness by an appearance of immoderate grief? It is also a duty owed to yourself ; for excessive sorrow prevents improvement or enjoyment, or even the discharge of daily usefulness, without which no man is fit for society.”

This advice, although good, was totally inapplicable to my case ; I should have been the first to hide my grief, and console my friends, if remorse had not mingled its bitterness, and terror its alarm with my other sensations. Now I could only answer my father with a look of despair, and endeavour to hide myself from his view.

About this time we retired to our house at Belrive. This change was particularly agreeable to me. The shutting of the gates regularly at ten o'clock, and the impossibility of remaining on the lake after that hour, had rendered our residence within the walls of Geneva very irksome to me. I was now free. Often, after the rest of the family had retired for the night, I took the boat, and passed many hours upon the water. Sometimes, with my sails set, I was carried by the wind ; and sometimes, after rowing into the middle of the lake, I left the boat to pursue its own course, and gave way to my own miserable reflections. I was often tempted, when all was at peace around me, and I the only unquiet thing that wandered restless in a scene so beautiful and heavenly—if I except some bat, or the frogs, whose harsh and interrupted croaking was heard only when I ap-

proached the shore—often, I say, I was tempted to plunge into the silent lake, that the waters might close over me and my calamities for ever. But I was restrained, when I thought of the heroic and suffering Elizabeth, whom I tenderly loved, and whose existence was bound up in mine. I thought also of my father, and surviving brother : should I by my base desertion leave them exposed and unprotected to the malice of the fiend whom I had let loose among them ?

At these moments I wept bitterly, and wished that peace would revisit my mind only that I might afford them consolation and happiness. But that could not be. Remorse extinguished every hope. I had been the author of unalterable evils ; and I lived in daily fear, lest the monster whom I had created should perpetrate some new wickedness. I had an obscure feeling that all was not over, and that he would still commit some signal crime, which by its enormity should almost efface the recollection of the past. There was always scope for fear, so long as any thing I loved remained behind. My abhorrence of this fiend cannot be conceived. When I thought of him, I gnashed my teeth, my eyes became inflamed, and I ardently wished to extinguish that life which I had so thoughtlessly bestowed. When I reflected on his crimes and malice, my hatred and revenge burst all bounds of moderation. I would have made a pilgrimage to the highest peak of the Andes, could I, when there, have precipitated him to their base. I wished to see him again, that I might wreak the utmost extent of abhorrence on his head, and avenge the deaths of William and Justine.

Our house was the house of mourning. My father's health was deeply shaken by the horror of the recent events. Elizabeth was sad and desponding ; she no longer took delight in her ordinary occupations ; all pleasure seemed to her sacrilege toward the dead ; eternal woe and tears she then thought was the just tribute she should pay to innocence so blasted and destroyed. She was no longer that happy creature, who in earlier youth wandered with me on the banks of the lake, and talked with ecstasy of our future prospects. The first of those sorrows which are

sent to wean us from the earth, had visited her, and its dimming influence quenched her dearest smiles.

“When I reflect, my dear cousin,” said she, “on the miserable death of Justine Moritz, I no longer see the world and its works as they before appeared to me. Before, I looked upon the accounts of vice and injustice, that I read in books or heard from others, as tales of ancient days, or imaginary evils; at least they were remote, and more familiar to reason than to the imagination; but now misery has come home, and men appear to me as monsters thirsting for each other’s blood. Yet I am certainly unjust. Every body believed that poor girl to be guilty; and if she could have committed the crime for which she suffered, assuredly she would have been the most depraved of human creatures. For the sake of a few jewels, to have murdered the son of her benefactor and friend, a child whom she had nursed from its birth, and appeared to love as if it had been her own! I could not consent to the death of any human being; but certainly I should have thought such a creature unfit to remain in the society of men. But she was innocent. I know, I feel she was innocent; you are of the same opinion, and that confirms me. Alas! Victor, when falsehood can look so like the truth, who can assure themselves of certain happiness? I feel as if I were walking on the edge of a precipice, towards which thousands are crowding, and endeavouring to plunge me into the abyss. William and Justine were assassinated, and the murderer escapes; he walks about the world free, and perhaps respected. But even if I were condemned to suffer on the scaffold for the same crimes, I would not change places with such a wretch.”

I listened to this discourse with the extremest agony. I, not in deed, but in effect, was the true murderer. Elizabeth read my anguish in my countenance, and kindly taking my hand, said, “My dearest friend, you must calm yourself. These events have affected me, God knows how deeply; but I am not so wretched as you are. There is an expression of despair, and sometimes of revenge, in your countenance, that makes me tremble. Dear Victor, banish these dark passions. Remember the friends around you,

who centre all their hopes in you. Have we lost the power of rendering you happy? Ah! while we love—while we are true to each other, here in this land of peace and beauty, your native country, we may reap every tranquil blessing,—what can disturb our peace?”

And could not such words from her whom I fondly prized before every other gift of fortune, suffice to chase away the fiend that lurked in my heart? Even as she spoke I drew near to her, as if in terror; lest at that very moment the destroyer had been near to rob me of her.

Thus not the tenderness of friendship, nor the beauty of earth, nor of heaven, could redeem my soul from woe: the very accents of love were ineffectual. I was encompassed by a cloud which no beneficial influence could penetrate. The wounded deer dragging its fainting limbs to some untrodden brake, there to gaze upon the arrow which had pierced it, and to die—was but a type of me.

Sometimes I could cope with the sullen despair that overwhelmed me: but sometimes the whirlwind passions of my soul drove me to seek, by bodily exercise and by change of place, some relief from my intolerable sensations. It was during an access of this kind that I suddenly left my home, and bending my steps towards the near Alpine valleys, sought in the magnificence, the eternity of such scenes, to forget myself and my ephemeral, because human, sorrows. My wanderings were directed towards the valley of Chamounix. I had visited it frequently during my boyhood. Six years had passed since then: *I* was a wreck—but nought had changed in those savage and enduring scenes.

I performed the first part of my journey on horseback. I afterwards hired a mule, as the more sure-footed, and least liable to receive injury on these rugged roads. The weather was fine: it was about the middle of the month of August, nearly two months after the death of Justine; that miserable epoch from which I dated all my woe. The weight upon my spirit was sensibly lightened as I plunged yet deeper in the ravine of Arve. The immense mountains and precipices that overhung me on every side—the sound of the river raging among the rocks, and the dashing of the

waterfalls around, spoke of a power mighty as Omnipotence—and I ceased to fear, or to bend before any being less almighty than that which had created and ruled the elements, here displayed in their most terrific guise. Still, as I ascended higher, the valley assumed a more magnificent and astonishing character. Ruined castles hanging on the precipices of piny mountains; the impetuous Arve, and cottages every here and there peeping forth from among the trees, formed a scene of singular beauty. But it was augmented and rendered sublime by the mighty Alps, whose white and shining pyramids and domes towered above all, as belonging to another earth, the habitations of another race of beings.

I passed the bridge of Pélissier, where the ravine, which the river forms, opened before me, and I began to ascend the mountain that overhangs it. Soon after I entered the valley of Chamounix. This valley is more wonderful and sublime, but not so beautiful and picturesque, as that of Servox, through which I had just passed. The high and snowy mountains were its immediate boundaries; but I saw no more ruined castles and fertile fields. Immense glaciers approached the road; I heard the rumbling thunder of the falling avalanche, and marked the smoke of its passage. Mont Blanc, the supreme and magnificent Mont Blanc, raised itself from the surrounding *aiguilles*, and its tremendous *dôme* overlooked the valley.

A tingling long-lost sense of pleasure often came across me during this journey. Some turn in the road, some new object suddenly perceived and recognised, reminded me of days gone by, and were associated with the light-hearted gaiety of boyhood. The very winds whispered in soothing accents, and maternal nature bade me weep no more. Then again the kindly influence ceased to act—I found myself fettered again to grief, and indulging in all the misery of reflection. Then I spurred on my animal, striving so to forget the world, my fears, and, more than all, myself—or, in a more desperate fashion, I alighted, and threw myself on the grass, weighed down by horror and despair.

At length I arrived at the village of Chamounix. Exhaustion succeeded to the extreme fatigue both of body and

of mind which I had endured. For a short space of time I remained at the window, watching the pallid lightnings that played above Mont Blanc, and listening to the rushing of the Arve, which pursued its noisy way beneath. The same lulling sounds acted as a lullaby to my too keen sensations : when I placed my head upon my pillow, sleep crept over me ; I felt it as it came, and blest the giver of oblivion. ;

CHAPTER X.

I SPENT the following day roaming through the valley. I stood beside the sources of the Arveiron, which take their rise in a glacier, that with slow pace is advancing down from the summit of the hills, to barricade the valley. The abrupt sides of vast mountains were before me ; the icy wall of the glacier overhung me ; a few shattered pines were scattered around ; and the solemn silence of this glorious presence-chamber of imperial Nature was broken only by the brawling waves, or the fall of some vast fragment, the thunder sound of the avalanche, or the cracking, reverberated along the mountains of the accumulated ice, which, through the silent working of immutable laws, was ever and anon rent and torn, as if it had been but a plaything in their hands. These sublime and magnificent scenes afforded me the greatest consolation that I was capable of receiving. They elevated me from all littleness of feeling ; and although they did not remove my grief, they subdued and tranquilised it. In some degree, also, they diverted my mind from the thoughts over which it had brooded for the last month. I retired to rest at night ; my slumbers, as it were, waited on and ministered to by the assemblance of grand shapes which I had contemplated during the day. They congregated round me ; the unstained snowy mountain-top, the glittering pinnacle, the pine woods, and ragged bare ravine ; the eagle, soaring amidst the clouds — they all gathered round me, and bade me be at peace.

Where had they fled when the next morning I awoke ?

All of soul-inspiring fled with sleep, and dark melancholy clouded every thought. The rain was pouring in torrents, and thick mists hid the summits of the mountains, so that I even saw not the faces of those mighty friends. Still I would penetrate their misty veil, and seek them in their cloudy retreats. What were rain and storm to me? My mule was brought to the door, and I resolved to ascend to the summit of Montanvert. I remembered the effect that the view of the tremendous and ever-moving glacier had produced upon my mind when I first saw it. It had then filled me with a sublime ecstasy, that gave wings to the soul, and allowed it to soar from the obscure world to light and joy. The sight of the awful and majestic in nature had indeed always the effect of solemnising my mind, and causing me to forget the passing cares of life. I determined to go without a guide, for I was well acquainted with the path, and the presence of another would destroy the solitary grandeur of the scene.

The ascent is precipitous, but the path is cut into continual and short windings, which enable you to surmount the perpendicularity of the mountain. It is a scene terrifically desolate. In a thousand spots the traces of the winter avalanche may be perceived, where trees lie broken and strewed on the ground; some entirely destroyed, others bent, leaning upon the jutting rocks of the mountain, or transversely upon other trees. The path, as you ascend higher, is intersected by ravines of snow, down which stones continually roll from above; one of them is particularly dangerous, as the slightest sound, such as even speaking in a loud voice, produces a concussion of air sufficient to draw destruction upon the head of the speaker. The pines are not tall or luxuriant, but they are sombre, and add an air of severity to the scene. I looked on the valley beneath; vast mists were rising from the rivers which ran through it, and curling in thick wreaths around the opposite mountains, whose summits were hid in the uniform clouds, while rain poured from the dark sky, and added to the melancholy impression I received from the objects around me. Alas! why does man boast of sensibilities superior to those apparent in the brute; it only

renders them more necessary beings. If our impulses were confined to hunger, thirst, and desire, we might be nearly free ; but now we are moved by every wind that blows, and a chance word or scene that that word may convey to us.

We rest ; a dream has power to poison sleep.
 We rise ; one wand'ring thought pollutes the day.
 We feel, conceive, or reason ; laugh or weep,
 Embrace fond woe, or cast our cares away ;
 It is the same : for, be it joy or sorrow,
 The path of its departure still is free.
 Man's yesterday may ne'er be like his morrow ;
 Nought may endure but mutability !

It was nearly noon when I arrived at the top of the ascent. For some time I sat upon the rock that overlooks the sea of ice. A mist covered both that and the surrounding mountains. Presently a breeze dissipated the cloud, and I descended upon the glacier. The surface is very uneven, rising like the waves of a troubled sea, descending low, and interspersed by rifts that sink deep. The field of ice is almost a league in width, but I spent nearly two hours in crossing it. The opposite mountain is a bare perpendicular rock. From the side where I now stood Montanvert was exactly opposite, at the distance of a league ; and above it rose Mont Blanc, in awful majesty. I remained in a recess of the rock, gazing on this wonderful and stupendous scene. The sea, or rather the vast river of ice, wound among its dependent mountains, whose aerial summits hung over its recesses. Their icy and glittering peaks shone in the sunlight over the clouds. My heart, which was before sorrowful, now swelled with something like joy ; I exclaimed—“ Wandering spirits, if indeed ye wander, and do not rest in your narrow beds, allow me this faint happiness, or take me, as your companion, away from the joys of life.”

As I said this, I suddenly beheld the figure of a man, at some distance, advancing towards me with superhuman speed. He bounded over the crevices in the ice, among which I had walked with caution ; his stature, also, as he approached, seemed to exceed that of man. I was troubled : a mist came over my eyes, and I felt a faintness seize me ; but I was quickly restored by the cold gale of the mountains. I perceived, as the shape came nearer (sight tremendous and

abhorred!) that it was the wretch whom I had created. I trembled with rage and horror, resolving to wait his approach, and then close with him in mortal combat. He approached; his countenance bespoke bitter anguish, combined with disdain and malignity, while its unearthly ugliness rendered it almost too horrible for human eyes. But I scarcely observed this; rage and hatred had at first deprived me of utterance, and I recovered only to overwhelm him with words expressive of furious detestation and contempt.

“Devil,” I exclaimed, “do you dare approach me? and do not you fear the fierce vengeance of my arm wreaked on your miserable head? Begone, vile insect! or rather, stay, that I may trample you to dust! and, oh! that I could, with the extinction of your miserable existence, restore those victims whom you have so diabolically murdered!”

“I expected this reception,” said the dæmon. “All men hate the wretched; how, then, must I be hated, who am miserable beyond all living things! Yet you, my creator, detest and spurn me, thy creature, to whom thou art bound by ties only dissoluble by the annihilation of one of us. You purpose to kill me. How dare you sport thus with life? Do your duty towards me, and I will do mine towards you and the rest of mankind. If you will comply with my conditions, I will leave them and you at peace; but if you refuse, I will glut the maw of death, until it be satiated with the blood of your remaining friends.”

“Abhorred monster! fiend that thou art! the tortures of hell are too mild a vengeance for thy crimes. Wretched devil! you reproach me with your creation; come on, then, that I may extinguish the spark which I so negligently bestowed.”

My rage was without bounds; I sprang on him, impelled by all the feelings which can arm one being against the existence of another.

He easily eluded me, and said—

“Be calm! I entreat you to hear me, before you give vent to your hatred on my devoted head. Have I not suffered enough, that you seek to increase my misery? Life, although it may only be an accumulation of anguish, is dear

to me, and I will defend it. Remember, thou hast made me more powerful than thyself; my height is superior to thine; my joints more supple. But I will not be tempted to set myself in opposition to thee. I am thy creature, and I will be even mild and docile to my natural lord and king, if thou wilt also perform thy part, the which thou owest me. Oh, Frankenstein, be not equitable to every other, and trample upon me alone, to whom thy justice, and even thy clemency and affection, is most due. Remember, that I am thy creature; I ought to be thy Adam; but I am rather the fallen angel, whom thou drivest from joy for no misdeed. Every where I see bliss, from which I alone am irrevocably excluded. I was benevolent and good; misery made me a fiend. Make me happy, and I shall again be virtuous."

"Begone! I will not hear you. There can be no community between you and me; we are enemies. Begone, or let us try our strength in a fight, in which one must fall."

"How can I move thee? Will no entreaties cause thee to turn a favourable eye upon thy creature, who implores thy goodness and compassion? Believe me, Frankenstein: I was benevolent; my soul glowed with love and humanity: but am I not alone, miserably alone? You, my creator, abhor me; what hope can I gather from your fellow-creatures, who owe me nothing? they spurn and hate me. The desert mountains and dreary glaciers are my refuge. I have wandered here many days; the caves of ice, which I only do not fear, are a dwelling to me, and the only one which man does not grudge. These bleak skies I hail, for they are kinder to me than your fellow-beings. If the multitude of mankind knew of my existence, they would do as you do, and arm themselves for my destruction. Shall I not then hate them who abhor me? I will keep no terms with my enemies. I am miserable, and they shall share my wretchedness. Yet it is in your power to recompense me, and deliver them from an evil which it only remains for you to make so great, that not only you and your family, but thousands of others, shall be swallowed up in the whirlwinds of its rage. Let your compassion be moved, and do

not disdain me. Listen to my tale: when you have heard that, abandon or commiserate me, as you shall judge that I deserve. But hear me. The guilty are allowed, by human laws, bloody as they are, to speak in their own defence before they are condemned. Listen to me, Frankenstein. You accuse me of murder; and yet you would, with a satisfied conscience, destroy your own creature. Oh, praise the eternal justice of man! Yet I ask you not to spare me: listen to me; and then, if you can, and if you will, destroy the work of your hands."

"Why do you call to my remembrance," I rejoined, "circumstances, of which I shudder to reflect, that I have been the miserable origin and author? Cursed be the day, abhorred devil, in which you first saw light! Cursed (although I curse myself) be the hands that formed you! You have made me wretched beyond expression. You have left me no power to consider whether I am just to you, or not. Begone! relieve me from the sight of your detested form."

"Thus I relieve thee, my creator," he said, and placed his hated hands before my eyes, which I flung from me with violence; "thus I take from thee a sight which you abhor. Still thou canst listen to me, and grant me thy compassion. By the virtues that I once possessed, I demand this from you. Hear my tale; it is long and strange, and the temperature of this place is not fitting to your fine sensations; come to the hut upon the mountain. The sun is yet high in the heavens; before it descends to hide itself behind yon snowy precipices, and illuminate another world, you will have heard my story, and can decide. On you it rests, whether I quit for ever the neighbourhood of man, and lead a harmless life, or become the scourge of your fellow-creatures, and the author of your own speedy ruin."

As he said this, he led the way across the ice: I followed. My heart was full, and I did not answer him; but, as I proceeded, I weighed the various arguments that he had used, and determined at least to listen to his tale. I was partly urged by curiosity, and compassion confirmed my resolution. I had hitherto supposed him to be the murderer of my brother, and I eagerly sought a confirm-

ation or denial of this opinion. For the first time, also, I felt what the duties of a creator towards his creature were, and that I ought to render him happy before I complained of his wickedness. These motives urged me to comply with his demand. We crossed the ice, therefore, and ascended the opposite rock. The air was cold, and the rain again began to descend : we entered the hut, the fiend with an air of exultation, I with a heavy heart, and depressed spirits. But I consented to listen ; and, seating myself by the fire which my odious companion had lighted, he thus began his tale.

CHAPTER XI.

“ It is with considerable difficulty that I remember the original era of my being : all the events of that period appear confused and indistinct. A strange multiplicity of sensations seized me, and I saw, felt, heard, and smelt, at the same time ; and it was, indeed, a long time before I learned to distinguish between the operations of my various senses. By degrees, I remember, a stronger light pressed upon my nerves, so that I was obliged to shut my eyes. Darkness then came over me, and troubled me ; but hardly had I felt this, when, by opening my eyes, as I now suppose, the light poured in upon me again. I walked, and, I believe, descended ; but I presently found a great alteration in my sensations. Before, dark and opaque bodies had surrounded me, impervious to my touch or sight ; but I now found that I could wander on at liberty, with no obstacles which I could not either surmount or avoid. The light became more and more oppressive to me ; and, the heat wearying me as I walked, I sought a place where I could receive shade. This was the forest near Ingolstadt ; and here I lay by the side of a brook resting from my fatigue, until I felt tormented by hunger and thirst. This roused me from my nearly dormant state, and I ate some berries which I found hanging on the trees, or lying on the

ground. I slaked my thirst at the brook ; and then lying down, was overcome by sleep.

“ It was dark when I awoke ; I felt cold also, and half-frightened, as it were instinctively, finding myself so desolate. Before I had quitted your apartment, on a sensation of cold, I had covered myself with some clothes ; but these were insufficient to secure me from the dews of night. I was a poor, helpless, miserable wretch ; I knew, and could distinguish, nothing ; but feeling pain invade me on all sides, I sat down and wept.

“ Soon a gentle light stole over the heavens, and gave me a sensation of pleasure. I started up, and beheld a radiant form rise from among the trees.* I gazed with a kind of wonder. It moved slowly, but it enlightened my path ; and I again went out in search of berries. I was still cold, when under one of the trees I found a huge cloak, with which I covered myself, and sat down upon the ground. No distinct ideas occupied my mind ; all was confused. I felt light, and hunger, and thirst, and darkness ; innumerable sounds rung in my ears, and on all sides various scents saluted me : the only object that I could distinguish was the bright moon, and I fixed my eyes on that with pleasure.

“ Several changes of day and night passed, and the orb of night had greatly lessened, when I began to distinguish my sensations from each other. I gradually saw plainly the clear stream that supplied me with drink, and the trees that shaded me with their foliage. I was delighted when I first discovered that a pleasant sound, which often saluted my ears, proceeded from the throats of the little winged animals who had often intercepted the light from my eyes. I began also to observe, with greater accuracy, the forms that surrounded me, and to perceive the boundaries of the radiant roof of light which canopied me. Sometimes I tried to imitate the pleasant songs of the birds, but was unable. Sometimes I wished to express my sensations in my own mode, but the uncouth and inarticulate sounds which broke from me frightened me into silence again.

“ The moon had disappeared from the night, and again,

* The moon.

with a lessened form, showed itself, while I still remained in the forest. My sensations had, by this time, become distinct, and my mind received every day additional ideas. My eyes became accustomed to the light, and to perceive objects in their right forms ; I distinguished the insect from the herb, and, by degrees, one herb from another. I found that the sparrow uttered none but harsh notes, whilst those of the blackbird and thrush were sweet and enticing.

“ One day, when I was oppressed by cold, I found a fire which had been left by some wandering beggars, and was overcome with delight at the warmth I experienced from it. In my joy I thrust my hand into the live embers, but quickly drew it out again with a cry of pain. How strange, I thought, that the same cause should produce such opposite effects ! I examined the materials of the fire, and to my joy found it to be composed of wood. I quickly collected some branches ; but they were wet, and would not burn. I was pained at this, and sat still watching the operation of the fire. The wet wood which I had placed near the heat dried, and itself became inflamed. I reflected on this ; and, by touching the various branches, I discovered the cause, and busied myself in collecting a great quantity of wood, that I might dry it, and have a plentiful supply of fire. When night came on, and brought sleep with it, I was in the greatest fear lest my fire should be extinguished. I covered it carefully with dry wood and leaves, and placed wet branches upon it ; and then, spreading my cloak, I lay on the ground, and sunk into sleep.

“ It was morning when I awoke, and my first care was to visit the fire. I uncovered it, and a gentle breeze quickly fanned it into a flame. I observed this also, and contrived a fan of branches, which roused the embers when they were nearly extinguished. When night came again, I found, with pleasure, that the fire gave light as well as heat ; and that the discovery of this element was useful to me in my food ; for I found some of the offals that the travellers had left had been roasted, and tasted much more savoury than the berries I gathered from the trees. I tried, therefore, to dress my food in the same manner, placing it on the live embers. I found that the berries

were spoiled by this operation, and the nuts and roots much improved.

“ Food, however, became scarce ; and I often spent the whole day searching in vain for a few acorns to assuage the pangs of hunger. When I found this, I resolved to quit the place that I had hitherto inhabited, to seek for one where the few wants I experienced would be more easily satisfied. In this emigration, I exceedingly lamented the loss of the fire which I had obtained through accident, and knew not how to reproduce it. I gave several hours to the serious consideration of this difficulty ; but I was obliged to relinquish all attempt to supply it ; and, wrapping myself up in my cloak, I struck across the wood towards the setting sun. I passed three days in these rambles, and at length discovered the open country. A great fall of snow had taken place the night before, and the fields were of one uniform white ; the appearance was disconsolate, and I found my feet chilled by the cold damp substance that covered the ground.

“ It was about seven in the morning, and I longed to obtain food and shelter ; at length I perceived a small hut, on a rising ground, which had doubtless been built for the convenience of some shepherd. This was a new sight to me ; and I examined the structure with great curiosity. Finding the door open, I entered. An old man sat in it, near a fire, over which he was preparing his breakfast. He turned on hearing a noise ; and, perceiving me, shrieked loudly, and, quitting the hut, ran across the fields with a speed of which his debilitated form hardly appeared capable. His appearance, different from any I had ever before seen, and his flight, somewhat surprised me. But I was enchanted by the appearance of the hut : here the snow and rain could not penetrate ; the ground was dry ; and it presented to me then as exquisite and divine a retreat as Pandæmonium appeared to the dæmons of hell after their sufferings in the lake of fire. I greedily devoured the remnants of the shepherd’s breakfast, which consisted of bread, cheese, milk, and wine ; the latter, however, I did not like. Then, overcome by fatigue, I lay down among some straw, and fell asleep.

“ It was noon when I awoke ; and, allured by the

warmth of the sun, which shone brightly on the white ground, I determined to recommence my travels ; and, depositing the remains of the peasant's breakfast in a wallet I found, I proceeded across the fields for several hours, until at sunset I arrived at a village. How miraculous did this appear ! the huts, the neater cottages, and stately houses, engaged my admiration by turns. The vegetables in the gardens, the milk and cheese that I saw placed at the windows of some of the cottages, allured my appetite. One of the best of these I entered ; but I had hardly placed my foot within the door, before the children shrieked, and one of the women fainted. The whole village was roused ; some fled, some attacked me, until, grievously bruised by stones and many other kinds of missile weapons, I escaped to the open country, and fearfully took refuge in a low hovel, quite bare, and making a wretched appearance after the palaces I had beheld in the village. This hovel, however, joined a cottage of a neat and pleasant appearance ; but, after my late dearly bought experience, I dared not enter it. My place of refuge was constructed of wood, but so low, that I could with difficulty sit upright in it. No wood, however, was placed on the earth, which formed the floor, but it was dry ; and although the wind entered it by innumerable chinks, I found it an agreeable asylum from the snow and rain.

“ Here then I retreated, and lay down happy to have found a shelter, however miserable, from the inclemency of the season, and still more from the barbarity of man.

“ As soon as morning dawned, I crept from my kennel, that I might view the adjacent cottage, and discover if I could remain in the habitation I had found. It was situated against the back of the cottage, and surrounded on the sides which were exposed by a pig-sty and a clear pool of water. One part was open, and by that I had crept in ; but now I covered every crevice by which I might be perceived with stones and wood, yet in such a manner that I might move them on occasion to pass out : all the light I enjoyed came through the sty, and that was sufficient for me.

“ Having thus arranged my dwelling, and carpeted it with clean straw, I retired ; for I saw the figure of a man

at a distance, and I remembered too well my treatment the night before, to trust myself in his power. I had first, however, provided for my sustenance for that day, by a loaf of coarse bread, which I purloined, and a cup with which I could drink, more conveniently than from my hand, of the pure water which flowed by my retreat. The floor was a little raised, so that it was kept perfectly dry, and by its vicinity to the chimney of the cottage it was tolerably warm.

“ Being thus provided, I resolved to reside in this hovel, until something should occur which might alter my determination. It was indeed a paradise, compared to the bleak forest, my former residence, the rain-dropping branches, and dank earth. I ate my breakfast with pleasure, and was about to remove a plank to procure myself a little water, when I heard a step, and looking through a small chink, I beheld a young creature, with a pail on her head, passing before my hovel. The girl was young, and of gentle demeanour, unlike what I have since found cottagers and farm-house servants to be. Yet she was meanly dressed, a coarse blue petticoat and a linen jacket being her only garb ; her fair hair was plaited, but not adorned : she looked patient, yet sad. I lost sight of her ; and in about a quarter of an hour she returned, bearing the pail, which was now partly filled with milk. As she walked along, seemingly incommoded by the burden, a young man met her, whose countenance expressed a deeper despondence. Uttering a few sounds with an air of melancholy, he took the pail from her head, and bore it to the cottage himself. She followed, and they disappeared. Presently I saw the young man again, with some tools in his hand, cross the field behind the cottage ; and the girl was also busied, sometimes in the house, and sometimes in the yard.

“ On examining my dwelling, I found that one of the windows of the cottage had formerly occupied a part of it, but the panes had been filled up with wood. In one of these was a small and almost imperceptible chink, through which the eye could just penetrate. Through this crevice a small room was visible, whitewashed and clean, but very bare of furniture. In one corner, near a small fire, sat an old man, leaning his head on his hands in a disconsolate

attitude. The young girl was occupied in arranging the cottage ; but presently she took something out of a drawer, which employed her hands, and she sat down beside the old man, who, taking up an instrument, began to play, and to produce sounds sweeter than the voice of the thrush or the nightingale. It was a lovely sight, even to me, poor wretch ! who had never beheld aught beautiful before. The silver hair and benevolent countenance of the aged cottager won my reverence, while the gentle manners of the girl enticed my love. He played a sweet mournful air, which I perceived drew tears from the eyes of his amiable companion, of which the old man took no notice, until she sobbed audibly ; he then pronounced a few sounds, and the fair creature, leaving her work, knelt at his feet. He raised her, and smiled with such kindness and affection, that I felt sensations of a peculiar and overpowering nature : they were a mixture of pain and pleasure, such as I had never before experienced, either from hunger or cold, warmth or food ; and I withdrew from the window, unable to bear these emotions.

“ Soon after this the young man returned, bearing on his shoulders a load of wood. The girl met him at the door, helped to relieve him of his burden, and, taking some of the fuel into the cottage, placed it on the fire ; then she and the youth went apart into a nook of the cottage, and he showed her a large loaf and a piece of cheese. She seemed pleased, and went into the garden for some roots and plants, which she placed in water, and then upon the fire. She afterwards continued her work, whilst the young man went into the garden, and appeared busily employed in digging and pulling up roots. After he had been employed thus about an hour, the young woman joined him, and they entered the cottage together.

“ The old man had, in the mean time, been pensive ; but, on the appearance of his companions, he assumed a more cheerful air, and they sat down to eat. The meal was quickly despatched. The young woman was again occupied in arranging the cottage ; the old man walked before the cottage in the sun for a few minutes, leaning on the arm of the youth. Nothing could exceed in beauty the contrast

between these two excellent creatures. One was old, with silver hairs and a countenance beaming with benevolence and love: the younger was slight and graceful in his figure, and his features were moulded with the finest symmetry; yet his eyes and attitude expressed the utmost sadness and despondency. The old man returned to the cottage; and the youth, with tools different from those he had used in the morning, directed his steps across the fields.

“ Night quickly shut in; but, to my extreme wonder, I found that the cottagers had a means of prolonging light by the use of tapers, and was delighted to find that the setting of the sun did not put an end to the pleasure I experienced in watching my human neighbours. In the evening, the young girl and her companion were employed in various occupations which I did not understand; and the old man again took up the instrument which produced the divine sounds that had enchanted me in the morning. So soon as he had finished, the youth began, not to play, but to utter sounds that were monotonous, and neither resembling the harmony of the old man’s instrument nor the songs of the birds: I since found that he read aloud, but at that time I knew nothing of the science of words or letters.

“ The family, after having been thus occupied for a short time, extinguished their lights, and retired, as I conjectured, to rest.

CHAPTER XII.

“ I LAY on my straw, but I could not sleep. I thought of the occurrences of the day. What chiefly struck me was the gentle manners of these people; and I longed to join them, but dared not. I remembered too well the treatment I had suffered the night before from the barbarous villagers, and resolved, whatever course of conduct I might hereafter think it right to pursue, that for the present I would remain quietly in my hovel, watching, and endeavouring to discover the motives which influenced their actions.

“ The cottagers arose the next morning before the sun.

The young woman arranged the cottage, and prepared the food ; and the youth departed after the first meal.

“ This day was passed in the same routine as that which preceded it. The young man was constantly employed out of doors, and the girl in various laborious occupations within. The old man, whom I soon perceived to be blind, employed his leisure hours on his instrument or in contemplation. Nothing could exceed the love and respect which the younger cottagers exhibited towards their venerable companion. They performed towards him every little office of affection and duty with gentleness ; and he rewarded them by his benevolent smiles.

“ They were not entirely happy. The young man and his companion often went apart, and appeared to weep. I saw no cause for their unhappiness ; but I was deeply affected by it. If such lovely creatures were miserable, it was less strange that I, an imperfect and solitary being, should be wretched. Yet why were these gentle beings unhappy ? They possessed a delightful house (for such it was in my eyes) and every luxury ; they had a fire to warm them when chill, and delicious viands when hungry ; they were dressed in excellent clothes ; and, still more, they enjoyed one another’s company and speech, interchanging each day looks of affection and kindness. What did their tears imply ? Did they really express pain ? I was at first unable to solve these questions ; but perpetual attention and time explained to me many appearances which were at first enigmatic.

“ A considerable period elapsed before I discovered one of the causes of the uneasiness of this amiable family : it was poverty ; and they suffered that evil in a very distressing degree. Their nourishment consisted entirely of the vegetables of their garden, and the milk of one cow, which gave very little during the winter, when its masters could scarcely procure food to support it. They often, I believe, suffered the pangs of hunger very poignantly, especially the two younger cottagers ; for several times they placed food before the old man, when they reserved none for themselves.

“ This trait of kindness moved me sensibly. I had been accustomed, during the night, to steal a part of their store.

for my own consumption ; but when I found that in doing this I inflicted pain on the cottagers, I abstained, and satisfied myself with berries, nuts, and roots, which I gathered from a neighbouring wood.

“ I discovered also another means through which I was enabled to assist their labours. I found that the youth spent a great part of each day in collecting wood for the family fire ; and, during the night, I often took his tools, the use of which I quickly discovered, and brought home firing sufficient for the consumption of several days.

“ I remember, the first time that I did this, the young woman, when she opened the door in the morning, appeared greatly astonished on seeing a great pile of wood on the outside. She uttered some words in a loud voice, and the youth joined her, who also expressed surprise. I observed, with pleasure, that he did not go to the forest that day, but spent it in repairing the cottage, and cultivating the garden.

“ By degrees I made a discovery of still greater moment. I found that these people possessed a method of communicating their experience and feelings to one another by articulate sounds. I perceived that the words they spoke sometimes, produced pleasure or pain, smiles or sadness, in the minds and countenances of the hearers. This was indeed a godlike science, and I ardently desired to become acquainted with it. But I was baffled in every attempt I made for this purpose. Their pronunciation was quick ; and the words they uttered, not having any apparent connection with visible objects, I was unable to discover any clue by which I could unravel the mystery of their reference. By great application, however, and after having remained during the space of several revolutions of the moon in my hovel, I discovered the names that were given to some of the most familiar objects of discourse ; I learned and applied the words, *fire, milk, bread, and wood*. I learned also the names of the cottagers themselves. The youth and his companion had each of them several names, but the old man had only one, which was *father*. The girl was called *sister, or Agatha* ; and the youth *Felix, brother, or son*. I cannot describe the delight I felt when I learned the ideas appropriated to each of these sounds, and

was able to pronounce them. I distinguished several other words, without being able as yet to understand or apply them ; such as *good, dearest, unhappy*.

“ I spent the winter in this manner. The gentle manners and beauty of the cottagers greatly endeared them to me : when they were unhappy, I felt depressed ; when they rejoiced, I sympathised in their joys. I saw few human beings beside them ; and if any other happened to enter the cottage, their harsh manners and rude gait only enhanced to me the superior accomplishments of my friends. The old man, I could perceive, often endeavoured to encourage his children, as sometimes I found that he called them, to cast off their melancholy. He would talk in a cheerful accent, with an expression of goodness that bestowed pleasure even upon me. Agatha listened with respect, her eyes sometimes filled with tears, which she endeavoured to wipe away unperceived ; but I generally found that her countenance and tone were more cheerful after having listened to the exhortations of her father. It was not thus with Felix. He was always the saddest of the group ; and, even to my unpractised senses, he appeared to have suffered more deeply than his friends. But if his countenance was more sorrowful, his voice was more cheerful than that of his sister, especially when he addressed the old man.

“ I could mention innumerable instances, which, although slight, marked the dispositions of these amiable cottagers. In the midst of poverty and want, Felix carried with pleasure to his sister the first little white flower that peeped out from beneath the snowy ground. Early in the morning, before she had risen, he cleared away the snow that obstructed her path to the milk-house, drew water from the well, and brought the wood from the out-house, where, to his perpetual astonishment, he found his store always replenished by an invisible hand. In the day, I believe, he worked sometimes for a neighbouring farmer, because he often went forth, and did not return until dinner, yet brought no wood with him. At other times he worked in the garden ; but, as there was little to do in the frosty season, he read to the old man and Agatha.

“ This reading had puzzled me extremely at first ; but, by degrees, I discovered that he uttered many of the same sounds when he read, as when he talked. I conjectured, therefore, that he found on the paper signs for speech which he understood, and I ardently longed to comprehend these also ; but how was that possible, when I did not even understand the sounds for which they stood as signs ? I improved, however, sensibly in this science, but not sufficiently to follow up any kind of conversation, although I applied my whole mind to the endeavour : for I easily perceived that, although I eagerly longed to discover myself to the cottagers, I ought not to make the attempt until I had first become master of their language ; which knowledge might enable me to make them overlook the deformity of my figure ; for with this also the contrast perpetually presented to my eyes had made me acquainted.

“ I had admired the perfect forms of my cottagers — their grace, beauty, and delicate complexions : but how was I terrified, when I viewed myself in a transparent pool ! At first I started back, unable to believe that it was indeed I who was reflected in the mirror ; and when I became fully convinced that I was in reality the monster that I am, I was filled with the bitterest sensations of despondence and mortification. Alas ! I did not yet entirely know the fatal effects of this miserable deformity.

“ As the sun became warmer, and the light of day longer, the snow vanished, and I beheld the bare trees and the black earth. From this time Felix was more employed ; and the heart-moving indications of impending famine disappeared. Their food, as I afterwards found, was coarse, but it was wholesome ; and they procured a sufficiency of it. Several new kinds of plants sprung up in the garden, which they dressed ; and these signs of comfort increased daily as the season advanced.

“ The old man, leaning on his son, walked each day at noon, when it did not rain, as I found it was called when the heavens poured forth its waters. This frequently took place ; but a high wind quickly dried the earth, and the season became far more pleasant than it had been.

“ My mode of life in my hovel was uniform. During

the morning, I attended the motions of the cottagers ; and when they were dispersed in various occupations, I slept : the remainder of the day was spent in observing my friends. When they had retired to rest, if there was any moon, or the night was star-light, I went into the woods, and collected my own food and fuel for the cottage. When I returned, as often as it was necessary, I cleared their path from the snow, and performed those offices that I had seen done by Felix. I afterwards found that these labours, performed by an invisible hand, greatly astonished them ; and once or twice I heard them, on these occasions, utter the words *good spirit, wonderful* ; but I did not then understand the signification of these terms.

“ My thoughts now became more active, and I longed to discover the motives and feelings of these lovely creatures ; I was inquisitive to know why Felix appeared so miserable, and Agatha so sad. I thought (foolish wretch !) that it might be in my power to restore happiness to these deserving people. When I slept, or was absent, the forms of the venerable blind father, the gentle Agatha, and the excellent Felix, flitted before me. I looked upon them as superior beings, who would be the arbiters of my future destiny. I formed in my imagination a thousand pictures of presenting myself to them, and their reception of me. I imagined that they would be disgusted, until, by my gentle demeanour and conciliating words, I should first win their favour, and afterwards their love.

“ These thoughts exhilarated me, and led me to apply with fresh ardour to the acquiring the art of language. My organs were indeed harsh, but supple ; and although my voice was very unlike the soft music of their tones, yet I pronounced such words as I understood with tolerable ease. It was as the ass and the lap-dog ; yet surely the gentle ass whose intentions were affectionate, although his manners were rude, deserved better treatment than blows and execration.

“ The pleasant showers and genial warmth of spring greatly altered the aspect of the earth. Men, who before this change seemed to have been hid in caves, dispersed themselves, and were employed in various arts of cultiva-

tion. The birds sang in more cheerful notes, and the leaves began to bud forth on the trees. Happy, happy earth ! fit habitation for gods, which, so short a time before, was bleak, damp, and unwholesome. My spirits were elevated by the enchanting appearance of nature ; the past was blotted from my memory, the present was tranquil, and the future gilded by bright rays of hope, and anticipations of joy."

CHAPTER XIII.

" I NOW hasten to the more moving part of my story. I shall relate events, that impressed me with feelings which, from what I had been, have made me what I am.

" Spring advanced rapidly ; the weather became fine, and the skies cloudless. It surprised me, that what before was desert and gloomy should now bloom with the most beautiful flowers and verdure. My senses were gratified and refreshed by a thousand scents of delight, and a thousand sights of beauty.

" It was on one of these days, when my cottagers periodically rested from labour—the old man played on his guitar, and the children listened to him — that I observed the countenance of Felix was melancholy beyond expression ; he sighed frequently ; and once his father paused in his music, and I conjectured by his manner that he enquired the cause of his son's sorrow. Felix replied in a cheerful accent, and the old man was recommencing his music, when some one tapped at the door.

" It was a lady on horseback, accompanied by a countryman as a guide. The lady was dressed in a dark suit, and covered with a thick black veil. Agatha asked a question ; to which the stranger only replied by pronouncing, in a sweet accent, the name of Felix. Her voice was musical, but unlike that of either of my friends. On hearing this word, Felix came up hastily to the lady ; who, when she saw him, threw up her veil, and I beheld a countenance of angelic beauty and expression. Her hair of a shining

raven black, and curiously braided ; her eyes were dark, but gentle, although animated ; her features of a regular proportion, and her complexion wondrously fair, each cheek tinged with a lovely pink.

“ Felix seemed ravished with delight when he saw her, every trait of sorrow vanished from his face, and it instantly expressed a degree of ecstatic joy, of which I could hardly have believed it capable ; his eyes sparkled, as his cheek flushed with pleasure ; and at that moment I thought him as beautiful as the stranger. She appeared affected by different feelings ; wiping a few tears from her lovely eyes, she held out her hand to Felix, who kissed it rapturously, and called her, as well as I could distinguish, his sweet Arabian. She did not appear to understand him, but smiled. He assisted her to dismount, and dismissing her guide, conducted her into the cottage. Some conversation took place between him and his father ; and the young stranger knelt at the old man’s feet, and would have kissed his hand, but he raised her, and embraced her affectionately.

“ I soon perceived, that although the stranger uttered articulate sounds, and appeared to have a language of her own, she was neither understood by, nor herself understood, the cottagers. They made many signs (which I did not comprehend ; but I saw that her presence diffused gladness through the cottage, dispelling their sorrow as the sun dissipates the morning mists. Felix seemed peculiarly happy, and with smiles of delight welcomed his Arabian. Agatha, the ever-gentle Agatha, kissed the hands of the lovely stranger ; and, pointing to her brother, made signs which appeared to me to mean that he had been sorrowful until she came. Some hours passed thus, while they, by their countenances, expressed joy, the cause of which I did not comprehend. Presently I found, by the frequent recurrence of some sound which the stranger repeated after them, that she was endeavouring to learn their language ; and the idea instantly occurred to me, that I should make use of the same instructions to the same end. The stranger learned about twenty words at the first lesson, most of them, indeed, were those which I had before understood, but I profited by the others.

“ As night came on, Agatha and the Arabian retired early. When they separated, Felix kissed the hand of the stranger, and said, ‘ Good night, sweet Safie.’ He sat up much longer, conversing with his father ; and, by the frequent repetition of her name, I conjectured that their lovely guest was the subject of their conversation. I ardently desired to understand them, and bent every faculty towards that purpose, but found it utterly impossible.

“ The next morning Felix went out to his work ; and, after the usual occupations of Agatha were finished, the Arabian sat at the feet of the old man, and, taking his guitar, played some airs so entrancingly beautiful, that they at once drew tears of sorrow and delight from my eyes. She sang, and her voice flowed in a rich cadence, swelling or dying away, like a nightingale of the woods.

“ When she had finished, she gave the guitar to Agatha, who at first declined it. She played a simple air, and her voice accompanied it in sweet accents, but unlike the wondrous strain of the stranger. The old man appeared enraptured, and said some words, which Agatha endeavoured to explain to Safie, and by which he appeared to wish to express that she bestowed on him the greatest delight by her music.

“ The days now passed as peaceably as before, with the sole alteration, that joy had taken place of sadness in the countenances of my friends. Safie was always gay and happy ; she and I improved rapidly in the knowledge of language, so that in two months I began to comprehend most of the words uttered by my protectors.

“ In the meanwhile also the black ground was covered with herbage, and the green banks interspersed with innumerable flowers, sweet to the scent and the eyes, stars of pale radiance among the moonlight woods ; the sun became warmer, the nights clear and balmy ; and my nocturnal rambles were an extreme pleasure to me, although they were considerably shortened by the late setting and early rising of the sun ; for I never ventured abroad during daylight, fearful of meeting with the same treatment I had formerly endured in the first village which I entered.

“ My days were spent in close attention, that I might

more speedily master the language ; and I may boast that I improved more rapidly than the Arabian, who understood very little, and conversed in broken accents, whilst I comprehended and could imitate almost every word that was spoken.

“ While I improved in speech, I also learned the science of letters, as it was taught to the stranger ; and this opened before me a wide field for wonder and delight.

“ The book from which Felix instructed Safie was Volney’s ‘ Ruins of Empires.’ I should not have understood the purport of this book, had not Felix, in reading it, given very minute explanations. He had chosen this work, he said, because the declamatory style was framed in imitation of the eastern authors. Through this work I obtained a cursory knowledge of history, and a view of the several empires at present existing in the world ; it gave me an insight into the manners, governments, and religions of the different nations of the earth. I heard of the slothful Asiatics ; of the stupendous genius and mental activity of the Grecians ; of the wars and wonderful virtue of the early Romans—of their subsequent degenerating—of the decline of that mighty empire ; of chivalry, Christianity, and kings. I heard of the discovery of the American hemisphere, and wept with Safie over the hapless fate of its original inhabitants.

“ These wonderful narrations inspired me with strange feelings. Was man, indeed, at once so powerful, so virtuous, and magnificent, yet so vicious and base ? He appeared at one time a mere scion of the evil principle, and at another, as all that can be conceived of noble and godlike. To be a great and virtuous man appeared the highest honour that can befall a sensitive being ; to be base and vicious, as many on record have been, appeared the lowest degradation, a condition more abject than that of the blind mole or harmless worm. For a long time I could not conceive how one man could go forth to murder his fellow, or even why there were laws and governments ; but when I heard details of vice and bloodshed, my wonder ceased, and I turned away with disgust and loathing.

“ Every conversation of the cottagers now opened new

wonders to me. While I listened to the instructions which Felix bestowed upon the Arabian, the strange system of human society was explained to me. I heard of the division of property, of immense wealth and squalid poverty; of rank, descent, and noble blood.

“The words induced me to turn towards myself. I learned that the possessions most esteemed by your fellow-creatures were, high and unsullied descent united with riches. A man might be respected with only one of these advantages; but, without either, he was considered, except in very rare instances, as a vagabond and a slave, doomed to waste his powers for the profits of the chosen few! And what was I? Of my creation and creator I was absolutely ignorant; but I knew that I possessed no money, no friends, no kind of property. I was, besides, endued with a figure hideously deformed and loathsome; I was not even of the same nature as man. I was more agile than they, and could subsist upon coarser diet; I bore the extremes of heat and cold with less injury to my frame; my stature far exceeded theirs. When I looked around, I saw and heard of none like me. Was I then a monster, a blot upon the earth, from which all men fled, and whom all men disowned?

“I cannot describe to you the agony that these reflections inflicted upon me: I tried to dispel them, but sorrow only increased with knowledge. Oh, that I had for ever remained in my native wood, nor known nor felt beyond the sensations of hunger, thirst, and heat!

“Of what a strange nature is knowledge! It clings to the mind, when it has once seized on it, like a lichen on the rock. I wished sometimes to shake off all thought and feeling; but I learned that there was but one means to overcome the sensation of pain, and that was death—a state which I feared yet did not understand. I admired virtue and good feelings, and loved the gentle manners and amiable qualities of my cottagers; but I was shut out from intercourse with them, except through means which I obtained by stealth, when I was unseen and unknown, and which rather increased than satisfied the desire I had of becoming one among my fellows. The gentle words of

Agatha, and the animated smiles of the charming Arabian, were not for me. The mild exhortations of the old man, and the lively conversation of the loved Felix, were not for me. Miserable, unhappy wretch !

“ Other lessons were impressed upon me even more deeply. I heard of the difference of sexes ; and the birth and growth of children ; how the father doated on the smiles of the infant, and the lively sallies of the older child ; how all the life and cares of the mother were wrapped up in the precious charge ; how the mind of youth expanded and gained knowledge ; of brother, sister, and all the various relationships which bind one human being to another in mutual bonds.

“ But where were my friends and relations ? No father had watched my infant days, no mother had blessed me with smiles and caresses ; or if they had, all my past life was now a blot, a blind vacancy in which I distinguished nothing. From my earliest remembrance I had been as I then was in height and proportion. I had never yet seen a being resembling me, or who claimed any intercourse with me. What was I ? The question again recurred, to be answered only with groans.

“ I will soon explain to what these feelings tended ; but allow me now to return to the cottagers, whose story excited in me such various feelings of indignation, delight, and wonder, but which all terminated in additional love and reverence for my protectors (for so I loved, in an innocent, half painful self-deceit, to call them).

CHAPTER XIV.

“ SOME time elapsed before I learned the history of my friends. It was one which could not fail to impress itself deeply on my mind, unfolding as it did a number of circumstances, each interesting and wonderful to one so utterly inexperienced as I was.

“ The name of the old man was De Lacey. He was descended from a good family in France, where he had

lived for many years in affluence, respected by his superiors, and beloved by his equals. His son was bred in the service of his country; and Agatha had ranked with ladies of the highest distinction. A few months before my arrival, they had lived in a large and luxurious city, called Paris, surrounded by friends, and possessed of every enjoyment which virtue, refinement of intellect, or taste, accompanied by a moderate fortune, could afford.

“ The father of Safie had been the cause of their ruin. He was a Turkish merchant, and had inhabited Paris for many years, when, for some reason which I could not learn, he became obnoxious to the government. He was seized and cast into prison the very day that Safie arrived from Constantinople to join him. He was tried, and condemned to death. The injustice of his sentence was very flagrant; all Paris was indignant; and it was judged that his religion and wealth, rather than the crime alleged against him, had been the cause of his condemnation.

“ Felix had accidentally been present at the trial; his horror and indignation were uncontrollable, when he heard the decision of the court. He made, at that moment, a solemn vow to deliver him, and then looked around for the means. After many fruitless attempts to gain admittance to the prison, he found a strongly grated window in an unguarded part of the building, which lighted the dungeon of the unfortunate Mahometan; who, loaded with chains, waited in despair the execution of the barbarous sentence. Felix visited the grate at night, and made known to the prisoner his intentions in his favour. The Turk, amazed and delighted, endeavoured to kindle the zeal of his deliverer by promises of reward and wealth. Felix rejected his offers with contempt; yet when he saw the lovely Safie, who was allowed to visit her father, and who, by her gestures, expressed her lively gratitude, the youth could not help owning to his own mind, that the captive possessed a treasure which would fully reward his toil and hazard.

“ The Turk quickly perceived the impression that his daughter had made on the heart of Felix, and endeavoured to secure him more entirely in his interests by the promise

of her hand in marriage, so soon as he should be conveyed to a place of safety. Felix was too delicate to accept this offer ; yet he looked forward to the probability of the event as to the consummation of his happiness.

“ During the ensuing days, while the preparations were going forward for the escape of the merchant, the zeal of Felix was warmed by several letters that he received from this lovely girl, who found means to express her thoughts in the language of her lover by the aid of an old man, a servant of her father, who understood French. She thanked him in the most ardent terms for his intended services towards her parent ; and at the same time she gently deplored her own fate.

“ I have copies of these letters ; for I found means, during my residence in the hovel, to procure the implements of writing ; and the letters were often in the hands of Felix or Agatha. Before I depart, I will give them to you, they will prove the truth of my tale ; but at present, as the sun is already far declined, I shall only have time to repeat the substance of them to you.

“ Safie related, that her mother was a Christian Arab, seized and made a slave by the Turks ; recommended by her beauty, she had won the heart of the father of Safie, who married her. The young girl spoke in high and enthusiastic terms of her mother, who, born in freedom, spurned the bondage to which she was now reduced. She instructed her daughter in the tenets of her religion, and taught her to aspire to higher powers of intellect, and an independence of spirit, forbidden to the female followers of Mahomet. This lady died ; but her lessons were indelibly impressed on the mind of Safie, who sickened at the prospect of again returning to Asia, and being immured within the walls of a haram, allowed only to occupy herself with infantile amusements, ill suited to the temper of her soul, now accustomed to grand ideas and a noble emulation for virtue. The prospect of marrying a Christian, and remaining in a country where women were allowed to take a rank in society, was enchanting to her.

“ The day for the execution of the Turk was fixed ; but, on the night previous to it, he quitted his prison, and be-

fore morning was distant many leagues from Paris. Felix had procured passports in the name of his father, sister, and himself. He had previously communicated his plan to the former, who aided the deceit by quitting his house, under the pretence of a journey, and concealed himself, with his daughter, in an obscure part of Paris.

“ Felix conducted the fugitives through France to Lyons, and across Mont Cenis to Leghorn, where the merchant had decided to wait a favourable opportunity of passing into some part of the Turkish dominions.

“ Safie resolved to remain with her father until the moment of his departure, before which time the Turk renewed his promise that she should be united to his deliverer; and Felix remained with them in expectation of that event; and in the mean time he enjoyed the society of the Arabian, who exhibited towards him the simplest and tenderest affection. They conversed with one another through the means of an interpreter, and sometimes with the interpretation of looks; and Safie sang to him the divine airs of her native country.

“ The Turk allowed this intimacy to take place, and encouraged the hopes of the youthful lovers, while in his heart he had formed far other plans. He loathed the idea that his daughter should be united to a Christian; but he feared the resentment of Felix, if he should appear lukewarm; for he knew that he was still in the power of his deliverer, if he should choose to betray him to the Italian state which they inhabited. He revolved a thousand plans by which he should be enabled to prolong the deceit until it might be no longer necessary, and secretly to take his daughter with him when he departed. His plans were facilitated by the news which arrived from Paris.

“ The government of France were greatly enraged at the escape of their victim, and spared no pains to detect and punish his deliverer. The plot of Felix was quickly discovered, and De Lacey and Agatha were thrown into prison. The news reached Felix, and roused him from his dream of pleasure. His blind and aged father, and his gentle sister, lay in a noisome dungeon, while he enjoyed the free air, and the society of her whom he loved. This idea was

torture to him. He quickly arranged with the Turks, that if the latter should find a favourable opportunity for escape before Felix could return to Italy, Safie should remain as a boarder at a convent at Leghorn ; and then, quitting the lovely Arabian, he hastened to Paris, and delivered himself up to the vengeance of the law, hoping to free De Lacey and Agatha by this proceeding.

“ He did not succeed. They remained confined for five months before the trial took place ; the result of which deprived them of their fortune, and condemned them to a perpetual exile from their native country.

“ They found a miserable asylum in the cottage in Germany, where I discovered them. Felix soon learned that the treacherous Turk, for whom he and his family endured such unheard-of oppression, on discovering that his deliverer was thus reduced to poverty and ruin, became a traitor to good feeling and honour, and had quitted Italy with his daughter, insultingly sending Felix a pittance of money, to aid him, as he said, in some plan of future maintenance.

“ Such were the events that preyed on the heart of Felix, and rendered him, when I first saw him, the most miserable of his family. He could have endured poverty ; and while this distress had been the meed of his virtue, he gloried in it : but the ingratitude of the Turk, and the loss of his beloved Safie, were misfortunes more bitter and irreparable. The arrival of the Arabian now infused new life into his soul.

“ When the news reached Leghorn, that Felix was deprived of his wealth and rank, the merchant commanded his daughter to think no more of her lover, but to prepare to return to her native country. The generous nature of Safie was outraged by this command ; she attempted to expostulate with her father, but he left her angrily, reiterating his tyrannical mandate.

“ A few days after, the Turk entered his daughter’s apartment, and told her hastily, that he had reason to believe that his residence at Leghorn had been divulged, and that he should speedily be delivered up to the French government ; he had, consequently hired a vessel to convey

him to Constantinople, for which city he should sail in a few hours. He intended to leave his daughter under the care of a confidential servant, to follow at her leisure with the greater part of his property, which had not yet arrived at Leghorn.

“ When alone, Safie resolved in her own mind the plan of conduct that it would become her to pursue in this emergency. A residence in Turkey was abhorrent to her ; her religion and her feelings were alike adverse to it. By some papers of her father, which fell into her hands, she heard of the exile of her lover, and learnt the name of the spot where he then resided. She hesitated some time, but at length she formed her determination. Taking with her some jewels that belonged to her, and a sum of money, she quitted Italy with an attendant, a native of Leghorn, but who understood the common language of Turkey, and departed for Germany.

“ She arrived in safety at a town about twenty leagues from the cottage of De Lacey, when her attendant fell dangerously ill. Safie nursed her with the most devoted affection ; but the poor girl died, and the Arabian was left alone, unacquainted with the language of the country, and utterly ignorant of the customs of the world. She fell, however, into good hands. The Italian had mentioned the name of the spot for which they were bound ; and, after her death, the woman of the house in which they had lived took care that Safie should arrive in safety at the cottage of her lover.

CHAPTER XV.

“ SUCH was the history of my beloved cottagers. It impressed me deeply. I learned, from the views of social life which it developed, to admire their virtues, and to deprecate the vices of mankind.

“ As yet I looked upon crime as a distant evil ; benevolence and generosity were ever present before me, inciting

within me a desire to become an actor in the busy scene where so many admirable qualities were called forth and displayed. But, in giving an account of the progress of my intellect, I must not omit a circumstance which occurred in the beginning of the month of August of the same year.

“ One night, during my accustomed visit to the neighbouring wood, where I collected my own food, and brought home firing for my protectors, I found on the ground a leathern portmanteau, containing several articles of dress and some books. I eagerly seized the prize, and returned with it to my hovel. Fortunately the books were written in the language, the elements of which I had acquired at the cottage ; they consisted of ‘ Paradise Lost,’ a volume of ‘ Plutarch’s Lives,’ and the ‘ Sorrows of Werter.’ The possession of these treasures gave me extreme delight ; I now continually studied and exercised my mind upon these histories, whilst my friends were employed in their ordinary occupations.

“ I can hardly describe to you the effect of these books. They produced in me an infinity of new images and feelings, that sometimes raised me to ecstasy, but more frequently sunk me into the lowest dejection. In the ‘ Sorrows of Werter,’ besides the interest of its simple and affecting story, so many opinions are canvassed, and so many lights thrown upon what had hitherto been to me obscure subjects, that I found in it a never-ending source of speculation and astonishment. The gentle and domestic manners it described, combined with lofty sentiments and feelings, which had for their object something out of self, accorded well with my experience among my protectors, and with the wants which were for ever alive in my own bosom. But I thought Werter himself a more divine being than I had ever beheld or imagined ; his character contained no pretension, but it sunk deep. The disquisitions upon death and suicide were calculated to fill me with wonder. I did not pretend to enter into the merits of the case, yet I inclined towards the opinions of the hero, whose extinction I wept, without precisely understanding it.

“ As I read, however, I applied much personally to my

own feelings and condition. I found myself similar, yet at the same time strangely unlike to the beings concerning whom I read, and to whose conversation I was a listener. I sympathised with, and partly understood them, but I was unformed in mind; I was dependent on none, and related to none. 'The path of my departure was free;' and there was none to lament my annihilation. My person was hideous, and my stature gigantic? What did this mean? Who was I? What was I? Whence did I come? What was my destination? These questions continually recurred, but I was unable to solve them.

"The volume of 'Plutarch's Lives,' which I possessed, contained the histories of the first founders of the ancient republics. This book had a far different effect upon me from the 'Sorrows of Werter.' I learned from Werter's imaginations despondency and gloom: but Plutarch taught me high thoughts; he elevated me above the wretched sphere of my own reflections, to admire and love the heroes of past ages. Many things I read surpassed my understanding and experience. I had a very confused knowledge of kingdoms, wide extents of country, mighty rivers, and boundless seas. But I was perfectly unacquainted with towns, and large assemblages of men. The cottage of my protectors had been the only school in which I had studied human nature; but this book developed new and mightier scenes of action. I read of men concerned in public affairs, governing or massacring their species. I felt the greatest ardour for virtue rise within me, and abhorrence for vice, as far as I understood the signification of those terms, relative as they were, as I applied them, to pleasure and pain alone. Induced by these feelings, I was of course led to admire peaceable lawgivers, Numa, Solon, and Lycurgus, in preference to Romulus and Theseus. The patriarchal lives of my protectors caused these impressions to take a firm hold on my mind; perhaps, if my first introduction to humanity had been made by a young soldier, burning for glory and slaughter, I should have been imbued with different sensations.

"But 'Paradise Lost' excited different and far deeper emotions. I read it, as I had read the other volumes which

had fallen into my hands, as a true history. It moved every feeling of wonder and awe, that the picture of an omnipotent God warring with his creatures was capable of exciting. I often referred the several situations, as their similarity struck me, to my own. Like Adam, I was apparently united by no link to any other being in existence ; but his state was far different from mine in every other respect. He had come forth from the hands of God a perfect creature, happy and prosperous, guarded by the especial care of his Creator ; he was allowed to converse with, and acquire knowledge from, beings of a superior nature : but I was wretched, helpless, and alone. Many times I considered Satan as the fitter emblem of my condition ; for often, like him, when I viewed the bliss of my protectors, the bitter gall of envy rose within me.

“ Another circumstance strengthened and confirmed these feelings. Soon after my arrival in the hovel, I discovered some papers in the pocket of the dress which I had taken from your laboratory. At first I had neglected them ; but now that I was able to decipher the characters in which they were written, I began to study them with diligence. It was your journal of the four months that preceded my creation. You minutely described in these papers every step you took in the progress of your work ; this history was mingled with accounts of domestic occurrences. You, doubtless, recollect these papers. Here they are. Every thing is related in them which bears reference to my accursed origin ; the whole detail of that series of disgusting circumstances which produced it, is set in view ; the minutest description of my odious and loathsome person is given, in language which painted your own horrors, and rendered mine indelible. I sickened as I read. ‘Hateful day when I received life !’ I exclaimed in agony. ‘Accursed creator ! Why did you form a monster so hideous that even *you* turned from me in disgust ? God, in pity, made man beautiful and alluring, after his own image ; but my form is a filthy type of yours, more horrid even from the very resemblance. Satan had his companions, fellow-devils, to admire and encourage him ; but I am solitary and abhorred.’

“ These were the reflections of my hours of despondency and solitude ; but when I contemplated the virtues of the cottagers, their amiable and benevolent dispositions, I persuaded myself that when they should become acquainted with my admiration of their virtues, they would compassionate me, and overlook my personal deformity. Could they turn from their door one, however monstrous, who solicited their compassion and friendship ? I resolved, at least, not to despair, but in every way to fit myself for an interview with them which would decide my fate. I postponed this attempt for some months longer ; for the importance attached to its success inspired me with a dread lest I should fail. Besides, I found that my understanding improved so much with every day’s experience, that I was unwilling to commence this undertaking until a few more months should have added to my sagacity.

“ Several changes, in the mean time, took place in the cottage. The presence of Safie diffused happiness among its inhabitants ; and I also found that a greater degree of plenty reigned there. Felix and Agatha spent more time in amusement and conversation, and were assisted in their labours by servants. They did not appear rich, but they were contented and happy ; their feelings were serene and peaceful, while mine became every day more tumultuous. Increase of knowledge only discovered to me more clearly what a wretched outcast I was. I cherished hope, it is true ; but it vanished, when I beheld my person reflected in water, or my shadow in the moonshine, even as that frail image and that inconstant shade.

“ I endeavoured to crush these fears, and to fortify myself for the trial which in a few months I resolved to undergo ; and sometimes I allowed my thoughts, unchecked by reason, to ramble in the fields of Paradise, and dared to fancy amiable and lovely creatures sympathising with my feelings, and cheering my gloom ; their angelic countenances breathed smiles of consolation. But it was all a dream ; no Eve soothed my sorrows, nor shared my thoughts ; I was alone. I remembered Adam’s supplication to his Creator. But where was mine ? He had abandoned me : and, in the bitterness of my heart, I cursed him.

“ Autumn passed thus. I saw, with surprise and grief, the leaves decay and fall, and nature again assume the barren and bleak appearance it had worn when I first beheld the woods and the lovely moon. Yet I did not heed the bleakness of the weather ; I was better fitted by my conformation for the endurance of cold than heat. But my chief delights were the sight of the flowers, the birds, and all the gay apparel of summer ; when those deserted me, I turned with more attention towards the cottagers. Their happiness was not decreased by the absence of summer. They loved, and sympathised with one another ; and their joys, depending on each other, were not interrupted by the casualties that took place around them. The more I saw of them, the greater became my desire to claim their protection and kindness ; my heart yearned to be known and loved by these amiable creatures : to see their sweet looks directed towards me with affection, was the utmost limit of my ambition. I dared not think that they would turn them from me with disdain and horror. The poor that stopped at their door were never driven away. I asked, it is true, for greater treasures than a little food or rest : I required kindness and sympathy ; but I did not believe myself utterly unworthy of it.

“ The winter advanced, and an entire revolution of the seasons had taken place since I awoke into life. My attention, at this time, was solely directed towards my plan of introducing myself into the cottage of my protectors. I revolved many projects ; but that on which I finally fixed was, to enter the dwelling when the blind old man should be alone. I had sagacity enough to discover, that the unnatural hideousness of my person was the chief object of horror with those who had formerly beheld me. My voice, although harsh, had nothing terrible in it ; I thought, therefore, that if, in the absence of his children, I could gain the good-will and mediation of the old De Lacey, I might, by his means, be tolerated by my younger protectors.

“ One day, when the sun shone on the red leaves that strewed the ground, and diffused cheerfulness, although it denied warmth, Safie, Agatha, and Felix departed on a

long country walk, and the old man, at his own desire, was left alone in the cottage. When his children had departed, he took up his guitar, and played several mournful but sweet airs, more sweet and mournful than I had ever heard him play before. At first his countenance was illuminated with pleasure, but, as he continued, thoughtfulness and sadness succeeded; at length, laying aside the instrument, he sat absorbed in reflection.

“ My heart beat quick; this was the hour and moment of trial, which would decide my hopes, or realise my fears. The servants were gone to a neighbouring fair. All was silent in and around the cottage: it was an excellent opportunity; yet, when I proceeded to execute my plan, my limbs failed me, and I sank to the ground. Again I rose; and, exerting all the firmness of which I was master, removed the planks which I had placed before my hovel to conceal my retreat. The fresh air revived me, and, with renewed determination, I approached the door of their cottage.

“ I knocked. ‘ Who is there?’ said the old man — ‘ Come in.’

“ I entered; ‘ Pardon this intrusion,’ said I: ‘ I am a traveller in want of a little rest; you would greatly oblige me, if you would allow me to remain a few minutes before the fire.’

“ ‘ Enter,’ said De Lacey; ‘ and I will try in what manner I can relieve your wants; but, unfortunately, my children are from home, and, as I am blind, I am afraid I shall find it difficult to procure food for you.’

“ ‘ Do not trouble yourself, my kind host, I have food; it is warmth and rest only that I need.’

“ I sat down, and a silence ensued. I knew that every minute was precious to me, yet I remained irresolute in what manner to commence the interview; when the old man addressed me —

“ ‘ By your language, stranger, I suppose you are my countryman; — are you French?’

“ ‘ No; but I was educated by a French family, and understand that language only. I am now going to claim

the protection of some friends, whom I sincerely love, and of whose favour I have some hopes.'

" 'Are they Germans?'

" 'No, they are French. But let us change the subject. I am an unfortunate and deserted creature; I look around, and I have no relation or friend upon earth. These amiable people to whom I go have never seen me, and know little of me. I am full of fears; for if I fail there, I am an outcast in the world for ever.'

" 'Do not despair. To be friendless is indeed to be unfortunate; but the hearts of men, when unprejudiced by any obvious self-interest, are full of brotherly love and charity. Rely, therefore, on your hopes; and if these friends are good and amiable, do not despair.'

" 'They are kind — they are the most excellent creatures in the world; but, unfortunately, they are prejudiced against me. I have good dispositions; my life has been hitherto harmless, and in some degree beneficial; but a fatal prejudice clouds their eyes, and where they ought to see a feeling and kind friend, they behold only a detestable monster.'

" 'That is indeed unfortunate; but if you are really blameless, cannot you undeceive them?'

" 'I am about to undertake that task; and it is on that account that I feel so many overwhelming terrors. I tenderly love these friends; I have, unknown to them, been for many months in the habits of daily kindness towards them; but they believe that I wish to injure them, and it is that prejudice which I wish to overcome.'

" 'Where do these friends reside?'

" 'Near this spot.'

" The old man paused, and then continued, 'If you will unreservedly confide to me the particulars of your tale, I perhaps may be of use in undeceiving them. I am blind, and cannot judge of your countenance, but there is something in your words, which persuades me that you are sincere. I am poor, and an exile; but it will afford me true pleasure to be in any way serviceable to a human creature.'

" 'Excellent man! I thank you, and accept your ge-

nerous offer. You raise me from the dust by this kindness; and I trust that, by your aid, I shall not be driven from the society and sympathy of your fellow-creatures.'

" 'Heaven forbid! even if you were really criminal; for that can only drive you to desperation, and not instigate you to virtue. I also am unfortunate; I and my family have been condemned, although innocent: judge, therefore, if I do not feel for your misfortunes.'

" 'How can I thank you, my best and only benefactor? From your lips first have I heard the voice of kindness directed towards me; I shall be for ever grateful; and your present humanity assures me of success with those friends whom I am on the point of meeting.'

" 'May I know the names and residence of those friends?'

" I paused. This, I thought, was the moment of decision, which was to rob me of, or bestow happiness on me for ever. I struggled vainly for firmness sufficient to answer him, but the effort destroyed all my remaining strength; I sank on the chair, and sobbed aloud. At that moment I heard the steps of my younger protectors. I had not a moment to lose; but, seizing the hand of the old man, I cried, 'Now is the time! — save and protect me! You and your family are the friends whom I seek. Do not you desert me in the hour of trial!'

" 'Great God!' exclaimed the old man, 'who are you?'

" At that instant the cottage door was opened, and Felix, Safie, and Agatha entered. Who can describe their horror and consternation on beholding me? Agatha fainted; and Safie, unable to attend to her friend, rushed out of the cottage. Felix darted forward, and with supernatural force tore me from his father, to whose knees I clung: in a transport of fury, he dashed me to the ground, and struck me violently with a stick. I could have torn him limb from limb, as the lion rends the antelope. But my heart sunk within me as with bitter sickness, and I refrained. I saw him on the point of repeating his blow, when, overcome by pain and anguish, I quitted the cottage, and in the general tumult escaped unperceived to my hovel.

CHAPTER XVI.

“CURSED, cursed creator ! Why did I live ? Why, in that instant, did I not extinguish the spark of existence which you had so wantonly bestowed ? I know not ; despair had not yet taken possession of me ; my feelings were those of rage and revenge. I could with pleasure have destroyed the cottage and its inhabitants, and have glutted myself with their shrieks and misery.

“When night came, I quitted my retreat, and wandered in the wood ; and now, no longer restrained by the fear of discovery, I gave vent to my anguish in fearful howlings. I was like a wild beast that had broken the toils ; destroying the objects that obstructed me, and ranging through the wood with a stag-like swiftness. O ! what a miserable night I passed ! the cold stars shone in mockery, and the bare trees waved their branches above me : now and then the sweet voice of a bird burst forth amidst the universal stillness. All, save I, were at rest or in enjoyment : I, like the arch-fiend, bore a hell within me ; and, finding myself unsympathised with, wished to tear up the trees, spread havoc and destruction around me, and then to have sat down and enjoyed the ruin.

“But this was a luxury of sensation that could not endure ; I became fatigued with excess of bodily exertion, and sank on the damp grass in the sick impotence of despair. There was none among the myriads of men that existed who would pity or assist me ; and should I feel kindness towards my enemies ? No : from that moment I declared everlasting war against the species, and, more than all, against him who had formed me, and sent me forth to this insupportable misery.

“The sun rose ; I heard the voices of men, and knew that it was impossible to return to my retreat during that day. Accordingly I hid myself in some thick underwood, determining to devote the ensuing hours to reflection on my situation.

“The pleasant sunshine, and the pure air of day, re-

stored me to some degree of tranquillity ; and when I considered what had passed at the cottage, I could not help believing that I had been too hasty in my conclusions. I had certainly acted imprudently. It was apparent that my conversation had interested the father in my behalf, and I was a fool in having exposed my person to the horror of his children. I ought to have familiarised the old De Lacey to me, and by degrees to have discovered myself to the rest of his family, when they should have been prepared for my approach. But I did not believe my errors to be irretrievable ; and, after much consideration, I resolved to return to the cottage, seek the old man, and by my representations win him to my party.

“ These thoughts calmed me, and in the afternoon I sank into a profound sleep ; but the fever of my blood did not allow me to be visited by peaceful dreams. The horrible scene of the preceding day was for ever acting before my eyes ; the females were flying, and the enraged Felix tearing me from his father’s feet. I awoke exhausted ; and, finding that it was already night, I crept forth from my hiding-place, and went in search of food.

“ When my hunger was appeased, I directed my steps towards the well-known path that conducted to the cottage. All there was at peace. I crept into my hovel, and remained in silent expectation of the accustomed hour when the family arose. That hour passed, the sun mounted high in the heavens, but the cottagers did not appear. I trembled violently, apprehending some dreadful misfortune. The inside of the cottage was dark, and I heard no motion ; I cannot describe the agony of this suspense.

“ Presently two countrymen passed by ; but, pausing near the cottage, they entered into conversation, using violent gesticulations ; but I did not understand what they said, as they spoke the language of the country, which differed from that of my protectors. Soon after, however, Felix approached with another man : I was surprised, as I knew that he had not quitted the cottage that morning, and waited anxiously to discover, from his discourse, the meaning of these unusual appearances.

“ ‘ Do you consider,’ said his companion to him, ‘ that

you will be obliged to pay three months' rent, and to lose the produce of your garden? I do not wish to take any unfair advantage, and I beg therefore that you will take some days to consider of your determination.'

“ ‘It is utterly useless,’ replied Felix; ‘we can never again inhabit your cottage. The life of my father is in the greatest danger, owing to the dreadful circumstance that I have related. My wife and my sister will never recover their horror. I entreat you not to reason with me any more. Take possession of your tenement, and let me fly from this place.’

“ Felix trembled violently as he said this. He and his companion entered the cottage, in which they remained for a few minutes, and then departed. I never saw any of the family of De Lacey more.

“ I continued for the remainder of the day in my hovel in a state of utter and stupid despair. My protectors had departed, and had broken the only link that held me to the world. For the first time the feelings of revenge and hatred filled my bosom, and I did not strive to control them; but, allowing myself to be borne away by the stream, I bent my mind towards injury and death. When I thought of my friends, of the mild voice of De Lacey, the gentle eyes of Agatha, and the exquisite beauty of the Arabian, these thoughts vanished, and a gush of tears somewhat soothed me. But again, when I reflected that they had spurned and deserted me, anger returned, a rage of anger; and, unable to injure any thing human, I turned my fury towards inanimate objects. As night advanced, I placed a variety of combustibles around the cottage; and, after having destroyed every vestige of cultivation in the garden, I waited with forced impatience until the moon had sunk to commence my operations.

“ As the night advanced, a fierce wind arose from the woods, and quickly dispersed the clouds that had loitered in the heavens: the blast tore along like a mighty avalanche, and produced a kind of insanity in my spirits, that burst all bounds of reason and reflection. I lighted the dry branch of a tree, and danced with fury around the devoted cottage, my eyes still fixed on the western horizon, the edge

of which the moon nearly touched. A part of its orb was at length hid, and I waved my brand ; it sunk, and, with a loud scream, I fired the straw, and heath, and bushes, which I had collected. The wind fanned the fire, and the cottage was quickly enveloped by the flames, which clung to it, and licked it with their forked and destroying tongues.

“ As soon as I was convinced that no assistance could save any part of the habitation, I quitted the scene, and sought for refuge in the woods.

“ And now, with the world before me, whither should I bend my steps ? I resolved to fly far from the scene of my misfortunes ; but to me, hated and despised, every country must be equally horrible. At length the thought of you crossed my mind. I learned from your papers that you were my father, my creator ; and to whom could I apply with more fitness than to him who had given me life ? Among the lessons that Felix had bestowed upon Safie, geography had not been omitted : I had learned from these the relative situations of the different countries of the earth. You had mentioned Geneva as the name of your native town ; and towards this place I resolved to proceed.

“ But how was I to direct myself ? I knew that I must travel in a south-westerly direction to reach my destination ; but the sun was my only guide. I did not know the names of the towns that I was to pass through, nor could I ask information from a single human being ; but I did not despair. From you only could I hope for succour, although towards you I felt no sentiment but that of hatred. Unfeeling, heartless creator ! you had endowed me with perceptions and passions, and then cast me abroad an object for the scorn and horror of mankind. But on you only had I any claim for pity and redress, and from you I determined to seek that justice which I vainly attempted to gain from any other being that wore the human form.

“ My travels were long, and the sufferings I endured intense. It was late in autumn when I quitted the district where I had so long resided. I travelled only at night, fearful of encountering the visage of a human being. Nature decayed around me, and the sun became heatless ; rain and snow poured around me ; mighty rivers were frozen ;

the surface of the earth was hard and chill, and bare, and I found no shelter. Oh, earth! how often did I imprecate curses on the cause of my being! The mildness of my nature had fled, and all within me was turned to gall and bitterness. The nearer I approached to your habitation, the more deeply did I feel the spirit of revenge enkindled in my heart. Snow fell, and the waters were hardened; but I rested not. A few incidents now and then directed me, and I possessed a map of the country; but I often wandered wide from my path. The agony of my feelings allowed me no respite: no incident occurred from which my rage and misery could not extract its food; but a circumstance that happened when I arrived on the confines of Switzerland, when the sun had recovered its warmth, and the earth again began to look green, confirmed in an especial manner the bitterness and horror of my feelings.

“ I generally rested during the day, and travelled only when I was secured by night from the view of man. One morning, however, finding that my path lay through a deep wood, I ventured to continue my journey after the sun had risen; the day, which was one of the first of spring, cheered even me by the loveliness of its sunshine and the balminess of the air. I felt emotions of gentleness and pleasure, that had long appeared dead, revive within me. Half surprised by the novelty of these sensations, I allowed myself to be borne away by them; and, forgetting my solitude and deformity, dared to be happy. Soft tears again bedewed my cheeks, and I even raised my humid eyes with thankfulness towards the blessed sun which bestowed such joy upon me.

“ I continued to wind among the paths of the wood, until I came to its boundary, which was skirted by a deep and rapid river, into which many of the trees bent their branches, now budding with the fresh spring. Here I paused, not exactly knowing what path to pursue, when I heard the sound of voices, that induced me to conceal myself under the shade of a cypress. I was scarcely hid, when a young girl came running towards the spot where I was concealed, laughing, as if she ran from some one in sport. She continued her course along the precipitous sides of the river, when suddenly her foot slipped, and she fell into the rapid

stream. I rushed from my hiding-place; and, with extreme labour from the force of the current, saved her, and dragged her to shore. She was senseless; and I endeavoured, by every means in my power, to restore animation, when I was suddenly interrupted by the approach of a rustic, who was probably the person from whom she had playfully fled. On seeing me, he darted towards me, and tearing the girl from my arms, hastened towards the deeper parts of the wood. I followed speedily, I hardly knew why; but when the man saw me draw near, he aimed a gun, which he carried, at my body, and fired. I sunk to the ground, and my injurer, with increased swiftness, escaped into the wood.

“ This was then the reward of my benevolence! I had saved a human being from destruction, and, as a recompense, I now writhed under the miserable pain of a wound, which shattered the flesh and bone. The feelings of kindness and gentleness, which I had entertained but a few moments before, gave place to hellish rage and gnashing of teeth. Inflamed by pain, I vowed eternal hatred and vengeance to all mankind. But the agony of my wound overcame me; my pulses paused, and I fainted.

“ For some weeks I led a miserable life in the woods, endeavouring to cure the wound which I had received. The ball had entered my shoulder, and I knew not whether it had remained there or passed through; at any rate I had no means of extracting it. My sufferings were augmented also by the oppressive sense of the injustice and ingratitude of their infliction. My daily vows rose for revenge—a deep and deadly revenge, such as would alone compensate for the outrages and anguish I had endured.

“ After some weeks my wound healed, and I continued my journey. The labours I endured were no longer to be alleviated by the bright sun or gentle breezes of spring; all joy was but a mockery, which insulted my desolate state, and made me feel more painfully that I was not made for the enjoyment of pleasure.

“ But my toils now drew near a close; and, in two months from this time, I reached the environs of Geneva.

“ It was evening when I arrived, and I retired to a hiding-place among the fields that surround it, to meditate

in what manner I should apply to you. I was oppressed by fatigue and hunger, and far too unhappy to enjoy the gentle breezes of evening, or the prospect of the sun setting behind the stupendous mountains of Jura.

“ At this time a slight sleep relieved me from the pain of reflection, which was disturbed by the approach of a beautiful child, who came running into the recess I had chosen, with all the sportiveness of infancy. Suddenly, as I gazed on him, an idea seized me, that this little creature was unprejudiced, and had lived too short a time to have imbibed a horror of deformity. If, therefore, I could seize him, and educate him as my companion and friend, I should not be so desolate in this peopled earth.

“ Urged by this impulse, I seized on the boy as he passed, and drew him towards me. As soon as he beheld my form, he placed his hands before his eyes, and uttered a shrill scream : I drew his hand forcibly from his face, and said, ‘ Child, what is the meaning of this ? I do not intend to hurt you ; listen to me.’

“ He struggled violently. ‘ Let me go,’ he cried ; ‘ monster ! ugly wretch ! you wish to eat me, and tear me to pieces— You are an ogre— Let me go, or I will tell my papa.’

“ ‘ Boy, you will never see your father again ; you must come with me.’

“ ‘ Hideous monster ! let me go. My papa is a Syndic—he is M. Frankenstein—he will punish you. You dare not keep me.’

“ ‘ Frankenstein ! you belong then to my enemy—to him towards whom I have sworn eternal revenge ; you shall be my first victim.’

“ The child still struggled, and loaded me with epithets which carried despair to my heart ; I grasped his throat to silence him, and in a moment he lay dead at my feet.

“ I gazed on my victim, and my heart swelled with exultation and hellish triumph : clapping my hands, I exclaimed, ‘ I, too, can create desolation ; my enemy is not invulnerable ; this death will carry despair to him, and a thousand other miseries shall torment and destroy him.’

“ As I fixed my eyes on the child, I saw something glittering on his breast. I took it ; it was a portrait of a

most lovely woman. In spite of my malignity, it softened and attracted me. For a few moments I gazed with delight on her dark eyes, fringed by deep lashes, and her lovely lips; but presently my rage returned: I remembered that I was for ever deprived of the delights that such beautiful creatures could bestow; and that she whose resemblance I contemplated would, in regarding me, have changed that air of divine benignity to one expressive of disgust and affright.

“Can you wonder that such thoughts transported me with rage? I only wonder that at that moment, instead of venting my sensations in exclamations and agony, I did not rush among mankind, and perish in the attempt to destroy them.

“While I was overcome by these feelings, I left the spot where I had committed the murder, and seeking a more secluded hiding-place, I entered a barn which had appeared to me to be empty. A woman was sleeping on some straw; she was young: not indeed so beautiful as her whose portrait I held; but of an agreeable aspect, and blooming in the loveliness of youth and health. Here, I thought, is one of those whose joy-imparting smiles are bestowed on all but me. And then I bent over her, and whispered ‘Awake, fairest, thy lover is near—he who would give his life but to obtain one look of affection from thine eyes: my beloved, awake!’

“The sleeper stirred; a thrill of terror ran through me. Should she indeed awake, and see me, and curse me, and denounce the murderer? Thus would she assuredly act, if her darkened eyes opened, and she beheld me. The thought was madness; it stirred the fiend within me—not I, but she shall suffer: the murder I have committed because I am for ever robbed of all that she could give me, she shall atone. The crime had its source in her: be hers the punishment! Thanks to the lessons of Felix and the sanguinary laws of man, I had learned now to work mischief. I bent over her, and placed the portrait securely in one of the folds of her dress. She moved again, and I fled.

“For some days I haunted the spot where these scenes had taken place; sometimes wishing to see you, sometimes resolved to quit the world and its miseries for ever.

At length I wandered towards these mountains, and have ranged through their immense recesses, consumed by a burning passion which you alone can gratify. We may not part until you have promised to comply with my requisition. I am alone, and miserable ; man will not associate with me ; but one as deformed and horrible as myself would not deny herself to me. My companion must be of the same species, and have the same defects. This being you must create."

CHAPTER XVII.

THE being finished speaking, and fixed his looks upon me in expectation of a reply. But I was bewildered, perplexed, and unable to arrange my ideas sufficiently to understand the full extent of his proposition. He continued —

" You must create a female for me, with whom I can live in the interchange of those sympathies necessary for my being. This you alone can do ; and I demand it of you as a right which you must not refuse to concede."

The latter part of his tale had kindled anew in me the anger that had died away while he narrated his peaceful life among the cottagers, and, as he said this, I could no longer suppress the rage that burned within me.

" I do refuse it," I replied ; " and no torture shall ever extort a consent from me. You may render me the most miserable of men, but you shall never make me base in my own eyes. Shall I create another like yourself, whose joint wickedness might desolate the world. Begone ! I have answered you ; you may torture me, but I will never consent."

" You are in the wrong," replied the fiend ; " and, instead of threatening, I am content to reason with you. I am malicious because I am miserable. Am I not shunned and hated by all mankind ? You, my creator, would tear me to pieces, and triumph ; remember that, and tell me why I should pity man more than he pities me ? You would

not call it murder, if you could precipitate me into one of those ice-rifts, and destroy my frame, the work of your own hands. Shall I respect man, when he contemns me? Let him live with me in the interchange of kindness; and, instead of injury, I would bestow every benefit upon him with tears of gratitude at his acceptance. But that cannot be; the human senses are insurmountable barriers to our union. Yet mine shall not be the submission of abject slavery. I will revenge my injuries: if I cannot inspire love, I will cause fear; and chiefly towards you my arch-enemy, because my creator, do I swear inextinguishable hatred. Have a care: I will work at your destruction, nor finish until I desolate your heart, so that you shall curse the hour of your birth."

A fiendish rage animated him as he said this; his face was wrinkled into contortions too horrible for human eyes to behold; but presently he calmed himself and proceeded —

"I intended to reason. This passion is detrimental to me; for you do not reflect that *you* are the cause of its excess. If any being felt emotions of benevolence towards me, I should return them an hundred and an hundred fold; for that one creature's sake, I would make peace with the whole kind! But I now indulge in dreams of bliss that cannot be realised. What I ask of you is reasonable and moderate; I demand a creature of another sex, but as hideous as myself; the gratification is small, but it is all that I can receive, and it shall content me. It is true, we shall be monsters, cut off from all the world; but on that account we shall be more attached to one another. Our lives will not be happy, but they will be harmless, and free from the misery I now feel. Oh! my creator, make me happy; let me feel gratitude towards you for one benefit! Let me see that I excite the sympathy of some existing thing; do not deny me my request!"

I was moved. I shuddered when I thought of the possible consequences of my consent; but I felt that there was some justice in his argument. His tale, and the feelings he now expressed, proved him to be a creature of fine sensations; and did I not as his maker, owe him all the portion

of happiness that it was in my power to bestow? He saw my change of feeling, and continued —

“ If you consent, neither you nor any other human being shall ever see us again: I will go to the vast wilds of South America. My food is not that of man; I do not destroy the lamb and the kid to glut my appetite; acorns and berries afford me sufficient nourishment. My companion will be of the same nature as myself, and will be content with the same fare. We shall make our bed of dried leaves; the sun will shine on us as on man, and will ripen our food. The picture I present to you is peaceful and human, and you must feel that you could deny it only in the wantonness of power and cruelty. Pitiless as you have been towards me, I now see compassion in your eyes; let me seize the favourable moment, and persuade you to promise what I so ardently desire.”

“ You propose,” replied I, “ to fly from the habitations of man, to dwell in those wilds where the beasts of the field will be your only companions. How can you, who long for the love and sympathy of man, persevere in this exile? You will return, and again seek their kindness, and you will meet with their detestation; your evil passions will be renewed, and you will then have a companion to aid you in the task of destruction. This may not be: cease to argue the point, for I cannot consent.”

“ How inconstant are your feelings! but a moment ago you were moved by my representations, and why do you again harden yourself to my complaints? I swear to you, by the earth which I inhabit, and by you that made me, that, with the companion you bestow, I will quit the neighbourhood of man, and dwell as it may chance, in the most savage of places. My evil passions will have fled, for I shall meet with sympathy! my life will flow quietly away, and, in my dying moments, I shall not curse my maker.”

His words had a strange effect upon me. I compassionated him, and sometimes felt a wish to console him; but when I looked upon him, when I saw the filthy mass that moved and talked, my heart sickened, and my feelings were altered to those of horror and hatred. I tried to

stifle these sensations ; I thought, that as I could not sympathise with him, I had no right to withhold from him the small portion of happiness which was yet in my power to bestow.

“ You swear,” I said, “ to be harmless ; but have you not already shown a degree of malice that should reasonably make me distrust you ? May not even this be a feint that will increase your triumph by affording a wider scope for your revenge.”

“ How is this ? I must not be trifled with : and I demand an answer. If I have no ties and no affections, hatred and vice must be my portion ; the love of another will destroy the cause of my crimes, and I shall become a thing, of whose existence every one will be ignorant. My vices are the children of a forced solitude that I abhor ; and my virtues will necessarily arise when I live in communion with an equal. I shall feel the affections of a sensitive being, and become linked to the chain of existence and events, from which I am now excluded.”

I paused some time to reflect on all he had related, and the various arguments which he had employed. I thought of the promise of virtues which he had displayed on the opening of his existence, and the subsequent blight of all kindly feeling by the loathing and scorn which his protectors had manifested towards him. His power and threats were not omitted in my calculations : a creature who could exist in the ice-caves of the glaciers, and hide himself from pursuit among the ridges of inaccessible precipices, was a being possessing faculties it would be vain to cope with. After a long pause of reflection, I concluded that the justice due both to him and my fellow-creatures demanded of me that I should comply with his request. Turning to him, therefore, I said —

“ I consent to your demand, on your solemn oath to quit Europe for ever, and every other place in the neighbourhood of man, as soon as I shall deliver into your hands a female who will accompany you in your exile.”

“ I swear,” he cried, “ by the sun, and by the blue sky of Heaven, and by the fire of love that burns my heart, that if you grant my prayer, while they exist you shall

never behold me again. Depart to your home, and commence your labours : I shall watch their progress with unutterable anxiety ; and fear not but that when you are ready I shall appear."

Saying this, he suddenly quitted me, fearful, perhaps, of any change in my sentiments. I saw him descend the mountain with greater speed than the flight of an eagle, and quickly lost among the undulations of the sea of ice.

His tale had occupied the whole day ; and the sun was upon the verge of the horizon when he departed. I knew that I ought to hasten my descent towards the valley, as I should soon be encompassed in darkness ; but my heart was heavy, and my steps slow. The labour of winding among the little paths of the mountains, and fixing my feet firmly as I advanced, perplexed me, occupied as I was by the emotions which the occurrences of the day had produced. Night was far advanced, when I came to the half-way resting-place, and seated myself beside the fountain. The stars shone at intervals, as the clouds passed from over them ; the dark pines rose before me, and every here and there a broken tree lay on the ground : it was a scene of wonderful solemnity, and stirred strange thoughts within me. I wept bitterly ; and clasping my hands in agony, I exclaimed, " Oh ! stars and clouds, and winds, ye are all about to mock me : if ye really pity me, crush sensation and memory ; let me become as nought ; but if not, depart, depart, and leave me in darkness."

These were wild and miserable thoughts ; but I cannot describe to you how the eternal twinkling of the stars weighed upon me, and how I listened to every blast of wind, as if it were a dull ugly siroc on its way to consume me.

Morning dawned before I arrived at the village of Chamounix ; I took no rest, but returned immediately to Geneva. Even in my own heart I could give no expression to my sensations—they weighed on me with a mountain's weight, and their excess destroyed my agony beneath them. Thus I returned home, and entering the house, presented myself to the family. My haggard and wild appearance awoke intense alarm ; but I answered no ques-

tion, scarcely did I speak. I felt as if I were placed under a ban — as if I had no right to claim their sympathies — as if never more might I enjoy companionship with them. Yet even thus I loved them to adoration ; and to save them, I resolved to dedicate myself to my most abhorred task. The prospect of such an occupation made every other circumstance of existence pass before me like a dream ; and that thought only had to me the reality of life.

CHAPTER XVIII.

DAY after day, week after week, passed away on my return to Geneva ; and I could not collect the courage to recommence my work. I feared the vengeance of the disappointed fiend, yet I was unable to overcome my repugnance to the task which was enjoined me. I found that I could not compose a female without again devoting several months to profound study and laborious disquisition. I had heard of some discoveries having been made by an English philosopher, the knowledge of which was material to my success, and I sometimes thought of obtaining my father's consent to visit England for this purpose ; but I clung to every pretence of delay, and shrunk from taking the first step in an undertaking whose immediate necessity began to appear less absolute to me. A change indeed had taken place in me : my health, which had hitherto declined, was now much restored ; and my spirits, when unchecked by the memory of my unhappy promise, rose proportionably. My father saw this change with pleasure, and he turned his thoughts towards the best method of eradicating the remains of my melancholy, which every now and then would return by fits, and with a devouring blackness overcast the approaching sunshine. At these moments I took refuge in the most perfect solitude. I passed whole days on the lake alone in a little boat, watching the clouds, and listening to the rippling of the waves, silent and listless. But the fresh air and bright sun seldom failed to restore me to some degree

of composure ; and, on my return, I met the salutations of my friends with a readier smile and a more cheerful heart.

It was after my return from one of these rambles, that my father, calling me aside, thus addressed me :—

“ I am happy to remark, my dear son, that you have resumed your former pleasures, and seem to be returning to yourself. And yet you are still unhappy, and still avoid our society. For some time I was lost in conjecture as to the cause of this ; but yesterday an idea struck me, and if it is well founded, I conjure you to avow it. Reserve on such a point would be not only useless, but draw down treble misery on us all.”

I trembled violently at his exordium, and my father continued —

“ I confess, my son, that I have always looked forward to your marriage with our dear Elizabeth as the tie of our domestic comfort, and the stay of my declining years. You were attached to each other from your earliest infancy ; you studied together, and appeared, in dispositions and tastes, entirely suited to one another. But so blind is the experience of man, that what I conceived to be the best assistants to my plan, may have entirely destroyed it. You, perhaps, regard her as your sister, without any wish that she might become your wife. Nay, you may have met with another whom you may love ; and, considering yourself as bound in honour to Elizabeth, this struggle may occasion the poignant misery which you appear to feel.”

“ My dear father, re-assure yourself. I love my cousin tenderly and sincerely. I never saw any woman who excited, as Elizabeth does, my warmest admiration and affection. My future hopes and prospects are entirely bound up in the expectation of our union.”

“ The expression of your sentiments of this subject, my dear Victor, gives me more pleasure than I have for some time experienced. If you feel thus, we shall assuredly be happy, however present events may cast a gloom over us. But it is this gloom which appears to have taken so strong a hold of your mind, that I wish to dissipate. Tell me, therefore, whether you object to an immediate solemnisation of the marriage. We have been unfortunate, and

recent events have drawn us from that every-day tranquillity befitting my years and infirmities. You are younger; yet I do not suppose, possessed as you are of a competent fortune, that an early marriage would at all interfere with any future plans of honour and utility that you may have formed. Do not suppose, however, that I wish to dictate happiness to you, or that a delay on your part would cause me any serious uneasiness. Interpret my words with candour, and answer me, I conjure you, with confidence and sincerity."

I listened to my father in silence, and remained for some time incapable of offering any reply. I revolved rapidly in my mind a multitude of thoughts, and endeavoured to arrive at some conclusion. Alas! to me the idea of an immediate union with my Elizabeth was one of horror and dismay. I was bound by a solemn promise, which I had not yet fulfilled, and dared not break; or, if I did, what manifold miseries might not impend over me and my devoted family! Could I enter into a festival with this deadly weight yet hanging round my neck, and bowing me to the ground. I must perform my engagement, and let the monster depart with his mate, before I allowed myself to enjoy the delight of an union from which I expected peace.

I remembered also the necessity imposed upon me of either journeying to England, or entering into a long correspondence with those philosophers of that country, whose knowledge and discoveries were of indispensable use to me in my present undertaking. The latter method of obtaining the desired intelligence was dilatory and unsatisfactory: besides, I had an insurmountable aversion to the idea of engaging myself in my loathsome task in my father's house, while in habits of familiar intercourse with those I loved. I knew that a thousand fearful accidents might occur, the slightest of which would disclose a tale to thrill all connected with me with horror. I was aware also that I should often lose all self-command, all capacity of hiding the harrowing sensations that would possess me during the progress of my unearthly occupation. I must absent myself from all I loved while thus employed. Once

commenced, it would quickly be achieved, and I might be restored to my family in peace and happiness. My promise fulfilled, the monster would depart for ever. Or (so my fond fancy imaged) some accident might meanwhile occur to destroy him, and put an end to my slavery for ever.

These feelings dictated my answer to my father. I expressed a wish to visit England ; but, concealing the true reasons of this request, I clothed my desires under a guise which excited no suspicion, while I urged my desire with an earnestness that easily induced my father to comply. After so long a period of an absorbing melancholy, that resembled madness in its intensity and effects, he was glad to find that I was capable of taking pleasure in the idea of such a journey, and he hoped that change of scene and varied amusement would, before my return, have restored me entirely to myself.

The duration of my absence was left to my own choice ; a few months, or at most a year, was the period contemplated. One paternal kind precaution he had taken to ensure my having a companion. Without previously communicating with me, he had, in concert with Elizabeth, arranged that Clerval should join me at Strasburgh. This interfered with the solitude I coveted for the prosecution of my task ; yet at the commencement of my journey the presence of my friend could in no way be an impediment, and truly I rejoiced that thus I should be saved many hours of lonely, maddening reflection. Nay, Henry might stand between me and the intrusion of my foe. If I were alone, would he not at times force his abhorred presence on me, to remind me of my task, or to contemplate its progress ?

To England, therefore, I was bound, and it was understood that my union with Elizabeth should take place immediately on my return. My father's age rendered him extremely averse to delay. For myself, there was one reward I promised myself from my detested toils—one consolation for my unparalleled sufferings ; it was the prospect of that day when, enfranchised from my miserable slavery, I might claim Elizabeth, and forget the past in my union with her.

I now made arrangements for my journey ; but one

feeling haunted me, which filled me with fear and agitation. During my absence I should leave my friends unconscious of the existence of their enemy, and unprotected from his attacks, exasperated as he might be by my departure. But he had promised to follow me wherever I might go; and would he not accompany me to England? This imagination was dreadful in itself, but soothing, inasmuch as it supposed the safety of my friends. I was agonised with the idea of the possibility that the reverse of this might happen. But through the whole period during which I was the slave of my creature, I allowed myself to be governed by the impulses of the moment; and my present sensations strongly intimated that the fiend would follow me, and exempt my family from the danger of his machinations.

It was in the latter end of September that I again quitted my native country. My journey had been my own suggestion, and Elizabeth, therefore, acquiesced: but she was filled with disquiet at the idea of my suffering, away from her, the inroads of misery and grief. It had been her care which provided me a companion in Clerval—and yet a man is blind to a thousand minute circumstances, which call forth a woman's sedulous attention. She longed to bid me hasten my return,—a thousand conflicting emotions rendered her mute, as she bade me a tearful silent farewell.

I threw myself into the carriage that was to convey me away, hardly knowing whither I was going, and careless of what was passing around. I remembered only, and it was with a bitter anguish that I reflected on it, to order that my chemical instruments should be packed to go with me. Filled with dreary imaginations, I passed through many beautiful and majestic scenes; but my eyes were fixed and unobserving. I could only think of the bourne of my travels, and the work which was to occupy me whilst they endured.

After some days spent in listless indolence, during which I traversed many leagues, I arrived at Strasburgh, where I waited two days for Clerval. He came. Alas, how great was the contrast between us! He was alive to every new scene; joyful when he saw the beauties of the setting sun,

and more happy when he beheld it rise, and recommence a new day. He pointed out to me the shifting colours of the landscape, and the appearances of the sky. "This is what it is to live," he cried, "now I enjoy existence! But you, my dear Frankenstein, wherefore are you desponding and sorrowful!" In truth, I was occupied by gloomy thoughts, and neither saw the descent of the evening star, nor the golden sunrise reflected in the Rhine.—And you, my friend, would be far more amused with the journal of Clerval, who observed the scenery with an eye of feeling and delight, than in listening to my reflections. I, a miserable wretch, haunted by a curse that shut up every avenue to enjoyment.

We had agreed to descend the Rhine in a boat from Strasburgh to Rotterdam, whence we might take shipping for London. During this voyage, we passed many willowy islands, and saw several beautiful towns. We stayed a day at Manheim, and, on the fifth from our departure from Strasburgh, arrived at Mayence. The course of the Rhine below Mayence becomes much more picturesque. The river descends rapidly, and winds between hills, not high, but steep, and of beautiful forms. We saw many ruined castles standing on the edges of precipices, surrounded by black woods, high and inaccessible. This part of the Rhine, indeed, presents a singularly variegated landscape. In one spot you view rugged hills, ruined castles overlooking tremendous precipices, with the dark Rhine rushing beneath; and, on the sudden turn of a promontory, flourishing vineyards, with green sloping banks, and a meandering river, and populous towns occupy the scene.

We travelled at the time of the vintage, and heard the song of the labourers, as we glided down the stream. Even I, depressed in mind, and my spirits continually agitated by gloomy feelings, even I was pleased. I lay at the bottom of the boat, and, as I gazed on the cloudless blue sky, I seemed to drink in a tranquillity to which I had long been a stranger. And if these were my sensations, who can describe those of Henry? He felt as if he had been transported to Fairy-land, and enjoyed a happiness seldom tasted by man. "I have seen," he said, "the most beautiful

scenes of my own country; I have visited the lakes of Lucerne and Uri, where the snowy mountains descend almost perpendicularly to the water, casting black and impenetrable shades, which would cause a gloomy and mournful appearance, were it not for the most verdant islands that relieve the eye by their gay appearance; I have seen this lake agitated by a tempest, when the wind tore up whirlwinds of water, and gave you an idea of what the water-spout must be on the great ocean; and the waves dash with fury the base of the mountain; where the priest and his mistress were overwhelmed by an avalanche, and where their dying voices are still said to be heard amid the pauses of the nightly wind; I have seen the mountains of La Valais, and the Pays de Vaud: but this country, Victor, pleases me more than all those wonders. The mountains of Switzerland are more majestic and strange; but there is a charm in the banks of this divine river, that I never before saw equalled. Look at that castle which overhangs yon precipice; and that also on the island, almost concealed amongst the foliage of those lovely trees; and now that group of labourers coming from among their vines; and that village half hid in the recess of the mountain. Oh, surely, the spirit that inhabits and guards this place has a soul more in harmony with man, than those who pile the glacier, or retire to the inaccessible peaks of the mountains of our own country."

Clerval! beloved friend! even now it delights me to record your words, and to dwell on the praise of which you are so eminently deserving. He was a being formed in the "very poetry of nature." His wild and enthusiastic imagination was chastened by the sensibility of his heart. His soul overflowed with ardent affections, and his friendship was of that devoted and wondrous nature that the worldly-minded teach us to look for only in the imagination. But even human sympathies were not sufficient to satisfy his eager mind. The scenery of external nature, which others regard only with admiration, he loved with ardour: —

—————“ The sounding cataract
 Haunted him like a passion : the tall rock,
 The mountain, and the deep and gloomy wood,
 Their colours and their forms, were then to him
 An appetite ; a feeling, and a love,
 That had no need of a remoter charm,
 By thought supplied, or any interest
 Unborrow'd from the eye ”*

And where does he now exist ? Is this gentle and lovely being lost for ever ? Has this mind, so replete with ideas, imaginations fanciful and magnificent, which formed a world, whose existence depended on the life of its creator ; — has this mind perished ? Does it now only exist in my memory ? No, it is not thus ; your form so divinely wrought, and beaming with beauty, has decayed, but your spirit still visits and consoles your unhappy friend.

Pardon this gush of sorrow ; these ineffectual words are but a slight tribute to the unexampled worth of Henry, but they soothe my heart, overflowing with the anguish which his remembrance creates. I will proceed with my tale.

Beyond Cologne we descended to the plains of Holland ; and we resolved to post the remainder of our way ; for the wind was contrary, and the stream of the river was too gentle to aid us.

Our journey here lost the interest arising from beautiful scenery ; but we arrived in a few days at Rotterdam, whence we proceeded by sea to England. It was on a clear morning, in the latter days of December, that I first saw the white cliffs of Britain. The banks of the Thames presented a new scene ; they were flat, but fertile, and almost every town was marked by the remembrance of some story. We saw Tilbury Fort, and remembered the Spanish armada ; Gravesend, Woolwich, and Greenwich, places which I had heard of even in my country.

At length we saw the numerous steeples of London, St. Paul's towering above all, and the Tower famed in English history.

* Wordsworth's Tintern Abbey.

CHAPTER XIX.

LONDON was our present point of rest ; we determined to remain several months in this wonderful and celebrated city. Clerval desired the intercourse of the men of genius and talent who flourished at this time ; but this was with me a secondary object ; I was principally occupied with the means of obtaining the information necessary for the completion of my promise, and quickly availed myself of the letters of introduction that I had brought with me, addressed to the most distinguished natural philosophers.

If this journey had taken place during my days of study and happiness, it would have afforded me inexpressible pleasure. But a blight had come over my existence, and I only visited these people for the sake of the information they might give me on the subject in which my interest was so terribly profound. Company was irksome to me ; when alone, I could fill my mind with the sights of heaven and earth ; the voice of Henry soothed me, and I could thus cheat myself into a transitory peace. But busy uninteresting joyous faces brought back despair to my heart. I saw an insurmountable barrier placed between me and my fellow-men ; this barrier was sealed with the blood of William and Justine ; and to reflect on the events connected with those names filled my soul with anguish.

But in Clerval I saw the image of my former self ; he was inquisitive, and anxious to gain experience and instruction. The difference of manners which he observed was to him an inexhaustible source of instruction and amusement. He was also pursuing an object he had long had in view. His design was to visit India, in the belief that he had in his knowledge of its various languages, and in the views he had taken of its society, the means of materially assisting the progress of European colonisation and trade. In Britain only could he further the execution of his plan. He was for ever busy ; and the only check to his enjoyments was my sorrowful and dejected mind. I tried to conceal this as much as possible, that I might not debar him from the

pleasures natural to one, who was entering on a new scene of life, undisturbed by any care or bitter recollection. I often refused to accompany him, alleging another engagement, that I might remain alone. I now also began to collect the materials necessary for my new creation, and this was to me like the torture of single drops of water continually falling on the head. Every thought that was devoted to it was an extreme anguish, and every word that I spoke in allusion to it caused my lips to quiver, and my heart to palpitate.

After passing some months in London, we received a letter from a person in Scotland, who had formerly been our visiter at Geneva. He mentioned the beauties of his native country, and asked us if those were not sufficient allurements to induce us to prolong our journey as far north as Perth, where he resided. Clerval eagerly desired to accept this invitation ; and I, although I abhorred society, wished to view again mountains and streams, and all the wondrous works with which Nature adorns her chosen dwelling-places.

We had arrived in England at the beginning of October, and it was now February. We accordingly determined to commence our journey towards the north at the expiration of another month. In this expedition we did not intend to follow the great road to Edinburgh, but to visit Windsor, Oxford, Matlock, and the Cumberland lakes, resolving to arrive at the completion of this tour about the end of July. I packed up my chemical instruments, and the materials I had collected, resolving to finish my labours in some obscure nook in the northern highlands of Scotland.

We quitted London on the 27th of March, and remained a few days at Windsor, rambling in its beautiful forest. This was a new scene to us mountaineers ; the majestic oaks, the quantity of game, and the herds of stately deer, were all novelties to us.

From thence we proceeded to Oxford. As we entered this city, our minds were filled with the remembrance of the events that had been transacted there more than a century and a half before. It was here that Charles I. had collected his forces. This city had remained faithful to

him, after the whole nation had forsaken his cause to join the standard of parliament and liberty. The memory of that unfortunate king, and his companions, the amiable Falkland, the insolent Goring, his queen, and son, gave a peculiar interest to every part of the city, which they might be supposed to have inhabited. The spirit of elder days found a dwelling here, and we delighted to trace its footsteps. If these feelings had not found an imaginary gratification, the appearance of the city had yet in itself sufficient beauty to obtain our admiration. The colleges are ancient and picturesque; the streets are almost magnificent; and the lovely Isis, which flows beside it through meadows of exquisite verdure, is spread forth into a placid expanse of waters, which reflects its majestic assemblage of towers, and spires, and domes, embosomed among aged trees.

I enjoyed this scene; and yet my enjoyment was embittered both by the memory of the past, and the anticipation of the future. I was formed for peaceful happiness. During my youthful days discontent never visited my mind; and if I was ever overcome by *ennui*, the sight of what is beautiful in nature, or the study of what is excellent and sublime in the productions of man, could always interest my heart, and communicate elasticity to my spirits. But I am a blasted tree; the bolt has entered my soul; and I felt then that I should survive to exhibit, what I shall soon cease to be—a miserable spectacle of wrecked humanity, pitiable to others, and intolerable to myself.

We passed a considerable period at Oxford, rambling among its environs, and endeavouring to identify every spot which might relate to the most animating epoch of English history. Our little voyages of discovery were often prolonged by the successive objects that presented themselves. We visited the tomb of the illustrious Hampden, and the field on which that patriot fell. For a moment my soul was elevated from its debasing and miserable fears, to contemplate the divine ideas of liberty and self-sacrifice, of which these sights were the monuments and the remembrancers. For an instant I dared to shake off my chains, and look around me with a free and lofty spirit; but the

iron had eaten into my flesh, and I sank again, trembling and hopeless, into my miserable self.

We left Oxford with regret, and proceeded to Matlock, which was our next place of rest. The country in the neighbourhood of this village resembled, to a greater degree, the scenery of Switzerland ; but every thing is on a lower scale, and the green hills want the crown of distant white Alps, which always attend on the piny mountains of my native country. We visited the wondrous cave, and the little cabinets of natural history, where the curiosities are disposed in the same manner as in the collections at Servox and Chamounix. The latter name made me tremble, when pronounced by Henry ; and I hastened to quit Matlock, with which that terrible scene was thus associated.

From Derby, still journeying northward, we passed two months in Cumberland and Westmorland. I could now almost fancy myself among the Swiss mountains. The little patches of snow which yet lingered on the northern sides of the mountains, the lakes, and the dashing of the rocky streams, were all familiar and dear sights to me. Here also we made some acquaintances, who almost contrived to cheat me into happiness. The delight of Clerval was proportionably greater than mine ; his mind expanded in the company of men of talent, and he found in his own nature greater capacities and resources than he could have imagined himself to have possessed while he associated with his inferiors. " I could pass my life here," said he to me ; " and among these mountains I should scarcely regret Switzerland and the Rhine."

But he found that a traveller's life is one that includes much pain amidst its enjoyments. His feelings are for ever on the stretch ; and when he begins to sink into repose, he finds himself obliged to quit that on which he rests in pleasure for something new, which again engages his attention, and which also he forsakes for other novelties.

We had scarcely visited the various lakes of Cumberland and Westmorland, and conceived an affection for some of the inhabitants, when the period of our appointment with our Scotch friend approached, and we left them to travel on. For my own part I was not sorry. I had now neglected

my promise for some time, and I feared the effects of the dæmon's disappointment. He might remain in Switzerland, and wreak his vengeance on my relatives. This idea pursued me, and tormented me at every moment from which I might otherwise have snatched repose and peace. I waited for my letters with feverish impatience: if they were delayed, I was miserable, and overcome by a thousand fears; and when they arrived, and I saw the superscription of Elizabeth or my father, I hardly dared to read and ascertain my fate. Sometimes I thought that the fiend followed me, and might expedite my remissness by murdering my companion. When these thoughts possessed me, I would not quit Henry for a moment, but followed him as his shadow, to protect him from the fancied rage of his destroyer. I felt as if I had committed some great crime, the consciousness of which haunted me. I was guiltless, but I had indeed drawn down a horrible curse upon my head, as mortal as that of crime.

I visited Edinburgh with languid eyes and mind; and yet that city might have interested the most unfortunate being. Clerval did not like it so well as Oxford: for the antiquity of the latter city was more pleasing to him. But the beauty and regularity of the new town of Edinburgh, its romantic castle, and its environs, the most delightful in the world, Arthur's Seat, St. Bernard's Well, and the Pentland Hills, compensated him for the change, and filled him with cheerfulness and admiration. But I was impatient to arrive at the termination of my journey.

We left Edinburgh in a week, passing through Coupar, St. Andrew's, and along the banks of the Tay, to Perth, where our friend expected us. But I was in no mood to laugh and talk with strangers, or enter into their feelings or plans with the good humour expected from a guest; and accordingly I told Clerval that I wished to make the tour of Scotland alone. "Do you," said I, "enjoy yourself, and let this be our rendezvous. I may be absent a month or two; but do not interfere with my motions, I entreat you: leave me to peace and solitude for a short time; and when I return, I hope it will be with a lighter heart, more congenial to your own temper."

Henry wished to dissuade me ; but, seeing me bent on this plan, ceased to remonstrate. He entreated me to write often. “ I had rather be with you,” he said, “ in your solitary rambles, than with these Scotch people, whom I do not know : hasten then, my dear friend, to return, that I may again feel myself somewhat at home, which I cannot do in your absence.”

Having parted from my friend, I determined to visit some remote spot of Scotland, and finish my work in solitude. I did not doubt but that the monster followed me, and would discover himself to me when I should have finished, that he might receive his companion.

With this resolution I traversed the northern highlands, and fixed on one of the remotest of the Orkneys as the scene of my labours. It was a place fitted for such a work, being hardly more than a rock, whose high sides were continually beaten upon by the waves. The soil was barren, scarcely affording pasture for a few miserable cows, and oatmeal for its inhabitants, which consisted of five persons, whose gaunt and scraggy limbs gave tokens of their miserable fare. Vegetables and bread, when they indulged in such luxuries, and even fresh water, was to be procured from the main land, which was about five miles distant.

On the whole island there were but three miserable huts, and one of these was vacant when I arrived. This I hired. It contained but two rooms, and these exhibited all the squalidness of the most miserable penury. The thatch had fallen in, the walls were unplastered, and the door was off its hinges. I ordered it to be repaired, bought some furniture, and took possession ; an incident which would, doubtless, have occasioned some surprise, had not all the senses of the cottagers been benumbed by want and squalid poverty. As it was, I lived ungazed at and unmolested, hardly thanked for the pittance of food and clothes which I gave ; so much does suffering blunt even the coarsest sensations of men.

In this retreat I devoted the morning to labour ; but in the evening, when the weather permitted, I walked on the stony beach of the sea, to listen to the waves as they roared and dashed at my feet. It was a monotonous yet ever-

changing scene. I thought of Switzerland ; it was far different from this desolate and appalling landscape. Its hills are covered with vines, and its cottages are scattered thickly in the plains. Its fair lakes reflect a blue and gentle sky ; and, when troubled by the winds, their tumult is but as the play of a lively infant, when compared to the roarings of the giant ocean.

In this manner I distributed my occupations when I first arrived ; but, as I proceeded in my labour, it became every day more horrible and irksome to me. Sometimes I could not prevail on myself to enter my laboratory for several days ; and at other times I toiled day and night in order to complete my work. It was, indeed, a filthy process in which I was engaged. During my first experiment, a kind of enthusiastic frenzy had blinded me to the horror of my employment ; my mind was intently fixed on the consummation of my labour, and my eyes were shut to the horror of my proceedings. But now I went to it in cold blood, and my heart often sickened at the work of my hands.

Thus situated, employed in the most detestable occupation, immersed in a solitude where nothing could for an instant call my attention from the actual scene in which I was engaged, my spirits became unequal ; I grew restless and nervous. Every moment I feared to meet my persecutor. Sometimes I sat with my eyes fixed on the ground, fearing to raise them, lest they should encounter the object which I so much dreaded to behold. I feared to wander from the sight of my fellow-creatures, lest when alone he should come to claim his companion.

In the mean time I worked on, and my labour was already considerably advanced. I looked towards its completion with a tremulous and eager hope, which I dared not trust myself to question, but which was intermixed with obscure forebodings of evil, that made my heart sicken in my bosom.

CHAPTER XX.

I SAT one evening in my laboratory ; the sun had set, and the moon was just rising from the sea ; I had not sufficient light for my employment, and I remained idle, in a pause of consideration of whether I should leave my labour for the night, or hasten its conclusion by an unremitting attention to it. As I sat, a train of reflection occurred to me, which led me to consider the effects of what I was now doing. Three years before I was engaged in the same manner, and had created a fiend whose unparalleled barbarity had desolated my heart, and filled it for ever with the bitterest remorse. I was now about to form another being, of whose dispositions I was alike ignorant ; she might become ten thousand times more malignant than her mate, and delight, for its own sake, in murder and wretchedness. He had sworn to quit the neighbourhood of man, and hide himself in deserts ; but she had not ; and she, who in all probability was to become a thinking and reasoning animal, might refuse to comply with a compact made before her creation. They might even hate each other ; the creature who already lived loathed his own deformity, and might he not conceive a greater abhorrence for it when it came before his eyes in the female form ? She also might turn with disgust from him to the superior beauty of man ; she might quit him, and he be again alone, exasperated by the fresh provocation of being deserted by one of his own species.

Even if they were to leave Europe, and inhabit the deserts of the new world, yet one of the first results of those sympathies for which the dæmon thirsted would be children, and a race of devils would be propagated upon the earth, who might make the very existence of the species of man a condition precarious and full of terror. Had I right, for my own benefit, to inflict this curse upon everlasting generations ? I had before been moved by the sophisms of the being I had created ; I had been struck senseless by his

fiendish threats : but now, for the first time, the wickedness of my promise burst upon me ; I shuddered to think that future ages might curse me as their pest, whose selfishness had not hesitated to buy its own peace at the price, perhaps, of the existence of the whole human race.

I trembled, and my heart failed within me ; when, on looking up, I saw, by the light of the moon, the dæmon at the casement. A ghastly grin wrinkled his lips as he gazed on me, where I sat fulfilling the task which he had allotted to me. Yes, he had followed me in my travels ; he had loitered in forests, hid himself in caves, or taken refuge in wide and desert heaths ; and he now came to mark my progress, and claim the fulfilment of my promise.

As I looked on him, his countenance expressed the utmost extent of malice and treachery. I thought with a sensation of madness on my promise of creating another like to him, and trembling with passion, tore to pieces the thing on which I was engaged. The wretch saw me destroy the creature on whose future existence he depended for happiness, and, with a howl of devilish despair and revenge, withdrew.

I left the room, and, locking the door, made a solemn vow in my own heart never to resume my labours ; and then, with trembling steps, I sought my own apartment. I was alone ; none were near me to dissipate the gloom, and relieve me from the sickening oppression of the most terrible reveries.

Several hours passed, and I remained near my window gazing on the sea ; it was almost motionless, for the winds were hushed, and all nature reposed under the eye of the quiet moon. A few fishing vessels alone specked the water, and now and then the gentle breeze wafted the sound of voices, as the fishermen called to one another. I felt the silence, although I was hardly conscious of its extreme profundity, until my ear was suddenly arrested by the paddling of oars near the shore, and a person landed close to my house.

In a few minutes after, I heard the creaking of my door, as if some one endeavoured to open it softly. I trembled from head to foot ; I felt a presentiment of who it was, and

wished to rouse one of the peasants who dwelt in a cottage not far from mine ; but I was overcome by the sensation of helplessness, so often felt in frightful dreams, when you in vain endeavour to fly from an impending danger, and was rooted to the spot.

Presently I heard the sound of footsteps along the passage ; the door opened, and the wretch whom I dreaded appeared. Shutting the door, he approached me, and said, in a smothered voice —

“ You have destroyed the work which you began ; what is it that you intend ? Do you dare to break your promise ? I have endured toil and misery : I left Switzerland with you ; I crept along the shores of the Rhine, among its willow islands, and over the summits of its hills. I have dwelt many months in the heaths of England, and among the deserts of Scotland. I have endured incalculable fatigue, and cold, and hunger ; do you dare destroy my hopes ?”

“ Begone ! I do break my promise ; never will I create another like yourself, equal in deformity and wickedness.”

“ Slave, I before reasoned with you, but you have proved yourself unworthy of my condescension. Remember that I have power ; you believe yourself miserable, but I can make you so wretched that the light of day will be hateful to you. You are my creator, but I am your master ; — obey !”

“ The hour of my irresolution is past, and the period of your power is arrived. Your threats cannot move me to do an act of wickedness ; but they confirm me in a determination of not creating you a companion in vice. Shall I, in cool blood, set loose upon the earth a dæmon, whose delight is in death and wretchedness ? Begone ! I am firm, and your words will only exasperate my rage.”

The monster saw my determination in my face, and gnashed his teeth in the impotence of anger. “ Shall each man,” cried he, “ find a wife for his bosom, and each beast have his mate, and I be alone ? I had feelings of affection, and they were requited by detestation and scorn. Man ! you may hate ; but beware ! your hours will pass in dread and misery, and soon the bolt will fall which must ravish from you your happiness for ever. Are you to be happy, while I grovel in the intensity of my wretchedness ? You

can blast my other passions ; but revenge remains — revenge, henceforth dearer than light or food ! I may die ; but first you, my tyrant and tormentor, shall curse the sun that gazes on your misery. Beware ; for I am fearless, and therefore powerful. I will watch with the wiliness of a snake, that I may sting with its venom. Man, you shall repent of the injuries you inflict.”

“ Devil, cease ; and do not poison the air with these sounds of malice. I have declared my resolution to you, and I am no coward to bend beneath words. Leave me ; I am inexorable.”

“ It is well. I go ; but remember, I shall be with you on your wedding-night.”

I started forward, and exclaimed, “ Villain ! before you sign my death-warrant, be sure that you are yourself safe.”

I would have seized him ; but he eluded me, and quitted the house with precipitation. In a few moments I saw him in his boat, which shot across the waters with an arrowy swiftness, and was soon lost amidst the waves.

All was again silent ; but his words rung in my ears. I burned with rage to pursue the murderer of my peace, and precipitate him into the ocean. I walked up and down my room hastily and perturbed, while my imagination conjured up a thousand images to torment and sting me. Why had I not followed him, and closed with him in mortal strife ? But I had suffered him to depart, and he had directed his course towards the main land. I shuddered to think who might be the next victim sacrificed to his insatiate revenge. And then I thought again of his words — “ *I will be with you on your wedding-night.*” That then was the period fixed for the fulfilment of my destiny. In that hour I should die, and at once satisfy and extinguish his malice. The prospect did not move me to fear ; yet when I thought of my beloved Elizabeth, — of her tears and endless sorrow, when she should find her lover so barbarously snatched from her, — tears, the first I had shed for many months, streamed from my eyes, and I resolved not to fall before my enemy without a bitter struggle.

The night passed away, and the sun rose from the ocean ; my feelings became calmer, if it may be called calmness.

when the violence of rage sinks into the depths of despair. I left the house, the horrid scene of the last night's contention, and walked on the beach of the sea, which I almost regarded as an insuperable barrier between me and my fellow-creatures ; nay, a wish that such should prove the fact stole across me. I desired that I might pass my life on that barren rock, wearily, it is true, but uninterrupted by any sudden shock of misery. If I returned, it was to be sacrificed, or to see those whom I most loved die under the grasp of a dæmon whom I had myself created.

I walked about the isle like a restless spectre, separated from all it loved, and miserable in the separation. When it became noon, and the sun rose higher, I lay down on the grass, and was overpowered by a deep sleep. I had been awake the whole of the preceding night, my nerves were agitated, and my eyes inflamed by watching and misery. The sleep into which I now sunk refreshed me ; and when I awoke, I again felt as if I belonged to a race of human beings like myself, and I began to reflect upon what had passed with greater composure ; yet still the words of the fiend rung in my ears like a death-knell, they appeared like a dream, yet distinct and oppressive as a reality.

The sun had far descended, and I still sat on the shore, satisfying my appetite, which had become ravenous, with an oaten cake, when I saw a fishing-boat land close to me, and one of the men brought me a packet ; it contained letters from Geneva, and one from Clerval, entreating me to join him. He said that he was wearing away his time fruitlessly where he was ; that letters from the friends he had formed in London desired his return to complete the negotiation they had entered into for his Indian enterprise. He could not any longer delay his departure ; but as his journey to London might be followed, even sooner than he now conjectured, by his longer voyage, he entreated me to bestow as much of my society on him as I could spare. He besought me, therefore, to leave my solitary isle, and to meet him at Perth, that we might proceed southwards together. This letter in a degree recalled me to life, and I determined to quit my island at the expiration of two days.

Yet, before I departed, there was a task to perform, on which I shuddered to reflect: I must pack up my chemical instruments; and for that purpose I must enter the room which had been the scene of my odious work, and I must handle those utensils, the sight of which was sickening to me. The next morning, at daybreak, I summoned sufficient courage, and unlocked the door of my laboratory. The remains of the half-finished creature, whom I had destroyed, lay scattered on the floor, and I almost felt as if I had mingled the living flesh of a human being. I paused to collect myself, and then entered the chamber. With trembling hand I conveyed the instruments out of the room; but I reflected that I ought not to leave the relics of my work to excite the horror and suspicion of the peasants; and I accordingly put them into a basket, with a great quantity of stones, and, laying them up, determined to throw them into the sea that very night; and in the mean time I sat upon the beach, employed in cleaning and arranging my chemical apparatus.

Nothing could be more complete than the alteration that had taken place in my feelings since the night of the appearance of the daemon. I had before regarded my promise with a gloomy despair, as a thing that, with whatever consequences, must be fulfilled; but I now felt as if a film had been taken from before my eyes, and that I, for the first time, saw clearly. The idea of renewing my labours did not for one instant occur to me; the threat I had heard weighed on my thoughts, but I did not reflect that a voluntary act of mine could avert it. I had resolved in my own mind, that to create another like the fiend I had first made would be an act of the basest and most atrocious selfishness; and I banished from my mind every thought that could lead to a different conclusion.

Between two and three in the morning the moon rose; and I then, putting my basket aboard a little skiff, sailed out about four miles from the shore. The scene was perfectly solitary: a few boats were returning towards land, but I sailed away from them. I felt as if I was about the commission of a dreadful crime, and avoided with shuddering anxiety any encounter with my fellow-creatures. At

one time the moon, which had before been clear, was suddenly overspread by a thick cloud, and I took advantage of the moment of darkness, and cast my basket into the sea : I listened to the gurgling sound as it sunk, and then sailed away from the spot. The sky became clouded ; but the air was pure, although chilled by the north-east breeze that was then rising. But it refreshed me, and filled me with such agreeable sensations, that I resolved to prolong my stay on the water ; and, fixing the rudder in a direct position, stretched myself at the bottom of the boat. Clouds hid the moon, every thing was obscure, and I heard only the sound of the boat, as its keel cut through the waves ; the murmur lulled me, and in a short time I slept soundly.

I do not know how long I remained in this situation, but when I awoke I found that the sun had already mounted considerably. The wind was high, and the waves continually threatened the safety of my little skiff. I found that the wind was north-east, and must have driven me far from the coast from which I had embarked. I endeavoured to change my course, but quickly found that, if I again made the attempt, the boat would be instantly filled with water. Thus situated, my only resource was to drive before the wind. I confess that I felt a few sensations of terror. I had no compass with me, and was so slenderly acquainted with the geography of this part of the world, that the sun was of little benefit to me. I might be driven into the wide Atlantic, and feel all the tortures of starvation, or be swallowed up in the immeasurable waters that roared and buffeted around me. I had already been out many hours, and felt the torment of a burning thirst, a prelude to my other sufferings. I looked on the heavens, which were covered by clouds that flew before the wind, only to be replaced by others : I looked upon the sea, it was to be my grave. " Fiend," I exclaimed, " your task is already fulfilled !" I thought of Elizabeth, of my father, and of Clerval ; all left behind, on whom the monster might satisfy his sanguinary and merciless passions. This idea plunged me into a reverie, so despairing and frightful, that even now, when the scene is on the point of closing before me for ever, I shudder to reflect on it.

Some hours passed thus ; but by degrees, as the sun declined towards the horizon, the wind died away into a gentle breeze, and the sea became free from breakers. But these gave place to a heavy swell : I felt sick, and hardly able to hold the rudder, when suddenly I saw a line of high land towards the south.

Almost spent, as I was, by fatigue, and the dreadful suspense I endured for several hours, this sudden certainty of life rushed like a flood of warm joy to my heart, and tears gushed from my eyes.

How mutable are our feelings, and how strange is that clinging love we have of life even in the excess of misery ! I constructed another sail with a part of my dress, and eagerly steered my course towards the land. It had a wild and rocky appearance ; but, as I approached nearer, I easily perceived the traces of cultivation. I saw vessels near the shore, and found myself suddenly transported back to the neighbourhood of civilised man. I carefully traced the windings of the land, and hailed a steeple which I at length saw issuing from behind a small promontory. As I was in a state of extreme debility, I resolved to sail directly towards the town, as a place where I could most easily procure nourishment. Fortunately I had money with me. As I turned the promontory, I perceived a small neat town and a good harbour, which I entered, my heart bounding with joy at my unexpected escape.

As I was occupied in fixing the boat and arranging the sails, several people crowded towards the spot. They seemed much surprised at my appearance ; but, instead of offering me any assistance, whispered together with gestures that at any other time might have produced in me a slight sensation of alarm. As it was, I merely remarked that they spoke English ; and I therefore addressed them in that language : " My good friends," said I, " will you be so kind as to tell me the name of this town, and inform me where I am ? "

" You will know that soon enough," replied a man with a hoarse voice. " May be you are come to a place that will not prove much to your taste ; but you will not be consulted as to your quarters, I promise you."

I was exceedingly surprised on receiving so rude an answer from a stranger ; and I was also disconcerted on perceiving the frowning and angry countenances of his companions. " Why do you answer me so roughly ? " I replied ; " surely it is not the custom of Englishmen to receive strangers so inhospitably."

" I do not know," said the man, " what the custom of the English may be ; but is the custom of the Irish to hate villains."

While this strange dialogue continued, I perceived the crowd rapidly increase. Their faces expressed a mixture of curiosity and anger, which annoyed, and in some degree alarmed me. I enquired the way to the inn ; but no one replied. I then moved forward, and a murmuring sound arose from the crowd as they followed and surrounded me ; when an ill-looking man approaching, tapped me on the shoulder, and said, " Come, Sir, you must follow me to Mr. Kirwin's, to give an account of yourself."

" Who is Mr. Kirwin ? Why am I to give an account of myself ? Is not this a free country ? "

" Ay, sir, free enough for honest folks. Mr. Kirwin is a magistrate ; and you are to give an account of the death of a gentleman who was found murdered here last night."

This answer startled me ; but I presently recovered myself. I was innocent ; that could easily be proved : accordingly I followed my conductor in silence, and was led to one of the best houses in the town. I was ready to sink from fatigue and hunger ; but, being surrounded by a crowd, I thought it politic to rouse all my strength, that no physical debility might be construed into apprehension or conscious guilt. Little did I then expect the calamity that was in a few moments to overwhelm me, and extinguish in horror and despair all fear of ignominy or death.

I must pause here ; for it requires all my fortitude to recall the memory of the frightful events which I am about to relate, in proper detail, to my recollection.

CHAPTER XXI.

I WAS soon introduced into the presence of the magistrate, an old benevolent man, with calm and mild manners. He looked upon me, however, with some degree of severity: and then, turning towards my conductors, he asked who appeared as witnesses on this occasion.

About half a dozen men came forward; and, one being selected by the magistrate, he deposed, that he had been out fishing the night before with his son and brother-in-law, Daniel Nugent, when, about ten o'clock, they observed a strong northerly blast rising, and they accordingly put in for port. It was a very dark night, as the moon had not yet risen; they did not land at the harbour, but, as they had been accustomed, at a creek about two miles below. He walked on first, carrying a part of the fishing tackle, and his companions followed him at some distance. As he was proceeding along the sands, he struck his foot against something, and fell at his length on the ground. His companions came up to assist him; and, by the light of their lantern, they found that he had fallen on the body of a man, who was to all appearance dead. Their first supposition was, that it was the corpse of some person who had been drowned, and was thrown on shore by the waves; but, on examination, they found that the clothes were not wet, and even that the body was not then cold. They instantly carried it to the cottage of an old woman near the spot, and endeavoured, but in vain, to restore it to life. It appeared to be a handsome young man, about five and twenty years of age. He had apparently been strangled; for there was no sign of any violence, except the black mark of fingers on his neck.

The first part of this deposition did not in the least interest me; but when the mark of the fingers was mentioned, I remembered the murder of my brother, and felt myself extremely agitated; my limbs trembled, and a mist came over my eyes, which obliged me to lean on a chair

for support. The magistrate observed me with a keen eye, and of course drew an unfavourable augury from my manner.

The son confirmed his father's account : but when Daniel Nugent was called, he swore positively that, just before the fall of his companion, he saw a boat, with a single man in it, at a short distance from the shore ; and, as far as he could judge by the light of a few stars, it was the same boat in which I had just landed.

A woman deposed, that she lived near the beach, and was standing at the door of her cottage, waiting for the return of the fishermen, about an hour before she heard of the discovery of the body, when she saw a boat, with only one man in it, push off from that part of the shore where the corpse was afterwards found.

Another woman confirmed the account of the fishermen having brought the body into her house ; it was not cold. They put it into a bed, and rubbed it ; and Daniel went to the town for an apothecary, but life was quite gone.

Several other men were examined concerning my landing ; and they agreed, that, with the strong north wind that had arisen during the night, it was very probable that I had beaten about for many hours, and had been obliged to return nearly to the same spot from which I had departed. Besides, they observed that it appeared that I had brought the body from another place, and it was likely, that as I did not appear to know the shore, I might have put into the harbour ignorant of the distance of the town of * * * from the place where I had deposited the corpse.

Mr. Kirwin, on hearing this evidence, desired that I should be taken into the room where the body lay for interment, that it might be observed what effect the sight of it would produce upon me. This idea was probably suggested by the extreme agitation I had exhibited when the mode of the murder had been described. I was accordingly conducted, by the magistrate and several other persons, to the inn. I could not help being struck by the strange coincidences that had taken place during this eventful night ; but, knowing that I had been conversing with several persons in

the island I had inhabited about the time that the body had been found, I was perfectly tranquil as to the consequences of the affair.

I entered the room where the corpse lay, and was led up to the coffin. How can I describe my sensations on beholding it? I feel yet parched with horror, nor can I reflect on that terrible moment without shuddering and agony. The examination, the presence of the magistrate and witnesses, passed like a dream from my memory, when I saw the lifeless form of Henry Clerval stretched before me. I gasped for breath; and, throwing myself on the body, I exclaimed, "Have my murderous machinations deprived you also, my dearest Henry, of life? Two I have already destroyed; other victims await their destiny: but you, Clerval, my friend, my benefactor——"

The human frame could no longer support the agonies that I endured, and I was carried out of the room in strong convulsions.

A fever succeeded to this. I lay for two months on the point of death: my ravings, as I afterwards heard, were frightful; I called myself the murderer of William, of Justine, and of Clerval. Sometimes I entreated my attendants to assist me in the destruction of the fiend by whom I was tormented; and at others, I felt the fingers of the monster already grasping my neck, and screamed aloud with agony and terror. Fortunately, as I spoke my native language, Mr. Kirwin alone understood me; but my gestures and bitter cries were sufficient to affright the other witnesses.

Why did I not die? More miserable than man ever was before, why did I not sink into forgetfulness and rest? Death snatches away many blooming children, the only hopes of their doating parents: how many brides and youthful lovers have been one day in the bloom of health and hope, and the next a prey for worms and the decay of the tomb! Of what materials was I made, that I could thus resist so many shocks, which, like the turning of the wheel, continually renewed the torture?

But I was doomed to live; and, in two months, found myself as awaking from a dream, in a prison, stretched

on a wretched bed, surrounded by gaolers, turnkeys, bolts, and all the miserable apparatus of a dungeon. It was morning, I remember, when I thus awoke to understanding: I had forgotten the particulars of what had happened, and only felt as if some great misfortune had suddenly overwhelmed me; but when I looked around, and saw the barred windows, and the squalidness of the room in which I was, all flashed across my memory, and I groaned bitterly.

This sound disturbed an old woman who was sleeping in a chair beside me. She was a hired nurse, the wife of one of the turnkeys, and her countenance expressed all those bad qualities which often characterise that class. The lines of her face were hard and rude, like that of persons accustomed to see without sympathising in sights of misery. Her tone expressed her entire indifference; she addressed me in English, and the voice struck me as one that I had heard during my sufferings: —

“Are you better now, sir?” said she.

I replied in the same language, with a feeble voice, “I believe I am; but if it be all true, if indeed I did not dream, I am sorry that I am still alive to feel this misery and horror.”

“For that matter,” replied the old woman, “if you mean about the gentleman you murdered, I believe that it were better for you if you were dead, for I fancy it will go hard with you! However, that’s none of my business; I am sent to nurse you, and get you well; I do my duty with a safe conscience; it were well if every body did the same.”

I turned with loathing from the woman who could utter so unfeeling a speech to a person just saved, on the very edge of death; but I felt languid, and unable to reflect on all that had passed. The whole series of my life appeared to me as a dream; I sometimes doubted if indeed it were all true, for it never presented itself to my mind with the force of reality.

As the images that floated before me became more distinct, I grew feverish; a darkness pressed around me: no one was near me who soothed me with the gentle voice of

love ; no dear hand supported me. The physician came and prescribed medicines, and the old woman prepared them for me ; but utter carelessness was visible in the first, and the expression of brutality was strongly marked in the visage of the second. Who could be interested in the fate of a murderer, but the hangman who would gain his fee ?

These were my first reflections ; but I soon learned that Mr. Kirwin had shown me extreme kindness. He had caused the best room in the prison to be prepared for me (wretched indeed was the best) ; and it was he who had provided a physician and a nurse. It is true, he seldom came to see me ; for, although he ardently desired to relieve the sufferings of every human creature, he did not wish to be present at the agonies and miserable ravings of a murderer. He came, therefore, sometimes, to see that I was not neglected ; but his visits were short, and with long intervals.

One day, while I was gradually recovering, I was seated in a chair, my eyes half open, and my cheeks livid like those in death. I was overcome by gloom and misery, and often reflected I had better seek death than desire to remain in a world which to me was replete with wretchedness. At one time I considered whether I should not declare myself guilty, and suffer the penalty of the law, less innocent than poor Justine had been. Such were my thoughts, when the door of my apartment was opened, and Mr. Kirwin entered. His countenance expressed sympathy and compassion ; he drew a chair close to mine, and addressed me in French —

“ I fear that this place is very shocking to you ; can I do any thing to make you more comfortable ? ”

“ I thank you ; but all that you mention is nothing to me : on the whole earth there is no comfort which I am capable of receiving.”

“ I know that the sympathy of a stranger can be but of little relief to one borne down as you are by so strange a misfortune. But you will, I hope, soon quit this melancholy abode ; for, doubtless, evidence can easily be brought to free you from the criminal charge.”

“ That is my least concern : I am, by a course of strange

events, become the most miserable of mortals. Persecuted and tortured as I am and have been, can death be any evil to me?"

"Nothing indeed could be more unfortunate and agonising than the strange chances that have lately occurred. You were thrown, by some surprising accident, on this shore, renowned for its hospitality; seized immediately, and charged with murder. The first sight that was presented to your eyes was the body of your friend, murdered in so unaccountable a manner, and placed, as it were, by some fiend across your path."

As Mr. Kirwin said this, notwithstanding the agitation I endured on this retrospect of my sufferings, I also felt considerable surprise at the knowledge he seemed to possess concerning me. I suppose some astonishment was exhibited in my countenance; for Mr. Kirwin hastened to say —

"Immediately upon your being taken ill, all the papers that were on your person were brought me, and I examined them that I might discover some trace by which I could send to your relations an account of your misfortune and illness. I found several letters, and, among others, one which I discovered from its commencement to be from your father. I instantly wrote to Geneva: nearly two months have elapsed since the departure of my letter.—But you are ill; even now you tremble: you are unfit for agitation of any kind."

"This suspense is a thousand times worse than the most horrible event: tell me what new scene of death has been acted, and whose murder I am now to lament?"

"Your family is perfectly well," said Mr. Kirwin, with gentleness; "and some one, a friend, is come to visit you."

I know not by what chain of thought, the idea presented itself, but it instantly darted into my mind that the murderer had come to mock at my misery, and taunt me with the death of Clerval, as a new incitement for me to comply with his hellish desires. I put my hand before my eyes, and cried out in agony —

“ Oh ! take him away ! I cannot see him ; for God’s sake, do not let him enter ! ”

Mr. Kirwin regarded me with a troubled countenance. He could not help regarding my exclamation as a presumption of my guilt, and said, in rather a severe tone —

“ I should have thought, young man, that the presence of your father would have been welcome, instead of inspiring such violent repugnance.”

“ My father ! ” cried I, while every feature and every muscle was relaxed from anguish to pleasure : “ is my father indeed come ? How kind, how very kind ! But where is he, why does he not hasten to me ? ”

My change of manner surprised and pleased the magistrate ; perhaps he thought that my former exclamation was a momentary return of delirium, and now he instantly resumed his former benevolence. He rose, and quitted the room with my nurse, and in a moment my father entered it.

Nothing, at this moment, could have given me greater pleasure than the arrival of my father. I stretched out my hand to him, and cried —

“ Are you then safe — and Elizabeth — and Ernest ? ”

My father calmed me with assurances of their welfare, and endeavoured, by dwelling on these subjects so interesting to my heart, to raise my desponding spirits ; but he soon felt that a prison cannot be the abode of cheerfulness. “ What a place is this that you inhabit, my son ! ” said he, looking mournfully at the barred windows, and wretched appearance of the room. “ You travelled to seek happiness, but a fatality seems to pursue you. And poor Clerval — ”

The name of my unfortunate and murdered friend was an agitation too great to be endured in my weak state ; I shed tears.

“ Alas ! yes, my father,” replied I ; “ some destiny of the most horrible kind hangs over me, and I must live to fulfil it, or surely I should have died on the coffin of Henry.”

We were not allowed to converse for any length of time, for the precarious state of my health rendered every pre-

caution necessary that could ensure tranquillity. Mr. Kirwin came in, and insisted that my strength should not be exhausted by too much exertion. But the appearance of my father was to me like that of my good angel, and I gradually recovered my health.

As my sickness quitted me, I was absorbed by a gloomy and black melancholy, that nothing could dissipate. The image of Clerval was for ever before me, ghastly and murdered. More than once the agitation into which these reflections threw me made my friends dread a dangerous relapse. Alas! why did they preserve so miserable and detested a life? It was surely that I might fulfil my destiny, which is now drawing to a close. Soon, oh! very soon, will death extinguish these throbbings, and relieve me from the mighty weight of anguish that bears me to the dust; and, in executing the award of justice, I shall also sink to rest. Then the appearance of death was distant, although the wish was ever present to my thoughts; and I often sat for hours motionless and speechless, wishing for some mighty revolution that might bury me and my destroyer in its ruins.

The season of the assizes approached. I had already been three months in prison; and although I was still weak, and in continual danger of a relapse, I was obliged to travel nearly a hundred miles to the county-town, where the court was held. Mr. Kirwin charged himself with every care of collecting witnesses, and arranging my defence. I was spared the disgrace of appearing publicly as a criminal, as the case was not brought before the court that decides on life and death. The grand jury rejected the bill, on its being proved that I was on the Orkney Islands at the hour the body of my friend was found; and a fortnight after my removal I was liberated from prison.

My father was enraptured on finding me freed from the vexations of a criminal charge, that I was again allowed to breathe the fresh atmosphere, and permitted to return to my native country. I did not participate in these feelings; for to me the walls of a dungeon or a palace were alike hateful. The cup of life was poisoned for ever; and although the sun shone upon me, as upon the happy and gay of heart, I saw

around me nothing but a dense and frightful darkness, penetrated by no light but the glimmer of two eyes that glared upon me. Sometimes they were the expressive eyes of Henry, languishing in death, the dark orbs nearly covered by the lids, and the long black lashes that fringed them; sometimes it was the watery, clouded eyes of the monster, as I first saw them in my chamber at Ingolstadt.

My father tried to awaken in me the feelings of affection. He talked of Geneva, which I should soon visit — of Elizabeth and Ernest; but these words only drew deep groans from me. Sometimes, indeed, I felt a wish for happiness; and thought, with melancholy delight, of my beloved cousin; or longed, with a devouring *maladie du pays*, to see once more the blue lake and rapid Rhone, that had been so dear to me in early childhood: but my general state of feeling was a torpor, in which a prison was as welcome a residence as the divinest scene in nature; and these fits were seldom interrupted but by paroxysms of anguish and despair. At these moments I often endeavoured to put an end to the existence I loathed; and it required unceasing attendance and vigilance to restrain me from committing some dreadful act of violence.

Yet one duty remained to me, the recollection of which finally triumphed over my selfish despair. It was necessary that I should return without delay to Geneva, there to watch over the lives of those I so fondly loved; and to lie in wait for the murderer, that if any chance led me to the place of his concealment, or if he dared again to blast me by his presence, I might, with unflinching aim, put an end to the existence of the monstrous Image which I had endued with the mockery of a soul still more monstrous. My father still desired to delay our departure, fearful that I could not sustain the fatigues of a journey: for I was a shattered wreck,—the shadow of a human being. My strength was gone. I was a mere skeleton; and fever night and day preyed upon my wasted frame.

Still, as I urged our leaving Ireland with such inquietude and impatience, my father thought it best to yield. We took our passage on board a vessel bound for Havre-de-Grace, and sailed with a fair wind from the Irish shores.

It was midnight. I lay on the deck, looking at the stars, and listening to the dashing of the waves. I hailed the darkness that shut Ireland from my sight ; and my pulse beat with a feverish joy when I reflected that I should soon see Geneva. The past appeared to me in the light of a frightful dream ; yet the vessel in which I was, the wind that blew me from the detested shore of Ireland, and the sea which surrounded me, told me too forcibly that I was deceived by no vision, and that Clerval, my friend and dearest companion, had fallen a victim to me and the monster of my creation. I repassed, in my memory, my whole life ; my quiet happiness while residing with my family in Geneva, the death of my mother, and my departure for Ingolstadt. I remembered, shuddering, the mad enthusiasm that hurried me on to the creation of my hideous enemy, and I called to mind the night in which he first lived. I was unable to pursue the train of thought ; a thousand feelings pressed upon me, and I wept bitterly.

Ever since my recovery from the fever, I had been in the custom of taking every night a small quantity of laudanum ; for it was by means of this drug only that I was enabled to gain the rest necessary for the preservation of life. Oppressed by the recollection of my various misfortunes, I now swallowed double my usual quantity, and soon slept profoundly. But sleep did not afford me respite from thought and misery ; my dreams presented a thousand objects that scared me. Towards morning I was possessed by a kind of night-mare ; I felt the fiend's grasp in my neck, and could not free myself from it ; groans and cries rung in my ears. My father, who was watching over me, perceiving my restlessness, awoke me ; the dashing waves were around : the cloudy sky above ; the fiend was not here : a sense of security, a feeling that a truce was established between the present hour and the irresistible, disastrous future, imparted to me a kind of calm forgetfulness, of which the human mind is by its structure peculiarly susceptible.

CHAPTER XXII.

THE voyage came to an end. We landed, and proceeded to Paris. I soon found that I had overtaxed my strength, and that I must repose before I could continue my journey. My father's care and attentions were indefatigable; but he did not know the origin of my sufferings, and sought erroneous methods to remedy the incurable ill. He wished me to seek amusement in society. I abhorred the face of man. Oh, not abhorred! they were my brethren, my fellow beings, and I felt attracted even to the most repulsive among them, as to creatures of an angelic nature and celestial mechanism. But I felt that I had no right to share their intercourse. I had unchained an enemy among them, whose joy it was to shed their blood, and to revel in their groans. How they would, each and all, abhor me, and hunt me from the world, did they know my unhallowed acts, and the crimes which had their source in me!

My father yielded at length to my desire to avoid society, and strove by various arguments to banish my despair. Sometimes he thought that I felt deeply the degradation of being obliged to answer a charge of murder, and he endeavoured to prove to me the futility of pride.

"Alas! my father," said I, "how little do you know me. Human beings, their feelings and passions, would indeed be degraded if such a wretch as I felt pride. Justine, poor unhappy Justine, was as innocent as I, and she suffered the same charge; she died for it; and I am the cause of this — I murdered her. William, Justine, and Henry — they all died by my hands."

My father had often, during my imprisonment, heard me make the same assertion; when I thus accused myself, he sometimes seemed to desire an explanation, and at others he appeared to consider it as the offspring of delirium, and that, during my illness, some idea of this kind had presented itself to my imagination, the remembrance of which I preserved in my convalescence. I avoided explanation,

and maintained a continual silence concerning the wretch I had created. I had a persuasion that I should be supposed mad ; and this in itself would for ever have chained my tongue. But, besides, I could not bring myself to disclose a secret which would fill my hearer with consternation, and make fear and unnatural horror the inmates of his breast. I checked, therefore, my impatient thirst for sympathy, and was silent when I would have given the world to have confided the fatal secret. Yet still words like those I have recorded, would burst uncontrollably from me. I could offer no explanation of them ; but their truth in part relieved the burden of my mysterious woe.

Upon this occasion my father said, with an expression of unbounded wonder, " My dearest Victor, what infatuation is this ? My dear son, I entreat you never to make such an assertion again."

" I am not mad," I cried energetically ; " the sun and the heavens, who have viewed my operations, can bear witness of my truth. I am the assassin of those most innocent victims ; they died by my machinations. A thousand times would I have shed my own blood, drop by drop, to have saved their lives ; but I could not, my father, indeed I could not sacrifice the whole human race."

The conclusion of this speech convinced my father that my ideas were deranged, and he instantly changed the subject of our conversation, and endeavoured to alter the course of my thoughts. He wished as much as possible to obliterate the memory of the scenes that had taken place in Ireland, and never alluded to them, or suffered me to speak of my misfortunes.

As time passed away I became more calm : misery had her dwelling in my heart, but I no longer talked in the same incoherent manner of my own crimes ; sufficient for me was the consciousness of them. By the utmost self-violence, I curbed the imperious voice of wretchedness, which sometimes desired to declare itself to the whole world ; and my manners were calmer and more composed than they had ever been since my journey to the sea of ice.

A few days before we left Paris on our way to Switzerland, I received the following letter from Elizabeth : —

“ My dear Friend,

“ It gave me the greatest pleasure to receive a letter from my uncle dated at Paris ; you are no longer at a formidable distance, and I may hope to see you in less than a fortnight. My poor cousin, how much you must have suffered ! I expect to see you looking even more ill than when you quitted Geneva. This winter has been passed most miserably, tortured as I have been by anxious suspense ; yet I hope to see peace in your countenance, and to find that your heart is not totally void of comfort and tranquillity.

“ Yet I fear that the same feelings now exist that made you so miserable a year ago, even perhaps augmented by time. I would not disturb you at this period, when so many misfortunes weigh upon you ; but a conversation that I had with my uncle previous to his departure renders some explanation necessary before we meet.

“ Explanation ! you may possibly say ; what can Elizabeth have to explain ? If you really say this, my questions are answered, and all my doubts satisfied. But you are distant from me, and it is possible that you may dread, and yet be pleased with this explanation ; and, in a probability of this being the case, I dare not any longer postpone writing what, during your absence, I have often wished to express to you, but have never had the courage to begin.

“ You well know, Victor, that our union had been the favourite plan of your parents ever since our infancy. We were told this when young, and taught to look forward to it as an event that would certainly take place. We were affectionate playfellows during childhood, and, I believe, dear and valued friends to one another as we grew older. But as brother and sister often entertain a lively affection towards each other, without desiring a more intimate union, may not such also be our case ? Tell me, dearest Victor. Answer me, I conjure you, by our mutual happiness, with simple truth — Do you not love another ?

“ You have travelled ; you have spent several years of your life at Ingolstadt ; and I confess to you, my friend, that when I saw you last autumn so unhappy, flying to

solitude, from the society of every creature, I could not help supposing that you might regret our connection, and believe yourself bound in honour to fulfil the wishes of you parents, although they opposed themselves to your inclinations. But this is false reasoning. I confess to you, my friend, that I love you, and that in my airy dreams of futurity you have been my constant friend and companion. But it is your happiness I desire as well as my own, when I declare to you, that our marriage would render me eternally miserable, unless it were the dictate of your own free choice. Even now I weep to think, that, borne down as you are by the cruellest misfortunes, you may stifle, by the word *honour*, all hope of that love and happiness which would alone restore you to yourself. I, who have so disinterested an affection for you, may increase your miseries tenfold, by being an obstacle to your wishes. Ah! Victor, be assured that your cousin and playmate has too sincere a love for you not to be made miserable by this supposition. Be happy, my friend; and if you obey me in this one request, remain satisfied that nothing on earth will have the power to interrupt my tranquillity.

“ Do not let this letter disturb you; do not answer tomorrow, or the next day, or even until you come, if it will give you pain. My uncle will send me news of your health; and if I see but one smile on your lips when we meet, occasioned by this or any other exertion of mine, I shall need no other happiness.

“ ELIZABETH LAVENZA.

“ Geneva, May 18th, 17—.”

This letter revived in my memory what I had before forgotten, the threat of the fiend—“ *I will be with you on your wedding night!*” Such was my sentence, and on that night would the dæmon employ every art to destroy me, and tear me from the glimpse of happiness which promised partly to console my sufferings. On that night he had determined to consummate his crimes by my death. Well, be it so; a deadly struggle would then assuredly take place, in which if he were victorious I should be at peace, and his power over me be at an end. If he were vanquished, I should be a free man. Alas! what freedom? such as the peasant enjoys

when his family have been massacred before his eyes, his cottage burnt, his lands laid waste, and he is turned adrift, homeless, penniless, and alone, but free. Such would be my liberty, except that in my Elizabeth I possessed a treasure ; alas ! balanced by those horrors of remorse and guilt, which would pursue me until death.

Sweet and beloved Elizabeth ! I read and re-read her letter, and some softened feelings stole into my heart, and dared to whisper paradisiacal dreams of love and joy ; but the apple was already eaten, and the angel's arm bared to drive me from all hope. Yet I would die to make her happy. If the monster executed his threat, death was inevitable ; yet, again, I considered whether my marriage would hasten my fate. My destruction might indeed arrive a few months sooner ; but if my torturer should suspect that I postponed it, influenced by his menaces, he would surely find other, and perhaps more dreadful means of revenge. He had vowed *to be with me on my wedding-night*, yet he did not consider that threat as binding him to peace in the mean time ; for, as if to show me that he was not yet satiated with blood, he had murdered Clerval immediately after the enunciation of his threats. I resolved, therefore, that if my immediate union with my cousin would conduce either to hers or my father's happiness, my adversary's designs against my life should not retard it a single hour.

In this state of mind I wrote to Elizabeth. My letter was calm and affectionate. " I fear, my beloved girl," I said, " little happiness remains for us on earth ; yet all that I may one day enjoy is centred in you. Chase away your idle fears ; to you alone do I consecrate my life, and my endeavours for contentment. I have one secret, Elizabeth, a dreadful one ; when revealed to you, it will chill your frame with horror, and then, far from being surprised at my misery, you will only wonder that I survive what I have endured. I will confide this tale of misery and terror to you the day after our marriage shall take place ; for, my sweet cousin, there must be perfect confidence between us. But until then, I conjure you, do not mention or allude to it. This I most earnestly entreat, and I know you will comply."

In about a week after the arrival of Elizabeth's letter, we returned to Geneva. The sweet girl welcomed me with warm affection ; yet tears were in her eyes, as she beheld my emaciated frame and feverish cheeks. I saw a change in her also. She was thinner, and had lost much of that heavenly vivacity that had before charmed me ; but her gentleness, and soft looks of compassion, made her a more fit companion for one blasted and miserable as I was.

The tranquillity which I now enjoyed did not endure. Memory brought madness with it ; and when I thought of what had passed, a real insanity possessed me ; sometimes I was furious, and burnt with rage ; sometimes low and despondent. I neither spoke, nor looked at any one, but sat motionless, bewildered by the multitude of miseries that overcame me.

Elizabeth alone had the power to draw me from these fits ; her gentle voice would soothe me when transported by passion, and inspire me with human feelings when sunk in torpor. She wept with me, and for me. When reason returned, she would remonstrate, and endeavour to inspire me with resignation. Ah ! it is well for the unfortunate to be resigned, but for the guilty there is no peace. The agonies of remorse poison the luxury there is otherwise sometimes found in indulging the excess of grief.

Soon after my arrival, my father spoke of my immediate marriage with Elizabeth. I remained silent.

“ Have you, then, some other attachment ? ”

“ None on earth. I love Elizabeth, and look forward to our union with delight. Let the day therefore be fixed ; and on it I will consecrate myself, in life or death, to the happiness of my cousin.”

“ My dear Victor, do not speak thus. Heavy misfortunes have befallen us ; but let us only cling closer to what remains, and transfer our love for those whom we have lost, to those who yet live. Our circle will be small, but bound close by the ties of affection and mutual misfortune. And when time shall have softened your despair, new and dear objects of care will be born to replace those of whom we have been so cruelly deprived.”

Such were the lessons of my father. But to me the

remembrance of the threat returned: nor can you wonder, that, omnipotent as the fiend had yet been in his deeds of blood, I should almost regard him as invincible; and that when he had pronounced the words, "I shall be with you on your wedding-night," I should regard the threatened fate as unavoidable. But death was no evil to me, if the loss of Elizabeth were balanced with it; and I therefore, with a contented and even cheerful countenance, agreed with my father, that if my cousin would consent, the ceremony should take place in ten days, and thus put, as I imagined, the seal to my fate.

Great God! if for one instant I had thought what might be the hellish intention of my fiendish adversary, I would rather have banished myself for ever from my native country, and wandered a friendless outcast over the earth, than have consented to this miserable marriage. But, as if possessed of magic powers, the monster had blinded me to his real intentions; and when I thought that I had prepared only my own death, I hastened that of a far dearer victim.

As the period fixed for our marriage drew nearer, whether from cowardice or a prophetic feeling, I felt my heart sink within me. But I concealed my feelings by an appearance of hilarity, that brought smiles and joy to the countenance of my father, but hardly deceived the ever-watchful and nicer eye of Elizabeth. She looked forward to our union with placid contentment, not unmingled with a little fear, which past misfortunes had impressed, that what now appeared certain and tangible happiness, might soon dissipate into an airy dream, and leave no trace but deep and everlasting regret.

Preparations were made for the event; congratulatory visits were received; and all wore a smiling appearance. I shut up, as well as I could, in my own heart the anxiety that preyed there, and entered with seeming earnestness into the plans of my father, although they might only serve as the decorations of my tragedy. Through my father's exertions, a part of the inheritance of Elizabeth had been restored to her by the Austrian government. A small possession on the shores of Como belonged to her. It was agreed that, immediately after our union, we should proceed

to Villa Lavenza, and spend our first days of happiness beside the beautiful lake near which it stood.

In the mean time I took every precaution to defend my person, in case the fiend should openly attack me. I carried pistols and a dagger constantly about me, and was ever on the watch to prevent artifice; and by these means gained a greater degree of tranquillity. Indeed, as the period approached, the threat appeared more as a delusion, not to be regarded as worthy to disturb my peace, while the happiness I hoped for in my marriage wore a greater appearance of certainty, as the day fixed for its solemnisation drew nearer, and I heard it continually spoken of as an occurrence which no accident could possibly prevent.

Elizabeth seemed happy; my tranquil demeanour contributed greatly to calm her mind. But on the day that was to fulfil my wishes and my destiny, she was melancholy, and a presentiment of evil pervaded her; and perhaps also she thought of the dreadful secret which I had promised to reveal to her on the following day. My father was in the mean time overjoyed, and, in the bustle of preparation, only recognised in the melancholy of his niece the diffidence of a bride.

After the ceremony was performed, a large party assembled at my father's; but it was agreed that Elizabeth and I should commence our journey by water, sleeping that night at Evian, and continuing our voyage on the following day. The day was fair, the wind favourable, all smiled on our nuptial embarkation.

Those were the last moments of my life during which I enjoyed the feeling of happiness. We passed rapidly along: the sun was hot, but we were sheltered from its rays by a kind of canopy, while we enjoyed the beauty of the scene, sometimes on one side of the lake, where we saw Mont Salève, the pleasant banks of Montalègre, and at a distance, surmounting all, the beautiful Mont Blanc, and the assemblage of snowy mountains that in vain endeavour to emulate her; sometimes coasting the opposite banks, we saw the mighty Jura opposing its dark side to the ambition that would quit its native country, and an almost insurmountable barrier to the invader who should wish to enslave it.

I took the hand of Elizabeth: "You are sorrowful, my love. Ah! if you knew what I have suffered, and what I may yet endure, you would endeavour to let me taste the quiet and freedom from despair, that this one day at least permits me to enjoy."

"Be happy, my dear Victor," replied Elizabeth; "there is, I hope, nothing to distress you; and be assured that if a lively joy is not painted in my face, my heart is contented. Something whispers to me not to depend too much on the prospect that is opened before us; but I will not listen to such a sinister voice. Observe how fast we move along, and how the clouds, which sometimes obscure and sometimes rise above the dome of Mont Blanc, render this scene of beauty still more interesting. Look also at the innumerable fish that are swimming in the clear waters, where we can distinguish every pebble that lies at the bottom. What a divine day! how happy and serene all nature appears!"

Thus Elizabeth endeavoured to divert her thoughts and mine from all reflection upon melancholy subjects. But her temper was fluctuating; joy for a few instants shone in her eyes, but it continually gave place to distraction and reverie.

The sun sunk lower in the heavens; we passed the river Drance, and observed its path through the chasms of the higher, and the glens of the lower hills. The Alps here come closer to the lake, and we approached the amphitheatre of mountains which forms its eastern boundary. The spire of Evian shone under the woods that surrounded it, and the range of mountain above mountain by which it was overhung.

The wind, which had hitherto carried us along with amazing rapidity, sunk at sunset to a light breeze; the soft air just ruffled the water, and caused a pleasant motion among the trees as we approached the shore, from which it wafted the most delightful scent of flowers and hay. The sun sunk beneath the horizon as we landed; and as I touched the shore, I felt those cares and fears revive, which soon were to clasp me, and cling to me for ever.

CHAPTER XXIII.

IT was eight o'clock when we landed ; we walked for a short time on the shore, enjoying the transitory light, and then retired to the inn, and contemplated the lovely scene of waters, woods, and mountains, obscured in darkness, yet still displaying their black outlines.

The wind, which had fallen in the south, now rose with great violence in the west. The moon had reached her summit in the heavens, and was beginning to descend ; the clouds swept across it swifter than the flight of the vulture, and dimmed her rays, while the lake reflected the scene of the busy heavens, rendered still busier by the restless waves that were beginning to rise. Suddenly a heavy storm of rain descended.

I had been calm during the day ; but so soon as night obscured the shapes of objects, a thousand fears arose in my mind. I was anxious and watchful, while my right hand grasped a pistol which was hidden in my bosom ; every sound terrified me ; but I resolved that I would sell my life dearly, and not shrink from the conflict until my own life, or that of my adversary, was extinguished.

Elizabeth observed my agitation for some time in timid and fearful silence ; but there was something in my glance which communicated terror to her, and trembling she asked, " What is it that agitates you, my dear Victor ? What is it you fear ? "

" Oh ! peace, peace, my love," replied I ; " this night, and all will be safe : but this night is dreadful, very dreadful."

I passed an hour in this state of mind, when suddenly I reflected how fearful the combat which I momentarily expected would be to my wife, and I earnestly entreated her to retire, resolving not to join her until I had obtained some knowledge as to the situation of my enemy.

She left me, and I continued some time walking up and down the passages of the house, and inspecting every corner

that might afford a retreat to my adversary. But I discovered no trace of him, and was beginning to conjecture that some fortunate chance had intervened to prevent the execution of his menaces ; when suddenly I heard a shrill and dreadful scream. It came from the room into which Elizabeth had retired. As I heard it, the whole truth rushed into my mind, my arms dropped, the motion of every muscle and fibre was suspended ; I could feel the blood trickling in my veins, and tingling in the extremities of my limbs. This state lasted but for an instant ; the scream was repeated, and I rushed into the room.

Great God ! why did I not then expire ! Why am I here to relate the destruction of the best hope, and the purest creature of earth ? She was there, lifeless and inanimate, thrown across the bed, her head hanging down, and her pale and distorted features half covered by her hair. Every where I turn I see the same figure—her bloodless arms and relaxed form flung by the murderer on its bridal bier. Could I behold this, and live ? Alas ! life is obstinate, and clings closest where it is most hated. For a moment only did I lose recollection ; I fell senseless on the ground.

When I recovered, I found myself surrounded by the people of the inn ; their countenances expressed a breathless terror : but the horror of others appeared only as a mockery, a shadow of the feelings that oppressed me. I escaped from them to the room where lay the body of Elizabeth, my love, my wife, so lately living, so dear, so worthy. She had been moved from the posture in which I had first beheld her ; and now, as she lay, her head upon her arm, and a handkerchief thrown across her face and neck, I might have supposed her asleep. I rushed towards her, and embraced her with ardour ; but the deadly languor and coldness of the limbs told me, that what I now held in my arms had ceased to be the Elizabeth whom I had loved and cherished. The murderous mark of the fiend's grasp was on her neck, and the breath had ceased to issue from her lips.

While I still hung over her in the agony of despair, I happened to look up. The windows of the room had before

been darkened, and I felt a kind of panic on seeing the pale yellow light of the moon illuminate the chamber. The shutters had been thrown back ; and, with a sensation of horror not to be described, I saw at the open window a figure the most hideous and abhorred. A grin was on the face of the monster ; he seemed to jeer, as with his fiendish finger he pointed towards the corpse of my wife. I rushed towards the window, and drawing a pistol from my bosom, fired ; but he eluded me, leaped from his station, and, running with the swiftness of lightning, plunged into the lake.

The report of the pistol brought a crowd into the room. I pointed to the spot where he had disappeared, and we followed the track with boats ; nets were cast, but in vain. After passing several hours, we returned hopeless, most of my companions believing it to have been a form conjured up by my fancy. After having landed, they proceeded to search the country, parties going in different directions among the woods and vines.

I attempted to accompany them, and proceeded a short distance from the house ; but my head whirled round, my steps were like those of a drunken man, I fell at last in a state of utter exhaustion ; a film covered my eyes, and my skin was parched with the heat of fever. In this state I was carried back, and placed on a bed, hardly conscious of what had happened ; my eyes wandered round the room, as if to seek something that I had lost.

After an interval, I arose, and, as if by instinct, crawled into the room where the corpse of my beloved lay. There were women weeping around—I hung over it, and joined my sad tears to theirs—all this time no distinct idea presented itself to my mind ; but my thoughts rambled to various subjects, reflecting confusedly on my misfortunes, and their cause. I was bewildered in a cloud of wonder and horror. The death of William, the execution of Justine, the murder of Clerval, and lastly of my wife ; even at that moment I knew not that my only remaining friends were safe from the malignity of the fiend ; my father even now might be writhing under his grasp, and Ernest might be dead at his feet. This idea made me shudder, and re-

called me to action. I started up, and resolved to return to Geneva with all possible speed.

There were no horses to be procured, and I must return by the lake; but the wind was unfavourable, and the rain fell in torrents. However, it was hardly morning, and I might reasonably hope to arrive by night. I hired men to row, and took an oar myself; for I had always experienced relief from mental torment in bodily exercise. But the overflowing misery I now felt, and the excess of agitation that I endured, rendered me incapable of any exertion. I threw down the oar; and leaning my head upon my hands, gave way to every gloomy idea that arose. If I looked up, I saw the scenes which were familiar to me in my happier time, and which I had contemplated but the day before in the company of her who was now but a shadow and a recollection. Tears streamed from my eyes. The rain had ceased for a moment, and I saw the fish play in the waters as they had done a few hours before; they had then been observed by Elizabeth. Nothing is so painful to the human mind as a great and sudden change. The sun might shine, or the clouds might lower: but nothing could appear to me as it had done the day before. A fiend had snatched from me every hope of future happiness: no creature had ever been so miserable as I was; so frightful an event is single in the history of man.

But why should I dwell upon the incidents that followed this last overwhelming event? Mine has been a tale of horrors; I have reached their *acme*, and what I must now relate can but be tedious to you. Know that, one by one, my friends were snatched away; I was left desolate. My own strength is exhausted; and I must tell, in a few words, what remains of my hideous narration.

I arrived at Geneva. My father and Ernest yet lived; but the former sunk under the tidings that I bore. I see him now, excellent and venerable old man! his eyes wandered in vacancy, for they had lost their charm and their delight — his Elizabeth, his more than daughter, whom he doated on with all that affection which a man feels, who in the decline of life, having few affections, clings more earnestly to those that remain. Cursed, cursed be the fiend

that brought misery on his grey hairs, and doomed him to waste in wretchedness ! He could not live under the horrors that were accumulated around him ; the springs of existence suddenly gave way : he was unable to rise from his bed, and in a few days he died in my arms.

What then became of me ? I know not ; I lost sensation, and chains and darkness were the only objects that pressed upon me. Sometimes, indeed, I dreamt that I wandered in flowery meadows and pleasant vales with the friends of my youth ; but I awoke, and found myself in a dungeon. Melancholy followed, but by degrees I gained a clear conception of my miseries and situation, and was then released from my prison. For they had called me mad ; and during many months, as I understood, a solitary cell had been my habitation.

Liberty, however, had been an useless gift to me, had I not, as I awakened to reason, at the same time awakened to revenge. As the memory of past misfortunes pressed upon me, I began to reflect on their cause — the monster whom I had created, the miserable dæmon whom I had sent abroad into the world for my destruction. I was possessed by a maddening rage when I thought of him, and desired and ardently prayed that I might have him within my grasp to wreak a great and signal revenge on his cursed head.

Nor did my hate long confine itself to useless wishes ; I began to reflect on the best means of securing him ; and for this purpose, about a month after my release, I repaired to a criminal judge in the town, and told him that I had an accusation to make ; that I knew the destroyer of my family ; and that I required him to exert his whole authority for the apprehension of the murderer.

The magistrate listened to me with attention and kindness : — “ Be assured, sir,” said he, “ no pains or exertions on my part shall be spared to discover the villain.”

“ I thank you,” replied I ; “ listen, therefore, to the deposition that I have to make. It is indeed a tale so strange, that I should fear you would not credit it, were there not something in truth which, however wonderful, forces conviction. The story is too connected to be mis-

taken for a dream, and I have no motive for falsehood." My manner, as I thus addressed him, was impressive, but calm; I had formed in my own heart a resolution to pursue my destroyer to death; and this purpose quieted my agony, and for an interval reconciled me to life. I now related my history, briefly, but with firmness and precision, marking the dates with accuracy, and never deviating into invective or exclamation.

The magistrate appeared at first perfectly incredulous, but as I continued he became more attentive and interested; I saw him sometimes shudder with horror, at others a lively surprise, unmingled with disbelief, was painted on his countenance.

When I had concluded my narration, I said, "This is the being whom I accuse, and for whose seizure and punishment I call upon you to exert your whole power. It is your duty as a magistrate, and I believe and hope that your feelings as a man will not revolt from the execution of those functions on this occasion."

This address caused a considerable change in the physiognomy of my own auditor. He had heard my story with that half kind of belief that is given to a tale of spirits and supernatural events; but when he was called upon to act officially in consequence, the whole tide of his incredulity returned. He, however, answered mildly, "I would willingly afford you every aid in your pursuit; but the creature of whom you speak appears to have powers which would put all my exertions to defiance. Who can follow an animal which can traverse the sea of ice, and inhabit caves and dens where no man would venture to intrude? Besides, some months have elapsed since the commission of his crimes, and no one can conjecture to what place he has wandered, or what region he may now inhabit."

"I do not doubt that he hovers near the spot which I inhabit; and if he has indeed taken refuge in the Alps, he may be hunted like the chamois, and destroyed as a beast of prey. But I perceive your thoughts: you do not credit my narrative, and do not intend to pursue my enemy with the punishment which is his desert."

As I spoke, rage sparkled in my eyes ; the magistrate was intimidated : — “ You are mistaken,” said he, “ I will exert myself ; and if it is in my power to seize the monster, be assured that he shall suffer punishment proportionate to his crimes. But I fear, from what you have yourself described to be his properties, that this will prove impracticable ; and thus, while every proper measure is pursued, you should make up your mind to disappointment.”

“ That cannot be ; but all that I can say will be of little avail. My revenge is of no moment to you ; yet, while I allow it to be a vice, I confess that it is the devouring and only passion of my soul. My rage is unspeakable, when I reflect that the murderer, whom I have turned loose upon society, still exists. You refuse my just demand : I have but one resource ; and I devote myself, either in my life or death, to his destruction.”

I trembled with excess of agitation as I said this ; there was a frenzy in my manner, and something, I doubt not, of that haughty fierceness which the martyrs of old are said to have possessed. But to a Genevan magistrate, whose mind was occupied by far other ideas than those of devotion and heroism, this elevation of mind had much the appearance of madness. He endeavoured to soothe me as a nurse does a child, and reverted to my tale as the effects of delirium.

“ Man,” I cried, “ how ignorant art thou in thy pride of wisdom ! Cease ; you know not what it is you say.”

I broke from the house angry and disturbed, and retired to meditate on some other mode of action.

CHAPTER XXIV.

MY present situation was one in which all voluntary thought was swallowed up and lost. I was hurried away by fury ; revenge alone endowed me with strength and composure ; it moulded my feelings, and allowed me to be calculating

and calm, at periods when otherwise delirium or death would have been my portion.

My first resolution was to quit Geneva for ever ; my country, which, when I was happy and beloved, was dear to me, now, in my adversity, became hateful. I provided myself with a sum of money, together with a few jewels which had belonged to my mother, and departed.

And now my wanderings began, which are to cease but with life. I have traversed a vast portion of the earth, and have endured all the hardships which travellers, in deserts and barbarous countries, are wont to meet. How I have lived I hardly know ; many times have I stretched my failing limbs upon the sandy plain, and prayed for death. But revenge kept me alive ; I dared not die, and leave my adversary in being.

When I quitted Geneva, my first labour was to gain some clue by which I might trace the steps of my fiendish enemy. But my plan was unsettled ; and I wandered many hours round the confines of the town, uncertain what path I should pursue. As night approached, I found myself at the entrance of the cemetery where William, Elizabeth, and my father reposed. I entered it, and approached the tomb which marked their graves. Every thing was silent, except the leaves of the trees, which were gently agitated by the wind ; the night was nearly dark ; and the scene would have been solemn and affecting even to an uninterested observer. The spirits of the departed seemed to flit around, and to cast a shadow, which was felt but not seen, around the head of the mourner.

The deep grief which this scene had at first excited quickly gave way to rage and despair. They were dead, and I lived ; their murderer also lived, and to destroy him I must drag out my weary existence. I knelt on the grass, and kissed the earth, and with quivering lips exclaimed, " By the sacred earth on which I kneel, by the shades that wander near me, by the deep and eternal grief that I feel, I swear ; and by thee, O Night, and the spirits that preside over thee, to pursue the dæmon, who caused this misery, until he or I shall perish in mortal conflict. For this purpose I will preserve my life: to execute this dear

revenge, will I again behold the sun, and tread the green herbage of earth, which otherwise should vanish from my eyes for ever. And I call on you, spirits of the dead ; and on you, wandering ministers of vengeance, to aid and conduct me in my work. Let the cursed and hellish monster drink deep of agony ; let him feel the despair that now torments me.”

I had begun my adjuration with solemnity, and an awe which almost assured me that the shades of my murdered friends heard and approved my devotion ; but the furies possessed me as I concluded, and rage choked my utterance.

I was answered through the stillness of night by a loud and fiendish laugh. It rung on my ears long and heavily ; the mountains re-echoed it, and I felt as if all hell surrounded me with mockery and laughter. Surely in that moment I should have been possessed by frenzy, and have destroyed my miserable existence, but that my vow was heard, and that I was reserved for vengeance. The laughter died away ; when a well-known and abhorred voice, apparently close to my ear, addressed me in an audible whisper — “ I am satisfied : miserable wretch ! you have determined to live, and I am satisfied.”

I darted towards the spot from which the sound proceeded ; but the devil eluded my grasp. Suddenly the broad disk of the moon arose, and shone full upon his ghastly and distorted shape, as he fled with more than mortal speed.

I pursued him ; and for many months this has been my task. Guided by a slight clue, I followed the windings of the Rhone, but vainly. The blue Mediterranean appeared ; and, by a strange chance, I saw the fiend enter by night, and hide himself in a vessel bound for the Black Sea. I took my passage in the same ship ; but he escaped, I know not how.

Amidst the wilds of Tartary and Russia, although he still evaded me, I have ever followed in his track. Sometimes the peasants, scared by this horrid apparition, informed me of his path ; sometimes he himself, who feared that if I lost all trace of him, I should despair and die, left some mark to guide me. The snows descended on my

head, and I saw the print of his huge step on the white plain. To you first entering on life, to whom care is new, and agony unknown, how can you understand what I have felt, and still feel? Cold, want, and fatigue, were the least pains which I was destined to endure; I was cursed by some devil, and carried about with me my eternal hell; yet still a spirit of good followed and directed my steps; and, when I most murmured, would suddenly extricate me from seemingly insurmountable difficulties. Sometimes, when nature, overcome by hunger, sunk under the exhaustion, a repast was prepared for me in the desert, that restored and inspirited me. The fare was, indeed, coarse, such as the peasants of the country ate; but I will not doubt that it was set there by the spirits that I had invoked to aid me. Often, when all was dry, the heavens cloudless, and I was parched by thirst, a slight cloud would bedim the sky, shed the few drops that revived me, and vanish.

I followed, when I could, the courses of the rivers; but the dæmon generally avoided these, as it was here that the population of the country chiefly collected. In other places human beings were seldom seen; and I generally subsisted on the wild animals that crossed my path. I had money with me, and gained the friendship of the villagers by distributing it; or I brought with me some food that I had killed, which, after taking a small part, I always presented to those who had provided me with fire and utensils for cooking.

My life, as it passed thus, was indeed hateful to me, and it was during sleep alone that I could taste joy. O blessed sleep! often, when most miserable, I sank to repose, and my dreams lulled me even to rapture. The spirits that guarded me had provided these moments, or rather hours, of happiness, that I might retain strength to fulfil my pilgrimage. Deprived of this respite, I should have sunk under my hardships. During the day I was sustained and inspirited by the hope of night: for in sleep I saw my friends, my wife, and my beloved country; again I saw the benevolent countenance of my father, heard the silver tones of my Elizabeth's voice, and beheld Clerval enjoying

health and youth. Often, when wearied by a toilsome march, I persuaded myself that I was dreaming until night should come, and that I should then enjoy reality in the arms of my dearest friends. What agonising fondness did I feel for them ! how did I cling to their dear forms, as sometimes they haunted even my waking hours, and persuade myself that they still lived ! At such moments vengeance, that burned within me, died in my heart, and I pursued my path towards the destruction of the dæmon, more as a task enjoined by heaven, as the mechanical impulse of some power of which I was unconscious, than as the ardent desire of my soul.

What his feelings were whom I pursued I cannot know. Sometimes, indeed, he left marks in writing on the barks of the trees, or cut in stone, that guided me, and instigated my fury. " My reign is not yet over," (these words were legible in one of these inscriptions;) " you live, and my power is complete. Follow me ; I seek the everlasting ices of the north, where you will feel the misery of cold and frost, to which I am impassive. You will find near this place, if you follow not too tardily, a dead hare ; eat, and be refreshed. Come on, my enemy ; we have yet to wrestle for our lives ; but many hard and miserable hours must you endure until that period shall arrive."

Scoffing devil ! Again do I vow vengeance ; again do I devote thee, miserable fiend, to torture and death. Never will I give up my search, until he or I perish ; and then with what ecstasy shall I join my Elizabeth, and my departed friends, who even now prepare for me the reward of my tedious toil and horrible pilgrimage !

As I still pursued my journey to the northward, the snows thickened, and the cold increased in a degree almost too severe to support. The peasants were shut up in their hovels, and only a few of the most hardy ventured forth to seize the animals whom starvation had forced from their hiding-places to seek for prey. The rivers were covered with ice, and no fish could be procured ; and thus I was cut off from my chief article of maintenance.

The triumph of my enemy increased with the difficulty of my labours. One inscription that he left was in these

words:—"Prepare! your toils only begin: wrap yourself in furs, and provide food; for we shall soon enter upon a journey where your sufferings will satisfy my everlasting hatred."

My courage and perseverance were invigorated by these scoffing words; I resolved not to fail in my purpose; and, calling on Heaven to support me, I continued with unabated fervour to traverse immense deserts, until the ocean appeared at a distance, and formed the utmost boundary of the horizon. Oh! how unlike it was to the blue seas of the south! Covered with ice, it was only to be distinguished from land by its superior wildness and ruggedness. The Greeks wept for joy when they beheld the Mediterranean from the hills of Asia, and hailed with rapture the boundary of their toils. I did not weep; but I knelt down, and, with a full heart, thanked my guiding spirit for conducting me in safety to the place where I hoped, notwithstanding my adversary's gibe, to meet and grapple with him.

Some weeks before this period I had procured a sledge and dogs, and thus traversed the snows with inconceivable speed. I know not whether the fiend possessed the same advantages; but I found that, as before I had daily lost ground in the pursuit, I now gained on him: so much so, that when I first saw the ocean, he was but one day's journey in advance, and I hoped to intercept him before he should reach the beach. With new courage, therefore, I pressed on, and in two days arrived at a wretched hamlet on the sea-shore. I enquired of the inhabitants concerning the fiend, and gained accurate information. A gigantic monster, they said, had arrived the night before, armed with a gun and many pistols; putting to flight the inhabitants of a solitary cottage, through fear of his terrific appearance. He had carried off their store of winter food, and, placing it in a sledge, to draw which he had seized on a numerous drove of trained dogs, he had harnessed them, and the same night, to the joy of the horror-struck villagers, had pursued his journey across the sea in a direction that led to no land; and they conjectured that he must speedily be

destroyed by the breaking of the ice, or frozen by the eternal frosts.

On hearing this information, I suffered a temporary access of despair. He had escaped me ; and I must commence a destructive and almost endless journey across the mountainous ices of the ocean, — amidst cold that few of the inhabitants could long endure, and which I, the native of a genial and sunny climate, could not hope to survive. Yet at the idea that the fiend should live and be triumphant, my rage and vengeance returned, and, like a mighty tide, overwhelmed every other feeling. After a slight repose, during which the spirits of the dead hovered round, and instigated me to toil and revenge, I prepared for my journey.

I exchanged my land-sledge for one fashioned for the inequalities of the Frozen Ocean ; and purchasing a plentiful stock of provisions, I departed from land.

I cannot guess how many days have passed since then ; but I have endured misery, which nothing but the eternal sentiment of a just retribution burning within my heart could have enabled me to support. Immense and rugged mountains of ice often barred up my passage, and I often heard the thunder of the ground sea, which threatened my destruction. But again the frost came, and made the paths of the sea secure.

By the quantity of provision which I had consumed, I should guess that I had passed three weeks in this journey ; and the continual protraction of hope, returning back upon the heart, often wrung bitter drops of despondency and grief from my eyes. Despair had indeed almost secured her prey, and I should soon have sunk beneath this misery. Once, after the poor animals that conveyed me had with incredible toil gained the summit of a sloping ice-mountain, and one, sinking under his fatigue, died, I viewed the expanse before me with anguish, when suddenly my eye caught a dark speck upon the dusky plain. I strained my sight to discover what it could be, and uttered a wild cry of ecstasy when I distinguished a sledge, and the distorted proportions of a well-known form within. Oh ! with what a burning gush did hope revisit my heart ! warm

tears filled my eyes, which I hastily wiped away, that they might not intercept the view I had of the dæmon; but still my sight was dimmed by the burning drops, until, giving way to the emotions that oppressed me, I wept aloud.

But this was not the time for delay: I disencumbered the dogs of their dead companion, gave them a plentiful portion of food; and, after an hour's rest, which was absolutely necessary, and yet which was bitterly irksome to me, I continued my route. The sledge was still visible; nor did I again lose sight of it, except at the moments when for a short time some ice-rock concealed it with its intervening crags. I indeed perceptibly gained on it; and when, after nearly two days' journey, I beheld my enemy at no more than a mile distant, my heart bounded within me.

But now, when I appeared almost within grasp of my foe, my hopes were suddenly extinguished, and I lost all trace of him more utterly than I had ever done before. A ground sea was heard; the thunder of its progress, as the waters rolled and swelled beneath me, became every moment more ominous and terrific. I pressed on, but in vain. The wind arose; the sea roared; and, as with the mighty shock of an earthquake, it split, and cracked with a tremendous and overwhelming sound. The work was soon finished: in a few minutes a tumultuous sea rolled between me and my enemy, and I was left drifting on a scattered piece of ice, that was continually lessening, and thus preparing for me a hideous death.

In this manner many appalling hours passed; several of my dogs died; and I myself was about to sink under the accumulation of distress, when I saw your vessel riding at anchor, and holding forth to me hopes of succour and life. I had no conception that vessels ever came so far north, and was astounded at the sight. I quickly destroyed part of my sledge to construct oars; and by these means was enabled, with infinite fatigue, to move my ice-raft in the direction of your ship. I had determined, if you were going southward, still to trust myself to the mercy of the seas rather than abandon my purpose. I hoped to induce you to grant me a boat with which I could pursue my enemy.

But your direction was northward. You took me on board when my vigour was exhausted, and I should soon have sunk under my multiplied hardships into a death which I still dread — for my task is unfulfilled.

Oh! when will my guiding spirit, in conducting me to the dæmon, allow me the rest I so much desire; or must I die, and he yet live? If I do, swear to me, Walton, that he shall not escape; that you will seek him, and satisfy my vengeance in his death. And do I dare to ask of you to undertake my pilgrimage, to endure the hardships that I have undergone? No; I am not so selfish. Yet, when I am dead, if he should appear; if the ministers of vengeance should conduct him to you, swear that he shall not live — swear that he shall not triumph over my accumulated woes, and survive to add to the list of his dark crimes. He is eloquent and persuasive; and once his words had even power over my heart: but trust him not. His soul is as hellish as his form, full of treachery and fiendlike malice. Hear him not; call on the manes of William, Justine, Clerval, Elizabeth, my father, and of the wretched Victor, and thrust your sword into his heart. I will hover near, and direct the steel aright.

WALTON, *in continuation.*

August 26th, 17—.

You have read this strange and terrific story, Margaret; and do you not feel your blood congeal with horror, like that which even now curdles mine? Sometimes, seized with sudden agony, he could not continue his tale; at others, his voice broken, yet piercing, uttered with difficulty the words so replete with anguish. His fine and lovely eyes were now lighted up with indignation, now subdued to downcast sorrow, and quenched in infinite wretchedness. Sometimes he commanded his countenance and tones, and related the most horrible incidents with a tranquil voice, suppressing every mark of agitation; then, like a volcano bursting forth, his face would suddenly change to an expression of the wildest rage, as he shrieked out imprecations on his persecutor.

His tale is connected, and told with an appearance of the simplest truth ; yet I own to you that the letters of Felix and Safie, which he showed me, and the apparition of the monster seen from our ship, brought to me a greater conviction of the truth of his narrative than his asseverations, however earnest and connected. Such a monster has then really existence ! I cannot doubt it ; yet I am lost in surprise and admiration. Sometimes I endeavoured to gain from Frankenstein the particulars of his creature's formation : but on this point he was impenetrable.

“ Are you mad, my friend ? ” said he ; “ or whither does your senseless curiosity lead you ? Would you also create for yourself and the world a demoniacal enemy ? Peace, peace ! learn my miseries, and do not seek to increase your own.”

Frankenstein discovered that *II* made notes concerning his history : he asked to see them, and then himself corrected and augmented them in many places ; but principally in giving the life and spirit to the conversations he held with his enemy. “ Since you have preserved my narration,” said he, “ I would not that a mutilated one should go down to posterity.”

Thus has a week passed away, while I have listened to the strangest tale that ever imagination formed. My thoughts, and every feeling of my soul, have been drunk up by the interest for my guest, which this tale, and his own elevated and gentle manners, have created. I wish to soothe him ; yet can I counsel one so infinitely miserable, so destitute of every hope of consolation, to live ? Oh, no ! the only joy that he can now know will be when he composes his shattered spirit to peace and death. Yet he enjoys one comfort, the offspring of solitude and delirium : he believes, that, when in dreams he holds converse with his friends, and derives from that communion consolation for his miseries, or excitements to his vengeance, that they are not the creations of his fancy, but the beings themselves who visit him from the regions of a remote world. This faith gives a solemnity to his reveries that render them to me almost as imposing and interesting as truth.

Our conversations are not always confined to his own

history and misfortunes. On every point of general literature he displays unbounded knowledge, and a quick and piercing apprehension. His eloquence is forcible and touching ; nor can I hear him, when he relates a pathetic incident, or endeavours to move the passions of pity or love, without tears. What a glorious creature must he have been in the days of his prosperity, when he is thus noble and godlike in ruin ! He seems to feel his own worth, and the greatness of his fall.

“ When younger,” said he, “ I believed myself destined for some great enterprise. My feelings are profound ; but I possessed a coolness of judgment that fitted me for illustrious achievements. This sentiment of the worth of my nature supported me, when others would have been oppressed ; for I deemed it criminal to throw away in useless grief those talents that might be useful to my fellow-creatures. When I reflected on the work I had completed, no less a one than the creation of a sensitive and rational animal, I could not rank myself with the herd of common projectors. But this thought, which supported me in the commencement of my career, now serves only to plunge me lower in the dust. All my speculations and hopes are as nothing ; and, like the archangel who aspired to omnipotence, I am chained in an eternal hell. My imagination was vivid, yet my powers of analysis and application were intense ; by the union of these qualities I conceived the idea, and executed the creation of a man. Even now I cannot recollect, without passion, my reveries while the work was incomplete. I trod heaven in my thoughts, now exulting in my powers, now burning with the idea of their effects. From my infancy I was imbued with high hopes and a lofty ambition ; but how am I sunk ! Oh ! my friend, if you had known me as I once was, you would not recognise me in this state of degradation. Despondency rarely visited my heart ; a high destiny seemed to bear me on, until I fell, never, never again to rise.”

Must I then lose this admirable being ? I have longed for a friend ; I have sought one who would sympathise with and love me. Behold, on these desert seas I have found such a one ; but, I fear, I have gained him only to

know his value, and lose him. I would reconcile him to life, but he repulses the idea.

“ I thank you, Walton,” he said, “ for your kind intentions towards so miserable a wretch ; but when you speak of new ties, and fresh affections, think you that any can replace those who are gone ? Can any man be to me as Clerval was ; or any woman another Elizabeth ? Even where the affections are not strongly moved by any superior excellence, the companions of our childhood always possess a certain power over our minds, which hardly any later friend can obtain. They know our infantine dispositions, which, however they may be afterwards modified, are never eradicated ; and they can judge of our actions with more certain conclusions as to the integrity of our motives. A sister or a brother can never, unless indeed such symptoms have been shown early, suspect the other of fraud or false dealing, when another friend, however strongly he may be attached, may, in spite of himself, be contemplated with suspicion. But I enjoyed friends, dear not only through habit and association, but from their own merits ; and wherever I am, the soothing voice of my Elizabeth, and the conversation of Clerval, will be ever whispered in my ear. They are dead ; and but one feeling in such a solitude can persuade me to preserve my life. If I were engaged in any high undertaking or design, fraught with extensive utility to my fellow-creatures, then could I live to fulfil it. But such is not my destiny ; I must pursue and destroy the being to whom I gave existence ; then my lot on earth will be fulfilled, and I may die.”

My beloved Sister,

September 2d.

I write to you, encompassed by peril, and ignorant whether I am ever doomed to see again dear England, and the dearer friends that inhabit it. I am surrounded by mountains of ice, which admit of no escape, and threaten every moment to crush my vessel. The brave fellows, whom I have persuaded to be my companions, look towards me for aid ; but I have none to bestow. There is something terribly appalling in our situation, yet my courage and hopes do not desert me. Yet it is terrible to reflect

that the lives of all these men are endangered through me. If we are lost, my mad schemes are the cause.

And what, Margaret, will be the state of your mind? You will not hear of my destruction, and you will anxiously await my return. Years will pass, and you will have visitings of despair, and yet be tortured by hope. Oh! my beloved sister, the sickening failing of your heart-felt expectations is, in prospect, more terrible to me than my own death. But you have a husband, and lovely children; you may be happy: Heaven bless you, and make you so!

My unfortunate guest regards me with the tenderest compassion. He endeavours to fill me with hope; and talks as if life were a possession which he valued. He reminds me how often the same accidents have happened to other navigators, who have attempted this sea, and, in spite of myself, he fills me with cheerful auguries. Even the sailors feel the power of his eloquence: when he speaks, they no longer despair; he rouses their energies, and, while they hear his voice, they believe these vast mountains of ice are mole-hills, which will vanish before the resolutions of man. These feelings are transitory; each day of expectation delayed fills them with fear, and I almost dread a mutiny caused by this despair.

September 5th.

A scene has just passed of such uncommon interest, that although it is highly probable that these papers may never reach you, yet I cannot forbear recording it.

We are still surrounded by mountains of ice, still in imminent danger of being crushed in their conflict. The cold is excessive, and many of my unfortunate comrades have already found a grave amidst this scene of desolation. Frankenstein has daily declined in health: a feverish fire still glimmers in his eyes; but he is exhausted, and, when suddenly roused to any exertion, he speedily sinks again into apparent lifelessness.

I mentioned in my last letter the fears I entertained of a mutiny. This morning, as I sat watching the wan countenance of my friend — his eyes half closed, and his limbs hanging listlessly, — I was roused by half a dozen of the sailors, who demanded admission into the cabin. They

entered, and their leader addressed me. He told me that he and his companions had been chosen by the other sailors to come in deputation to me, to make me a requisition, which, in justice, I could not refuse. We were immured in ice, and should probably never escape; but they feared that if, as was possible, the ice should dissipate, and a free passage be opened, I should be rash enough to continue my voyage, and lead them into fresh dangers, after they might happily have surmounted this. They insisted, therefore, that I should engage with a solemn promise, that if the vessel should be freed I would instantly direct my course southward.

This speech troubled me. I had not despaired; nor had I yet conceived the idea of returning, if set free. Yet could I, in justice, or even in possibility, refuse this demand? I hesitated before I answered; when Frankenstein, who had at first been silent, and, indeed, appeared hardly to have force enough to attend, now roused himself; his eyes sparkled, and his cheeks flushed with momentary vigour. Turning towards the men, he said —

“What do you mean? What do you demand of your captain? Are you then so easily turned from your design? Did you not call this a glorious expedition? And wherefore was it glorious? Not because the way was smooth and placid as a southern sea, but because it was full of dangers and terror; because, at every new incident, your fortitude was to be called forth, and your courage exhibited; because danger and death surrounded it, and these you were to brave and overcome. For this was it a glorious, for this was it an honourable undertaking. You were hereafter to be hailed as the benefactors of your species; your names adored, as belonging to brave men who encountered death for honour, and the benefit of mankind. And now, behold, with the first imagination of danger, or, if you will, the first mighty and terrific trial of your courage, you shrink away, and are content to be handed down as men who had not strength enough to endure cold and peril; and so, poor souls, they were chilly, and returned to their warm fire-sides. Why, that requires not this preparation; ye need not have come thus far, and dragged your captain to the

shame of a defeat, merely to prove yourselves cowards. Oh! be men, or be more than men. Be steady to your purposes, and firm as a rock. This ice is not made of such stuff as your hearts may be; it is mutable, and cannot withstand you, if you say that it shall not. Do not return to your families with the stigma of disgrace marked on your brows. Return, as heroes who have fought and conquered, and who know not what it is to turn their backs on the foe."

He spoke this with a voice so modulated to the different feelings expressed in his speech, with an eye so full of lofty design and heroism, that can you wonder that these men were moved? They looked at one another, and were unable to reply. I spoke; I told them to retire, and consider of what had been said: that I would not lead them farther north, if they strenuously desired the contrary; but that I hoped that, with reflection, their courage would return.

They retired, and I turned towards my friend; but he was sunk in languor, and almost deprived of life.

How all this will terminate, I know not; but I had rather die than return shamefully, — my purpose unfulfilled. Yet I fear such will be my fate; the men, unsupported by ideas of glory and honour, can never willingly continue to endure their present hardships.

September 7th.

The die is cast; I have consented to return, if we are not destroyed. Thus are my hopes blasted by cowardice and indecision; I come back ignorant and disappointed. It requires more philosophy than I possess, to bear this injustice with patience.

September 12th.

It is past; I am returning to England. I have lost my hopes of utility and glory; — I have lost my friend. But I will endeavour to detail these bitter circumstances to you, my dear sister; and, while I am wafted towards England, and towards you, I will not despond.

September 9th, the ice began to move, and roarings like thunder were heard at a distance, as the islands split and cracked in every direction. We were in the most imminent peril; but, as we could only remain passive, my chief atten-

tion was occupied by my unfortunate guest, whose illness increased in such a degree, that he was entirely confined to his bed. The ice cracked behind us, and was driven with force towards the north; a breeze sprung from the west, and on the 11th the passage towards the south became perfectly free. When the sailors saw this, and that their return to their native country was apparently assured, a shout of tumultuous joy broke from them, loud and long-continued. Frankenstein, who was dozing, awoke, and asked the cause of the tumult. "They shout," I said, "because they will soon return to England."

"Do you then really return?"

"Alas! yes; I cannot withstand their demands. I cannot lead them unwillingly to danger, and I must return."

"Do so, if you will; but I will not. You may give up your purpose, but mine is assigned to me by Heaven, and I dare not. I am weak; but surely the spirits who assist my vengeance will endow me with sufficient strength." Saying this, he endeavoured to spring from the bed, but the exertion was too great for him; he fell back, and fainted.

It was long before he was restored; and I often thought that life was entirely extinct. At length he opened his eyes; he breathed with difficulty, and was unable to speak. The surgeon gave him a composing draught, and ordered us to leave him undisturbed. In the mean time he told me, that my friend had certainly not many hours to live.

His sentence was pronounced; and I could only grieve, and be patient. I sat by his bed, watching him; his eyes were closed, and I thought he slept; but presently he called to me in a feeble voice, and, bidding me come near, said — "Alas! the strength I relied on is gone; I feel that I shall soon die, and he, my enemy and persecutor, may still be in being. Think not, Walton, that in the last moments of my existence I feel that burning hatred, and ardent desire of revenge, I once expressed; but I feel myself justified in desiring the death of my adversary. During these last days I have been occupied in examining my past conduct; nor do I find it blamable. In a fit of enthusiastic madness I created a rational creature, and was bound to-

wards him, to assure, as far as was in my power, his happiness and well-being. This was my duty ; but there was another still paramount to that. My duties towards the beings of my own species had greater claims to my attention, because they included a greater proportion of happiness or misery. Urged by this view, I refused, and I did right in refusing, to create a companion for the first creature. He showed unparalleled malignity and selfishness, in evil : he destroyed my friends ; he devoted to destruction beings who possessed exquisite sensations, happiness, and wisdom ; nor do I know where this thirst for vengeance may end. Miserable himself, that he may render no other wretched, he ought to die. The task of his destruction was mine, but I have failed. When actuated by selfish and vicious motives, I asked you to undertake my unfinished work ; and I renew this request now, when I am only induced by reason and virtue.

“ Yet I cannot ask you to renounce your country and friends, to fulfil this task ; and now, that you are returning to England, you will have little chance of meeting with him. But the consideration of these points, and the well balancing of what you may esteem your duties, I leave to you ; my judgment and ideas are already disturbed by the near approach of death. I dare not ask you to do what I think right, for I may still be misled by passion.

“ That he should live to be an instrument of mischief disturbs me ; in other respects, this hour, when I momentarily expect my release, is the only happy one which I have enjoyed for several years. The forms of the beloved dead flit before me, and I hasten to their arms. Farewell, Walton ! Seek happiness in tranquillity, and avoid ambition, even if it be only the apparently innocent one of distinguishing yourself in science and discoveries. Yet why do I say this ? I have myself been blasted in these hopes, yet another may succeed.”

His voice became fainter as he spoke ; and at length, exhausted by his effort, he sunk into silence. About half an hour afterwards he attempted again to speak, but was unable ; he pressed my hand feebly, and his eyes closed for

ever, while the irradiation of a gentle smile passed away from his lips.

Margaret, what comment can I make on the untimely extinction of this glorious spirit? What can I say, that will enable you to understand the depth of my sorrow? All that I should express would be inadequate and feeble. My tears flow; my mind is overshadowed by a cloud of disappointment. But I journey towards England, and I may there find consolation.

I am interrupted. What do these sounds portend? It is midnight; the breeze blows fairly, and the watch on deck scarcely stir. Again; there is a sound as of a human voice, but hoarser; it comes from the cabin where the remains of Frankenstein still lie. I must arise, and examine. Good night, my sister.

Great God! what a scene has just taken place! I am yet dizzy with the remembrance of it. I hardly know whether I shall have the power to detail it; yet the tale which I have recorded would be incomplete without this final and wonderful catastrophe.

I entered the cabin, where lay the remains of my ill-fated and admirable friend. Over him hung a form which I cannot find words to describe; gigantic in stature, yet uncouth and distorted in its proportions. As he hung over the coffin, his face was concealed by long locks of ragged hair; but one vast hand was extended, in colour and apparent texture like that of a mummy. When he heard the sound of my approach, he ceased to utter exclamations of grief and horror, and sprung towards the window. Never did I behold a vision so horrible as his face, of such loathsome, yet appalling hideousness. I shut my eyes involuntarily, and endeavoured to recollect what were my duties with regard to this destroyer. I called on him to stay.

He paused, looking on me with wonder; and, again turning towards the lifeless form of his creator, he seemed to forget my presence, and every feature and gesture seemed instigated by the wildest rage of some uncontrollable passion.

“That is also my victim!” he exclaimed: “in his murder my crimes are consummated; the miserable series of my being is wound to its close! Oh, Frankenstein!

generous and self-devoted being ! what does it avail that I now ask thee to pardon me ? I, who irretrievably destroyed thee by destroying all thou lovedst. Alas ! he is cold, he cannot answer me.”

His voice seemed suffocated ; and my first impulses, which had suggested to me the duty of obeying the dying request of my friend, in destroying his enemy, were now suspended by a mixture of curiosity and compassion. I approached this tremendous being ; I dared not again raise my eyes to his face, there was something so scaring and unearthly in his ugliness. I attempted to speak, but the words died away on my lips. The monster continued to utter wild and incoherent self-reproaches. At length I gathered resolution to address him in a pause of the tempest of his passion : “ Your repentance,” I said, “ is now superfluous. If you had listened to the voice of conscience, and heeded the stings of remorse, before you had urged your diabolical vengeance to this extremity, Frankenstein would yet have lived.

“ And do you dream ? ” said the dæmon ; “ do you think that I was then dead to agony and remorse ? — He,” he continued, pointing to the corpse, “ he suffered not in the consummation of the deed—oh ! not the ten-thousandth portion of the anguish that was mine during the lingering detail of its execution. A frightful selfishness hurried me on, while my heart was poisoned with remorse. Think you that the groans of Clerval were music to my ears ? My heart was fashioned to be susceptible of love and sympathy ; and, when wrenched by misery to vice and hatred, it did not endure the violence of the change, without torture such as you cannot even imagine.

“ After the murder of Clerval, I returned to Switzerland, heart-broken and overcome. I pitied Frankenstein ; my pity amounted to horror : I abhorred myself. But when I discovered that he, the author at once of my existence and of its unspeakable torments, dared to hope for happiness ; that while he accumulated wretchedness and despair upon me, he sought his own enjoyment in feelings and passions from the indulgence of which I was for ever barred, then impotent envy and bitter indignation filled me with an in-

satiabie thirst for vengeance. I recollected my threat, and resolved that it should be accomplished. I knew that I was preparing for myself a deadly torture ; but I was the slave, not the master, of an impulse, which I detested, yet could not disobey. Yet when she died !—nay, then I was not miserable. I had cast off all feeling, subdued all anguish, to riot in the excess of my despair. Evil thenceforth became my good. Urged thus far, I had no choice but to adapt my nature to an element which I had willingly chosen. The completion of my demoniacal design became an insatiable passion. And now it is ended ; there is my last victim !”

I was at first touched by the expressions of his misery ; yet, when I called to mind what Frankenstein had said of his powers of eloquence and persuasion, and when I again cast my eyes on the lifeless form of my friend, indignation was rekindled within me. “Wretch !” I said, “it is well that you come here to whine over the desolation that you have made. You throw a torch into a pile of buildings ; and, when they are consumed, you sit among the ruins, and lament the fall. Hypocritical fiend ! if he whom you mourn still lived, still would he be the object, again would he become the prey, of your accursed vengeance. It is not pity that you feel ; you lament only because the victim of your malignity is withdrawn from your power.”

“Oh, it is not thus—not thus,” interrupted the being ; “yet such must be the impression conveyed to you by what appears to be the purport of my actions. Yet I seek not a fellow-feeling in my misery. No sympathy may I ever find. When I first sought it, it was the love of virtue, the feelings of happiness and affection with which my whole being overflowed, that I wished to be participated. But now, that virtue has become to me a shadow, and that happiness and affection are turned into bitter and loathing despair, in what should I seek for sympathy ? I am content to suffer alone, while my sufferings shall endure : when I die, I am well satisfied that abhorrence and opprobrium should load my memory. Once my fancy was soothed with dreams of virtue, of fame, and of enjoyment. Once I falsely hoped to meet with beings, who, pardoning my

outward form, would love me for the excellent qualities which I was capable of unfolding. I was nourished with high thoughts of honour and devotion. But now crime has degraded me beneath the meanest animal. No guilt, no mischief, no malignity, no misery, can be found comparable to mine. When I run over the frightful catalogue of my sins, I cannot believe that I am the same creature whose thoughts were once filled with sublime and transcendent visions of the beauty and the majesty of goodness. But it is even so; the fallen angel becomes a malignant devil. Yet even that enemy of God and man had friends and associates in his desolation; I am alone.

“ You, who call Frankenstein your friend, seem to have a knowledge of my crimes and his misfortunes. But, in the detail which he gave you of them, he could not sum up the hours and months of misery which I endured, wasting in impotent passions. For while I destroyed his hopes, I did not satisfy my own desires. They were for ever ardent and craving; still I desired love and fellowship, and I was still spurned. Was there no injustice in this? Am I to be thought the only criminal, when all human kind sinned against me? Why do you not hate Felix, who drove his friend from his door with contumely? Why do you not execrate the rustic who sought to destroy the saviour of his child? Nay, these are virtuous and immaculate beings! I, the miserable and the abandoned, am an abortion, to be spurned at, and kicked, and trampled on. Even now my blood boils at the recollection of this injustice.

“ But it is true that I am a wretch. I have murdered the lovely and the helpless; I have strangled the innocent as they slept, and grasped to death his throat who never injured me or any other living thing. I have devoted my creator, the select specimen of all that is worthy of love and admiration among men, to misery; I have pursued him even to that irremediable ruin. There he lies, white and cold in death. You hate me; but your abhorrence cannot equal that with which I regard myself. I look on the hands which executed the deed; I think on the heart in which the imagination of it was conceived, and long for

the moment when these hands will meet my eyes, when that imagination will haunt my thoughts no more.

“ Fear not that I shall be the instrument of future mischief. My work is nearly complete. Neither yours nor any man’s death is needed to consummate the series of my being, and accomplish that which must be done ; but it requires my own. Do not think that I shall be slow to perform this sacrifice. I shall quit your vessel on the ice-raft which brought me thither, and shall seek the most northern extremity of the globe ; I shall collect my funeral pile, and consume to ashes this miserable frame, that its remains may afford no light to any curious and unhallowed wretch, who would create such another as I have been. I shall die. I shall no longer feel the agonies which now consume me, or be the prey of feelings unsatisfied, yet unquenched. He is dead who called me into being ; and when I shall be no more, the very remembrance of us both will speedily vanish. I shall no longer see the sun or stars, or feel the winds play on my cheeks. Light, feeling, and sense will pass away ; and in this condition must I find my happiness. Some years ago, when the images which this world affords first opened upon me, when I felt the cheering warmth of summer, and heard the rustling of the leaves and the warbling of the birds, and these were all to me, I should have wept to die ; now it is my only consolation. Polluted by crimes, and torn by the bitterest remorse, where can I find rest but in death ?

“ Farewell ! I leave you, and in you the last of human kind whom these eyes will ever behold. Farewell, Frankenstein ! If thou wert yet alive, and yet cherished a desire of revenge against me, it would be better satiated in my life than in my destruction. But it was not so ; thou didst seek my extinction, that I might not cause greater wretchedness ; and if yet, in some mode unknown to me, thou hadst not ceased to think and feel, thou wouldst not desire against me a vengeance greater than that which I feel. Blasted as thou wert, my agony was still superior to thine ; for the bitter sting of remorse will not cease to rankle in my wounds until death shall close them for ever.

“ But soon,” he cried, with sad and solemn enthusiasm, “ I shall die, and what I now feel be no longer felt. Soon these burning miseries will be extinct. I shall ascend my funeral pile triumphantly, and exult in the agony of the torturing flames. The light of that conflagration will fade away ; my ashes will be swept into the sea by the winds. My spirit will sleep in peace ; or if it thinks, it will not surely think thus. Farewell.”

He sprung from the cabin-window, as he said this, upon the ice-raft which lay close to the vessel. He was soon borne away by the waves, and lost in darkness and distance.

THE END.

LONDON:

Printed by A. & R. Spottiswoode,
New-Street-Square.

THE
GHOST-SEER.

THE
G H O S T - S E E R !

FROM THE GERMAN

OF

S C H I L L E R .

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

LONDON:

HENRY COLBURN AND RICHARD BENTLEY,

NEW BURLINGTON STREET;

BELL AND BRADFUTE, EDINBURGH;

AND CUMMING, DUBLIN.

1831.



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INTRODUCTION.

LIFE AND WRITINGS OF SCHILLER.

“FREDERICK SCHILLER was the son of an officer in the Bavarian army, who subsequently attained the rank of major, and served in the campaigns for the disputed succession. Frederick was born at Marbach, a little town in Wurtemburgh, on the 10th day of November, 1759, and was finally bred to the surgical profession. His early education was not very favourable for the developement of those great powers which he afterwards discovered, and which burst forth with sudden and impetuous vigour at the age of nineteen, as if indignant at the scholastic discipline and restraints which had been imposed upon them. Schiller pursued his studies at the public seminary of Ludwigsburg, and for several years he went through the regular examinations preparatory to the clerical profession. As he grew older, however, he performed his tasks with less docility and alacrity; he imbibed no very deep regard for the classics as they were there inculcated; while the scholastic forms and regulations proved still more irksome to him. Even at that early age, he began to discover the peculiar bias of his genius: he was fond of walking, reading, and studying alone; he sought Nature in her loneliest scenes; and would stand gazing on the heavens, or watching the progress of the storm. He continued at this seminary upwards of six years; the most irksome and unprofitable, according to his own admission, that he ever spent. He was compelled to drudge through all the preliminary forms and examinations, indiscriminately insisted upon in the Stutgard system, under the patronage and dictation of the

reigning Duke. In this wretched servitude he went through a course of legal study, which he was only permitted to relinquish in favour of that of medicine, to which he was little more adapted or attached. Instead of taking down notes of the lectures, he was secretly perusing Shakspeare; and procured small editions of Klopstock, Herder, Goethe, Garve, and Lessing, the father of the modern drama of Germany. Early inspired by a perusal of them, he produced an epic poem, like our own Pope, at the age of fourteen; which he as judiciously, however, destroyed.

“ In his second effort, he at once assumed a high rank as one of the popular dramatists of the country. This was his tragedy of ‘The Robbers,’ composed at the age of nineteen; and almost appallingly impressed with the most striking characteristics of a daring, enthusiastic, and impatient spirit. Wild and extravagant as it must be allowed to be, it was the production, so to say, of a future great writer—the luxurious promise of a glorious harvest—the struggle of a lofty mind at issue with its destiny, exhibiting the whole of its gigantic, but untutored strength. The reputation obtained by this, and two subsequent pieces—‘The Conspiracy of Fiesco,’ and ‘Intrigue and Love,’—soon brought Schiller advantageous offers from the theatre of Manheim, one of the best conducted in Germany. During his engagement here, he projected a translation of Shakspeare’s plays, though the tragedy of Macbeth was the only one which he presented to his countrymen in a new dress; but he judiciously abandoned the undertaking, and entered upon the subject of Don Carlos, which he borrowed from the French of the Abbé St. Réal. At the same period he was engaged in a variety of minor works; one of which was a theatrical journal, in which several scenes of his ‘Don Carlos’ first made their appearance. Dramatic essays and poetical effusions, published in the same journal, likewise occupied much of his time. Though commenced in his twenty-fifth year, this tragedy was not completed until long afterwards; nor did it appear entire until 1794, when he was more than thirty-five years of age. Nearly at the same time he began his series of ‘Philosophical Letters,’ which, throughout, display singular ardour and boldness of

enquiry on a great diversity of topics. Schiller now became one of the most popular writers of his age, and he daily received gratifying proofs of it, both of a public and private kind. He himself relates one which he considered the most pleasing of all—a present of two beautiful miniature portraits from the fair originals, accompanied by a very elegant pocket-book, and letters filled with the most flattering compliments to his genius.

“ Upon closing his engagements at Manheim, Schiller took up his residence at Leipsic, where he became acquainted with a number of eminent contemporaries, among whom were Professor Huber, Zollikofer, Hiller, Oeser, and the celebrated actor Reinike. Soon after his arrival, finding himself somewhat disappointed in the extent of his literary views, he had serious intentions of adopting the medical profession, to which his final academic studies had been directed ; but this idea was again abandoned, and he resumed his literary occupations with increased ardour and activity. Though ranking among the chief ornaments of his country as a poet and a dramatist, he still sighed for fresh fields of enterprise, for which he was every way qualified, and in which he ultimately gathered more brilliant and unfading laurels. At no period did he produce more important works, than during his residence at Dresden. It was there he first began to devote his nights, as well as a large portion of the day, to intellectual labour,—a habit which no constitution could long withstand. Besides the interruptions he was so frequently liable to in the day, he was fond of spending his mornings in the woods, or upon the banks of the Elbe ; sometimes sailing upon its bosom ; sometimes wandering, with a book, in its solitary vicinity. He spent a portion of the evening in society ; and then came the baneful night, invariably set apart for the most difficult and abstracted pursuits. It was thus he most probably laid the foundation of his subsequent maladies, and his premature decease. About the year 1787, he visited Weimar, in order to cultivate a personal acquaintance with some of his most celebrated contemporaries. He was there introduced to Wieland, already advanced in years, and to Herder ; and such was the warm reception he met with, that he declared

his intention of fixing his residence at Weimar, then conspicuous for the number of its distinguished writers. Goethe was next added to the list of his acquaintance ; but not, during some period at least, to that of his friends. Men of totally opposite minds and character, in a literary view, their first meeting is described as having been somewhat singular ; by no means cordial and pleasing. Schiller being much younger, and of a reserved temper, was rather surprised, than attracted, by the perfect ease and openness, the versatility and extent of information, which Goethe's conversation exhibited ; and declared, after the interview, that he and Goethe were cast in different moulds, that they lived in different worlds, and that it was almost impossible for them ever to understand, or become ultimately acquainted with each other. 'Time, however,' he concluded, 'will try.' It is gratifying to add, that they subsequently grew sincerely attached to each other, assisted in the same undertakings, and for some period, resided with each other. On Schiller's removal to Jena, where he succeeded Eichhorn in the professorship of history, he entered into a matrimonial connection with a lady of the name of Lengefeld, to whom he had some time before been attached. In a letter to one of his friends, he thus alludes to the event, many months afterwards :— 'How different does life now begin to appear, seated at the side of a beloved wife, instead of being forsaken and alone, as I have so long been !'

“ During his professorship, Schiller entered upon his history of the Thirty Years' War, a work which appeared in 1791. This is universally admitted to be his chief historical performance, no less in Germany than in other countries. A just comparison, however, can scarcely be instituted, his previous work upon the Netherlands having unfortunately never been carried to a conclusion. In the year 1791, he suffered a very severe attack upon his lungs, from which he with difficulty recovered, after it had greatly shattered his constitution. Still, with returning strength, he resumed his labours with equal ardour, and was never heard to utter a complaint. It was on his recovery, that Schiller, for the first time, studied the new Kantian doc-

trine, though it does not appear how far he proceeded through the labyrinths of the transcendental terminology.

“ A number of productions, amongst which ranks the most finished specimen of his dramatic labours, ‘Wallenstein,’ followed his partial restoration to health. But the ardour and impetuosity with which he composed, and which was become too habitual to him for restraint, more especially in his lyric pieces, and his tragedies, brought on a dangerous relapse. All human aid, and human hope, proved alike in vain; and on the 9th day of May, 1805, his disorder reached its crisis, and Schiller, only in his forty-sixth year, had but a few hours to live.

“ Early that morning he grew delirious; but soon this was observed gradually to subside, and he appeared to be settling into a deep slumber. In this state, after continuing during several hours, he awoke about four o’clock in the afternoon, with entire composure, and a perfect consciousness of his situation. His manner was firm and tranquil: he took a tender farewell of his friends and family; and on being asked how he felt, he replied, ‘Only calmer and calmer.’ He once spoke with a happy and lively air; ‘Many things are now becoming clearer and clearer to me!’ Soon afterwards he relapsed into deep sleep, became more and more insensible, though still calm, and in that state he almost imperceptibly expired.

“ Schiller wrote but few prose fictions, though these few are enough to display the great powers he possessed. The ‘Geisterseher,’ of which the following is a translation, is the most important and most striking of its kind.”*

This singular romance was written in Dresden, in which town Schiller became enamoured of a beautiful lady, who has been designated by some of his biographers as “Fraulein A——.” The intercourse which subsisted between the poet and his charmer appears not to have been of the most reputable kind; but it is certain that, for a time, she held exclusive possession of his heart, and that she even influenced his writings. She was the original of the Princess Eboli, in his play of Don Carlos; and it is probable that his passion for her might have suggested that important

* Roscoe’s German Novelists, vol. iii

part of his story of "the Ghost-Seer" which delineates the mad love entertained by the Prince, for the lady whose fascinations first enthralled him, as he saw her under the rays of the setting sun, praying in the evening solitude of the church in Venice. During his residence in Dresden, and whilst under the intoxicating influence just mentioned, Schiller's mind might well be supposed to have been in an unsettled state; but, though unguided by any determinate and wholesome purpose, it "hovered among a multitude of vast plans," and was on the watch for any object that might give consistency to his views. "The Ghost-Seer" is the first product arising out of this mental fermentation. Its origin may be traced to the tricks of a certain Count Cagliostro, the prince of quacks, whose juggleries were, about that time, turning the heads of the good people at Paris; who paid their money lavishly, in order to be terrified, and to "snatch a fearful joy."

"The Ghost-Seer" is unquestionably one of the "curiosities of literature." It is alone of its kind; and, perhaps, there is no work in the circle of romance, in which the reader is so irresistibly impelled through the pages; or wherein his longing is more acutely excited for a solution of the mystery of the plot. The agency, supernatural as it seems, is, however, all the effect of imposture and extensive confederacy; though even a knowledge of this, in which the reader is made to participate early in the story, does not abate his wonder at the incidents, or lessen the interest he takes in the characters. If any objection may be made to the scheme of the tale, it might be said that it is too intricate; that the conspiracy against the Prince, and the counter-conspiracy to save him, perplex the attention of him who would trace the windings of the labyrinth. Still, who does not feel a keen sympathy in the bewilderment of the amiable but feeble-minded victim of the conspirators? Who does not participate in the honest wishes of the two Englishmen, who strive to protect him from snares such as never before were spread for the ruin of a human being? Who can look without awe at the inscrutable Armenian, or contemplate, unless with a heart-thrill, the terrific agency which his cunning and his science are able to evoke?

THE

GHOST-SEER.

Narrative of the Count O——.

I AM about to relate an occurrence, which, to many persons, will appear incredible, yet to which I was myself, in great part, an eye-witness. The few who are acquainted with a certain political occurrence, will (if these leaves should find them alive) have a perfect key to the publication; but without this key, it will be looked upon as an addition to the history of deceit and artifice so often imposed upon mankind. The boldness of the undertaking, which malice was able to conjecture and to pursue, must excite astonishment; while the singularity of the means employed, is calculated to create no less surprise. Genuine, bold truth, will conduct my pen; for when these leaves go into the world, I shall probably be no more, and shall never experience the credit with which they are received.

It was on my return to Courland, in the year 17—, about the time of the Carnival, that I paid a visit to the Prince of W—— in Venice. We had known each other in the P—— military service, and renewed here an acquaintance which peace had interrupted. As I wished to see the remarkable city of Venice, the Prince easily persuaded me to bear him company, and to delay my departure from hence until his remittances, which were expected every day, arrived. We agreed to live together as long as our stay at Venice should last, and the Prince was so kind as to offer to share his habitation with me at the Moor Hotel.

He lived in disguise, because he wished to enjoy himself, and his little income did not permit him to maintain the dignity of his rank. Two cavaliers, upon whose secrecy he could entirely rely, composed (besides some trusty servants) his whole household. He shunned expense more from temperance than economy. He fled from diversions of all kinds; and at the age of thirty-five years, it may be said, that he had resisted all the charms of that voluptuous city. The fair sex was not regarded by him: gravity, and an almost profound melancholy, overshadowed his mind. His passions were still, but obstinate to excess; his choice slow and fearful; his attachment warm and lasting. Locked up in his own visionary ideas, he often was a stranger to the world about him; and, conscious of his own deficiency in the knowledge of mankind, he very seldom observed that line of conduct which influences those who are wary and suspicious. No one, perhaps, was more exposed than he, to suffer himself to be influenced and commanded by the opinion of others. No one was more liable to mental weakness; but as soon as he was once convinced, he possessed equal courage to combat an acknowledged prejudice, and to die for a new one. As the third prince of his house, he could not have any views for the sovereignty; his ambition, therefore, on that point, was never awakened: his passion had taken quite another direction. Conscious of his own aversion to being governed by the opinion of others, he never forced his own upon any person as a law. The peaceable paths of solitude, and a private life, were the summit of his wishes. He read much, but without selection. A narrow education, together with being initiated into the military service early in life, served to check all application to the study of literature; all the knowledge which he afterward, acquired added but little to his ideas. He was a Protestant as all his family had been, by birth, not by enquiry, which he never attempted, though he was, in a certain epoch of his life, an enthusiast; he never, to my knowledge, became a free-mason.

One evening we, as usual, took a walk by ourselves, very well masked, upon St. Mark's Place. As it grew late, and the people were dispersing, the Prince observed that a

mask followed us every where. The mask was an Armenian, and walked alone. We doubled our steps, and sought by striking into different turns of our road to lose him, but in vain, for he always remained close behind us.

“You have not had, I hope, any intrigue here?” said the Prince at last to me. “The husbands at Venice are very dangerous.” “I know not one lady,” I replied. “Let us sit down here, and speak German,” he continued: “I imagine they mistake us for some other persons.” We sat down upon a stone bench, and expected that the mask would pass by. He came straight towards us, and took his seat very close by the side of the Prince; who drew out his watch, and said rather loud, in French, rising at the same time from his seat, “Nine — come! we forget that they wait for us at the *Louvre*.” This was only a pretence to deceive the mask as to our route. “Nine!” repeated the mask in the same language, very expressively and slowly. “Wish yourself joy, Prince (whilst he called him by his right name); *at nine o’clock he died*.” With this he rose, and went away: we looked at one another very much amazed. “Who is dead?” said the Prince, after a long silence. “Let us follow him,” said I, “and request an explanation.”

We hurried through all the by-ways of St. Mark, but the mask was not to be found. Chagrined at our bad success, we proceeded to our hotel. The Prince spoke not a word in our way home, but walked apart from me, apparently in deep reflection, and greatly agitated, as he afterwards confessed to me. When we got home, assuming an air of gaiety — “It is indeed laughable,” said he, “that a madman should thus be able to disturb the tranquillity of a person’s mind by a couple of words.”

We wished each other a good night; and as soon as I was in my own room, I noted in my pocket-book the day and the hour when this extraordinary event happened — it was upon a Thursday. The following evening the Prince said to me, — “Let us take a walk again to St. Mark’s Place, and try to discover this mysterious Armenian. I am very anxious to unravel this adventure.”

I agreed to the proposal, and we remained till eleven

o'clock wandering about the place: the Armenian was nowhere to be seen. We repeated our visits the four following evenings, and each time with the same bad success. The sixth evening, when we left our hotel, I had the foresight to tell the servants where we might be found, if there should be any enquiry after us. The Prince observed this, and praised my attention with a smiling countenance. There was a great crowd upon St. Mark's Place when we arrived there; and we scarcely had gone thirty steps, when I observed the Armenian, who pushed himself through the crowd in great haste, and seemed to be in the act of searching for somebody. We were just upon the point of reaching him, when the Baron F——, one of the Prince's companions, came breathless towards us, and delivered a letter to the Prince.

"It is sealed black," said he; and we thought that it might contain intelligence of great consequence. It struck me like a thunderbolt. The Prince went to a lamp, and began to read the contents. "My cousin is dead," he cried. "When?" said I, interrupting him hastily. He once more read the letter. "Last Thursday, at nine o'clock in the evening." We scarcely had time to recover ourselves from our surprise, when the Armenian appeared. "You are known here, gracious Sire," said he to the Prince. "Hasten to the Moor: you'll find there ambassadors from the Senate, and do not hesitate to accept the honour which they will offer you. The Baron F—— forgot to tell you that your remittances are arrived."

He left us precipitately, and mingled with the crowd. We hastened to our hotel, and found every thing as the Armenian had announced to us. Three noblemen of the Republic were there ready to receive the Prince, and to conduct him with splendour to the assembly, where the first nobility of the city expected him. He had just time enough to let me understand, by a slight hint, that he wished me to sit up for him. About eleven o'clock at night he returned. He came into the room serious and thoughtful; and, after having dismissed the servants, he seized me by the hand. "Count," he said, in the words of Hamlet, "there are more things in heaven and earth

than are dreamt of in our philosophy." "Gracious Sir," I replied, "you seem to forget that you are enriched with the prospect of a sovereignty."* "Do not remind me of that," said the Prince; "I have something of greater importance to me than a crown that now claims my attention, if that Armenian has not been at guess-work." "How is that possible, Prince?" I replied. "Then will I resign all my princely hope for the habit of a monk."

The following evening we went together earlier to the market-place. A heavy shower of rain obliged us to take shelter in a coffee-house, where we observed a number of persons at a gaming-table. The Prince placed himself behind the chair of a Spaniard to see the game played, whilst I went into an adjoining room to read the papers. A little time afterwards I heard a noise. Before the arrival of the Prince, the Spaniard universally lost; but since he entered, the latter won upon every card. The whole game was totally changed, and the bank was in danger of being broken by the man whom this lucky reverse of fortune had made bolder. The Venetian, who kept it, said to the Prince in a surly tone, — "You have changed the luck, and shall quit the table." The Prince looked at him coolly, without giving him an answer, and kept his place; but the Venetian repeated his command in French. The latter thought that the Prince did not understand either language; and, addressing himself to the company with a sneering grin — "Tell me, gentlemen," said he, "how I shall make myself understood by this fool?" Hereupon he stood up, and would have struck the Prince; but the Prince's patience forsaking him, he did not wait for the attack, but seized the Venetian by the throat, and dashed him with violence on the ground. This circumstance threw the whole house into confusion. Upon hearing the uproar, I ran into the room, and unguardedly called him by his name. "Take care, Prince," said I, incautiously; "we are in Venice!"

* The deceased was the hereditary Prince, the only son of the reigning —, who was in years, very sickly, and without the least prospect of having an heir to his dominions. An uncle of our Prince, almost in the same situation, now alone stood between him and the throne. I am obliged to mention this circumstance, as the subject will be treated of in the work.

The name of the Prince excited an universal silence, and soon after a confused murmur ran through the assembly, which appeared to me to have a dangerous tendency. The Italians present crowded round each other, and walked aside. They soon quitted the room, one after the other, and we found ourselves left only with the Spaniard and several Frenchmen. "You are lost, gracious Sir," said a Frenchman, "if you do not leave the city directly. The Venetian, whom you have handled so roughly, is rich enough to hire a bravo; — it will only cost him fifty sequins to be revenged by your death."

The Spaniard, in concert with the Frenchmen, offered to conduct the Prince with safety to his house. We were standing thus consulting what was best to be done, when the door of the room was suddenly opened, and several officers of the *State Inquisition* entered. They produced an order from the government, in which we were both commanded to follow them immediately. They conducted us under a strong escort to a canal, where a boat waited for us. We were ordered to embark; but before we quitted it, our eyes were blindfolded; and, upon our landing, we found that they led us up a stone staircase, and then through a long winding passage over arches, as we could discover by the repeated echoes that sounded under our feet. We soon arrived at another staircase, which in twenty-six steps brought us to the bottom. We then heard a door creak upon its hinges; and when they took the bandage from our eyes, we found ourselves in a spacious hall, encircled by an assembly of venerable old men. All appeared in sable robes; and the hall, hung with black cloth, was dimly lighted by a few scattered tapers. A deadly silence prevailed through the assembly, which caused in us an awful sensation, too powerful to be described. One of the old men, who appeared to be the principal State Inquisitor, came near to the Prince, and spoke to him with a solemn countenance, whilst another set before him the Venetian.

"Do you acknowledge this man to be the same that you used so roughly in the coffee-house?" "Yes!" answered the Prince. Then turning to the prisoner — "Is that the person you would have assassinated this evening?" The

prisoner answered, "Yes." Immediately the judges opened the circle, and we saw, with the utmost horror, the head of the Venetian separated from his shoulders. "Are you satisfied with this sacrifice?" said the State Inquisitor. The Prince fainted in the arms of his conductors. "Go," he continued, with a terrible voice, as he turned towards me; "and think in future more favourably of the administration of justice in Venice."

We could not learn who our unknown friend was, who had thus delivered us, by the arm of justice, from the diabolical plans of the assassin. We reached our habitation terrified in the extreme. It was midnight. The chamberlain Z—— waited for us upon the stairs with great impatience. "How lucky it was," said he to the Prince, as he lighted us up stairs, "that you sent the messenger as you did; the intelligence from the Baron, which was brought to this house from the market-place, excited in us a dreadful anxiety for your safety." "I sent a message!" said the Prince. "When? I know nothing of it." "This evening, after eight o'clock, a person arrived, and said, we must not be alarmed if you should not return until late at night." Here the Prince said to me, — "You, perhaps, without my knowledge, have taken this precaution." "I know nothing of it," said I. "It must certainly be so, your Highness," said the chamberlain; "for here is your watch, which he left with me as a proof that he had been with you." The Prince felt his pocket immediately: the watch was actually gone, and, looking upon that which the chamberlain held in his hand, he acknowledged it to be his own. "Who brought it?" said he, with eagerness. "An unknown mask in an Armenian habit, who immediately went away." We stood and looked at each other in silent horror. "What think you of this?" said the Prince at last, after a long pause; "it is now certain that I have in Venice a secret inspector."

The frightful transactions of this night threw the Prince into a fever, which confined him to his room for eight days. During this time our hotel was crowded with citizens and strangers, who had lately learned the rank of the Prince. They strove to vie with each other in showing civility to

him ; and we saw with pleasure every night how fast suspicion was wearing away. Love-letters and billets came from all quarters. Every person endeavoured to make himself useful. The whole proceedings of the State Inquisition were no longer thought of. In the mean time, the Court of ——— did not wish to hasten the departure of the Prince, and therefore gave instructions to a rich banker in Venice to furnish him with large sums of money. Thus he was put into a condition, contrary to his inclination, of remaining longer in Italy ; and, agreeably to his wishes, I consented not to hasten my departure. As soon as he was so far recovered as to be able to leave his chamber, the physician ordered him to make an excursion upon the Brenta for the benefit of the air. The weather was fine, and we soon made an agreeable party. Just as we were about to step into the gondola, the Prince missed a key to a little box which contained some valuable papers. We returned immediately to look for it. He remembered perfectly to have locked the box the day before, and since that time he had not quitted the room. But all our efforts to discover the key were fruitless: we therefore abandoned the search ; and the Prince, whose soul was above suspicion, gave it over as lost, but requested me not to take any notice of it. The voyage was delightfully enchanting ; the landscape seemed to increase in beauty and variety at every turn of the river ; added to this, a clear sky, which, in the middle of February, formed a May-day. The charming gardens that surrounded the elegant country houses which every where adorned the sides of the Brenta, together with the majestic Venice crowned with a hundred towers, as if rising from the water, offered us one of the most delightful prospects in the world. We lost ourselves entirely in the beautiful magic of the scenery around us. Our spirits were elated ; and even the Prince assumed an air of gaiety, and joined with us in our frolicksome pleasantries. Sweet music occupied our attention, when we got to the shore about two Italian miles from the town. It proceeded from a small village where they were holding a fair. Here every art was practised by the company. A troop of young maidens and children, dressed in a theatrical manner, wel-

comed us with a pantomimic dance. The invention was new: nimbleness and grace animated every motion. Before the dance was ended, one of them, who seemed to be the principal person, and who acted the part of the queen, suddenly stopped, as if restrained by an invisible power. She stood still; all followed her example; and the music ceased. An universal silence prevailed in the whole assembly, whilst she remained with her eyes fixed upon the ground as in a profound trance; then she became as if inspired, looked wild, and cried in a transport of joy—"A king is amongst us!"

She arose, took her crown from her head, and placed it at the feet of the Prince. All who were present directed their eyes towards the Prince, who was a long time uncertain what could be the meaning of this juggle, so well had she acted the monkey tricks of this farce. At length an universal clapping of hands interrupted this silence. I looked at the Prince, and perceived that he was not a little concerned and hurt to be examined by the enquiring eyes of the company. He distributed money to the children, and hastened from the crowd. We had not gone far, when a venerable monk came from the throng, and placed himself in the path we were pursuing.

"Sir," said the monk, "bestow some of your money upon Madonna; you will need her prayers."

He spoke this in a tone which startled us—the crowd, however, soon separated him from us. Our suite was in the mean time increased. An English lord, whom the Prince had seen before at Nizza, several merchants from Leghorn, a German prelate, a French abbé, with several ladies, and a Russian officer, attached themselves to our party. The physiognomy of this last had something so remarkable about it, that it attracted our attention. Never in my life did I see so many traits, and so little character; so much inviting benevolence, and such forbidding coldness, painted together in one man's countenance. Every passion seemed to have formerly dwelt there, and to have abandoned it. Nothing remained but the still piercing look of a perfect man of the world. Every eye was fixed upon him

wherever he went. This stranger followed at a distance, and seemed indifferent to whatever was going on. We arrived at the booth where a lottery was kept: the ladies bought tickets—we followed their example, and the Prince also purchased a share. He won a snuff-box; and, when he opened it, I perceived him turn pale, and start back with the utmost surprise—the little key he had lost was in it. “What is this?” said he to me when we were alone, with a fixed countenance; “an unknown power pursues me; an all-powerful being hovers over me; an invisible agency, which I cannot flee from, watches over all my actions. I must seek the Armenian, and obtain an explanation from him.”

The sun was setting as we arrived at the pleasure-house where the supper was served up. The name of the Prince had increased our party to the number of sixteen persons. Besides our former companions, a virtuoso from Rome, several Swiss, and an adventurer from Palermo, who wore an uniform, and gave himself out for a captain, insinuated themselves into our society. It was agreed to spend the whole evening here, and to return home by torchlight. The entertainment at the table was good, and the conversation very sprightly; the Prince could not refrain from relating the adventure of the key, which excited a general astonishment. A great dispute arose concerning this affair:—the major part of the company had the temerity to think all these cunning tricks depended upon witchcraft. The Abbé, who had already drank a sufficient quantity of wine, challenged the whole kingdom of ghosts into the ring. The Englishman talked blasphemy, while another made sign of the cross to avert the devil. A few, in the number of whom was the Prince, maintained that it was better not to give any decided opinion upon these subjects. During this conversation the Russian officer entertained himself with the ladies, and seemed to be perfectly inattentive to our discussion. In the height of this dispute, no one observed that the Sicilian had retired. A short time afterwards he returned, clothed in a mantle, and placed himself behind the chair of the Frenchman.

“You have had the boldness,” said he, “to challenge

all the kingdom of ghosts. — Will you try one ?” “ Yes !” said the Abbé, “ if you will undertake to bring one before me.” “ That I will,” replied the Sicilian, turning himself about, “ when these ladies and gentlemen shall have left us.” “ Why so !” exclaimed the Englishman ; “ a jovial ghost will enjoy himself in such good company.” “ I will not answer for the consequences,” said the Sicilian. “ Oh, heavens !” cried the ladies, and fled, terrified, from their seats. “ Let your ghost come,” said the Abbé, daringly, “ but warn him beforehand that he will find here sharp-pointed tools ;” at the same time endeavouring to borrow a sword. “ You may do, in that respect, as you please,” said the Sicilian coolly, “ when you see it.”

Here he turned himself towards the Prince. “ Gracious Sir,” said he to him, “ you believe that your key was in strange hands — can you guess in whose ?” “ No.” “ Do you suspect any body ?” “ I had certainly a suspicion.” “ Should you know the person if you were to see him ?” “ Without doubt.”

Here the Sicilian put aside his mantle, and took from under it a looking-glass, which he held before the eyes of the Prince. “ Is this the man ?” The Prince started back with the utmost terror. “ What have you seen ?” asked I. “ The Armenian !” The Sicilian put the glass under his mantle. “ Was that the person you meant ?” enquired the whole company. “ The very same.”

Upon this, every countenance was changed, no one was heard to laugh, and all eyes were fixed attentively upon the Sicilian. “ Monsieur Abbé,” said the Englishman, “ this thing becomes serious : I advise you to think of your retreat.” “ The fellow is in league with the devil,” cried the Frenchman, and rushed out of the house. The ladies ran shrieking from the hall — the virtuoso followed them — the German prelate snored in his chair — the Russian remained sitting as if perfectly indifferent to what was passing.

“ You thought, perhaps, to have excited a great laugh,” said the Prince, “ against this boaster, if he had not gone out ; or did you intend to have performed what you promised ?” “ It is true,” said the Sicilian, “ with the

Abbé I was not in earnest ; I took him at his word, because I knew that the coward would not suffer me to go so far as to put it in execution. The thing itself is of too serious a nature to make a joke of." " You maintain, then, that you have it in your power to do what you asserted ?" The magician was silent, and seemed to be studying the expressive countenance of the Prince. " Yes," answered he, at length.

The curiosity of the Prince was already excited to the highest degree, for he had always believed in supernatural beings, and this act of the Armenian brought back to his mind all his former reflections on this subject, which reason had in some measure driven away. He went aside with the Sicilian, and I heard him conversing with him very earnestly. " You have before you a man," continued he, " who burns with impatience for an explanation of this affair. I would esteem that man as my benefactor, as my best friend, who would, in this respect, remove my doubts, and dissipate the mist from my eyes. — Will you do me this great service ?" " What do you require of me ?" said the magician with thoughtfulness. " To give me immediately a proof of your art ; let me see an apparition." " Why should I do this ?" " That you may judge, from a nearer acquaintance, whether I am worthy of higher instruction." " I esteem you above all others, mighty Prince. A secret power in your countenance, which you yourself are ignorant of, bound me at first sight irresistibly to you. You are more powerful than you are aware of. You have an undoubted right to command all my power, but —" " Then allow me to see an apparition." " I must be first certain that you do not make this request out of curiosity ; for, although the supernatural powers are subjected to my will in some respects, it is under the sacred condition that I do not abuse my authority." " My motives are the purest. I wish for an explanation of facts."

Here they left their places, and approached to a distant window, where I could not hear what was said. The Englishman, who had also heard this conversation, took me aside. " Your prince has a noble mind," said he ;

“but I pity him, for I will bet my life he has to deal with a sharper.” “That will be proved,” said I, “when he comes to investigate this matter.” “Let me tell you,” said the Englishman, “that the devil makes himself very dear. He will not practise his art without touching the cash. There are nine of us. We will make a collection. This will break the neck of his scheme, and perhaps open the eyes of the Prince.” “I am content, said I.”

The Englishman immediately threw six guineas into a plate, and gathered in the ring. Each gave several louis. The Russian especially was highly pleased at our proposal; he put a bank note of a hundred sequins into the plate—a piece of extravagance which startled the Englishman. We brought the collection to the Prince. “Have the goodness,” said the Englishman, “to entreat, in our names, that gentleman to let us see a proof of his art, and persuade him to accept this small token of our acknowledgments for his trouble.” The Prince also put a costly ring into the plate, and presented it to the Sicilian. He considered of our proposal. “Gentlemen,” he began, “this unexpected generosity is highly flattering. I obey your wishes. Your desires shall be fulfilled.” In the mean time he rang the bell. “With respect to this money,” he continued, “to which I have no right, if you will give me leave, I will present it to the nearest monastery, as a gratuity towards so benevolent an institution. This ring I shall always keep, as a valuable proof of the goodness of the best of princes.”

Here the master of the house entered, to whom he immediately delivered the money. “He is still a swindler,” said the Englishman, “although he refuses the gold. It is done that he may get more into the Prince’s favour.” Another said, “The landlord is in league with him.” “What would you wish to see?” said the Sicilian to the Prince. “Let us have a great man,” said the Lord: “challenge the Pope Ganginelli; it will be the same to this gentleman.” The Sicilian bit his lips. “I dare not call for one who has received extreme unction.” “That is bad,” said the Englishman; “perhaps we should learn from him of what disorder he died.” “The Marquis of

Lanoy," said the Prince, "was a French brigadier in a former war, and my most intimate friend. In a battle near Hastinbeck he received a deadly wound. They took him to my tent, where he soon after died in my arms. Before he expired—'Prince,' said he, 'I shall never again behold my native country; I will therefore intrust you with a secret, which is known to no one but myself. In a cloister upon the borders of Flanders, there lives a——' At that instant he expired. Death destroyed the thread of his discourse. I could wish to have him brought before me, and to hear the conclusion of his tale." "Well requested, by Heaven," said the Englishman; "I shall esteem you as the greatest conjurer in the world if you comply with this request." We admired the wise choice of the Prince, and unanimously gave our consent to the proposition. In the mean time the magician walked up and down the room with hasty steps, and seemed to be holding a conference with himself. "And was that all which the deceased communicated to you?" "All." "Did you make any further enquiries, on account of what you heard, in his native country?" "It was in vain." "Did the Marquis of Lanoy live irreproachably?—for I dare not call any one I please from the dead." "He died with penitence for the sins of his youth." "Have you about you any token of his?" "Yes." The Prince had actually a snuff-box, on the lid of which a miniature picture of the Marquis was painted in enamel, which he usually laid near him upon the table. "I do not desire to know what it is. Leave me alone: you shall see the deceased."

We were desired to go into another apartment, and wait until he called for us. At the same time he ordered all the moveables to be taken from the hall, the windows to be taken out, and the window shutters to be put close to. He also ordered the landlord, with whom he had already been conniving, to bring in a vessel filled with hot coals, and to put out all the fires in the house carefully with water. Before we returned, he made us all promise that we would observe a profound silence during the whole of what we should see or hear. All the doors of the

rooms behind us leading to this apartment were fastened. The clock had struck eleven. A deadly silence prevailed through the whole house. Before we went out, the Russian said to me — “Have we any loaded pistols with us?” “Why?” said I. “It is at all events convenient,” answered he. “Wait a minute, and I will go and see after some.”

He went out, and the Baron and myself opened a window which looked towards another room, and we thought we heard people talking together, and a noise as if they were placing a ladder under it; but as that might only be a conjecture, I dared not give it out as certain. The Russian returned with a brace of pistols, after being absent about half an hour. We saw him load them. It was now near two o'clock when the magician appeared again, and announced that he was prepared. Before we returned, he ordered us to pull off our shoes, and to appear in our shirts, stockings, and under garments. The doors as before were all fastened. We found, when we returned into the hall, a large circle made with coals, in which we could all stand very conveniently. Round about the room, and by the four walls, the boards were taken away, so that we seemed to stand as it were upon an island. An altar, hung with black cloth, was erected in the middle of the circle, under which was spread a carpet of red silk; a Chaldean Bible lay open near a death's head upon the altar, and a silver crucifix was fastened in the centre. Instead of candles, spirits were burning in a silver vessel. A thick smoke of olive wood darkened the hall, which almost extinguished the lights. The conjurer was clothed as we were, but bare-footed. On his bare neck he wore an amulet* suspended by a chain of human hair. Upon his loins he wore a white mantle, which was decorated with magical characters and mysterious figures. He made us join hands, and maintain a deep silence. Above all, he recommended us not to ask the apparition any questions. He requested the English-

* Amulet was the name of a charm made of wood or other materials, and on which was engraved particular words and characters, and worn about the neck, to subvert the machinations of the Devil and his agents. They were held in high esteem by the Arabs, Turks, and Jews, and particularly amongst the Catholics.

man and myself (for he seemed to entertain the greatest suspicion of us) to hold two drawn swords, steadily and cross-wise, an inch above his head, as long as the ceremony should last. We stood in a half circle around him. The Russian officer pressed near to the Englishman, and stood next to the altar. The magician placed himself upon the carpet, with his face towards the east, sprinkled holy water to the four points of the compass, and bowed thrice before the Bible. A quarter of an hour passed in ceremonious acts, perfectly unintelligible to us; at the end of which, he gave those a sign who stood behind him to hold him fast by the hair. Struggling apparently with dreadful convulsions, he called the deceased by name three times; at the last, he stretched out his hand towards the crucifix. We instantly experienced a violent shock, which separated our hands. A sudden clap of thunder shook the house to its foundation; at the same time the window shutters rattled, and all the doors were burst open. The apparatus fell in pieces, and as soon as the light was extinguished, we observed distinctly on the wall over the chimney-piece the figure of a man clothed in a bloody garment, with a pale and livid aspect.

“Who called me?” cried a faint, hollow voice. “Thy friend,” said the conjurer, “who venerates thy memory, and prays for thy soul.” At the same time he mentioned the name of the Prince. “What does he want?” continued the ghost, after a very long pause. “He wishes to hear your confession to the end, which you began in this world but did not finish.” “In a cloister upon the borders of Flanders there lives—” Here the house shook again, the door opened of its own accord, and a violent clap of thunder was heard, as a flash of lightning illuminated the room. Immediately another figure, bloody and pale like the first, appeared at the threshold. The spirits in the vase began to burn again, and the hall was as it first appeared.

“Who is among us?” cried the magician, looking with horror and astonishment at the spectators. “I did not much wish for thee.” The ghost immediately walked with a slow and majestic step to the altar, and stood upon the carpet opposite to us. It seized the crucifix, and the first

apparition instantly vanished. "Who is it that has called me?" said the second apparition. The magician began to tremble. Fear and astonishment almost overpowered us. I now seized a pistol—the magician wrested it from my hand, and fired at the ghost. The ball rolled along the altar, and the figure remained amidst the smoke unhurt. The magician immediately sunk down in a fit.

"What have we here?" exclaimed the Englishman with astonishment, as he endeavoured to strike the ghost with his sword. The apparition arrested his arm, and the sword fell to the ground. Here the sweat of anguish started from my forehead, and the Baron confessed to us afterwards that he employed himself in praying. All this time the Prince stood fearless and unmoved, with his eyes riveted upon the figure. "Yes!" said he at last, pathetically, "I know thee: thou art Lanoy—thou art my friend. From whence dost thou come?" "I cannot divulge the mysteries of eternity.—Ask me any question that relates to my existence on earth." "Who lives in the cloister," said the Prince, "of which you gave me notice at the hour of your death?" "My daughter." "How! Have you ever been a father?" "I would that I had not been." "Are you not happy, Lanoy?" "God is my judge." "Can I not render you any service in this world?" "None; but think of yourself." "How must I do that?" "You will learn it at Rome."

"Immediately a clap of thunder was heard—a thick smoke filled the room; and when it cleared up, the figure had vanished. I pushed open a window-shutter—it was day-light.

The conjurer soon recovered his senses. "Where are we?" he cried, when he saw the day-light. The Russian officer stood close behind him; and looking over his shoulder, "Juggler," he said, with a piercing frown, "this is the last time thou wilt ever have it in thy power to summon another ghost to appear on earth." The Sicilian turned hastily round; and, looking stedfastly in his face, uttered a loud shriek, and fell senseless on the ground. Immediately the pretended Russian was discovered by the Prince to be no other person than his mysterious friend the Armenian.

No language can paint the horror this circumstance occasioned in the mind of the Prince, and the consternation that generally pervaded the company. We stood motionless as we surveyed this awful being, who penetrated us to the soul with his looks. A dead silence reigned for some minutes: at length several loud knocks at the door roused us from a state of stupefaction. The noise continued, and the door was soon after shattered in pieces, when several police officers, with a guard, rushed into the hall. "Here we find them altogether," cried the commander, turning to his followers. "In the name of the government," (addressing himself to us) cried he, "I arrest you all."

We had scarcely time to recollect ourselves, ere we were all surrounded by the guard. The Russian, whom I shall now call the Armenian, took the commander aside; and notwithstanding the confusion we were in, I observed that he whispered something in his ear, and showed him a paper, at the sight of which the man bowed respectfully and retired — as he passed us he took off his hat. "Forgive me, gentlemen," said he, "for having confounded you with this impostor. I will not ask who you are; this person assures me that I have men of honour before me."

In the mean time he gave his people a hint to withdraw from us. He commanded them, however, to seize the Sicilian, and to bind him. "This fellow has reigned long enough," added he; "we have been upon the watch for him these seven months."

The miserable wretch was indeed an object of pity. The sudden fright which the second apparition occasioned, and the unexpected reproach from the Armenian, had overpowered his senses. He suffered himself to be bound without the least opposition. His eyes rolled in his head, and a death-like paleness spread itself over his countenance, as at intervals he heaved convulsive sighs. Every moment we expected that he would become frantic. The Prince pitied his distress, and undertook to solicit his discharge from the leader of the police, to whom he discovered his rank. "Gracious Prince," said the officer, "do you know who this man is? and for whom you so generously intercede? The tricks which he practised to deceive you are the

least of his crimes. We have already secured his accomplices, and they have discovered transactions which he has been concerned in of the most horrid nature. He may think himself well off if he escapes with banishment to the galleys."

In the mean time we observed the landlord and his family fettered and led through the yard. "Is that man guilty?" cried the Prince; "what has he done?" "He was his accomplice," said the officer, "and assisted him in his mountebank tricks and robberies, and shared the spoil with him. I will convince you immediately, gracious Sir, of the truth of my assertion" (turning towards his followers). "Search the house," he cried, "and bring me immediately intelligence as to what you discover."

The Prince looked for the Armenian, but he was gone. In the confusion which this unexpected circumstance occasioned, he found means to steal off without being observed. The Prince was inconsolable: he determined to send servants after him, and also search for him himself; and, hurrying with me to the window, we observed the whole house surrounded by the populace, whom the account of this event had drawn to the spot. "It is impossible to make our way through the crowd," said I; "and if it is the intention of the Armenian to elude our search, he certainly knows the means to do it effectually: let us rather stay here a little longer, gracious Sir. Perhaps this officer of the police can give us some information respecting him, to whom he has, if I have rightly observed, discovered himself."

We recollected that we were still in an undress, and promising to return soon, we hastened into a room to put on our clothes as quickly as possible. When we came back, the searching of the house was finished. After they had removed the altar, and forced up the boards of the floor, they discovered a vault where a man was able to sit upright, which was separated by a secret door from a narrow staircase that led to a gloomy cave. In this abyss they found an electrical machine, a clock, and a small silver bell; which last, as well as the electrical machine, had a communication with the altar and the crucifix that was fixed upon it. A hole had been made in the window-shutter opposite the chimney,

which opened and shut with a slide. In this hole, as we learned afterwards, was fixed a magic lantern, from which the figure of the ghost had been reflected on the opposite wall over the chimney. From the garret and the cave they brought several drums, to which large leaden bullets were fastened by strings: these had probably been used to imitate the roaring of thunder which we had heard. In searching the Sicilian's clothes, they found in a case different powders, genuine mercury in vials and boxes, phosphorus in a glass bottle, and a ring, which we immediately knew to be magnetic, because it adhered to a steel button that had been placed near to it by accident. In his coat pockets were a rosary, a jew's beard, a dagger, and a pocket pistol. "Let us see if it is loaded," said one of the watch, and fired up the chimney. "Jesus Maria!" cried a voice, which we knew to be the same as that we had heard when the first spirit appeared; and at the same instant we beheld a bleeding person tumbling down the chimney. "What! not yet at rest, poor ghost?" cried the Englishman, whilst we started back affrighted. "Go to thy grave. Thou hast appeared what thou wast not, and now thou wilt be what thou hast appeared." "Jesus Maria! I am wounded!" replied the man. The ball had fractured his right leg. Care was immediately taken to have the wound dressed.

"But who art thou?" said the English lord; "and what evil spirit brought thee here?" "I am a poor solitary monk," answered the wounded man. "A strange gentleman offered me a zechin to—" "Repeat your magical lesson. And why did you not withdraw immediately you had finished?" "I was waiting for a signal to continue my speech, as had been agreed on between us; but as this signal was not given, I was endeavouring to get off, when I found the ladder had been removed." "And what was the formula he taught thee?"

The wounded man fainted: nothing more could be got from him. When we observed his features more minutely, we discovered him to be the same man that stood in the pathway of the Prince the evening before, and asked alms for the Madonna. The Prince addressed the leader of the watch, giving him at the same time some

pieces of gold. "You have rescued us," said he, "from the hands of a deceiver, and done us justice even without knowing us: increase our gratitude by telling us who the stranger was, that, by speaking only a few words, procured us our liberty?" "Whom do you mean?" asked the officer, with a countenance which seemed to indicate that the question was useless. "The gentleman in a Russian uniform, who took you aside, showed you a written paper, and whispered in your ear, in consequence of which you immediately set us free." "Do not you know the gentleman?" said the officer. "Was he not one of your company?" "No," said the Prince; "and I have very important reasons for wishing to be acquainted with him." "He is a perfect stranger to me too," replied the officer; "even his name is unknown to me. I saw him to-day for the first time in my life." "How! And was he able in so short a space of time, and by using only a few words, to convince you that we were all innocent?" "Undoubtedly, Sire, with a single word." "And this was?—I confess I wish to know it." "This stranger, my Prince," (weighing the zechins in his hand)—"you have been too generous for me to make it any longer a mystery—this stranger is an officer of the Inquisition." "Of the Inquisition!—What! that man?" "Nothing else, my Prince. I was convinced of it by the paper which he showed to me." "That man did you say? It cannot be." "I will tell you more, my Prince; it was upon his information that I have been sent here to arrest the conjurer."

We looked at each other with the utmost astonishment.

"Now we know," said the English lord, "why the poor devil of a sorcerer started when he came near his face. He knew him to be a spy, and for that reason he made such a horrible outcry, and threw himself at his feet." "No," interrupted the Prince; "this man is whatever he wishes to be, and whatever the moment requires him to be. No mortal ever knew what he really was. Did not you see the knees of the Sicilian sink under him, when he said, with a terrible voice, 'Thou shalt no more call a ghost.' There is something mysterious in this matter. No person can persuade me that one man should

be thus alarmed at the sight of another, without some most essential reason." "The conjurer will probably explain it the best," said the English lord, "if that gentleman" (pointing to the officer) "will procure us an opportunity of speaking to his prisoner." The officer consented to it; and, after having agreed with the Englishman to visit the Sicilian in the morning, we returned to Venice.*

Lord Seymour (this was the name of the Englishman) called upon us very early in the forenoon, and was soon after followed by a person whom the officer had intrusted with the care of conducting us to the prison. I forgot to mention, that one of the Prince's domestics, a native of Bremen, who had served him many years with the strictest fidelity, and who possessed his confidence, had been missing for several days. Whether he had met with any accident, been kidnapped, or had voluntarily absented himself, was a secret to every one. The last supposition was extremely improbable, as his conduct had always been regular and irreproachable. All that his companions could recollect was, that he had been for some time very melancholy, and that, whenever he had a moment's leisure, he used to visit a certain monastery in the Giudecca, where he had formed an acquaintance with some monks. This led us to suppose that he might have fallen into the hands of the priests, and had been persuaded to turn Catholic. The Prince was indifferent about matters of this kind, and the few enquiries he caused to be made proving unsuccessful, he gave up the search. He, however, regretted the loss of this man, who had so constantly attended him in his campaigns, — had always been faithfully attached to him, — and whom it was therefore difficult to replace in a foreign country. The very same day the Prince's banker, whom he had commissioned to provide him with another servant, came at the moment we were going out; he pre-

* Count O——, whose narrative I have thus far literally copied, describes minutely the various effects of this adventure upon the mind of the Prince, and of his companions, and recounts a variety of tales of apparitions, which this event gave occasion to introduce. I shall omit giving them to the reader, on the supposition that he is as curious as myself to know the conclusion of the adventure, and its effects on the conduct of the Prince. I shall only add, that the Prince got no sleep the remainder of the night, and that he waited with impatience for the moment which was to disclose this incomprehensible mystery.

sented to the Prince a well-dressed man, of a good appearance, about forty years of age, who had been for a long time secretary to a procurator ; spoke French and a little German, and was besides furnished with the best recommendations. The Prince was pleased with the man's physiognomy ; and as he declared that he would be satisfied with such wages as his service should be found to merit, the Prince engaged him immediately.

We found the Sicilian in a private prison, where, as the keeper assured us, he had been lodged for the present, to accommodate the Prince, as he was to be confined in future under the lead roofs, to which there is no access. These lead roofs are the most terrible dungeons in Venice. They are situated on the top of the Palace of St. Mark, and the miserable criminals suffer so excessively from the heat of the leads, occasioned by the burning rays of the sun descending directly upon them, that they frequently become distracted. The Sicilian had recovered from his terror, and rose respectfully at the sight of the Prince. He had fetters on one hand and one leg, but he was able to walk about the room. The keeper left the dungeon as soon as we had entered.

“ I come,” said the Prince, “ to request an explanation of you on two subjects. — You owe me the one, and it shall not be to your disadvantage if you grant me the other.” “ My part is now acted,” replied the Sicilian : “ my destiny is in your hands.” “ Your sincerity alone can mitigate your punishment.” “ Ask, my Prince ; I am ready to answer you. I have nothing more to lose.” “ You showed me the face of the Armenian in your looking-glass — How was it done ?” “ What you saw was no looking-glass — a portrait in pastel behind a glass, representing a man in an Armenian dress, deceived you. The want of light, your astonishment, and my own dexterity, favoured the deception. The picture itself must have been found among the other things seized at the inn.” “ But how came you so well acquainted with my ideas as to hit upon the Armenian ?” “ This was not difficult, my Prince. You have, perhaps, frequently mentioned your adventure with the Armenian at table, in presence of

your domestics. One of my servants got accidentally acquainted with one of yours in the Giudecca, and soon learned from him as much as I wished to know." "Where is this man?" asked the Prince; "I miss him, and in all probability you are acquainted with the place of his retreat, and the reason why he deserted my service." "I swear to you, gracious Sir, that I know not the least of him. I have never seen him myself, nor had any other concern with him than the one before mentioned."

"Go on," said the Prince. "By this means also, I received the first information of your residence, and of your adventures at Venice; and I resolved immediately to profit by them. Your Highness sees that I am ingenuous. I was apprised of your intended excursion on the Brenta — I was prepared for it: and a key, that dropped by chance from your pocket, afforded me the first opportunity of trying my art upon you." "How! Have I been mistaken? The adventure of the key then was a trick of yours, and not of the Armenian? — You say this key fell from my pocket?" "You accidentally dropped it in taking out your purse, and I instantly covered it with my foot. The person of whom you bought the lottery ticket was in concert with me. He caused you to draw it from a box where there was no blank, and the key had been in the snuff-box long before it came into your possession." "It is almost incomprehensible — And the monk who stopped me in my way, and addressed me in a manner so solemn —" "Was the same that I hear has been wounded in the chimney. He is one of my accomplices, and under that disguise has rendered me many important services."

"But what purpose was this intended to answer?" "To render you thoughtful: to inspire you with such a train of ideas as should be favourable to the wonders I intended to make you believe." "The pantomimical dance, which ended in a manner so extraordinary, was at least none of your contrivance." "I had taught the girl who represented the queen. Her performance was the result of my instructions. I supposed your Highness would not be a little astonished to find yourself known in this place, and (I entreat your Highness's pardon) your

adventure with the Armenian gave room for me to hope that you were already disposed to reject natural interpretations, and to search for the marvellous."

"Indeed!" exclaimed the Prince, at once angry and amazed, and casting upon me a significant look — "Indeed, I did not expect this.* But," continued he, after a long silence, "how did you produce the figure that appeared on the wall over the chimney?" "By means of a magic lantern that was fixed in the opposite window-shutter, in which you have, no doubt, observed an opening." "And how did it happen that none of us perceived the lantern?" asked Lord Seymour. "You remember, my Lord, that on your re-entering the room, it was darkened by a thick smoke of olive wood. I used likewise the precaution to place upright against the wall near the window the boards which had been taken up from the floor. By these means I prevented the shutter from coming immediately under your sight. Moreover, the lantern remained covered until you had taken your places, and until there was no further reason to apprehend any examination from the persons in the hall."

"As I looked out of the window in the other pavilion," said I, "I heard a noise like that of a person who was in the act of placing a ladder against the side of the house. Was it really so?" "Yes, my assistant stood upon this ladder to direct the magic-lantern." "The apparition," continued the Prince, "had really a superficial likeness to my deceased friend; and what was particularly striking, his hair, which was of a very light colour, was exactly imitated. Was this mere chance, or how did you come by such a resemblance?" "Your Highness must recollect, that you had at table a snuff-box laid by your plate, with an enamelled portrait of an officer in a French uniform.

* Nor in all probability did my readers. The circumstance of the crown deposited at the feet of the Prince, in a manner so unexpected and extraordinary, and the former prediction of the Armenian, seemed so naturally and so obviously to aim at the same object, that at the first reading of these memoirs, I immediately remembered the deceitful speech of the Witches in the play of Macbeth:

"All hail, Macbeth! hail to thee, Thane of Glamis!
All hail, Macbeth! that shalt be King hereafter!"

When a particular idea has once entered the mind, it necessarily connects with itself every subsequent idea that seems to have the least affinity to it.

I asked whether you had any thing about you as a memorial of your friend. Your Highness answered in the affirmative. I conjectured it might be the box. I had attentively considered the picture during supper, and being very expert in drawing, and not less happy in taking likenesses, I had no difficulty in giving to my shade the superficial resemblance you have perceived, because the Marquis's features are very striking." "But the figure seemed to move?" "It appeared so; yet it was not the figure, but the smoke which received its light." "And the man who fell down in the chimney spoke for the apparition?" "He did." "But he could not hear your questions distinctly." "There was no occasion for it. Your Highness will recollect, that I ordered you all very strictly not to propose any question yourselves to the apparition. My enquiries and his answers were pre-concerted between us; and that no mistake might happen, I caused him to speak at long intervals, which he counted by the beating of a watch." "You ordered the inn-keeper carefully to extinguish every fire in the house. This was undoubtedly —" "To save the man from the danger of being smothered; because the chimneys in the house communicate with each other, and I did not think myself very secure from your retinue."

"How did it happen," asked Lord Seymour, "that your ghost appeared neither sooner nor later than you wished him?" "The ghost was in the room for some time before I called him; but while the room was lighted, the shade was too faint to be perceived. When the formula of the conjuration was finished, I caused the cover of the box, in which the spirit was burning, to drop down; the hall was darkened, and it was not till then that the figure on the wall could be distinctly seen, although it had been reflected there a considerable time before." "When the ghost appeared, we all felt an electrical stroke. How was that managed?" "You have discovered the machine under the altar. You have also seen, that I was standing upon a silk carpet. I ordered you to form a half moon around me, and to take hold of each other's hand. When the crisis approached, I gave a sign to one of you to seize me by the

hair. The silver crucifix was the conductor; and you felt the electrical shock when I touched it with my hand."

"You ordered Count O—— and myself," continued Lord Seymour, "to hold two naked swords across over your head, during the whole time of the conjuration; for what purpose?" "For no other than to engage your attention during the operation; because I distrusted you two the most. You remember, that I expressly commanded you to hold the swords one inch above my head; by confining you exactly to this distance, I prevented you from looking where I did not wish you. I had not then perceived my principal enemy."

"I own," said Lord Seymour, "you acted cautiously; but why were we obliged to appear undressed?" "Merely to give a greater solemnity to the scene, and to fill your imaginations with the idea of something extraordinary." "The second apparition prevented your ghost from speaking," said the Prince; "what should we have learned from him?" "Nearly the same as what you heard afterwards. It was not without design that I asked your Highness whether you had told me every thing that the deceased communicated to you, and whether you had made any further enquiries on this subject in his country? I thought this was necessary, in order to prevent the deposition of the ghost from being contradicted by facts that you were previously acquainted with. Knowing likewise that every man, especially in his youth, is liable to error, I enquired whether the life of your friend had been irreproachable, and on your answer I founded that of the ghost."

"Your explanation of this matter is in some measure satisfactory," said the Prince; "but there remains yet one material circumstance which I must insist upon being cleared up." "If it be in my power, and——" "I shall not listen to any conditions. Justice, into whose hands you are fallen, ought not, perhaps, to deal with you so delicately. Who was the man at whose feet we saw you fall? What do you know of him? How did you get acquainted with him? and what do you know of the second apparition?" "Your Highness ——" "Hesitate not a moment. Recollect, that on looking at the Russian officer attentively, you

screamed aloud, and fell on your knees before him. What are we to understand by that?" "That man, my Prince——" He stopped, grew visibly pale and perplexed, and, looking around him with an awful trepidation—"Yes, your Highness," he continued, "that man is a terrible being." "What do you know of him? What connection have you with him? Do not conceal the truth from us." "I will not; but—I am not certain that he is not among us at this very moment?"

"Where? Who?" exclaimed we all together, looking fearfully about the room. "It is impossible." "That man, or whatever else he may be, is a being incomprehensible; all things seem possible for him to do." "Who is he? Whence does he come? Is he Armenian or Russian? Of the characters he assumes, which is his real one?" "He is not what he appears to be. There are few conditions or countries in which he has not worn the mask. No person knows who he is, whence he comes, or whither he goes. Some say he has been for a long time in Egypt, and that he has brought from thence, out of a catacomb, his occult sciences. Here we only know him by the name of the Incomprehensible. How old, for instance, do you think he is?" "To judge from his appearance, he can scarcely have passed forty." "And of what age do you suppose I am?" "Not far from fifty." "Well; and I must tell you, that I was but a boy of seventeen when my grandfather spoke to me of this extraordinary man, whom he had seen at Famagusta; at which time he appeared nearly of the same age as he does at present." "Impossible," said the Prince; "it is ridiculous, and incredible."

"By no means, sir. Were I not prevented by these fetters, I could produce vouchers that would readily confirm my assertion. There are several credible persons who remember having seen him, each at the same time, in different parts of the globe. No sword can wound—no poison hurt—no fire burn him—no vessel in which he embarks can be shipwrecked or sunk: time itself seems to have no influence over him; years do not affect his constitution, nor age whiten his hair. He was never seen

to take any food. He is a stranger to love. No sleep closes his eyes. Of the twenty-four hours in the day, there is only one which he cannot command, during which no person ever saw him, and during which he never was employed in any terrestrial occupation."

"And this hour is—"

"That of midnight. When the clock strikes twelve, he ceases to belong to the living. In whatever place he is, he must immediately be gone; whatever business he is engaged in, he must instantly leave it. That dreadful hour tears him from the arms of friendship, hurries him from the sacred altar, and would, even in the agonies of death, drag him from his bed. His haunt has never been discovered, nor his engagements at that hour known. No person ventures to interrogate, and still less to follow him. As the time approaches, his features are enveloped in the gloom of melancholy, and are so terrifying that no person has courage to look him in the face or to speak a word to him. However lively the conversation may have been, a dead silence immediately succeeds it, and all around him wait for his return in awful horror, without venturing to quit their seats, or to open the door through which he has passed."

"Does nothing extraordinary appear in his person when he returns?" "Nothing, except that he seems pale and languid, nearly in the state of a man who has just suffered a painful operation, or received disastrous intelligence. Some pretend to have seen drops of blood on his linen, but with what degree of veracity I cannot affirm." "Did no person ever attempt to conceal the approach of this hour from him, or endeavour to engage him in such diversions as might make him forget it?" "Once only, it is said, he passed the fatal hour. The company was numerous, and remained together until late at night. All the clocks and watches were purposely set wrong, and the warmth of conversation diverted his attention. When the moment arrived, he suddenly became silent and motionless; his limbs continued in the position in which this instant had arrested them; his eyes were fixed, his pulse ceased to beat; all the means employed to awake him proved fruitless, and this situation endured till the hour had

elapsed ; he then revived on a sudden, and continued his speech from the same syllable that he was pronouncing at the moment of interruption. The general consternation discovered to him what had happened ; and he declared, with an awful solemnity, that they ought to think themselves happy in having escaped with no other injury than fear. The same night he quitted for ever the place where this circumstance had occurred. The common opinion is, that during this mysterious hour he converses with his attendant spirits. Some even suppose him to be one of the departed, who is allowed to pass twenty-three hours of the day among the living, and that in the twenty-fourth his soul is obliged to return to the infernal regions to suffer its punishment. Some believe him to be the famous Apollonius of Tyana*, and others the disciple of St. John the Baptist, of whom it is said that he shall remain wandering on the earth until the day of judgment."

"A character so wonderful," replied the Prince, "cannot fail to give rise to extraordinary conjectures. But all this you profess to know only by hearsay ; and yet his behaviour to you, and yours to him, seemed to indicate a more intimate acquaintance. Is it not founded upon some particular event, in which yourself have been concerned ? Conceal nothing from us." The Sicilian remained silent, as if uncertain whether he should speak or not. "If it concern any thing," said the Prince, "that you do not

* Apollonius, a Pythagorean philosopher, was born at Tyana, in Cappadocia, about three or four years before the birth of Christ. At sixteen years of age he became a strict observer of Pythagorean rules, renouncing wine, women, and all sorts of flesh ; not wearing shoes, letting his hair grow, and clothing himself with nothing but linen. He soon after set up for a reformer of mankind, and chose his habitation in the temple of Æsculapius, where he is said to have performed many miraculous cures. On his coming of age, he gave part of his wealth to his eldest brother, distributed another part to some poor relations, and kept very little for himself. There are numberless fabulous stories recounted of him. He went five years without speaking, and yet, during this time, he stopped many seditions in Cilicia and Pamphylia. He travelled, set up for a legislator, and gave out that he understood all languages without having ever learned them. He could tell the thoughts of men, and understood the oracles which birds delivered by their singing. The Heathens opposed the pretended miracles of this man to those of our Saviour, and gave the preference to this philosopher. After having for a long time imposed upon the world, and gained a great number of disciples, he died in a very advanced age about the end of the first century. His life, which is filled with absurdities, was written by Philostratus ; and M. du Pin has published a confutation of Apollonius's life, in which he proves, that the miracles of this pretended philosopher carry strong marks of falsehood, and that there is not one which may not be ascribed to chance or artifice. Apollonius himself wrote some works which are now lost.

wish to publish, I promise you by my honour, and before these gentlemen, the most inviolable secrecy; but speak openly, and without reserve." "Could I hope," answered the prisoner at last, "that you would not produce these gentlemen as evidence against me, I would tell you a remarkable adventure of this Armenian, to which I myself was witness, and which will leave you no doubt of his supernatural powers. But I beg leave to conceal some names." "Cannot you do it without this condition?" "No, your Highness: there is a family concerned in it which I must respect." "Let us hear then."

"Above five years ago, being at Naples, where I practised my art with success, I became acquainted with a person of the name of Lorenzo del M——, chevalier of the order of St. Stephen; a young and rich nobleman of one of the first families in the kingdom, who loaded me with civilities, and seemed to have a great esteem for my occult science. He told me that the Marquis del M——, his father, was a zealous admirer of the cabbala*, and would think himself happy in having a philosopher like me (for such he was pleased to call me) under his roof. The Marquis resided in one of his country seats on the sea-shore, about seven miles from Naples; and there, almost entirely secluded from the world, he mourned the loss of a beloved son, of whom he had been deprived by a fatal and melancholy accident. The chevalier gave me to understand, that he and his family might perhaps have occasion to employ my secret arts in obtaining some very important intelligence, to procure which every natural means had been exhausted in vain. He added, with a very significant look, that he himself might at some future period consider me as

* Cabbala is properly a mysterious kind of science delivered by revelation to the ancient Jews, and transmitted by oral tradition to those of our times; serving for the interpretation of difficult passages in Scripture, and to discover future events by the combination of particular words, letters, and numbers. It is likewise termed the oral law. But Cabbala, among the Christians, is also applied to the use, or rather abuse, which visionaries and enthusiasts make of Scripture for discovering futurity, by the study and consideration of the combination of certain words, letters, and numbers in the sacred writings. All the words, terms, magic characters, or figures, with stones and talismans, numbers, letters, charms, &c. in magic operations, are comprised under this species of Cabbala; and the word is used for any kind of magic, on account of the resemblance this art bears to the Jewish Cabbala. The Jews, however, never use the word in any such sense, but always with the utmost respect and veneration.

the author of all his earthly happiness. I did not choose to press him for an explanation. The affair was as follows :—Lorenzo, being the youngest son of the Marquis, had been destined for the church. The family estates were to devolve to the eldest. Jeronimo, which was the name of the latter, had spent many years on his travels, and returned to his country about seven years prior to the event which I am about to relate, in order to celebrate his marriage with the only daughter of a neighbouring count. This marriage had been determined on by the parents during the infancy of the children, in order to unite the very large fortunes of the two houses. But though this agreement was made by the two families without consulting the hearts of the parties concerned, the latter had secretly entertained an affection for each other. Jeronimo del M—— and Antonia C—— had been always brought up together; and the little constraint imposed on two children, whom their parents were already accustomed to regard as united, soon produced between them a connection of the tenderest kind. The congeniality of their tempers cemented this intimacy, and in riper years it matured insensibly into love. An absence of four years, far from cooling this passion, had only served to inflame it; and Jeronimo returned to the arms of his intended bride as faithful and as ardent as if they had never been separated. The raptures occasioned by his return had not subsided, nor the preparations for the happy day discontinued, when Jeronimo disappeared. He used frequently to pass the afternoon in a summer-house which commanded a prospect of the sea, and was accustomed to take the diversion of sailing on the water. One day, when he was at his favourite retirement, it was observed that he remained a much longer time than usual without returning, and his friends began to be very uneasy on his account. Boats were despatched after him, vessels were sent to sea in quest of him—no person had seen him—none of his servants could have attended him, for none of them were absent—night came on, and he did not appear. The next morning dawned—the day passed—the evening succeeded—Jeronimo came not. Already had they begun to give themselves up to the most melancholy

conjectures, when the news arrived that an Algerine pirate had landed the preceding day on that coast, and carried off several of the inhabitants. Two galleys, ready equipped, were immediately ordered to sea. The old Marquis himself embarked in one of them, to attempt the deliverance of his son at the peril of his own life. On the third day they perceived the corsair. The wind was favourable — they were just about to overtake him, and even approached so near to him, that Lorenzo, who was in one of the galleys, fancied that he saw, upon the deck of the adversary's ship, a signal made by his brother — when a sudden storm separated the vessels. Hardly could the almost shipwrecked galleys sustain the fury of the tempest. The pirate, in the mean time, had disappeared, and the distressed state of the other vessels obliged them to put into Malta. The affliction of the family was beyond all bounds. The distracted old Marquis tore his grey hairs in the utmost violence of grief ; and the life of the young Countess was despaired of.

“ Five years were consumed after this event in fruitless enquiries ; diligent search was made all along the coast of Barbary ; and immense sums were offered for the ransom of the young Marquis, but to no purpose. The only conjecture founded on probability was, that the same storm which had separated the galleys from the pirate had destroyed the latter vessel, and that the whole ship's company had perished in the waves. But this supposition, however probable, as it did not by any means amount to a certainty, could not authorise the family to renounce the hope that the absent Jeronymo might again appear. In case, however, that he did not, either the family's name must be suffered to perish, or the youngest son must relinquish the church, and enter into the rights of the eldest. Justice seemed to oppose the latter measure ; and, on the other hand, the necessity of preserving the family from annihilation required that the scruple should not be carried too far. In the mean time, sorrow, added to the weight of age, was bringing the Marquis fast to his grave. Every unsuccessful attempt served to increase his distress, and diminish the hope of finding his lost son. He saw that his name

might be perpetuated by acting with a little injustice, in consenting to favour his younger son at the expense of the elder. The fulfilment of his agreement with Count C—— required only the change of a name ; for the object of the two families was equally accomplished, whether Antonia became the wife of Lorenzo or Jeronymo. The faint probability of the latter's appearing again weighed but little against the certain and pressing danger of the total extinction of the family ; and the old Marquis, who considered his dissolution fast approaching, ardently wished to die free from this inquietude. Lorenzo alone, who was to be principally benefited by this measure, opposed it with the greatest obstinacy. He resisted with equal firmness the allurements of an immense fortune, and the attractions of a beautiful and accomplished object ready to be delivered into his arms. He refused, on principles the most generous and conscientious, to invade the rights of a brother, who for any thing he knew might himself be in a capacity to resume them.

“ ‘ Is not the lot of my Jeronymo,’ said he, ‘ made sufficiently miserable by the horrors of a long captivity, without the aggravation of being deprived for ever of all that he holds most dear ? With what conscience could I supplicate Heaven for his return, when his wife is in my arms ? With what countenance could I meet him, if at last he should be restored to us by a miracle ? And even supposing that he is torn from us for ever, can we honour his memory better than by keeping constantly open the chasm which his death has caused in our circle ? Can we better show our respects to him than by sacrificing our dearest hopes upon his tomb, and keeping untouched, as a sacred deposit, what was peculiarly his own ?’ But these arguments of fraternal delicacy could not reconcile the old Marquis to the idea of being obliged to witness the decay of a tree which nine centuries had beheld flourishing. All that Lorenzo could obtain was a delay of two years. During this period they continued their enquiries with the utmost diligence. Lorenzo himself made several voyages, and exposed his person to many dangers. No trouble, no ex-

pense, was spared to recover the lost Jeronimo. These two years, however, like those which preceded them, were consumed in vain."

"And Antonia," said the Prince.—"You tell us nothing of her. Could she so calmly submit to her fate? I cannot suppose it."

"Antonia," answered the Sicilian, "experienced the most violent struggle between duty and inclination, between dislike and admiration. The disinterested generosity of a brother affected her. She felt herself forced to esteem a person whom she could never love. Her heart, torn by contrary sentiments, felt the bitterest distress; but her repugnance to the chevalier seemed to increase in the same degree as his claims upon her esteem augmented. Lorenzo perceived with heartfelt sorrow the secret grief that consumed her youth. An unconquerable sympathy for her misfortune insensibly eradicated that indifference with which till then Lorenzo had been accustomed to consider her. But this delusive sentiment deceived him, and an ungovernable passion began rapidly to shake the steadiness of his virtue, which till then had been unequalled. He, however, still obeyed the dictates of generosity, though at the expense of his love. By his efforts alone was the unfortunate victim protected against the cruel and arbitrary proceedings of the rest of the family. But his endeavours were ineffectual. Every victory he gained over his passion rendered him more worthy of Antonia; and the disinterestedness with which he refused her, left her without an apology for resistance. Thus were affairs situated, when the chevalier engaged me to visit him at his father's villa. The earnest recommendation of my patron procured me a reception which exceeded my most sanguine wishes. I must not forget to mention, that, by some remarkable operations, I had previously rendered my name famous in different lodges of free-masons. This circumstance perhaps contributed to strengthen the old Marquis's confidence in me, and to heighten his expectations. I beg you will excuse me from describing particularly the lengths I went with him, or the means which I employed. You may form some judgment of them from what I have before confessed to you. Profit-

ing by the mystic books which I found in his very extensive library, I was soon able to speak to him in his own language, and to adorn my system of the invisible world with the most extraordinary inventions. He was therefore with so little difficulty induced to credit the fables I taught him, that in a short time he would have believed as implicitly in the secret commerce of philosophers and sylphs as in any article of the canon. The Marquis, being very religious, had acquired in the school of theology a facility of belief, which caused him at once to be fascinated with the stories I told him, and to put the most unreserved confidence in my character. At length I entangled him so completely in mystery, that he would no longer believe any thing that was natural. In short, I became the adored apostle of the house. The usual subject of my lectures was the exaltation of human nature, and the intercourse of men with superior things; the infallible Count Gabolis* was my oracle. Antonia, whose mind since the loss of her lover had been more occupied in the world of spirits than in that of nature, and who had a strong tincture of melancholy in her composition, caught every hint I gave her with a fearful satisfaction. Even the servants contrived to have some business in the room when I was speaking, and, seizing part of my conversation, formed from it mysterious presages.—Two months were passed in this manner at the Marquis's villa, when the chevalier one morning entered my apartment. His features had experienced a considerable alteration, and from his sorrowful countenance I suspected that something preyed upon his mind.—He threw himself upon a couch with every symptom of despair.

“ ‘ I am distracted, ruined,’ said he; ‘ I must, I cannot support it any longer.’ ‘ What is the matter with you, chevalier? ‘ What has befallen you?’ ‘ Oh! this terrible passion!’ said he, starting from his seat, and throwing himself into my arms. ‘ I have combated against it like a man, but can resist it no longer.’ ‘ And whose fault is it but your own, my dear chevalier? Are they not all willing to gratify this passion? Your father? Your relations?’ ‘ My father! my relations! What are they to me? I want

* A mystical work written in French by the Abbé de Villars.

not to be united to her by force. 'Have not I a rival? Alas! and what a rival! Perhaps a dead one! Oh! let me go, let me go to the end of the world; I must find my brother.' 'What! after so many unsuccessful attempts, have you still any hope?' 'Hope! Alas, no! It has long since been banished from my heart, but it has not from hers; of what consequence are my sentiments? Is it possible that I should be happy whilst there remains a gleam of hope in Antonia's breast. Two words, my friend, would end my torments, but in vain; my destiny must continue to be miserable, till eternity shall break its long silence, and the grave shall speak in my behalf.' 'Is it then a state of certainty that would render you happy?' 'Happy! Alas! I doubt whether I shall ever be happy again; but uncertainty is of all others the most dreadful affliction.'

"After a short interval of silence, he continued with an emotion less violent:—'If he could see my torments! Surely a constancy which renders his brother miserable cannot add to his happiness! Can it be just, that the living should suffer so much for the sake of the dead; that I should fruitlessly pine for an object which Jeronymo can no longer enjoy? If he knew the pangs I suffer,' (said he, concealing his face while the tears streamed from his eyes,) 'perhaps he himself would conduct her to my arms.' 'But is there no possibility of gratifying your wishes?' He started! 'What do you say, my friend?' 'Less important occasions than the present,' said I, 'have disturbed the repose of the dead for the sake of the living; is not the terrestrial happiness of a man, of a brother—' 'The terrestrial happiness! Ah, my friend, I feel but too sensibly the force of your expression—my entire felicity!' 'And the tranquillity of a distressed family, are not these sufficient to justify such a measure? If any sublunary concern can authorise us to interrupt the peace of the blessed, to make use of a power—' 'For God's sake, my friend!' said he, interrupting me, 'no more of this—once, I avow it, I had such a thought; I think I mentioned it to you; but I have long since rejected it as horrid and abominable.'

"You will have conjectured already," continued the Sicilian, "to what this conversation led us; I endeavoured

to overcome the scruples of the chevalier, and at last succeeded.—We resolved to call the ghost of the deceased Jeronymo; I only stipulated for a delay of a fortnight, in order, as I pretended, to prepare, in a suitable manner, for an act so solemn.—The time being expired, and my machinery in readiness, I took advantage of a very gloomy day, when we were all assembled as usual, to communicate the affair to the family; and not only brought them to consent to it, but even to make it a subject of their own request.—The most difficult part of the task was to obtain the approbation of Antonia, whose presence was essential.—My endeavours were, however, greatly assisted by the melancholy turn of her mind, and perhaps still more so by a faint hope that Jeronymo might still be living, and therefore would not appear.—A want of confidence in the thing itself was the only obstacle which I had to remove.—Having obtained the consent of the family, the third day was fixed on for the operation; I prepared then for the solemn transaction, by mystical instruction, fasting, solitude, and prayers, which I ordered to be continued till late in the night.—Much use was also made of a certain musical instrument*, unknown till that time; and, in such cases, it has often been found very powerful.—The effect of these artifices was so much beyond my expectation, that the enthusiasm which on this occasion I was obliged to show, was infinitely heightened by that of my audience.—The long-expected moment at last arrived.”

“I guess,” said the Prince, “whom you are now going to introduce.—But go on, go on.” “Your Highness is mistaken.—The deception succeeded according to my wishes.” “How! Where then is the Armenian?” “Your Highness’s patience: he will appear but too soon. I omit the description of the juggling farce itself, as it would be too tedious to relate.—It is sufficient to say, that it answered my expectation; the old Marquis, the young Countess, her mother, Lorenzo, and several other persons of the family were present.—You will imagine, that during my long residence in the house I took all opportunities of gathering information respecting every thing that concerned the deceased.—Seve-

* The *Æolian harp*.

ral of his portraits enabled me to give the apparition a striking likeness ; and as I suffered the ghost to speak only by signs, that the sound of his voice might excite no suspicion, the departed Jeronymo appeared in the dress of a Moorish slave, with a deep wound in his neck. — You observe, that in this respect I was counteracting the general supposition that he had perished in the waves. I had reason to hope, that this unexpected circumstance would heighten the belief in the apparition itself ; for nothing appeared to me more dangerous than to be too natural.”

“ I think you judged well,” said the Prince ; “ in whatever respects apparitions, the most probable is the least acceptable. If their communications are easily comprehended, we undervalue the channel by which they are obtained ; nay, we even suspect the reality of the miracle, if the discoveries which it brings to light are such as might easily have been imagined. — Why should we disturb the repose of a spirit, to inform us of nothing more than the ordinary powers of the intellect are capable of teaching us ? — But, on the other hand, if the intelligence which we receive be extraordinary and unexpected, it confirms, in some degree, the miracle by which it is obtained ; for who can doubt an operation to be supernatural, when its effect could not be produced by natural means ? I have interrupted you,” added the Prince : “ proceed in your narrative.” “ I asked the ghost, whether there was any thing in this world which he still considered as his own, and whether he had left any thing behind that was particularly dear to him ? The ghost thrice shook his head, and lifted up his hands towards heaven. Previous to his retiring, he dropped a ring from his finger, which was found on the floor after he had disappeared ; Antonia took it, and, looking at it attentively, she knew it to be the wedding-ring she had presented to her intended husband.”

“ The wedding-ring ! ” exclaimed the Prince, with surprise. “ How did you get it ? ” “ Who ? — I ! — It was not the true one ! — I procured it. — It was only a counterfeit.” “ A counterfeit ! ” repeated the Prince. “ But in order to counterfeit, you must have been in possession of the true one. How did you come at it ? Surely the

deceased never went without it." "That is true," replied the Sicilian, apparently confused. "But, from a description which was given me of the original wedding-ring —" "A description which was given you! by whom?" "Long before that time. It was a plain gold ring, and had, I believe, the name of the young Countess engraved on it. But you make me lose the connection."

"What happened farther?" said the Prince, with a very dissatisfied countenance. "The family fancied themselves convinced that Jeronymo was no more. From that very day they publicly announced his death, and went into mourning. The circumstance of the ring left no doubt even in the mind of Antonia, and added a considerable weight to the addresses of the chevalier. In the mean time, the violent impression which the young Countess had received from the sight of the apparition brought on her a disorder so dangerous, that the hopes of Lorenzo were very near being destroyed for ever. On her recovering, she insisted upon taking the veil; and it was only by the serious remonstrances of her confessor, in whom she placed an implicit confidence, that she was brought to abandon her project. At length, the united solicitations of the family, aided by the confessor, wrested from her the desired consent. The last day of mourning was fixed on for the day of marriage, and the old Marquis determined to add to the solemnity of the occasion, by resigning all his estates to his lawful heir. The day arrived, and Lorenzo received his trembling bride at the altar. In the evening, a splendid banquet was prepared for the guests, in a hall superbly illuminated. The most lively and delightful music contributed to increase the general joy of the assembly. The venerable Marquis wished all the world to participate in his felicity. The gates of the palace were thrown open, and every one that came in was joyfully welcomed. In the midst of the throng——"

The Sicilian paused — a trembling expectation suspended our breath. "In the midst of the throng," continued the prisoner, "appeared a Franciscan monk, to whom my attention was directed by a person who sat next to me at table. He was standing motionless like a marble

pillar. His shape was tall and thin; his face pale and ghastly; his aspect grave and mournful; and his eyes were fixed on the new-married couple. The joy which beamed on the face of every one present, appeared not on his. His countenance never once varied. He seemed like a statue among living persons. Such an object, appearing amidst the general joy, struck me more forcibly from its contrast with every thing around me. It left on my mind so durable an impression, that from it alone I have been enabled (which would otherwise have been impossible) to recollect in the Russian officer the features of this Franciscan monk; for without doubt you must have already conceived, that the person I have described was no other than your Armenian. I frequently attempted to withdraw my eyes from this figure, but they returned involuntarily, and found him always unaltered. I pointed him out to the person who sat nearest to me on the other side, and he did the same to the person next to him. In a few minutes, a general curiosity and astonishment pervaded the whole company. The conversation languished; a general silence succeeded; nor did the monk interrupt it. He continued motionless, and always the same; his grave and mournful looks constantly fixed upon the new-married couple: — His appearance struck every one with terror. The young Countess *alone*, who found the transcript of her own sorrow in the face of the stranger, beheld with a sullen satisfaction the only object that seemed to sympathise in her sufferings. The crowd insensibly diminished, for it was past midnight. The music became faint and languid; the tapers grew dim, and many of them went out. The conversation, declining by degrees, lost itself at last in secret murmurs, and the faintly illuminated hall was nearly deserted. The monk, in the mean time, continued motionless, his grave and mournful look still fixed on the new-married couple. The company at length rose from the table. The guests dispersed. The family assembled in a separate group, and the monk, though uninvited, continued near them. How it happened that no person spoke to him, I cannot conceive. The female friends now surrounded the trembling bride, who cast a

supplicating and distressed look on the awful stranger; but he did not answer it. The gentlemen assembled in the same manner around the bridegroom. A solemn and anxious silence prevailed among them.

“ At length — ‘ How happy we are here together !’ said the old Marquis, who alone seemed not to behold the stranger, or at least seemed to behold him without dismay. — ‘ How happy we are here together ! and yet my son Jeronymo cannot be with us !’ ‘ Have you not invited him, and did not he answer your invitation ?’ asked the monk. It was the first time he had spoken. We looked at him alarmed. ‘ Alas ! he is gone to a place whence there is no return,’ answered the old man. ‘ Reverend father, you misunderstood me ; — my son Jeronymo is dead.’ ‘ Perhaps he only fears to appear in this company,’ replied the monk. ‘ Who knows how your son Jeronymo may be situated ? Let him now hear the voice which he heard the last. Desire your son Lorenzo to call him.’ ‘ What does he mean ?’ whispered the company one to another.

“ Lorenzo changed colour. My own hair almost stood erect on my head. In the mean time the monk approached a sideboard. He took a glass of wine, and bringing it to his lips, — ‘ To the memory of our dear Jeronymo,’ said he : ‘ every one who loved the deceased will follow my example.’ ‘ Wherever you come from, reverend father,’ exclaimed the old Marquis, ‘ you have pronounced a dearly beloved name, and you are welcome here ;’ then turning to us, he offered us full glasses — ‘ Come, my friends ! let us not be surpassed by a stranger. The memory of my son Jeronymo !’ Never, I believe, was any toast less heartily received. ‘ There is one glass left,’ said the Marquis. ‘ Why does my son Lorenzo refuse to pay this friendly tribute ?’ Lorenzo tremblingly received the glass from the hands of the monk, — tremblingly he put it to his lips. — ‘ My dearly beloved brother Jeronymo !’ The name trembled on his tongue, and, being seized with horror, he replaced the glass unemptied. ‘ That is the voice of my murderer !’ exclaimed a terrible figure, which appeared instantaneously in the midst of us, covered with blood, and disfigured with horrible wounds.

“ But ask nothing further from me,” added the Sicilian, with every symptom of horror in his countenance. “ I lost my senses the moment I looked at this apparition. The same happened to every one present. When we recovered, the monk and the ghost had disappeared. Lorenzo was in the agonies of death. He was carried to bed in the most dreadful convulsions. No person attended him but his confessor and the sorrowful old Marquis, in whose presence he expired ; — the Marquis died a few weeks after him. Lorenzo’s secret is concealed in the bosom of the priest who received his last confession, and no person ever learned what it was. Soon after this event, a deep well was cleaned in the farm yard of the Marquis’s villa. It had been disused many years, and the mouth of it was almost closed up by shrubs and old trees. A skeleton was found among the rubbish. The house where this happened is now no more ; the family del M—— is extinct, and Antonia’s tomb may be seen in a convent not far from Salerno.”

Astonishment kept us silent. “ You see,” continued the Sicilian, “ how my acquaintance with the Russian officer, Armenian or Franciscan friar, has originated. Judge whether I had not cause to tremble at the sight of a being who has twice placed himself in my way in a manner so terrible.” “ I beg you will answer me one question more,” said the Prince, rising from his seat ; “ Have you been sincere in your account of the chevalier ?” “ Yes, your Highness, to the best of my knowledge.” “ You really believe him to be an honest man ?” “ I do, by heaven ! I believe him to be an honest man.” “ Even at the time that he gave you the ring ?” “ How ! he gave me no ring. I did not say that he gave me the ring.”

“ Very well !” said the Prince, pulling the bell, and preparing to depart. “ And you believe” (going back to the prisoner) “ that the ghost of the Marquis de Lanoy, which the Russian officer introduced after your apparition, was a real ghost ?” “ I cannot think otherwise.” “ Let us go !” said the Prince, addressing himself to us. The gaoler came in. “ We have done,” said the Prince to him. “ As for you,” turning to the prisoner, “ you shall hear farther from me.” “ I am tempted to ask your High-

ness the last question you proposed to the conjurer," said I to the Prince, when we were alone. "Do you believe the second ghost to have been a real one?" "I believe it! No, not now, most assuredly." "Not now? Then you did once believe it." "I confess I was tempted for a moment to believe it to have been something more than the contrivance of a juggler; and I could wish to see the man, who under similar circumstances would not have formed the same supposition." "But what reason have you for altering your opinion? What the prisoner has related of the Armenian, ought to increase rather than diminish your belief in his supernatural powers."

"What this wretch has related of him!" said the Prince, interrupting me very gravely. "I hope," continued he, "you have not now any doubt that we have had to do with a villain." "No; but must his evidence on that account—" "The evidence of a villain! Suppose I had no other reason for doubt, the evidence of such a person can be of no weight against common sense and established truth. Does a man who has already deceived me several times, and whose trade it is to deceive, does he deserve to be heard in a cause in which the unsupported testimony of even the most sincere adherent to truth could not be received? Ought we to believe a man who perhaps never once spoke truth for its own sake? Does such a man deserve credit, when he appears as evidence against human reason and the eternal laws of nature? Would it not be as absurd as to admit the accusation of a person notoriously infamous against unblemished and reproachless innocence?" "But what motives could he have for giving so great a character to a man whom he has so many reasons to hate?" "I am not to conclude that he can have no motives for doing this, because I am unable to comprehend them? Do I know who has bribed him to deceive me? I confess I cannot penetrate through the mystery of this plan; but he has certainly done a material injury to the cause he contends for, by showing himself at least an impostor, and perhaps something worse." "The circumstance of the ring, I allow, appears suspicious."

"It is more than suspicious; it is decisive. He received

this ring from the murderer. Let us even suppose the circumstances he has related are true ; at the moment he received it, he must have been certain that it was from the perpetrator of the murder. Who but the assassin could have taken from Jeronimo's finger a ring, which he undoubtedly never was without? Throughout the whole of his narration, the Sicilian has laboured to persuade us, that while he was endeavouring to deceive Lorenzo, Lorenzo was in reality deceiving him. Would he have had recourse to this subterfuge, if he had not been sensible that he should lose much of our confidence, by confessing himself an accomplice with the assassin? The whole story is visibly nothing but a series of impostures, invented merely to connect the few truths he has thought proper to give us. Ought I then to hesitate in disbelieving the eleventh assertion of a person who has already deceived me ten times, rather than admit a violation of the fundamental laws of nature, which I have ever found in the most perfect harmony?" "I have nothing to reply to all this; but the apparition we saw is to me not the less incomprehensible." "It is also incomprehensible to me, although I have been tempted to find a key to it." "How?" "Do not you recollect that the second apparition, as soon as he entered, walked directly up to the altar, took the crucifix in his hand, and placed himself upon the carpet?" "It appeared so to me." "And this crucifix, according to the Sicilian's confession, was a conductor. You see, that the apparition hastened to make himself electrical. Thus the blow which Lord Seymour struck him with his sword, must of necessity be ineffectual, the electric stroke having disabled his arm." "That is true with respect to the sword. But the pistol fired by the Sicilian, the ball of which rolled slowly upon the altar—" "Are you convinced that this was the same ball which was fired from the pistol? Not to mention that the puppet, or the man who represented the ghost, may have been so well accoutred as to be invulnerable by swords or bullets; but consider who had loaded the pistols."

"True," said I; and a sudden light darted into my mind. "The Russian officer had loaded them, but it was

in our presence. How could he have deceived us?" "Why should he not have deceived us? Did you suspect him sufficiently to observe him? Did you examine the ball before it was put into the pistol? It may have been one of quicksilver or clay. Did you take notice whether the Russian officer really put it into the barrel, or dropped it into his other hand? But supposing that he actually loaded the pistols, how can you be sure that he did not leave them behind him, and take some unloaded ones into the room where the ghost appeared. He might very easily have exchanged them while we were undressing. No person ever thought of noticing him in particular. It is very possible, too, that the figure, at the moment when we were prevented from seeing it by the smoke of the pistol, might have dropped another ball on the altar. Which of these conjectures is impossible?" "Your Highness is right. But that striking resemblance to your deceased friend! I have often seen him with you, and I immediately recognised him in the apparition." "I did the same, and I must confess the illusion was complete; but as the juggler, from a few secret glances at the snuff-box, was able to give to his apparition such a likeness as deceived us both, what was to prevent the Russian officer (who had used the box during the whole time of supper, who had liberty to observe the picture unnoticed, and to whom I had discovered in confidence the person it represented) from doing the same? Add to this, what has been before observed by the Sicilian, that the prominent features of the Marquis were so striking as to be easily imitated. What now remains to be explained respecting the second ghost?" "The words he uttered, the information he gave you about your friend." "What! Did not the juggler assure us, that from the little which he had learned from me, he had composed a similar story? Does not this prove that the invention was obvious and natural? Beside, the answers of the ghost, like those of an oracle, were so obscure, that he was in no danger of being detected in a falsehood. If the man who personated the ghost possessed sagacity and presence of mind, and knew ever so little of the affairs on which he was consulted, to what length might he not have carried the deception?"

“ I beg your Highness to consider, how much preparation such a complicated artifice would have required from the Armenian ; what a time it requires to paint a face with sufficient exactness ; what a time would have been requisite to instruct the pretended ghost, so as to guard him against gross errors ; what a degree of minute attention to regulate every attendant or adventitious circumstance which might be useful or detrimental. And remember, that the Russian officer was absent but half an hour. Was that short space sufficient to make even such arrangements as were indispensably necessary ? Surely not. Even a dramatic writer, who has the least desire to preserve the three unities of Aristotle, durst not venture to load the interval between one act and another with such a variety of actions, or to suppose in his audience such a facility of belief.” “ What ! You think it absolutely impossible that every necessary preparation should have been made in the space of half an hour.” “ Indeed, I look upon it as almost impossible.” “ I do not understand this expression. Does it militate against the laws of time and space, or of matter and motion, that a man so ingenious and so expert as this Armenian must necessarily be, assisted by agents whose dexterity and acuteness are probably not inferior to his own, provided with such means and instruments as a man of this profession is never without ; is it impossible that such a man, favoured by such circumstances, should effect so much in so short a time ? Is it absurd to suppose, that by a very small number of words or signs, he can convey to his assistants very extensive commissions, and direct very complex operations ? Nothing ought to be admitted against the established laws of nature, unless it is something with which these laws are absolutely incompatible. Would you rather give credit to a miracle than admit an improbability ? Would you solve a difficulty rather by overturning the powers of nature, than by believing an artful and uncommon combination of them ? ”

“ Though the fact will not justify a conclusion such as you have condemned, you must grant that it is far beyond our conception.” “ I am almost tempted to dispute even this,” said the Prince, with a sarcastic smile. “ What would you

say, my dear Count, if it should be proved, for instance, that the operations of the Armenian were prepared and carried on not only during the half hour that he was absent from us, not only in haste and incidentally, but during the whole evening and the whole night? You recollect that the Sicilian employed near three hours in preparation." "The Sicilian, your Highness!" "And how will you convince me that this juggler had not as much concern in the second apparition as in the first?" "How!" "That he was not the principal assistant of the Armenian; in a word, how will you convince me that they did not co-operate?" "It would be a difficult task to prove that they did," exclaimed I, with no little surprise.

"Not so difficult, my dear Count, as you imagine. What! could it have happened by mere chance that these two men should form a design so extraordinary and so complicated upon the same person, at the same time, and in the same place? Could mere chance have produced such an exact harmony between their operations, that one of them should appear as if subservient to the other? Suppose the Armenian has intended to heighten the effect of his deception, by introducing it after a less refined one; that he has created a Hector to make himself an Achilles. Suppose he has done all this, to see what degree of credulity he should find in me; to examine the avenues to my confidence; to familiarise himself with his subject by an attempt that might have miscarried without any prejudice to his plan; in a word, to try the instrument on which he intended to play. Suppose he has done this with a view to draw my attention on himself, in order to divert it from another object more important to his design. Lastly, suppose he wishes to have imputed to the juggler some indirect methods of information which himself has had occasion to practise."

"What do you mean?" "It is possible that he may have bribed some of my servants to give him secret intelligence, or perhaps some papers which may serve his purpose. One of my domestics has absconded. What reason have I to think that the Armenian is not concerned in his leaving me? Such a connection, however, if it exists, may be ac-

cidentally discovered ; a letter may be intercepted ; a servant who is in the secret may betray his trust. Now all the consequence of the Armenian is destroyed, if I detect the source of his omniscience ; he therefore introduces this juggler, who must be supposed to have the same or some other design upon me. He takes care to give me early notice of him and his intentions, so that whatever I may hereafter discover, my suspicions must necessarily rest upon the Sicilian. This is the puppet with which he amuses me, whilst he himself, unobserved and unsuspected, is entangling me in invisible snares." "We will allow this. But is it consistent with the Armenian's plan, that he himself should destroy the illusion which he has created, and disclose the mysteries of his science to the eyes of the profane ?"

"What mysteries does he disclose? None, surely, which he intends to practise on me ; he therefore loses nothing by the discovery. But, on the other hand, what an advantage will he gain if this pretended victory over juggling and deception should render me secure and unsuspecting ; if he succeeds in diverting my attention from the right quarter (I mean himself), and in fixing my wavering suspicions on an object most remote from the real one. If at any time, either from my own doubts or at the suggestion of another, I should be tempted to seek in the occult sciences for a key to his mysterious wonders, how could he better provide against such an enquiry than by contrasting his prodigies with the tricks of the juggler? By confining the latter within artificial limits, and by delivering, as it were, into my hands, a scale by which to appreciate them, he naturally exalts and perplexes my ideas of the former. How many suspicions does he preclude by this single contrivance! How many methods of accounting for his miracles, which might afterwards have occurred to me, does he refute beforehand!" "But in exposing such a finished deception, he has very much counteracted his own interest, both by quickening the penetration of those whom he meant to impose upon, and by staggering their belief of miracles in general. If he had had such a plan, your Highness's self is the best proof of its insufficiency."

“ Perhaps he has been mistaken in respect to myself, but his conclusions have nevertheless been well founded. Could he foresee that I should exactly notice the very circumstance which exposed the whole artifice? Was it in his plan, that the creature he employed should be so communicative? Are we certain that the Sicilian has not far exceeded his commission? He has undoubtedly done so with respect to the ring, and yet it is chiefly this single circumstance which determined my distrust in him. A plan whose contexture is so artful and refined, is easily spoiled in the execution by an awkward instrument. It certainly was not the Armenian’s intention that the juggler should speak to us in the style of a mountebank, that he should endeavour to impose upon us such fables as are too gross to bear the least reflection. For instance, with what countenance could this impostor affirm, that the miraculous being he spoke of, renounces all commerce with mankind at twelve in the night? Did not we see him among us at that very hour?” “ That is true. He must have forgotten it.” “ People of this description naturally overact their parts; and, by exceeding every limit of credibility, mar the effects which a well-managed deception is calculated to produce.” “ I cannot, however, yet prevail on myself to look upon the whole as a mere contrivance of art. What! the Sicilian’s terror, his convulsive fits, his sword, the deplorable situation in which we saw him, and which was even such as to move our pity; were all these nothing more than the mimicry of an actor? I allow that a skilful performer may carry imitation to a very high pitch, but he certainly has no power over the organs of life.” “ As for that, my friend, I have seen the celebrated Garrick in the character of Richard the Third. But were we at that moment sufficiently cool to be capable of observing dispassionately? Could we judge of the emotions of the Sicilian, when we were almost overcome by our own? Besides, the decisive crisis, even of a deception, is so momentous to the deceiver himself, that excessive anxiety may produce in him symptoms as violent as those which surprise excites in the deceived. Add to this, the unexpected entrance of the watch.” “ I am glad your Highness mentions that. Would the Armenian have ventured to

discover such an infamous scheme to the eye of justice, to expose the fidelity of his creature to such a dangerous test? And for what purpose?" "Leave that matter to him; he is no doubt acquainted with the people he employs. Do we know what secret crimes may have secured him the discretion of this man? You have been informed of the office he holds at Venice; what difficulty will he find in saving a man, of whom himself is the only accuser?"

This suggestion of the Prince was but too well justified by the event. For, some days after, on enquiring about the prisoner, we were told that he had escaped, and had not since been heard of. "You ask what could be his motives for delivering this man into the hands of justice?" continued the Prince. "By what other method, except this violent one, could he have wrested from the Sicilian such an infamous and improbable confession, which, however, was material to the success of his plan? Who but a man whose case is desperate, and who has nothing to lose, would consent to give so humiliating an account of himself? Under what other circumstances than such as these could we have believed such a confession." "I grant your Highness all this. The two apparitions were mere contrivances of art: the Sicilian has imposed upon us a tale which the Armenian his master had previously taught him: the efforts of both have been directed to the same end; and by this mutual intelligence all the wonderful incidents that have astonished us in this adventure may be easily explained. But the prophecy of the square of St. Mark, that first miracle, which as it were opened the door to all the rest, remains still unexplained; and of what use is the key to all his other wonders, if we must despair of resolving this single one?"

"Rather invert the proposition, my dear Count, and say, what do all these wonders prove, if I can demonstrate that a single one among them is a manifest deception? The prediction, I allow, is above my conception. If it had stopped there, if the Armenian had closed the scene with it, I confess, I do not know how far I might have been carried. But in the base alloy with which it is mixed,

it is certainly suspicious." "Gracious Sir, I grant it; but it still remains incomprehensible, and I defy all our philosophy to explain it." "But," continued the Prince, "can it be really so inexplicable?" After a few moments' reflection—"I am far from pretending to the title of a philosopher, and yet I am almost tempted to account for this miracle in a natural way, or at least to deprive it entirely of any extraordinary appearance." "If your Highness can do that," replied I, with a very unbelieving smile, "you will be the only wonder in which I have any faith." "As a proof," continued he, "how little we are justified in flying to supernatural powers for an explanation, I will point out to you two different ways by which we may perhaps account for this event, without doing any violence to nature." "Two ways at once! You do indeed raise my expectations."

"You have read, as well as I, the last accounts of my late cousin's illness. He died of an apoplexy. It was an attack during a fit of the ague. The extraordinariness of his death, I confess it, induced me to ask the opinions of some physicians upon the subject, and the knowledge which I acquired from that circumstance gives me a clue to this enchantment. The disorder of my deceased relative, which was one of a most uncommon and alarming nature, had this peculiar symptom, that during the fit of the ague it threw the patient into a deep and irrecoverable sleep, which naturally put an end to his existence on the return of the apoplectic paroxysm. As these paroxysms return in the most regular order, and at an appointed hour, the physician is enabled, from the very moment in which he forms his opinion on the nature of the disorder, to predict the hour of the patient's decease. The third paroxysm of a tertian ague will fall to a certainty on the fifth day after the appearance of the illness. Let us suppose then that our Armenian possesses a vigilant correspondent among the attendants of the deceased; that he was very much interested to gain information from thence; that he had views upon my person, to the prosecution of which my belief in the wonderful and the appearance of supernatural

powers would greatly conduce—thus you have a natural clue to this prediction, which is so inconceivable to you. This is sufficient, for you may hence see the possibility of a third person's informing another of a death which happened at the moment when he announced it, in a place at forty miles' distance."

"In truth your Highness in this instance combines things together, which, taken singly, appear very natural, but which could only be brought together by something that is not much better than enchantment." "What! Do you then fear a wonder less than an uncommon plan? As soon as we allow that the Armenian is engaged in a plan of consequence, of which my destruction is either the end, or at least conducive to it, (and may we not form that opinion of him with which his appearance first inspired us?) nothing will seem unnatural or forced, which could bring his scheme to a conclusion in the most expeditious manner. But what way could he devise more expeditious, than the securing his object by putting on the appearance of a miracle-worker? Who can resist a man to whom the spirits are obedient? However, I grant you that my conjectures are not perfectly natural; I confess that I am not even myself satisfied with them. I do not insist upon it, because I do not think it worth my while to call in to my assistance a well-formed and deliberate design, when it may at last turn out to be a mere accident." "What!" replied I; "may it be a mere accident?" "Certainly, nothing more!" continued the Prince. "The Armenian was aware of the danger of my cousin. He met us in the place of St. Mark. The opportunity invited him to hazard a prophecy, which, if it failed, would be nothing more than a loose word—but if it succeeded, might be of the greatest consequence. The event was favourable to this attempt—and he might still design to make use of the gift of prophecy for the connection of his plan—time will disclose this secret, or bury it in oblivion. But believe me, friend," (and he laid his hand upon mine, with a very earnest countenance,) "a man, to whose word the higher powers are obedient, will either not want the assistance of deception, or at least will despise it."

Thus ended a conversation which I have faithfully related, because it shows the difficulties which were to be overcome before the Prince could be effectually imposed upon. I hope it may free his memory from the imputation of having blindly and inconsiderately thrown himself into a snare which was spread for his destruction by the most unexampled and diabolical iniquity. Many, at the moment I am writing this, are, perhaps, smiling contemptuously at the Prince's credulity; but not all those who, in the fancied superiority of their own understanding, think themselves entitled to condemn him—not all those, I apprehend, would have resisted this first attempt with so much firmness. If afterwards, notwithstanding this happy prepossession, we witness his downfall; if we see that the black design against which, at its very opening, he was thus providentially warned, is finally successful, we shall not be so much inclined to ridicule his weakness, as to be astonished at the infamous ingenuity of a plot which could seduce an understanding so admirably prepared. Considerations of interest have no influence in my testimony. He, who alone would be thankful for it, is now no more. His dreadful destiny is accomplished. His soul has long since been purified before the throne of truth, where mine must likewise shortly appear. Pardon the involuntary tears which now flow at the remembrance of my deceased friend. But for the sake of justice I write this history. He was a great character, and would have adorned a throne which, seduced by the most atrocious artifice, he attempted to ascend by the commission of a murder.

Not long after these events, I began to observe an extraordinary alteration in the disposition of the Prince, which was partly the immediate consequence of the last event, and partly produced by the concurrence of many adventitious circumstances; for hitherto the Prince had avoided every severe trial of his faith, and contented himself with purifying the rude and unabstracted notions of religion in which he had been educated, by those more rational ideas upon the subject which obtruded themselves upon him, and by comparing the discordant opinions with each other, rather than by enquiring into the foundations of his faith. The

mystery of religion, he has many times confessed to me, always appeared to him like an enchanted castle, into which one does not set one's foot without horror; and that we act a much wiser part if for that reason we pass it with a willing resignation, without exposing ourselves to the danger of being bewildered in its labyrinths. Nevertheless, a contrary propensity irresistibly impelled him to those researches which were connected with it. A servile and bigoted education was the cause of this bias: this had impressed frightful images upon his tender brain, which he was never able perfectly to obliterate during his whole life. Religious melancholy was an hereditary disorder in his family. The education which he and his brothers received was actuated by this principle; the men to whose care they were entrusted, selected with this view, were also either enthusiasts or hypocrites, whose only method of securing to themselves the approbation of his noble parents, was by stifling all the sprightliness of the boy by a gloomy restraint of his mental faculties.

Such was the dark and gloomy aspect which the whole of our Prince's childhood wore. Mirth was banished even from his amusements. All his ideas of religion were accompanied by some frightful image, and the representations of terror and severity were those which first possessed themselves of his lively imagination, and which also the longest retained their empire over it. His God was an object of terror, a being whose sole occupation is the chastisement of his creatures; the adoration which he paid to him a blind submission, stifling all his courage and vigour. In all his infantine or youthful propensities, which a stout body and blooming constitution naturally excited to break out with greater violence, Religion stood in his way; she opposed every thing upon which his youthful heart was bent: he learned to consider her not as a friend, but as the scourge of his passions; so that a silent indignation was continually kindled against her in his heart, which, together with a revering faith and a blind dread, made both in his heart and head the strangest mixture — an abhorrence of the Lord before whom he trembled. It is no wonder, therefore, that he took the first opportunity of escaping from so galling a

yoke — but he fled from it as a bond-slave from his rigorous master, who even in the midst of freedom drags along with him a sense of his servitude; for, as he did not renounce the faith of his earlier years from a deliberate conviction — as he did not wait till the maturity and improvement of his reason had weaned him from it — as he had escaped from it like a fugitive, upon whose person the rights of his master are still in force, so was he obliged, even after his widest separation, to return to it at last. He had escaped with his chain; and must necessarily become the prey of any one who should discover it, and know how to make use of the discovery. That he considered himself in such a light, though the reader may not yet have supposed so, the sequel of this history will prove.

The confessions of the Sicilian left impressed upon his mind more important conclusions than the whole of the circumstance deserved; and the small victory which his reason had thence gained over this weak imposture, remarkably increased his reliance upon it. The facility with which he had been able to unravel this deception, appeared to have perfectly overwhelmed him. Truth and error were not yet so accurately distinguished from each other in his mind, but that he often happened to mistake the arguments which were in favour of the one for those which were in favour of the other. Thence it arose, that the same blow which urged his faith to credulity, made the whole edifice of it totter. In this instance he fell into the same error as an unexperienced man who has been deceived in love or friendship because he made a bad choice, and who drops all credit in these sensations, because he takes mere incidental circumstances for their actual distinguishing features. The unmasking of a deception made even truth suspicious to him, because he had unfortunately discovered the truth on very weak grounds. This imaginary triumph pleased him in proportion to the magnitude of the oppression from which it seemed to have delivered him. From this instant there arose in his mind a scepticism which did not spare even the most venerable objects. Many circumstances concurred to encourage him in this turn of mind, and still more to confirm him in it.

He now quitted the retirement in which he had hitherto lived, and was obliged to give way to a more dissipated mode of life. His rank was discovered. Attentions which he was obliged to return, etiquettes for which he was indebted to his rank, drew him imperceptibly within the vortex of the great world. His rank, as well as his personal attractions, opened to him the circles of all the *beaux esprits* in Venice, and he soon found himself on terms of intimacy with the most enlightened persons in the republic, the men of learning as well as politicians. This obliged him to enlarge the uniform and narrow circle to which his understanding had hitherto been confined. He began to perceive the poverty and debility of his ideas, and to feel the want of more elevated impressions. The old-fashioned dress of his understanding, spite of the many advantages with which it was accompanied, formed an unpleasing contrast with the current ideas of society; his ignorance of the commonest things frequently exposed him to ridicule, and nothing did he dread so much as that. The veneration for high birth entertained in his native country, appeared to him a challenge to overcome it in his own person. Thence arose a peculiarity in his character; he was offended with every attention that he thought he owed to his rank, and not to his natural good qualities. He felt this humiliation principally in the company of persons who shone by their abilities, and triumphed, as it were, over their birth by their merit. To perceive himself distinguished as a prince in such a society, was always a base humiliation to him, because he unfortunately conceived that by that title he was totally excluded from all competition. All these circumstances together convinced him of the necessity for the formation of his mind, which he had hitherto neglected, in order to raise it to a level with the thinking part of the world, from which he had remained so far remote; and for that purpose he chose the most fashionable books, to which he now applied himself with all the ardour with which he was accustomed to pursue every object he pitched upon. But the unskilful hand that directed his choice always prompted him to select such as were little calculated for the improvement either of his heart or his reason. And even,

in this instance, he was influenced by that propensity which rendered the charms of every thing incomprehensible and irresistible. He had neither attention nor memory for any thing that was not connected with this : his reason and his heart remained empty, while he was filling the vacuities in his brain with confused ideas. The dazzling style of the one captivated his imagination, while the subtlety of the other ensnared his reason. They were both able easily to possess themselves of a mind which became the prey of any one who obtruded himself upon it with a good assurance. A course of reading, which had been continued with ardour for more than a year, had scarcely enriched him with one benevolent idea ; but filled his head with doubts, which, as a natural consequence with such a character, had almost found an unfortunate road to his heart. In a word, he had entered this labyrinth as a credulous enthusiast, had left it as a sceptic, and was at length become a perfect free-thinker.

Among the many circles into which they had introduced him, there was a private society called the Bucentauro, which, under the external show of a noble and rational liberality of sentiment, encouraged the most unbridled licentiousness of manners and opinions. As they enumerated many of the clergy among their members, and could even boast of some cardinals at their head, the Prince was the more easily induced to be admitted into it. He thought that certain dangerous truths, which reason discovers, could be no where better preserved than in the hands of such persons, whose rank confined them to moderation, and who had had the advantage of hearing and examining the other side of the question ; but the Prince did not recollect that licentiousness of sentiment and manners takes so much the stronger hold among persons of this rank, inasmuch as they for that reason feel one curb less. This was the case with the Bucentauro ; most of whose members, through an execrable philosophy, and manners worthy of such a guide, were not only a disgrace to their own rank, but even to human nature itself. The society had its secret degrees ; and I will believe, for the credit of the Prince, that they never thought him worthy of admission into the inmost

sanctuary. Every one who entered this society was obliged, at least so long as he continued to be a member of it, to lay aside all distinctions arising from rank, nation, or religion; in short, every general mark or distinction whatever, and to submit himself to the condition of universal equality. To be elected a member was, indeed, a difficult matter, as superiority of understanding alone paved the way to it. The society boasted of the highest *ton* and the most cultivated taste, and such indeed was its fame throughout all Venice. This, as well as the appearance of equality which predominated in it, attracted the Prince irresistibly. Sensible conversations, set off by the most admirable humour, instructive amusements, and the flower of the learned and political world, which were all attracted to this point as to their common centre, concealed from him for a long time the danger of this connection. Though he had by degrees discovered, through its mask, the spirit of the institution, as they were tired of being any longer on their guard before him, to recede was dangerous, and false shame and anxiety for his safety obliged him to conceal the displeasure which he felt. But he already began, merely from familiarity with men of this class and their sentiments, though they did not excite him to imitation, to lose the pure and charming simplicity of his character, and the delicacy of his moral feelings. His understanding, so little supported by any real knowledge, could not, without foreign assistance, solve the fallacious sophisms with which he had been here ensnared; and this fatal corroder had consumed all, or nearly all, on which his morality rested. He gave away the natural and necessary supports of his happiness for sophisms which deserted him at a critical moment, and consequently obliged him to abide by the best decision which should first offer itself.

Perhaps it was yet left to the hand of a friend to extricate him at a proper opportunity from this abyss; but, besides that I did not become acquainted with the interior of the Bucentauro till long after the evil had taken place, an urgent circumstance called me away from Venice just at the beginning of this period. Moreover, Lord Seymour, a valuable acquaintance of the Prince's, whose under-

standing was proof against every species of deception, and who would infallibly have been a secure support to him, left us at this time in order to return to his native country. Those in whose hands I left the Prince were very worthy men, but inexperienced, excessively narrow in their religious opinions, and as much deficient in insight into the evil as in credit with the Prince. They had nothing to oppose to his captious sophisms, except the maxims of a blind and unenquiring faith, which either irritated him or excited his ridicule. He saw through them too easily, and his superior reason soon silenced those weak defenders of the good cause, which will be clearly evinced from an instance that I shall introduce in the sequel. The others, who, subsequent to this, possessed themselves of his confidence, were much more occupied in plunging him deeper into it. When I returned to Venice in the following year, a change had taken place in every thing.

The influence of this new philosophy soon showed itself in the Prince's conduct. The more he openly pursued pleasure, and formed new friendships, the more did he desert his old ones. He pleased me less and less every day; we saw each other seldom, and indeed he was seldom to be found. He had launched out into the torrent of the great world. His threshold was never clear when he was at home. One amusement introduced another — one banquet another — and one pleasure was succeeded by a second. He was the beauty whom every one adored — the king and idol of every circle. As often as he reflected on the former quietness of his retired life, amidst the bustle of the world, so often did he find more reason for astonishment. Every thing met his wishes; — whatever he uttered was admirable, and when he remained silent, it was committing a robbery upon the company. They understood the art of almost banishing reflection from his soul by an agreeable thoughtlessness, and through a delicate assistance to overwhelm him with it. This happiness, which accompanied him every where, and this universal success, raised him indeed too much in his own ideas, because it gave him reliance upon and confidence in himself.

The high opinion which he thence acquired of his own

worth, made him credit the excessive and almost idolatrous adoration that was paid to his understanding ; which, without this augmented and somewhat just self-complacency, must have necessarily recalled him to his senses. For the present, however, this universal voice was only the confirmation of that which his complacent vanity whispered to him in private — a tribute which he was entitled to by right. He would have infallibly disengaged himself from this snare, had they allowed him to take breath — had they granted him a moment of uninterrupted leisure for comparing his real merit with the picture that was exhibited to him in this seducing mirror ; but his existence was a continued state of intoxication, of a staggering dizziness. The higher he had been elevated, the more difficulty had he to support himself in his elevation. This incessant exertion slowly undermined him, — rest had forsaken even his slumbers. They had discovered his weakness, and turned to good account the passion which they had kindled in his breast.

His worthy attendants soon suffered for the *spirit* of their lord. That anxious sensibility, those glorious truths which his heart once embraced with the greatest enthusiasm, now began to be the objects of his ridicule. He revenged himself on the great truths of religion for the oppression which he had so long suffered from misconception. But, since from too true a voice his heart combated the intoxication of his head, there was more of acrimony than of humour in his jokes. His disposition began to alter, and caprice to make its appearance. The most beautiful ornament of his character, his moderation, vanished, — parasites had poisoned his excellent heart. That tender delicacy of address which frequently made his attendants forget that he was their lord, was now obliged not seldom to give place to a decisive and despotic tone, that made the more sensible impression because it was not founded upon the external distinction of birth, for the want of which they could have more easily consoled themselves, and which he himself esteemed less ; but upon an injurious estimation of his own individual merit : since, when at home, he was attacked by reflections that seldom

made their appearance in the bustle of company ; his own people seldom beheld him otherwise than gloomy, peevish, and unhappy, whilst a forced vivacity made him the soul of every circle. With the sincerest sorrow did we behold him treading this dangerous path. In the tumult in which he was involved, the feeble voice of friendship was no longer heard, and he was yet too much intoxicated to understand it.

Just at the beginning of this epoch an affair of the greatest consequence required my presence in the court of my sovereign, and which I dared not postpone even for the dearest interests of friendship. An invisible hand, which I did not discover till long after that period, had contrived to derange my affairs there, and to spread reports which I was obliged to hasten to contradict by my presence. My absence from the Prince was as painful to me as it was pleasing to him. The ties which united us had now been severed for some time ; but his fate had awakened all my anxiety : I on that account made the Baron de F—— promise to inform me in his letters of every event, which he has done in the most conscientious manner. As I was now for a considerable time no longer an eye-witness of these events, it will be allowable for me to introduce the Baron de F—— in my stead, and to fill up the gap in my narrative by the contents of his letters, though the representation of my friend F—— is not always that which I should have given. I would not, however, alter any of his expressions, by which the reader will be enabled to discover the truth with very little trouble.

Baron F—— to the Count O——.

I thank you, my beloved friend, that you have given me permission to continue with you, even in your absence, the conversation of friendship, which, during your stay here, was my greatest pleasure. There is not any person here with whom I could venture to converse, as you are well aware, on account of private transactions ; and, independent of that, I despise the character of the people. Since the Prince became a member of their society, and from the

moment that you were torn from us, I have been friendless in the midst of this populous city.

Z—— takes it in an easier manner ; for, encircled by the fair ones at Venice, he learns to forget the sorrows which he is obliged to share with me when at home. And why should he perplex himself ? He desires nothing from the Prince but that which a master would bestow ; but I, you know, place him nearer to my heart, and think I can never be too solicitous about his welfare and happiness ; and, indeed, I have reason for it. I have now lived with him sixteen years, and exist only for him. At the age of nine years I entered into his service, and since that time I have never been separated from him. I have grown up under his patronage, shared with him his pleasures and misfortunes, and time has converted respect into a sincere attachment. Until now I looked upon him as my friend and brother ; we basked in the sunbeam of happiness, uninterrupted by the clouds of misery.

Since you have left us, considerable alterations have taken place. The Prince —— de —— arrived here last week with a great retinue, and has corrupted our circle of acquaintance with ideas of a tumultuous life. As he and our Prince are so nearly related, and live at present upon good terms, I suspect they will not separate from one another during his stay here, which will last, as I have heard, till the Ascension. His *début* has already attracted notice ; and for ten days the Prince has been in the midst of gaiety. The style in which the Prince —— de —— has begun his career may be justified upon the ground that his stay here will not be long ; but the first part of the business is, that he has induced our Prince to partake of those insidious pleasures, knowing that he could not easily deny him his request, on account of the peculiar connection which exists between their houses ; added to this, in a few weeks we must depart from Venice, when he will be obliged to abandon this extraordinary and insufferable mockery of happiness, and which, perhaps, may make a serious impression on his mind.

The Prince —— de ——, it is reported, is here on the business of the order of ——. That he has taken advan-

tage of all the acquaintances of our Prince you may easily imagine. He was received into the Bucentauro with great splendour, and pleased himself with the idea that he was characterised as a wit, and one of great spirit ; and he has called himself in his correspondence (which he maintains in all parts of the world) the *philosophical Prince*. I know not whether you have ever had the fortune to see him personally. He displays a promising exterior, piercing eyes, and a countenance full of expression. Polite, and unaffected, he entertains (pardon me this expression) a princely respect for the feelings of his inferiors, but at the same time puts great confidence in himself. Who could refuse to pay adoration to so princely a character ? and how such a solitary Prince as ours will appear in opposition to such dazzling accomplishments, time itself must discover. In the arrangement of our affairs, many and great changes have taken place. We possess a new and magnificent house opposite the new Procuracy, because the lodgings at the Moor Hotel were too small for the Prince. Our household has been augmented by twelve persons. Pages, moors, body-guards, &c. grace our retinue. You complained during your stay here of extravagance ; you should be here now to witness the present system. Our internal arrangements are still the same ; only that the Prince, who no longer respects the advice of those he once loved, is become more reserved and cold towards us, and that we very seldom see him or are in his company, except in the hours employed in dressing and undressing him. Under the pretext that we speak the French language very badly, and the Italian not at all, he excludes us from his presence, which would not affect me in any great degree, but that I believe, to speak the truth, he is ashamed of us ; and that circumstance displeases me, because I am confident we have not deserved such treatment.

Of all our people (as you wish to know the minutiae) he seems most attached to Biondello, whom he took into his service, as you must remember, when he could not discover the retreat of his former servant from Bremen, and who has become, by this new manner of life, quite a necessary being. This man knows how every thing is going on at Venice, and he employs his time to some pur-

pose. He is as if he had a thousand eyes and a thousand hands to set in motion at once. He contrives all plans, and gains the greater part of his knowledge, as he says, by the help of the gondoliers; for that reason, he has become a great acquisition to the Prince. He makes him acquainted with every new face whom the Prince has met in his societies; and the secret information which he gives his Highness has always been found correct. Beside this, he reads and writes the Italian and French in an excellent style, by which means he has already become the Prince's secretary. I must relate to you a trait of fidelity in him, which is indeed very rare to be found in men of his station. Not long ago a merchant of great consequence from Rimini begged to be admitted to the Prince. The matter concerned a particular complaint against Biondello. The Procurator, his former master, who must have been an odd fellow, had for some time lived upon bad terms with his relations. Biondello possessed his confidence, and to him he intrusted all his secrets. As he was upon his death-bed, he made him swear never to disclose them to any one, that his relations might not be benefited by them, and gave him, as a reward, a great legacy.

When the will was opened, and his papers inspected, there were found considerable numbers of blanks, to which Biondello alone could furnish the key. He denied that he knew any thing of the matter, gave up to the relations his legacy, and persevered in his fidelity to the injunctions of his deceased master. Great offers were made to him by the relations, but all to no purpose; at last he eluded their threats of forcing him to confession, by entering into the service of the Prince. This merchant, who was the heir at law, addressed himself to the Prince, and made still greater offers to Biondello if he would discover the secret—but it was all in vain. The Prince interfered, but he remained firm. He confessed, however, to his Highness, that secrets of great importance were confided to him, and he did not deny that the deceased might have acted with too much severity towards his relations; but he added, "he was my good master and benefactor, and with the firmest confidence in my sincerity he died. I was the only friend he left in the world—as such I will never betray

my trust, nor act in contradiction to his dying request." In the mean time he gave a hint, that a discovery would not add to the honour of his deceased master. Was not such conduct worthy to be imitated? You may easily imagine that the Prince did not insist upon his violating his vow of fidelity. This extraordinary attachment which he showed for the deceased gained him the most unlimited confidence of his royal master.

Happiness attend you, my dear friend. I look back upon our former manner of life with secret pleasure, to which you have contributed in a high degree. I fear we shall never more enjoy those tranquil hours at Venice which we were wont formerly to do, and am much mistaken if the Prince is not of the same way of thinking. The element in which he lives at present is not that in which he can be happy in future, or an experience of sixteen years deceives me. Farewell!

The same to the same.

May 18.

I had no idea that our stay at Venice would prove so satisfactory as it has done. He has saved the life of a man — I am reconciled to him. The Prince not long ago suffered himself to be carried home in a chair from the Bicentauro; and two footmen, with Biondello, conducted him. I know not how it happened, but the chair, which had been hired in haste, broke, and the Prince was obliged to walk on foot the remainder of the way. Biondello went before. The way lay through several dark streets; and as it was not far from day-break, some of the lamps burnt but faintly, while the others were totally extinguished. They had been walking a quarter of an hour, when Biondello discovered that he had taken the wrong road. The similarity of the bridges had deceived him, and instead of crossing that of St. Mark, they found themselves in *Sestiere di Castello*. It was in one of the by streets, and not a soul stirring near the spot. They were obliged to turn back to gain, as the best way, one of the principal streets. They had walked but a few steps, when in an adjoining street they distinctly heard the cry of "Murder!" The Prince, unarmed as he was, snatched from one of the ser-

vants a stick ; and with his usual courage, which you have often witnessed, ran towards the place whence the voice issued. Three ruffianlike fellows were just on the point of vanquishing a person, who, with his servant, was defending himself, apparently overcome by fatigue, when the Prince appeared, and prevented the villains from murdering him. His voice, and those of his servants, startled the murderers, who did not expect in such a dismal place to meet with any interruption.

They immediately left their man, after several slight stabs with their daggers, and took flight. Fainting with loss of blood, the wounded man sunk into the arms of the Prince : his conductors then told him, that he had saved the life of the Marquis of Civitella, the nephew of the Cardinal A——i. As the Marquis's wounds bled very much, Biondello performed as well as he was able the office of surgeon, and the Prince immediately saw him taken to the palace of his uncle, which was not far distant from the spot. This done, he left the house, without discovering his rank. But through the means of a footman, who was acquainted with Biondello, he was betrayed. The following morning the Cardinal appeared, an old acquaintance from the Bucentauro. The visit lasted an hour ; the Cardinal was in great emotion, and when they separated tears stood in his eyes ; the Prince also appeared extremely concerned. The same evening his Highness paid a visit to the wounded man, whom the surgeon affirmed would soon recover. The cloak in which he was wrapped up had in some measure shielded him from the force with which the stabs were given. Since that accident, not a day has passed over without the Prince paying a visit to the Cardinal, or receiving one from him ; and a great friendship begins to exist between him and that family.

The Cardinal is a venerable man of sixty, with a majestic appearance, but full of gaiety and good health. They think him one of the richest prelates in the whole republic. Of his enormous fortune he himself is the treasurer ; and, although a prudent economist, he does not despise the pleasures of the world. This nephew, who is his only heir, does not always possess the good opinion of his uncle. Although the old

man is not an enemy to youthful pleasures, the conduct of the nephew appears to exhaust every principle of tolerance in his relation. His dissipated principles, and his licentious manner of living, supported by every vice that is countenanced by the grossest sensuality, make him the terror of all fathers, and the curse of domestic happiness. This last attack, it is said, was owing to an intrigue which he had concerted with the wife of the ——— ambassador: not to mention other troubles, from which only the power and money of the Cardinal could extricate him. But for this the Cardinal might be the most enviable man in all Italy, because he possesses every thing that can make life worth preserving. But his nephew's enormities render the gifts of fortune superfluous; and the continual fear of not being able to find an heir worthy of his property, diminishes the comfort that his Eminence would otherwise enjoy in such a state of affluence.

I have this information from Biondello. In this man the Prince has acquired a treasure. Every day he makes himself more worthy of estimation, and we almost hourly discover in him some new talent. Not long ago the Prince, being over-fatigued, could not sleep. The night-lamp was extinguished, and no bell could waken the valet de chambre, who it was soon found had gone out of the house to visit an opera girl. The Prince had the resolution to get up himself, to call one of his people. He had not gone far, when he heard at a little distance from him enchanting music. He followed the sound, and found Biondello playing upon the flute in his room, with his fellow-servants round him. He commanded him to proceed. With admirable skill Biondello repeated the same air, with the most delightful variations and niceties of a virtuoso. The Prince, who is a connoisseur in music, declared, that he might play with great confidence in the best concert.

“I must dismiss this man,” said he to me the following morning; “I am unable to recompense him according to his merits.” Biondello, who heard these words, came towards him. “Gracious sir, if you do that, you deprive me of my best reward.” “You are worthy of something better than being a servant,” said my master. “I will not

any longer be a bar to the improvement of your fortune." "Do not press upon me any other fortune, gracious sir, than that which I have chosen myself." "And to neglect such a talent—No! I must not consent." "Then permit me, your Highness, to exercise it every now and then in your presence."

To this proposition the Prince immediately consented, and Biondello obtained an apartment adjoining the sleeping-room of his master, where he lulled him to repose by soft and delicate airs, and awoke him in the morning with the same melody. The Prince insisted upon increasing his salary, which he did not accept without requesting his Highness to permit him to let it lie in his hands, as a capital which perhaps at some future period might be of service to him. The Prince expected that he would soon apply for his money, or some other favour; and whatever it might have been the Prince would not have denied it. Farewell, my best of friends. I expect with impatience news from R——n.

The same to the same.

June 4.

The Marquis Civitella, who is now entirely recovered from his wounds, was introduced last week by the Cardinal his uncle to the Prince, and since that day he has followed him like his shadow. Biondello, I suspect, has not told me the truth concerning the character of the Marquis, at least he has gone too far in his description. He is to all appearance a most amiable man, and irresistible in company. It is not possible to be angry with him; the first sight of him has conquered all my prejudices. Figure to your mind a man of the most enchanting person, a face full of uncommon expression, an insinuating tone of voice, possessed of the most fluent eloquence, united with all the advantages of the best education. He has none of that low despicable pride which in general so much disgraces the nobility here. Every action teems with the energy of youth, benevolence, and warm sensibility. They must, in relating his extravagances, have gone far beyond the truth; I never saw a more perfect contrast than his conduct is to

that which is represented of him. If he be really so licentious as Biondello asserted, then he is a siren, whom no creature is able to resist.

Towards me he acted with unreserved confidence. He confessed to me with the most agreeable frankness, that he did not stand in high favour with his uncle the Cardinal, and perhaps he might have deserved his censure. But he was seriously resolved to amend his life; and he declared that the merit of his reformation would entirely fall to the Prince: in the mean time he hoped, through his interference, to be entirely reconciled with his uncle, because he had the highest confidence in the Prince's character. He had wanted till now a friend and instructor, and he hoped to acquire both in the person of the Prince, who, indeed, exercises all the authority of a tutor over him, and guides him with the paternal watchfulness and solicitude of a Mentor. This confidence also gives him certain advantages, and he knows perfectly well how to make them valuable. He seldom quits the presence of the Prince; he partakes of all his pleasures, and has lately become one of the Bucentauro; and that is lucky for him, — he was before too young. Wherever he goes with the Prince, he charms the society by his accomplishments, which he is well skilled in turning to the greatest advantage. Nobody, they say, ever could succeed in reclaiming him; and should the Prince accomplish this Herculean labour, he will deserve the highest encomiums for his conduct. But I fear very much the tide will turn, and Mentor become the pupil of his scholar; to this end all the present circumstances seem to lead.

The Prince — d — has departed, to the greatest satisfaction of all here, my master not excepted. What I thought, dear O —, is thus happily accomplished. Two such opposite characters could not long, I was confident, maintain a good understanding with each other. The Prince — d — was not long at Venice before I observed a schism in their friendship; from which circumstance the Prince was in danger of losing all his former admirers. Wherever he went, he found this rival in his way, who possessed the artful quality of turning every advantage in which our Prince was deficient to good account. He had a variety of

little manœuvres at his command, which our master, from a noble sensibility, disdained. From such circumstances, in a short time, he procured a number of friends of his own description to follow his advice and participate in his schemes.* It would have been better for the Prince if he had not considered him as an enemy; but had looked forward to the time when this would have been the case. But now he has advanced too far into the stream, to reach the shore without difficulty. Although these trifles, by habit, have acquired an ascendancy over him, and probably he may despise them in his heart, yet his pride will not permit him to renounce them, naturally supposing that his submission will appear like conviction, rather than a free disposition to confess his abhorrence of them. The satirical manner in which they always conversed, and the spirit of rivalry that influenced his opponent, have also seized upon him. To preserve his conquests, and to maintain himself upon the dangerous principles to which the opinion of the world had rivetted him, he is resolved to augment the allurements of fashion and gaiety, and this cannot be acquired but by splendour equal to his rank; on that account he has been involved in perpetual banquets, concerts, and gaming. A long chain of poverty is the unavoidable consequence of this unhappy connection.

We have got rid at last of the rival; but what he has subverted cannot so easily be restored. The treasure of the Prince is exhausted; all that he had saved by a strict economy is gone; we must hasten from Venice, or else be involved in debt, which, till now, he has carefully avoided. Our departure is certainly to take place as soon as fresh remittances arrive. The many unnecessary expenses he has incurred would be of little consequence if his happiness increased in proportion; but he was never less happy than at present! He feels that he is not now what he formerly was — he is dissatisfied with himself, and rushes into new dissipation, to avoid the piercing consequences of reflec-

* In the unfavourable opinion which the Baron F— forms of our Prince, in several parts of the first letter, every one who has the happiness to know him intimately, will think with me, that he went beyond the limits of his judgment, and will ascribe it to the prejudice of this young observer.

tion. One new acquaintance follows another, which is fatal to his reformation. I know not what may happen; we must depart, — we have no other safety. — But, dear friend, as yet I have not received a single line from you; how must I interpret this long silence?

The same to the same.

June 12th.

Receive my thanks, dear friend, for that token of your remembrance which young B——hl brought over to me. But what do you say about letters which I was to have received? I have not received any letters from you till now, — not even a line. What a circuit must those which I now receive have taken! For the future, dear O——, when you honour me with your letters, send them by Trent, and under cover to my master.

We have at length been obliged, my dear friend, to take that step which we had hitherto so fortunately avoided. The remittances were kept back, even at this pressing emergency — for the first time were they kept back; we were absolutely compelled to have recourse to a usurer, and the Prince willingly pays something more for the sake of secrecy. The worst of these unpleasant circumstances is, that it delays our departure. Such was the state of our affairs when the Prince and I came to an explanation. The whole of the business had passed through Biondello's hands, and the Jew was present before I had the least suspicion of it. I was grieved to the heart to see the Prince reduced to such an extremity, and it revived in me all the recollection of the past, and all my fears for the future; so that I certainly might have looked a little melancholy and gloomy when the usurer left the room. The Prince, to whom the preceding scene had doubtless been by no means pleasing, walked backwards and forwards with uneasiness. The rouleaus of gold were yet lying on the table — I was standing at the window, and employing myself in counting the windows in the *Procuratié* — there was a long silence. At length he addressed himself to me —

“ F——,” he began, “ I cannot bear any dismal faces about me.” I was silent. “ Why do you not answer

me? Do I not see that it will break your heart not to pour forth your vexation? I command you to speak. You may, perhaps, wonder what extraordinary affairs I am concealing from you." "If I am gloomy, gracious Sir," replied I, "it is only because I do not see you in better spirits." "I know," continued he, "that you think I have acted wrongly for some time past — that every step which I have taken has displeased you — that — What does the Count d'O — say in his letters?" "The Count d'O — has not written to me." "Not written! Why will you not confess the truth? You lay open your hearts to each other — you and the Count. I know it very well: however, you need not conceal it from me. I shall not introduce myself into your secrets." "The Count d'O —," replied I, "has only answered the first of three letters which I wrote to him." "I was wrong," continued he; "is it not so?" (taking up one of the rouleaus) "I should not have acted thus." "I see very plainly that the step was *necessary*." "I ought not to have involved myself in such a necessity."

I remained silent. "Indeed, I ought not to have ventured beyond that point in the completion of my wishes, so as to have become a grey-beard as soon as I became a man. Because I once step forth from the dreary uniformity of my former life, and look around me to see whether there will spring up no source of enjoyment for me in any other quarter; because I —" "If it were only a trial, gracious Sir, I have nothing more to say; for the experience which it has procured for you would not be purchased at too dear a rate, though it cost three times as much. It hurts me, I must confess, that the opinion of the world should have to decide upon the question, How you can be happy?" "Fortunate man, who can thus despise the opinion of the world! I am its creature, and must be its slave. What else are we governed by but opinion? Opinion is every thing with us princes. Opinion is our nurse and educatress in infancy, our legislatress and mistress in our manly years, and our crutch in old age. Take from us what we receive from opinion, and the meanest of the humblest class is better off than we are;

for his fate has taught him a philosophy which enables him to bear it. A prince who laughs at opinion, is his own destroyer, like the priest who denies the existence of a God."

"And yet, gracious Prince—" "I know what you are going to say. I can pass the boundary of the circle which my birth has drawn around me. But can I eradicate from my memory all the foolish ideas which education and early habit have planted in it, and which a hundred thousand of you fools have ever been impressing with more and more firmness? Every one wishes to be what he is to *perfection*, and our existence consists, in short, in *appearing happy*. If we cannot be so according to your mode, shall we not for that reason be so at all? If we can no longer taste of joy immediately from its uncorrupted source, shall we not deceive ourselves with an artificial enjoyment? shall we not snatch a small compensation even from the very hand which robs us?" "You once found these joys in your own heart." "But if I do not any longer find them there!—Oh, how came we to fall upon this subject? Why must you awake in me the recollection of that, even if I have had recourse to this tumult of voluptuousness, in order to stifle a voice which renders my life miserable—in order to lull to rest this inquisitive reason, which moves to and fro in my brain like a sharp sickle, and with every new stroke cuts off a new branch of my happiness?" "Best of princes!" He got up, and walked backwards and forwards in the room with unusual agitation, and soon after left it.

Pardon, dear O——, this tedious letter. You wish to know every trifle which concerns the Prince, and I may justly rank his moral philosophy among them. I know that the state of his mind is important to you, and his actions, I am aware, are on that account also important to you. I have for that reason faithfully transcribed all that I recollected of this conversation. I shall at a future period inform you of a new occurrence, which you could hardly have been led to expect from a dialogue like that of to-day. Farewell.

The same to the same.

July 1.

As the time for our departure from Venice approaches, we are determined to employ this week in an examination of all the remarkable pictures and buildings, which is generally delayed to the last moment. They praised highly the work* of Paul Veronese, which was to be seen in a Benedictine convent upon the island of St. George. You must not expect from me a minute description of this beautiful masterpiece, from the contemplation of which I derived the most satisfactory pleasure; but it was a sight worthy to be enjoyed longer. We should have had as many hours as minutes to study a painting of a hundred and twenty figures, which is thirty feet in breadth. It is impossible to observe the beauties which the artist has displayed in it, by just glancing at the whole. It is however a pity that so valuable a work, which ought to adorn a place of more utility, should be buried within the walls of a convent for a few monks to gaze at. The church of this convent deserves also the attention of the connoisseur: it is one of the handsomest in the city.

Towards evening we set off for the Giudecca, to spend a few hours in the charming gardens that surround it. The society, which was not numerous, separated very soon; and Civitella, who had been the whole day seeking for an opportunity to speak to me in private, thus addressed me—"You are the friend of the Prince, and possess his confidence, as I know from good authority. When I went to-day to his hotel, I met a man upon the stairs, and immediately guessed the business he had been upon. I found the Prince, as I entered his apartments, thoughtful and dejected." I was about to interrupt him. "You cannot deny it," he continued, "I know the man, for I took very particular notice of his person. Is it possible that the Prince, who has friends at Venice, to whom he is as dear as life, should in a case of necessity make use of such a wretch? Be sincere, baron!—Is the Prince embarrassed in his circumstances? You may endeavour

* The marriage at Cana.

to hide the truth, but it is in vain. What I cannot learn from you I will obtain from a man to whom every secret is a prize, and ready to be sold." "What, Marquis!" "Pardon me. I must endure the charge of being indiscreet, to avoid the imputation of ingratitude. The Prince saved my life, and, what goes far beyond that, he has instilled into my mind the principles of virtue. If I see the Prince act in a manner which must be expensive to him, and beneath his dignity; if it is in my power to assist him, I never can resist it." "The Prince is not now in any embarrassment. Several remittances, which we expected from Trent, are, indeed, unexpectedly detained; but accidentally perhaps, or from the idea that his departure is near at hand. This is now fixed upon; and till then—" He shook his head. "Do not deceive me," said he. "I mean not by doing this to diminish the obligation I owe the Prince. No, not all the riches of my uncle could repay him. I am anxious to free him from one unhappy moment. My uncle possesses a large fortune, which I can dispose of as if it were my own. I consider it a fortunate circumstance that the moment is arrived when I can be useful to the Prince. I know," he continued, "with what delicacy the Prince will treat my offer;—but, on the other hand, I hope he will lay aside his prejudices, and suffer me to enjoy the satisfaction of having in some measure returned the obligation I owe to him." He continued to urge his request till I had promised him that I would do all in my power to make the Prince accept his offer. But I knew his character, and for that reason I despaired of success. He appeared satisfied however with my promise, though he confessed that it would give him great uneasiness if the Prince considered him in the light of a stranger. Lost in conversation, we had wandered from the company, and were just about to return, when Z—— approached us. "I thought the Prince had been with you?" said he: "is he not here?"

We immediately returned with him, thinking to find the Prince with the other part of the company. "The society is together, but the Prince is not among them," said I: "I really do not know how it happened that we missed

him." Here Civitella suggested that he might possibly have visited the adjoining church, which he had a little time before remarked for its beauty. We immediately went to seek for him there. As we approached it we discovered Biondello waiting at the entrance. When we came nearer, we observed the Prince rush hastily out from a small door; the agitation of his mind was impressed upon his countenance. He called Biondello to him, and seemed to instruct him in the execution of some commission of consequence; his eyes were constantly directed to the gate, which remained open. Biondello hastened into the church. The Prince, without perceiving us, pushed through the crowd, and went back to the society.

It was resolved to sup in an open pavilion, and the Marquis, without our knowledge, had procured some musicians to entertain us with a concert. It was quite select; but there was among the performers a young lady who sung delightfully, and whose voice did not more enchant us than the beauty of her person. Nothing seemed to make an impression upon the Prince; he spoke little, and answered our questions confusedly; his eyes were constantly riveted upon the spot from whence Biondello was to come; and it was visible to all, that something of consequence affected his mind. Civitella asked him how he liked the church; he could not give any description of it. He spoke of several remarkable pictures, which were highly esteemed; but he had not observed them. We perceived that our questions were unpleasant to him, and therefore we discontinued our enquiries. One hour after another passed away, and Biondello did not arrive. The impatience of the Prince could no longer be concealed: he went from supper very early, and walked alone up and down the aisles of the church with agitated steps. No person could imagine what had happened to him. I did not venture to ask him the reason for such a sudden change in his disposition, as I could not now treat him with that familiarity I did formerly. With so much more impatience, therefore, did I expect the arrival of Biondello, that he might explain to me the mystery.

It was past ten o'clock before he came back. The &c.

counts which he brought to the Prince did not contribute to dissipate the gloom of melancholy. He returned to the pavilion apparently uneasy and dissatisfied. Soon after, the boat was ordered, and we went home. I could not find a single opportunity the whole evening to speak with Biondello; and I was at last obliged to go to bed without being able to satisfy my curiosity. The Prince dismissed us very early; but a thousand unpleasant reflections which tormented me kept me awake. I could distinctly hear the Prince walking up and down his chamber till a late hour; at last I dropped into a dose, but was soon roused from slumber by a person who appeared at my bedside with a lamp in his hand. When I looked up, I discovered it to be the Prince. He could not close his eyes, he said, and begged of me to pass the night with him. I would have risen and dressed myself; but he commanded me to remain as I was, and seated himself on my bed.

“An extraordinary circumstance has happened to me to-day,” said he, “and the impression it has made upon my mind will never be effaced. I went, as you must recollect, to see *** church, to which Civitella directed my attention, and which had at a distance excited my curiosity. As neither you nor he were present, I went in alone, and bade Biondello wait for me at the entrance. The church was quite dark and solitary. The aisles were cold and damp. I felt a sudden chillness steal all over me; I saw myself alone amidst the dead, in a sanctuary where a solemn silence, as in the grave, reigned in every part. I placed myself in the middle of the dome, and gave my soul up to contemplation. Soon, however, the gothic beauty of the building arrested my attention. It appeared, as I examined it, more and more delightful. It called forth the powers of awful meditation. The evening bell was tolling; its hollow sound, as I heard it faintly in the aisle, overpowered me with an unusual melancholy. Some altar-pieces at a distance attracted my attention. I went nearer, to view them distinctly: unperceived, I had wandered through the aisles of the church, and was approaching the end, when, by accident, I went round a pillar up a flight of steps, which lead into a side chapel, decorated with several little altars

and statues of saints. As soon as I entered the chapel I heard a soft whispering, turned towards the spot from whence I heard the voice, and about two steps from me discovered a female figure. Fright almost overpowered me; but after a few moments had elapsed I recovered, and contemplated an object which I cannot describe with justice."

"And does your Highness know for certain that it was alive—that it was not fancy—a picture of the brain?"

"Hear farther—it was a lady. Until that moment I had never regarded the sex! The rays of the setting sun, that illumined the chapel, enabled me to observe that she was in the act of praying before an altar. Nature seemed to have lavished all her perfections on her lovely form. She was elegantly dressed in black silk, which spread around her in large folds like a Spanish robe; her long light-coloured hair burst from under the veil, and flowed in charming disorder down her back; one of her hands touched the crucifix, as she rested her head upon the other. But how shall I find words to describe to you the angelic beauty of her countenance! The sunbeams played upon it, and heightened the divine expression that seemed to glow in it. Can you call back to your mind the Madonna of Florence? She was the exact copy of the artless enchanting beauty which is so irresistibly expressed in that picture."

Of the Madonna of which the Prince speaks, the case is this:—Shortly after your departure, the Prince became acquainted with a painter from Florence, who had been ordered to Venice to paint an altar-piece for a church; his name I do not now remember. He brought with him three pictures, which he had executed for the gallery in the Canarian Palace. The subjects were a Madonna, a Heloise, and a Venus in dishabille. From the exquisite manner in which they were all painted, it was almost impossible to decide which was superior in beauty. The Prince alone did not hesitate a moment to decide; they were scarcely put before him when the Madonna attracted his whole attention; in both the others the genius of the painter was admired, but this he surveyed with enthusiasm. He was so enamoured with it, that he could not be persuaded to quit it. The artist, we could perceive by his countenance, enjoyed

the judgment of the Prince ; he had the wit not to separate the three pictures, and demanded 1500 zequins for them. The Prince offered him half the price for the Madonna. The artist insisted upon his demand ; and who knows what might have happened if he had not found a purchaser for his works ? Two hours after, all the three pieces were gone ; and we have not seen them since. This was the picture that the Prince brought to his memory.

“ I stood,” he continued, “ in silent admiration. She did not observe me ; she was not disturbed by my arrival ; so entirely was she lost in adoration. She prayed to her God, and I prayed to her eyes ; saints, altars, or burning tapers, had never before reminded me that I was in a sanctuary ; I was seized with enthusiasm. Shall I confess to you, that I believed, from that very moment, in the influence of the crucifix she held in her beautiful hand. I read our Saviour’s answer in her eyes. Thanks to her charming piety ! she painted his true character to me. My ideas wandered with her’s through the ways of heaven. She rose, and I stepped aside with embarrassment ; the noise I made discovered me. The unexpected appearance of a man alarmed her ; I was fearful that my boldness might offend ; for as she glanced at me, the beauteous rays of innocence and virtue played upon her countenance. As she rose from prayer, I was the first happy creature which offered itself to her sight. In an adjoining corner of the chapel, I saw an elderly lady rise from her seat, and come towards us. I had not till then perceived her. She was but a few steps distant from me, and no doubt had witnessed all my actions. I was somewhat confused — I cast my eyes as it were involuntarily on the ground, and they rushed by me. I looked after her as she passed along the aisle. The beautiful figure was with her — What grace, what majesty appeared in all her steps ! She was no longer the being that I first beheld ; no, she was possessed of a thousand new charms. I followed at a distance with trembling steps, undetermined whether I should overtake her or not. I waited with impatience to see if she would bestow upon me another look ; — for the one she gave me as she passed by was lost upon me. With what extreme anxiety did I expect it !

“ They stopped suddenly ; but I was not able to set a foot forwards. The elderly lady, who perhaps might be her mother, observed the disorder of her hair, and immediately adjusted it. That done, they approached the gate. I doubled my steps — she disappeared by degrees — I could only see the shadow of her robe as it floated in the air. A flower had fallen from her bosom ; she returned in haste to fetch it — she once more looked back, and — after me ! — whom else could she seek in a place so solitary ? She appeared as if I was no longer a stranger to her ; — but she deserted me like the flower which seemed unworthy to be replaced in her bosom. Dear F—— I am almost ashamed to own to you with what childish rapture I interpreted that look — that last expressive look, which was not perhaps designed for me ! ”

“ You may rely upon it, it was.”

“ It is singular,” said the Prince, after a long silence, “ that we should lament the loss of an object we never saw before — but I feel as if I exist only for her. That in a single moment man should display two such opposite characters ? I look back upon the happiness I received yesterday morning with all that exquisite feeling with which we trace the days of childhood. This picture lives in my remembrance, and forces me to acknowledge that it is my god ! ” “ Recollect, gracious Sir,” said I, “ in what gloomy thoughtfulness your mind was wrapt when this ideal divinity appeared to you ; the association of ideas alone inflamed your imagination. Quitting the beautiful light of day, and the tumult of the world, you were suddenly surrounded by darkness and silence, impressed with sensations which, as you confessed yourself, tended to impress you with melancholy, whilst the majesty of the structure, and the contemplation of beauty in the works of different artists, aided the train of ideas you were supporting. In the mean time, alone and solitary ; you gave yourself up to reflection ; in the midst of your meditations you observe the figure of a female, where you did not expect to meet a soul — still more enchanting by a fine form, which was heightened by a favourable illumination of the setting sun — a fortunate situation, and a

captivating display of piety — what is more likely than that your disturbed fancy deceived you?"

"Can memory give back impressions it has never received? In my whole country there is nothing that I could justly put in comparison with that picture. Entire and unchanged, as in the moment of beholding it, it lies in my memory; I can think of nothing but that picture — and in vain might you offer me a whole world for it!" "Gracious Prince, this is love." "Must it then be by a name that I am to be made happy? Love! — Do not think so meanly of my feelings as to accuse me of that which influences a thousand feeble souls! Who has ever felt what I endure! Such a being as I am never was in existence before! How then can you give my sensations a name? It is a new and singular suffering, originating with her that I adore. — Love! No, from love I am quite secure!" "You sent Biondello, no doubt, to find out the path your fair unknown pursued, and to get some information of her — What accounts did he bring you back?"

"Biondello has discovered nothing. He found her at the church gate. An old well-dressed man (who had the appearance of a citizen from this city, and not a servant) conducted her to the boat. Some poor peasants smiled upon her as she passed them, and she rewarded them with money. By this means one of her hands became visible; it was ornamented with several precious stones. She said something to her companion, which Biondello did not understand; he maintained it to be Greek. She had to walk a considerable distance to the canal. The people began to collect round her; so extraordinary a sight surprised all the peasants. Nobody knew her — but beauty is born a queen. All made way for her in an humble submissive manner. She let fall a black veil over her face, and hastened into the boat. To the extent of the channel of the Giudecca, Biondello kept the boat in sight, but could not pursue its course farther, owing to the concourse of people." "Has he not taken notice of the waterman?" "He endeavoured in vain to find him; for it was not one of them with whom he is connected. The poor people of whom

he enquired could give him no other account, than that the lady for several weeks past had landed on the same spot on a Sunday evening, when she distributed some gold pieces amongst them. They were Dutch ducats, which I discovered by one that Biondello had procured."

"A Greek lady of fortune and rank, as it should seem by your description. That is quite sufficient, gracious Sir, to aid us in a discovery. But a Greek lady and in a catholic church!" "Why not? She may have changed her religion. But I admit there is something in all this that we do not understand. Why does she come only once a week? Why only on a Sunday evening, at an hour when the church is entirely deserted, as Biondello told me? — Next Sunday evening must decide this. But till then, my dear friend, assist me in the difficult task of passing away the time! Days and hours will elapse in their ordinary course, but are of too long duration for a mind like mine." "And when that day arrives — what is to be done?" "What is to be done? I shall see her again. I shall discover who she is, and the place of her residence. Why should I be unhappy, when I know how to alleviate my sufferings?" "But our departure from Venice, which is fixed for the beginning of next month?" "Could I imagine that Venice contained such a treasure! I will not think of my past life, but date my existence from this hour."

I thought this a favourable opportunity of keeping my word with the Marquis. I gave the Prince to understand, that for him to continue at Venice in the present state of our finances would by no means be proper; and that, if he prolonged his stay beyond the term, he could not expect that his court would support him. I now discovered a secret which till then had been unknown to me, that he received succours clandestinely from his sister, the reigning Princess of —, which she is very willing to increase if his court should abandon him. This sister is a pious fanatic, you know, and thinks the great savings which she makes at a very economical court cannot be disposed of better than to a brother whose character she enthusiastically venerates. I was confident, some time back, that there existed a good understanding between them, and that many

letters had been exchanged ; but as the Prince's own resources were sufficient to defray his expenses, I never once thought of this secret channel. It was now clear that the Prince had expenses which were unknown to me : these still remain a secret ; and if I may conclude from what I know of his character, they are not of that nature which will disgrace him. I was certain now that I had found him out. I did not therefore hesitate to make known to him immediately the offer of the Marquis, which, to my great astonishment, was accepted without any difficulty. He gave me free liberty to conduct the business with the Marquis in such a manner as I thought, best, and then ordered me to dismiss the usurer, and write immediately to his sister.

It was daybreak when we separated. This event has made me very uneasy for more reasons than one, particularly that it compels us to prolong our stay at Venice. This sudden passion for the unknown lady I expect will rather be of service to him than otherwise. She will perhaps be the means of reclaiming the Prince. I hope it will affect him in the ordinary way with a slight illness, and so eradicate his prejudices. Farewell, my dear friend. I have written this letter on the spur of the moment. The post is about to depart. You will receive this letter with the foregoing one on the same day.

The same to the same.

July 20.

This Civitella is one of the most serviceable men in the world. The Prince had not long left me when a note arrived from the Marquis, in which he politely reminded me of my promise. I sent him immediately a bond, executed by the Prince for six thousand zechins ; in less than half an hour it was returned, with an enclosed draught for double the sum. The Prince accepted it, but insisted that the bond should be given in return, which was only for the space of six weeks.

This whole week has been spent in enquiries after the mysterious Greek lady. Biondello put his machines in motion ; but all were fruitless. He has indeed found the

waterman ; but he could learn nothing farther from him, than that he had set both the ladies on shore upon the island of Murano, where two chairs waited for them. He supposed her to be an English lady, because she spoke a foreign language, and paid him in gold. He did not know her conductor, but he appeared to him to be a looking-glass manufacturer from Murano. We were now convinced that we had not to seek for her in the Giudecca, and that she was probably at home upon the island of Murano ; but the misfortune was, that, from the description which the Prince gave of her, she could not be known by a third person. The impassioned frenzy which seized him at the moment hindered him from observing her minutely. To that to which other people would have principally directed their attention, he was quite blind. After such a description as his, one might have sought for her in Ariosto or Tasso with more probability than upon a Venetian island. His enquiries must be made with the greatest secrecy and precaution, to prevent impeaching the virtue of the lady ; and as Biondello was the only person besides the Prince who had seen her through the veil, and therefore could know her again, they sought together for her in all places where it was thought possible that she could be. The life of this good-tempered man was this week spent in traversing all the streets of Venice. In the Greek church he made particular enquiries, but all to no purpose ; and the Prince, although more and more impatient at every disappointment, was at last obliged to comfort himself till the next Sunday evening.

His impatience was pitiable. Nothing pleased him—nothing excited his attention. His hours were spent in anxiety and distress : he fled from society, but the evil increased in solitude. He was never more surrounded by visitors than he was this week. His departure had been announced as near at hand—all pressed themselves upon him. Being obliged to entertain those people, to avoid all suspicion, we contrived to occupy his mind in order that we might dissipate his melancholy. In this situation Civitella hit upon gaming ; and to detain the company, he proposed to stake very high. In the mean time he flattered

himself that he should tempt the Prince to play, which he thought would very soon conquer his romantic ideas. This scheme, although hazardous, they knew could not injure him, as they had it in their power to desist at any time from playing.

“Cards,” said the Marquis, “have often prevented me from pursuing follies which I anticipated, and relieved me from reflecting upon those I had committed. The tranquillity of mind which a pair of charming eyes deprive me of, I have very often found again at the faro table; and women never had half the effect upon my spirits as not being enabled to play from poverty.”

I consented, in as far as I thought Civitella might be in the right; but the means which we instituted began soon to become more dangerous than the evil we endeavoured to destroy. The Prince, who thought to make the game attractive by betting very high, found very soon no bounds to it. He was quite out of his element. What he did was with apparent indifference, although his actions betrayed impatience and uneasiness of mind. You know how indifferent he is about money, and now he became totally insensible of its value. Gold pieces ran away like water. He lost almost upon every card, because he played without paying any attention. He forfeited large sums, because he ventured like a desperate, unfortunate man.—Dear O——, I communicate this with an aching heart: in four days we had not any of the twelve thousand zechins. Do not reproach me. I accuse myself sufficiently. But could I prevent it? Could I oblige the Prince to listen to me? Could I do more than remonstrate with him? I did what lay in my power: surely I may say, that I am not guilty. Civitella also lost. I won six hundred zechins! The unexampled misfortune of the Prince was observed by all, and for that very reason he would not abandon the game. Civitella, who likes to show his readiness to oblige him, lent him immediately the required sums.

This scene is closed; but the Prince is indebted to the Marquis twenty-four thousand zechins. Oh how I long for the spare money of his pious sister! If all princes acted thus, my dear friend! His Highness behaves towards

the Marquis as if he had done him the greatest honour, and thus he plays his part very well. Civitella sought to console me, by saying, that he thought his extraordinary ill luck would powerfully assist in bringing the Prince back again to reason. As for the money, he was not anxious about it. He himself did not miss it—three times as much was at the Prince's service. The Cardinal also assured me, that the sentiments of his nephew were sincere, and that he was always ready to support him in them. The worst was, that these extraordinary sacrifices did not at all affect him. One would think the Prince at least had played with some intent: but it was not so. The passion which we endeavoured to destroy seemed only to increase with ill luck: when a great sum was staked, all pressed around his chair with expectation, but his eyes were watching for Biondello, to steal from his looks the news which he might have for him. Biondello always returned unsuccessful, and he as continually lost. The money at last fell into very distressed hands. Some poor noblemen, who report says are supported by the alms they obtain in the market-place, came into the house perfect beggars, and left it as rich as Jews. Civitella pointed them out to me.

“Behold,” said he, “how many poor devils this money is of service to; how comes it then that men of wit do not direct their attention to such practices? This circumstance pleases me: it is princely. A great man may sometimes, by his errors, make people happy, and like a bounteous stream enrich the neighbouring fields by overflowing its banks.” Civitella's ideas are noble—but the Prince owes him 24,000 zechins.

At last the long expected Sunday evening arrived, and my master could not be prevented from walking in the afternoon in the * * * church. His stand was taken exactly upon the same spot in the chapel where he had seen for the first time the unknown that had captivated him, yet so that he could not immediately be seen by her. Biondello was ordered to keep watch near the church gate, and to form a connection with the attendants of the lady. I had determined to step, as by accident, into the boat at its return, to trace the unknown farther, if the first scheme should not

succeed. At the place where, upon the report of the watermen, she landed, we hired two chairs, and the Prince commanded the chamberlain Z—— to follow in a separate boat, and he himself would meet her in the church, and try his fortune there first. Civitella did not assist us, because he had already acquired a bad character with the females at Venice, and therefore he determined not to make the lady mistrust his friend by his presence. You see, my dear Count, that it could not be for want of plans, if the beautiful unknown escaped us. Never was there offered up in a church more sanguine prayers for success, nor greater hopes created, and never was man deceived more cruelly. The Prince waited till sunset. He trembled at every noise that approached the chapel: the creaking of every church-door increased his anxiety. Seven long hours passed, and no Greek lady arrived. I say nothing of the state of his mind. You know well what it is to be disappointed in the attainment of an object for which one has sighed seven days and nights.

The same to the same.

August.

No, my dear friend, you wrong the good Biondello. Indeed you entertain a false suspicion of him. I give up to your prejudices all Italians; but this man is honest. You think it singular that a man of such brilliant talents, and conduct without example, should hire himself as a servant, if he had no secret ends to answer; and from that you draw the conclusion that he is a suspicious character. How! Is it then so extraordinary that a man of talents should make himself respected by a prince, in whose power it is to advance his fortune? Is it dishonourable to serve him? Does not Biondello clearly show that his attachment to the Prince is personal? He has already confessed to him that he has a particular favour to ask of him, and which, when known, will undoubtedly unravel all the secret. He perhaps has entered into his service with some particular view; but may it not be innocent? It appears strange to you that this Biondello, when you were present, did not display the great talents which he now seems to be possessed of. That is true; but he had not then an opportunity to dis-

tinguish himself? The Prince did not at that time want him, and his other qualities were discovered in him by accident. But we experienced not long ago a proof of his sincerity, which will remove all your doubts. The Prince of late has been very particularly noticed. Endeavours are made to obtain a secret knowledge of his manner of life, and of his acquaintance. I know not for what reason those enquiries are made; but attend to what I shall communicate.

There is at St. George a public-house, to which Biondello often resorts. He may have some love-intrigue there for aught I know. He was there for several days in the company of advocates, men in office under the government, merry brothers and old acquaintances. They were equally astonished and rejoiced to behold him again. The former friendship was renewed, and every one related his adventures since their separation. Biondello also told his. He did it in a few words. They wished him joy of his new situation: they had heard of the splendid manner in which the Prince lived; of his liberality in particular towards his people that knew how to keep a secret; his acquaintance with the Cardinal A—— was also well known; and his partiality for gaming, &c. &c. Biondello started. They told him, that he played his part very well, but they said they knew that he was the secret messenger of the Prince. The advocates sat on each side of him, and the bottle was speedily emptied. They persuaded him to drink more: he excused himself, and said that his head would not bear much wine; he therefore affected to be intoxicated. "Yes," said one of the advocates at last, "Biondello may understand his business; but he has not yet finished his lesson—he is but half a scholar." "What is wanting?" said Biondello. "He understands one art," said the man; "that is, to keep a secret; but he is not acquainted with the other, which is, to get rid of it again with profit." "Am I likely to find a purchaser for it?" asked Biondello.

The other part of the company left the room, and he remained alone with his two friends, who now came to the point. To make it short, he was to give them the means by which the Prince became acquainted with the Cardinal

and his nephew, to discover to them the sources by which the Prince received, and the way he exhausted his money, and to deliver into their hands the letters which were written to the Count O——. Biondello appointed to meet them, and discuss it another time: who it was that induced them to do this he could not get from them, but concluded, from the great offers which were made to him, that it must be some wealthy person who commissioned them to entice him to this confession. Last night he discovered to my master the whole of this affair. He was anxious to imprison the advocates; but Biondello remonstrated, and said, if they were ever to be at liberty again, he should lose all his credit with that class of people, and perhaps his life. These sort of people all hang together, and stand up for each other. He would sooner, he said, have the high council at Venice for his enemy than be looked upon by them as a betrayer; and he could not be so useful to the Prince, if he lost the confidence of these people. We tried to conjecture with whom this curiosity might originate. Who is there at Venice that can be interested in knowing what my master receives and spends; what concerns he has with the Cardinal A——, and what I write to you? Is this a scheme of the Prince — d——? or is the Armenian with us again?

The same to the same.

August.

The Prince abounds in happiness and love. He has found the Greek lady. Hear how this happened. A stranger who had travelled over Chiozza, and gave an enchanting description of that beautiful city, which is situated near the Gulf, made the Prince desirous to see it. Yesterday his wishes were put in execution; and to avoid all unnecessary expense, no other person attended him but Z——, Biondello, and myself, as he travelled incognito. We took places in a boat that usually sailed to that place with company. The society was not very select, and the voyage far from being agreeable. Chiozza is built upon piles, like Venice, and has about forty thousand inhabitants. You meet there very few people of distinction; the streets are crowded with fishermen

and sailors. He who wears a wig and a mantle is called a rich man ; lappels and veils are the sign of poverty. The city itself is handsome, but to admire it, you must not have seen Venice.

The waterman, who had more passengers to carry, was obliged to be quick in his return to Venice, and nothing at Chiozza particularly attracted the notice of the Prince. The vessel was full when we arrived. As the company was rather troublesome on our passage thither, we hired a separate room for our better accommodation. The Prince enquired, who were the other passengers ? A Dominican, was the answer, and several ladies. My master was not at all curious to see them, and immediately went to his room. The Greek lady was the sole object of our discourse on our passage, and it was the same on our return. The Prince repeated his adventure in the church in the highest transports of delight ; the time was passed in forming plans, and then rejecting them ; till, before we were aware of it, Venice was in sight. Some of the passengers left the vessel, the Dominican was amongst them. The waterman went to the ladies, who, as we now learned, had been only separated from us by a thin partition. He asked them, where he should land them. " Upon the island of Murano," was the answer.—" The island of Murano !" cried the Prince, as the sudden transport of joy shot through his soul. Before I could make him any answer, Biondello rushed in.

" Do you know with whom we have travelled ?" — The Prince started up—" Is she here ?" " Yes, she is," continued Biondello. " I am just come from her conductor." The Prince rushed out of the room. A thousand sensations overpowered his mind. He was seized with a sudden trembling : a deathlike paleness spread itself over his countenance. I burned with expectation. It is impossible for me to describe to you our situation.

The boat stopped at Murano. The Prince jumped upon the shore. She came. I perceived, from the Prince's countenance, that it was she. Her appearance did not leave any doubt of the fact. A more beautiful figure I never saw : the flattering descriptions the Prince had given of her, were fully realised. A blush of satisfaction was

spread over her face, when she beheld the Prince. She must have overheard our whole conversation, and could not doubt that she had been the subject of it. She gave her attendant a significant look, which seemed to say, "This is he!" and with an artless embarrassment she cast her eyes upon the ground. A small board was placed from the shore to the ship, on which she had to walk. She seemed anxious to land; but although she affected timidity, it appeared to arise more from a desire to be assisted, than from the danger of crossing the plank. The Prince stretched out his arm to assist her. Necessity overcame etiquette. She accepted his hand, and leaped upon the shore. The sudden agitation of the Prince made him uncivil; for he forgot the other lady, who waited for the same act of politeness—And what would he not have forgotten in that moment? I at last rendered her that service, and deprived myself of the pleasure of observing how the interview, which took place between my master and the lady, affected her. He still held her hand in his; and, I believe, without knowing that he did so.

"It is not the first time, Signora, that—that—" He hesitated. "I ought to remember," she lisped. "In the church," said he. "Yes," said she, "it was there." "And could I flatter myself to-day—so near." Here she drew her hand softly out of his. He recovered himself immediately. Biondello, who in the mean time had spoken with the servant, came to his assistance. "Signora," he began, "the ladies ordered their chairs to be waiting for them at a certain time, but we have arrived here sooner than was expected. Here is a garden in the vicinity, where you may retire to avoid the tumult." The proposal was accepted, and you may judge with what delight the Prince accompanied her. They remained in the garden till late in the evening. It fell to my lot, assisted by Z——, to entertain the old lady, that the Prince might remain undisturbed with his beloved. He made good use of his time, for he obtained permission to pay her a visit. He is now there. As soon as he returns, I shall know more of the matter.

Yesterday, when we came home, we found the expected remittances from our court, but accompanied by a letter,

which affected my master very much. He is recalled by it, and in a tone which he has not been accustomed to. He has answered it contemptuously, and intends to prolong his stay here. The remittances are just sufficient to pay the interest of the capital which he owes. We look for an answer from his sister with great anxiety.

The same to the same.

September.

The Prince has had a quarrel with his court: all our resources from thence are cut off. The six weeks, which were limited for my master to have paid the debt due to the Marquis, are elapsed; we have received no remittances from his cousin, whom he earnestly solicited to assist him; neither have we had any from his sister. You may easily imagine that Civitella does not remind him of his engagement; but the faithful memory of the Prince continually imposes upon him the idea, that he is still the Marquis's debtor. Yesterday came letters from the reigning Count. We had just concluded a new contract with the master of our hotel; and the Prince had openly declared, that he intended to protract his stay in Venice. Without speaking a word, he gave me the letter. His eyes darted fire: to me his countenance was a sufficient indication of the contents. Should you imagine, dear O——, that they are at * * * informed of all my master's connections; and that calumny has been very busy in inventing falsehoods to defame him?

They had heard with displeasure, it is said in the letter, that the Prince had not supported his former character, but had pursued a conduct which was in total contradiction to his former praiseworthy manner of thinking. They affirmed that he rioted with women, and was addicted to gaming in an extravagant manner; that he was involved in debt; that he studied physiognomy, and sought after conjurors; that he held suspicious correspondence with prelates, and that he possessed a household which was more than his income could support. They had even been assured that it was his intention to complete his bad conduct by turning an apostate, and embracing the Roman catholic religion; and, to exculpate himself from the last serious

accusation, they expected he would immediately return. A banker at Venice, to whom he was directed to deliver in the amount of his debts, was authorised, immediately after his departure, to satisfy his creditors; for, under circumstances so unpleasant, they did not think it safe to trust the money in his own hands. What accusations! and in what an artful manner alleged! I took the letter, and read it over a second time—I endeavoured to palliate the offence, but I did not succeed.

Z—— now reminded me of the secret enquiries which had been made by the advocates. The time, the contents, all circumstances agreed. We had falsely attributed them to the Armenian. Now it was clear from whom they were derived. Apostasy!—But whose interest can it be to calumniate my master in such an execrable manner? I fear it is a piece of mischief invented by the Prince —d—, who will follow it up, to get my master from Venice. He remained silent, with his eyes fixed upon the ground. His countenance made me tremble. I threw myself at his feet. “For Heaven’s sake, gracious Prince,” I exclaimed, “do not think of it so seriously. You shall, you will, have the greatest satisfaction. Leave the business to me. Send me there, for it is beneath your dignity to go personally to justify yourself against such vile calumnies: permit me to do it. The calumniator must, he shall, be named, and the eyes of the *** must be opened.

In this situation Civitella found us: he asked, with astonishment, the reason of our embarrassment. Z—— and I were silent. The Prince, who never made any distinction between him and us, was now too much agitated in his mind to act prudently on this occasion, and commanded us to communicate to him the contents of the letter. I hesitated, but the Prince snatched it from my hands, and gave it to the Marquis himself. I am your debtor, Marquis,” he began, after he had finished the letter, “but let that give you no uneasiness. “Allow me but a respite of twenty days, and you shall be paid.” “Gracious Prince!” exclaimed Civitella, with feeling and surprise, “do I deserve this?” “You did not choose to remind me of my engagement. I know your delicacy in this matter, and

thank you for your liberality. In twenty days, as I said before, you shall be paid." "What is the meaning of all this?" said Civitella with anxiety. "Explain to me this mystery. I cannot comprehend it."

We gave him all the information in our power. He fell into a rage. The Prince, he said, must insist upon satisfaction: the offence is infamous. In the mean time, he conjured the Prince to make use of his property and credit as if they were his own. The Marquis left us, and the Prince still continued silent. He walked with hasty steps up and down the room: something of an extraordinary nature seemed to oppress his senses. At last he stood still, and murmured incoherently — "Wish yourself happiness — at nine o'clock he died."

We looked at him with horror. "Wish yourself happiness," he continued. "Happiness — Did he not say so? What was it that he meant by these words?" "Why do you now repeat that foolish admonition?" I exclaimed; "What has this to do with it?" "I could not then understand what the Armenian meant by that expression. Now I comprehend him. Oh, it is intolerably hard to have a master over one!" "My dearest Prince!" "Who can make me experience it! — Ah! it must be exquisite!"

He stopped again. There was in his countenance a wildness resembling insanity. I never before had seen him so much agitated. "The most miserable among the people," he continued, "or the next Prince to the throne! are the same. There is but one distinction among men — to obey or to govern." He once more looked into the letter. "You have seen the man," he continued, "who has ventured to write thus to me. Would you salute him in the street if fate had not made him your master? By heavens! there is something wonderfully great about the wearer of a crown!" He continued speaking in this unintelligible manner for some time, and many of his words I dare not commit to paper. But the Prince has discovered to me a circumstance, which involved me in surprise and anxiety, and which may probably ere long lead to bad consequences. We were ignorant of the family circumstances at the court of * * * until now. The Prince

answered the letter upon the spot, though I opposed it with violence, and the manner in which he has done it will, in all probability, prevent a reconciliation.

You will also be desirous, dear O—— to hear something about the Greek lady. I can say but little upon that subject, as I am not able at present to learn any thing satisfactory concerning her. The Prince discloses nothing, because he is, no doubt, bound to secrecy, as I presume, by his word of honour. But she is not the Greek lady that we supposed. She is a German of noble extraction. It is reported that she has a mother of rank, and also that she is the fruit of an illicit connection, of which much was said in Europe. Clandestine pursuits, it is said, have forced her to seek refuge at Venice; and these also are the reasons why she avoids society, and secretes herself in a private dwelling, where it would have been impossible for the Prince to have discovered her. The veneration with which the Prince speaks of her, and certain traits which he observes in her conduct, seem to authorise this presumption. He is passionately fond of her, and his attachment increases every day. In the first outset the visits were not repeated very often; however, the second week the interval was shortened, and now not a day passes without the Prince's being there. We are not able to see him sometimes for whole evenings together; and even, if he is not in her society, she is the only object that occupies his attention. His nature seems to be changed. He walks about like a madman: he is inattentive to every thing that formerly interested him.

What will be the consequence, dearest friend, I cannot imagine. The quarrel with his court has thrown my master into the degrading situation of being dependent upon an individual, the Marquis Civitella. He is at present master of all our secrets, and perhaps of our fate. Will he always think so nobly as he does at present? Will this good understanding be of long duration? and is it right to give so much power and consequence to a man, let him be ever so excellent a character? A letter has been despatched to the sister of the Prince. The issue of it I hope to communicate to you in my next letter.

The Count O——, in continuation.

But this promised letter never arrived. Three whole months passed over, before I obtained any farther accounts from Venice; an interruption which is explained in the sequel. All the letters of my friend to me had been suppressed. You may guess the situation of my mind, when, in the month of December, I obtained the following writing, which mere accident (Biondello's illness) brought to my hands.

“ You do not write. You do not answer.—Come— Oh, come upon the wings of friendship. Our hope is gone. Read this with resolution. All our hope is gone. The Marquis's wound is mortal. The Cardinal cries for revenge, and his assassins seek the Prince's life. My master— Oh, my unhappy master! Is it come to this? Unworthy, terrible fate! We must fly like criminals from the poniards of murderers. I write to you from the Convent ***, where the Prince has taken refuge. He is lying asleep upon a mattress by my side. Alas! it is the slumber of exhausted nature, which will soon again resign him to the horror of new sufferings. During the ten days that she was ill, no sleep closed his eyes. I was present at the dissection of the body. They discovered traces of poison. To-day she will be buried.

“ Alas, dear O——, my heart is almost broken. I was witness to a scene that never will be rooted from my memory. I stood by her dying bed. She expired with divine resignation, and her last words hailed her beloved to accompany her to the throne of heaven. All our resolution forsook us; the Prince alone was firm and collected; and though he must have suffered almost beyond description, yet he had fortitude enough to refuse the pious fanatic her last prayer.”

In this was enclosed the following:—

*To the Prince ***, from his Sister.*

“ The religion which the Prince *** has embraced will not let him want the means to continue his present mode of

life, which is to be attributed to that alone. I have tears and prayers for an unfortunate, but no more benefits for one unworthy of them.

“HENRIETTE.”

I set off immediately; and travelling night and day, in the third week I arrived at Venice. My haste was of no consequence. I went to comfort an unhappy being; but I found one who did not want my feeble assistance. F—— was very ill, and was not to be spoken with, when I arrived; they gave me, however, the following note:—

“Return, dear O——, to where you came from. The Prince does not want your assistance nor mine. His debts are paid, the Cardinal consoled, and the Marquis restored. Do you remember the Armenian who entrapped us last year so dexterously? In his power you’ll find the Prince; who has these five days attended mass.”

Notwithstanding this, I waited upon the Prince, but was refused admittance. On the bed of my friend, however, I heard the following extraordinary history. After taking my lodgings, not far from the Prince’s hotel, I was obliged to wait a long time before I could speak with my friend F——. He was indisposed with a fever, and the physician that attended him despaired of his recovery. My situation was afflicting in the extreme; for I beheld the Prince, as it were, upon the verge of a most terrible abyss, and my friend F—— on the brink of the grave. Harassed almost to death with misfortunes, I resolved, at all events, to speak once more with the prince; but I found, after several ineffectual attempts, that it was in vain; and the last visit I made I was dismissed with the following intimation:—“That the Prince was not to be spoken to by me, and that it was alone owing to his former attachment for me that I still enjoyed my liberty.”

Biondello, who told me this, added to the weight of his information, by his serious and strongly marked countenance. I was not able to make him any answer, but felt my knees shake under me, and my lips quiver in a convulsive manner. I went immediately to my lodgings, and, almost insensible with apprehension, threw myself into an arm chair,

and endeavoured to dispel the gloom of anticipation that hung over me. A noise brought me at last to myself; I looked up, and saw the physician who attended F—— standing before me, whom I had not heard enter the room during my perplexity. “I like to be myself the messenger of happy news,” said he to me, “and I come to announce to you, that your friend F—— finds himself so much recovered, that he is able to converse without difficulty, and wishes to speak to you; the cause of his illness seems to be entirely removed, but you must expect to see him weak, and rather low.” I did not suffer him to proceed in his speech, but wrapped myself up in a cloak, and hastened to congratulate my friend upon his recovery, with as much satisfaction as if the welfare of millions had depended upon my walk.

“Oh! how much have I sighed after you, my dear O——,” said he, with a feeble voice, as he pressed my hand to his breast; “but the physician conjured me, until now; to avoid all sensations.” I looked at him. He was lying before me the picture of death. A tear started from my eye; I could not suppress it: he observed it. “I thank you, my friend, for this sincere proof of affection; it convinces me that my loss will not be indifferent to you.” “Speak not of your death,” said I, with concern, “the physician assures me he has removed your complaint, and that in a little time you will be well again.” “Ay,” he replied, with a deep sigh, “he has repeatedly said so, but I think the contrary. My internal feelings prove to me that I cannot exist long in this world.”

He sank back on his pillow. A cold sweat stood upon his forehead. His speech became fainter by degrees; but I collected sufficient to understand, that he suspected some one had poisoned him, for that he and myself had been suspected for some time of having maliciously and secretly calumniated the Prince at court. This accounted for the cold and unfriendly treatment I had lately received from the Prince; and the very thought of being subject to so powerful an enemy threw me into a state of melancholy. I looked back upon my conduct, and tried to recollect any circumstance that might throw some light upon the matter, but in vain. In the midst of these reflections F——

awaked, which aroused me from my lethargy. His first word was to entreat me to be secret as to what he had discovered respecting himself, and persuaded me, fearful that a similar lot would befall me, to absent myself immediately after his death from Venice. He added, with a smile, "See me laid in my grave first, for I wish very much to receive that last service from the hand of a friend whom I affectionately love." I embraced him, and bedewed his death-pale cheek with tears. "I forgive those," he said, "who are the cause of my death; it will not be painful to me; and as you have not deprived me of your presence in my last hours, I owe you the greatest thanks."

A long pause ensued;—after that, F—— related to me as follows. I have collected into a narrative the sentences which he spoke at intervals, and added what I extorted from him by questions; for his feebleness did not permit him to speak in a continued series. I also was often obliged to assist him, on account of the defect of his memory, as far as it could be done by questions. I must be permitted to introduce him speaking here, because, of all that I communicate, nothing is done by me but the chronological arrangement. I have, indeed, given myself the trouble to use his own language, which I am enabled to do, as I had my pocket-book always in my hand, and carefully noted down every thing which I thought would slip from my memory.

"I begin," said F——, "my story from that period when my letters to you were intercepted. By the last of them* you know, that the Prince had fallen out with his court, and had nothing more to expect from thence. His sister did not write to him, and left us for the space of two months in an anxious state of uncertainty, when the letter, which I enclosed for you last, arrived. It threw the Prince into the most horrid state of distress. His debt to Civitella was very much increased, and his expenses were not in the least diminished; and we found there was not any probability of maintaining the system much longer.—I must confess to you, that at that period I seldom enjoyed a happy hour. In the most splendid entertainments I was solitary,

* That from the month of September. See the foregoing.

and sunk in deep reflection. Z—— contented himself as well as he could. If he was not obliged to be at home, from necessity, he seldom stayed with me; and if at any time I mentioned the subject of our distress to him, he never listened to me, but answered, that he did not choose to interfere in his master's concerns. I had no friend left; and from you I received no answers to my letters. The Prince was seldom to be seen, being in general occupied with Biondello, upon the management of his intrigues. He must have had no other thought than that of visiting the Greek lady, for he had already promised four times to the Marquis to pay him; but instead of that, he borrowed fresh sums. You know formerly with what strict punctuality he performed a promise; but at that period he was completely inattentive to it.

“It was as if every thing existed only for him, and that he had the sole right to command it. The Marquis still continued the generous, uninterested friend of the Prince, who studied his wishes, before they came to maturity, and sought, with unremitting zeal, to satisfy him in every particular. In his hands, I may say, our fate rested; and yet he knew how to give his conduct such a colour, that an indifferent person would have thought his existence depended upon a single look from the Prince. Thus stood the affair, when the Prince one evening came home very late from the *Bucentauro*. He brought a book with him, the contents of which he was so anxious to be acquainted with, that, during the time he was undressing, he desired me to read it out aloud to him; for Biondello, on whom this honour was usually conferred, under the pretext of indisposition, which he had complained of for fourteen nights, had been dismissed to go to bed. At last the Prince retired to rest, and being unable to repose until the book was finished, I was obliged to sit upon the side of his bed and continue my task. He listened very attentively, as he supported his head upon his right arm. The clock in the steeple of St. Mark's church struck one.* At that instant

* The Count O—— has probably given here the hour in which this happened, according to our reckoning of time; in Venice, and other provinces of Italy, they begin to count the hours from *one*, at the beginning of the night.

both the candles which stood before me upon the table were extinguished. We heard thunder, which in a few minutes became so violent, that the house seemed to shake under us; quick flashes of lightning illuminated our room, and immediately all the windows and doors burst open.

“ ‘*Beware, Prince!* that thou dost not stain thy hand with blood,’ cried a hollow frightful voice— Again it thundered and lightened, after which a solemn stillness reigned for some time.

“ ‘Is this a dream?’—cried the Prince, after a pause. I did not make any answer, and was in doubt whether I should quit the room or not. In the mean time Biondello rushed in. ‘For God’s sake, what is the matter?’ he exclaimed with trepidation; but, without waiting for an answer, he took the wax candles from the table, and brought them back lighted. He was half dressed, and appeared so dreadfully frightened, that I became very much alarmed for him. Observing that the Prince had not received any injury, he seemed in some measure comforted. The Prince asked him if he had heard any thing? He answered in the affirmative, and his relation accorded exactly with what we had heard; however, he did not see any lightning. He was not asleep, and for that reason his evidence effectually proved, that our imaginations had not deceived us. Biondello received orders to go to bed again, and the Prince commanded him to observe the strictest silence as to what he had heard and seen. ‘What do you think of this?’ said the Prince, as soon as he was gone. ‘I must own to you, gracious Prince,’ said I, ‘that this event has almost deprived me of my senses.’ ‘Confess, that you will not willingly believe it to be a miracle, because you know that I hold them in contempt.’ ‘And yet I know not how to explain it in a natural way.’ ‘We have read strange things in the book; how, if our fancy should have played us a trick?’ ‘But that we both heard one and the same thing, that the candles in the mean time were extinguished at the same moment, and doors and windows burst open, is certain; and Biondello has heard the same?’

“ ‘That might, perhaps, be explained. The windows burst open because they were not fastened; the door from

the same cause; the pressure of the air became then stronger, and the thorough draft put out the candles.' 'But the words we heard—the lightning—the thunder?' 'I ascribe them to imagination.' 'But could imagination work upon *three* different persons exactly at the *same* time, and in the *same* manner?' 'If all our ideas turn to the same point, why not?—Have you never heard, that whole societies have been deceived in the same manner? To what cause else can we ascribe the existence of so many fanatics?' 'I allow this; but Biondello's ideas could not surely be similar to ours, and yet—' 'It is possible. Have you not heard that he was lying awake in his bed, and in all probability listened to every thing that was said. Only a thin wainscot separates his room from mine, and you, besides, read with a very loud voice?'

"I became silent, not because I was convinced, but because I did not like to contradict him; for his countenance proved to me that he was angry at my disputing the question with him. He seemed satisfied, but the recollection of what had passed banished sleep from my eyes. The following day was destined for a grand feast, which was given in honour of the Prince of St. Benedetto. All that Venetian splendour and pleasure could invent was united here. It was to conclude with a very brilliant masquerade ball. A valet-de-chambre, whom the Prince a short time ago took into his service, because he saved his life, remained alone at home; whilst myself and the Prince's whole household, Biondello not excepted, who forgot his complaints to join the party, went to the entertainment. The Prince was pleased with his attention so much the more, because, in spite of his indisposition, he insisted upon going in such a manner that the greatest love for his Prince could only have induced him. In the mask of a Bramin he followed him every where, at a little distance, like his shadow. I did not suffer him to go out of my sight, because I expected something might take place, that might lead to a discovery of the mysterious warning we had heard the foregoing night; to which ground I also attributed the foresight of Biondello. My conjecture was but too well founded. The crowd of masks which were present, left little room in the spacious hall for the dancers;

thus, they were rather crowded. The Prince, in endeavouring to pass some one in great haste, tore a part of his garment. He was obliged to leave the hall immediately to repair the accident. Biondello conducted him into a side room, and I followed. Picture to yourself our astonishment, when we beheld, in a recess, the Greek lady and Civitella conversing together. Not one of us was able to utter a word. The Prince seemed thunderstruck : his eyes rolled wildly in his head, and the muscles of his face became convulsive. The couple apparently did not observe us. Before we could prevent him, the Prince seized a dagger, which lay upon a table, and rushing towards Civitella laid him bleeding at his feet. The Greek lady ran with loud shrieks into the hall.

“ For God’s sake, save yourself, gracious Prince ! ” exclaimed Biondello, ‘ lose not a moment. ’ At that instant he laid hold of the Prince, who was quite stupified, and hurried him away through a side-door. I hastened after them. Scarcely was the door closed, when we heard a great noise in the room. In their embarrassment they had probably forgotten to pursue us ; we therefore made our escape. The Prince wished to go to his hotel, but Biondello prevented him, and added that he could not be secure there. The powers above* punish very rigorously any one that attacks a mask ; and in spite of his rank, he was in doubt whether they would not to-morrow morning send after him one of their *fantes*†, which might have very bad consequences. He promised to conduct him to a place of security till the affair could be settled. Biondello walked before us with hasty steps ; we followed him very close, and I must confess, with great dread and anxiety. The apprehension played upon my fancy so much, that I saw at every step figures, which seemed to me all armed with daggers. From the Prince’s countenance, I easily could perceive, that he also was very much discouraged. Not one of us spoke a word. Like fugitive criminals we stole

* This expression, or, in his language, *quci in alto*, the Venetians use as a name for the tribunal of the Inquisition. A Venetian is so afraid of that word, that he makes use of it only in cases of great necessity, and speaks of this tribunal with the highest veneration and beating heart.

† An officer of this tribunal.

through the private passages and by-streets. We were fortunate enough to meet, near *St. Samuele*, a boat, which, to all appearance, seemed waiting for us. We stepped into it: Biondello commanded the boatman to row into the *Sestier of Castello*, and to land us near *St. Francisco della Vigna*, a Franciscan convent. We glided like lightning through the water. Houses and steeples that bordered the river soon vanished from our sight. The moon shone with beautiful splendour; and, at intervals, we heard the distant oars as they dashed into the stream, and the melancholy song of the *Barcarole*.*—I shall never forget the impression that night made upon my mind.

“ We arrived, at last, at the before-mentioned place; and Biondello procured us, even at that time of night, through the means of an acquaintance, the best accommodation. We were obliged to live there in great secrecy, and I observed that the Prince deeply felt his situation. Biondello walked out in different masks to learn how the matter stood, and what the Prince had to fear; but for many days he returned without success. At last he came into the room, about night-fall, in great agitation. ‘ We must depart hence,’ he cried with a trembling voice, ‘ we must depart this moment! Your life hangs on a thread, my Prince! The Marquis is mortally wounded; the Cardinal has hired twelve assassins to murder you, and he who perpetrates the deed is promised one hundred sequins; a price which an assassin would be studious to earn, were it even to take the life of the head of the church. They already are acquainted with our abode — we must hasten away as quickly as possible!’

“ Had not Biondello been with us, we could not possibly have escaped our fate; but this indefatigable and attentive man assisted us always with the best advice. He brought us clothes, as a disguise, and we hired a boat for our conveyance. Biondello entered into conversation with

* *Barcarole* are a kind of watermen. They sing for entertainment, whilst they are lying solitarily in their boats, expecting customers. They know by heart many passages of the poets, and add to them music of their own composition, which they endeavour to make adequate to the words. One is heard to begin; another, who perhaps does not know the first, hears, and answers him, and they seldom discontinue their song till their business calls them away.

the waterman, and we experienced, to our astonishment, in what great danger we were placed, and how industrious the assassins were to earn the hundred sequins. Suspecting that some one might be able, by the boatman, to trace our route, to deceive them, we continually changed our boat, and went a very circuitous way about. At last we arrived at the convent —. A friendly monk, also an acquaintance of Biondello, received us at the gate, and conducted us immediately to a room, which was retired and clean, but not furnished for the reception of a prince. ‘A lady, in the last agonies of death, wishes to speak to you,’ said the monk the next day to the Prince. He started as if he had suffered an electrical stroke. ‘Who is she?’ he exclaimed hastily. ‘I do not know; I have not enquired concerning that. She has lived for two years in this convent. Whence she came is unknown. It is our duty to receive every stranger, within our walls, without first asking who he is, or whence he comes.—We suffer every one to keep his secret, if he will not discover it to us willingly.’

“The Prince seemed lost in deep reflection. ‘How long has she been ill?’ he said at last. ‘To-day is the seventh.’ ‘Where is she? I will go to her.’ He followed the monk.

“In the sick room, my dear friend, was his Greek lady. I have forgotten to mention, that he had not an opportunity to speak to her for two days previous to the unhappy masquerade-ball; it was clear now what detained her. I myself saw her, and I am not able to describe my feelings, when I beheld the most charming creature in the creation, who was formerly the admiration of every one, but now the victim of horror and disease. Upon her lovely face were marked the signs of death.—I no longer doubted, that at the ball we must have been mistaken in the person; but the Prince, in total opposition to his former character, still entertained his doubts. This affected his sensibility to such a degree, that nothing could be equal to it. His ardent affection threw him into the most violent paroxysms of despair, when he saw the object of his heart in the arms of death; but, in a few minutes, the fatal scene at the ball

rushed upon his mind — he turned from her with disgust, impressed with the idea that she had treated his love with scorn. His eyes sparkled with rage, and, as in agony, his limbs trembled; but this, when he looked upon the patient innocent, was changed into sympathetic melancholy. His situation was terrible. Although she herself suffered very much, she sought to console him. This circumstance almost drove him to distraction. I tore him by force from her bed. He sat silent in our room for some time; at last he exclaimed — ‘I am shamefully deceived! She, whom I adored, despised me, and rioted licentiously in the arms of another.’

“ ‘Gracious Prince, be satisfied. All circumstances clearly prove, that she was lying ill here when the deed happened. It must have been quite a different person.’ ‘Did I not see her — I, who preserved in the sanctuary of my heart the smallest of her favours — I, who existed only for her, who thought her one and the same with myself — to be treated thus!’ — ‘Pardon me, gracious Prince, did you not say yourself, that under such circumstances, one might be easily deceived?’ ‘Did you not see her also?’ ‘Your rash action hindered us from observing her minutely.’ ‘And how came she to know that I was in the convent? The plan is finely laid to decoy me again into the net; but it will not succeed!’ ‘Do not mistrust her. — An unhappy affair brought us hither; and, meeting her in such a pitiable situation, must have operated strongly upon your mind, and —’ ‘Will you remind me of my weakness? I believed, from the first moment, that it was a juggle.’ ‘Her illness a juggle?’ ‘Is that impossible, after having had the experience that we have?’

“ I know not how long this conversation would have lasted; for the more I endeavoured to convince him of his error, so much the more he opposed me; and his understanding, formerly so enlightened, did not look upon what appeared the fact as at all probable. Biondello’s arrival prevented a continuation of our discourse. He did not, however, bring news of our being safe; yet the Prince became, in one respect, more composed. For, he said it was in several places reported, that the lady, on account of

whom we had suffered so much, was no other person than a certain V—lli, who was of an indifferent character, and extremely like the Greek lady. The similarity of the dress, and the darkness of the room in which they were sitting, served also to deceive us. How his beloved knew that he was in the convent, was also explained to his satisfaction. One of her footmen had discovered Biondello—she had often made particular enquiries after the Prince, and having discovered his retreat, desired once more to see and speak to her beloved. Conscious of her innocence, her sufferings made a greater impression upon the mind of the Prince. He very seldom quitted her bed, and gave himself up entirely to sorrow. The cause of her dissolution will also be that of mine.—Oh! that I might die with the tranquillity that she did! Her patience under her sufferings, her serenity of mind, when the shadows of death surrounded her, contributed to make her more beloved than ever. Oh! that I might be certain of such a happy death as hers!* This angel died by poison; for, on the dissection of her body, at which I was obliged to be present, the clearest proofs of it were visible.†

“ The situation of the Prince I am not able to describe to you. I trembled for his safety; for when he saw the corpse carried to the grave, he burst into a loud hysterical laugh, and, as in a fit of madness, uttered expressions that I never wish to recollect. Several days passed, in which nothing remarkable happened. Biondello’s accounts were always the same, and the Marquis had not yet recovered from his indisposition. We did not perceive that they were at all solicitous to discover us, although he assured us, that they had not yet given over the pursuit; and that our safety depended upon our remaining quiet; for their revenge would not be satisfied but by blood. For want of room I was obliged to sleep in the Prince’s apartment. It was about midnight when he came to my bedside and waked me.

“ ‘ Have you heard nothing?’ said he. — I replied in the negative, for I had slept very soundly, my rest having been

* This wish of my friend was fulfilled in every particular.

† He has already mentioned this in his last letter. See the foregoing.

broken the preceding night. ‘Has any thing happened to you, gracious Sir?’ ‘Had I not the proof in my hands, I should think it was a dream. It seems as if I am surrounded every where by invisible beings. I was just on the point of falling asleep, when I was disturbed by the most enchanting music. Whilst I listened to find whence the sound came, a genius appeared to descend through the upper part of my bed, graced with all the charms with which our painters usually represent them; but no pencil ever portrayed such a perfection of irresistible beauty. A soft light surrounded it, and illuminated my bed. I had drawn the curtain very close. The night lamp burnt faintly, and on witnessing this apparition, I reflected upon the former prophecy, which, alas! was so punctually fulfilled. I remained lost in astonishment and fear. With a melodious voice it spoke to me: — *My lord and master sends thee a letter; open and read it, but not before the first beam of the sun announces day, and conquer all disbelief!* He let fall a letter, and melted, as it were, into a cloud, which vanished by degrees. His disappearance was accompanied by the same agreeable music as announced his approach, and a rich perfume diffused itself around me.

“The Prince shewed me the letter. It was exactly like a common letter; only the seal consisted of several symbols, which we could not explain, and it was not directed. He put it into his pocket. ‘Will you not open it?’ said I. ‘To-morrow at the appointed hour.’ ‘You believe, then, in this apparition?’ He was silent for a while. ‘Must I not? — Oh! what would I give if I could but still doubt it, and persevere in that philosophy, of which I boasted so much! Now I must give up all. I believe now in every thing! Can I do otherwise, after what has happened to me?’

“He slept no more that night, but conversed of ghosts and supernatural appearances; and I soon experienced how much he inclined to believe in the possibility of them. At the appointed time he took the letter from his pocket, and, behold, there was a direction upon it! This, although a trifle, greatly astonished the Prince; and you may easily conceive how he was affected at the moment. He opened it. It was a mere cover; but there was enclosed a receipt

from Civitella, not only for the sums which he had lent to the Prince, but also for the interest ; and a letter from him of which I will give you a copy ; I transcribed it on account of its singularity :—

‘ My gracious Prince !

‘ The enormity of my crime is so great, that I ask of you forgiveness, and hope your heart will not deny it, as my repose and future happiness depend upon it. You punished my imprudence, at that unfortunate ball, by a severe blow ; and I, like a madman, suffered myself to be overcome by rage, and thirsted for revenge. After the abominable custom of this country, I begged of my uncle to hire a party of banditti to kill *you*—the saviour of my life. The thought oppresses me with horror ; but you, who gave the wound, were also able to cure it, and could have done it by one word !—Oh ! you, at whose command the higher powers wait, why do you fly from my weak unpardonable revenge, which you could have suppressed at pleasure ?—Why did you send me the sums of money, which I lent you with such satisfaction, thus to deprive me of the consolation, which you at first so nobly gave me ? Whilst you thought me worthy to share with you my fortune, you did not want it.—Oh ! act with generosity and forgive me, for, without that, my recovery will be to me the most unhappy period of my life. I cannot excuse my temerity ; no, I am not able to do it—but you will be less indignant at my conduct, if you consider that it is by education alone such a detestable self-revenge can be justified. Am I not by such appearances punished enough ?—Alas ! the recollection of it will never be rooted from my memory. As I lay upon my bed, suffering the most excruciating pain, and the bystanders expecting my death every moment, there appeared to me a figure, in a long black Tartar dress, and girded round the loins with a golden belt. It approached near to my bed : its white beard flowed upon its breast, and a penetrating frown sat upon its brow : it looked around, and immediately my attendants sunk to sleep. *Wretch!*—it cried, with a terrible voice—*who has ventured to persecute him with vengeance, who could instantly destroy thy*

life, if he would make use of the power he has in his hands? I will not repeat the dreadful remonstrance which I heard. It was a miracle that I did not expire under the agitation this appearance occasioned. Having struggled for some time in the most terrible torments, the figure touched me. I was instantly free from pain, and perfectly recovered. Before me, on the table, were lying heaps of gold, for which I was obliged to give a receipt. It also desired me to ask your pardon in writing, though I did not know where to address you, and upon which my whole welfare would depend. Oh! do not refuse your compassion to a miserable wretch.—When and how you will obtain this letter I do not know; but the spirit assured me that you would, for certain, have it. Alas, gracious Prince! return to me again. For, with sincere repentance, an unworthy being will wait upon you in the ante-chamber of your hotel, as soon as day breaks.

‘Your unworthy friend,
‘CIVITELLA.’

“What we felt on reading that letter I need not, dear O—— describe to you. It was an event which filled us with astonishment. The Prince did not doubt the fact; but he would not quit his haunt, without first having made all possible enquiry as to its authenticity. Biondello, who was still asleep, was called, and commissioned to enquire very cautiously into every circumstance. The voice immediately repeated,—‘Overcome your disbelief!’ Biondello crossed himself, and went off. He did not go far from the convent, for he heard from his spies, that we were perfectly safe; and he soon returned with this happy news. The Prince conjured us to be silent as to what had happened, and set off immediately. We arrived at the hotel, and found not only Civitella but also the Cardinal, who came towards the Prince, and, in the humblest manner, asked his pardon. That he forgave them willingly, and was highly satisfied to free himself from such a dangerous dilemma, is easily to be imagined. Nor did he undeceive them as to the idea, that higher powers were at his command, and that the ghost had appeared to Civitella by his

desire ; he only begged of them to keep it a secret. Civitella assured him that it was quite public, for the people who waited upon him knew it, and had already cried him up as a saint.

“ ‘But the people were asleep, how could they discover the vision?’ replied the Prince, with some doubt. ‘Yes, gracious Prince,’ said Civitella—‘but they saw the form descending into the room, and witnessed, on their recovering from their terror, my restoration. They saw me at the brink of the grave; and to be restored so suddenly, must have excited their astonishment; and can you blame me, that in the moment when I found myself snatched from the jaws of death, I called you, with gratitude, my benefactor?—You did not prohibit me to do it; and had that been the case, I believe I should have violated your commands. Oh! most gracious Prince! there is no greater pain than for an uncorrupted mind to suppress the feelings of a grateful heart!’ He threw himself at the feet of the Prince, whilst tears burst from his eyes. ‘I have already forgiven you,’ said the Prince, raising him from the ground. ‘But, am I beloved by you as formerly?—Am I not unworthy of it?’ he continued in tears. ‘When I forgive, I do it not by halves,’ said the Prince, embracing him.

“ Life now seemed to beam afresh in the Marquis. He did not even appear to have been at all ill, for he looked as healthy as ever; but a fixed melancholy, that was discernible in his countenance, extinguished those traces of benevolence which had formerly rendered him so attractive. But by this reconciliation he recovered his happy looks, and ran through the room in an excess of joy that indicated his felicity. After the first intoxication was over, he was overwhelmed with an agreeable anxiety, which did not at all belong to his character, and from which one could perceive how much he felt his indiscretion. This, and the solicitude which originated with it, made him more agreeable to the Prince, and he became to him as dear as ever: he understood the smallest hint; he sought to read in his eyes his most distant wishes, and soon learned how to regulate his conduct according to his desires; besides, he sufficiently understood how to give

his actions an air of duty, and continually exclaimed how much he owed to the Prince. Believing that the Prince's violence upon the night of the ball was nothing more than a punishment for his extravagancies— (for he did not conceive that the Prince had taken the lady that was with him for his Grecian) — he now altered his mode of life, and often thanked the Prince that he had punished him so severely. He declared that he was proud of it—that he esteemed him higher than ever, and thought him more worthy of his friendship. He candidly confessed to me, that he had at that time entertained an idea, which would in the end have been his ruin. He had laid a plan to seduce the daughter of the —t—io, a charming innocent girl of sixteen. He had seen her, for the first time, at mass, and her beauty impressed him with this resolution.

“ To gain access to the house of her parents, and to succeed in this diabolical scheme, he was obliged to court the favour of the same lady with whom we had seen him at the ball, because she was a near relation to the family, and could easily introduce him. The strictness with which she was watched would have required him to commit a chain of crimes before he could have obtained his aim. His passion was so violent, that, united with his natural imprudence, he did not hesitate to adopt the most impolite manners to accomplish his purpose. At the brink of the grave, he added, a man reflects upon all his actions in another point of view ; and even those that formerly gave him great pleasure, and upon which he had often spoken with delight, pierced him to the very soul with horror.

“ Oh ! dearest friend, Civitella is, notwithstanding all his licentiousness, a noble man, and, if he commits a fault, he knows how to compensate for it, in such a manner, that one must attribute it to him as a great action. From his discourse, and from his answers to my questions, I could distinctly perceive, that it was not him, but the Cardinal his uncle, who caused the banditti to pursue us so industriously ; but he generously took all upon himself, and endeavoured to prevent us from discovering the truth. It is much to be lamented, that so superior an understanding,

with such a good heart, and such an enchanting appearance, must perish upon a Venetian soil.*

“It is a singular thing, considering the bad education which the children of the nobility receive, from the most stupid and rudest sort of priests, called abbés, that he was so enlightened, or possessed of that sensibility, which gives to all his actions so much captivating interest. I have neglected to mention, that curiosity induced us to ask the Marquis to show us the place where he had been wounded. He opened his shirt, and, to our great surprise, we perceived that there was not any appearance of a wound, or the smallest mark of any violence.”

Continuation of Count O——.

My friend exhausted himself so much by his relation, that all the powers of nature seemed suspended. My doubts were but too well founded; he appeared to sleep, but it was that of death—my tears are sacrificed to his memory! He was a man of fine ideas; but from the goodness of his heart, and an unsuspecting disposition, he became so much the easier a prey to his enemies, whose dislike to him arose from his attachment to his master. I was now left alone in a great city, possessed of no friend to whom I could communicate my thoughts, and was obliged to take particular care not to talk with any one but upon common topics, because I presumed, and with reason, that I was surrounded by spies, who would put a false construction upon my words, and make that a plea for poisoning me. The death of my friend had made me cautious. His earnest request, that I would quit the place, and the message that the Prince sent to me by Biondello, now preyed upon my mind with double force; my sorrow also contributed, in a great measure, to aid my determin-

* My friend here goes too far. Although the sciences at Venice are in a bad state, for want of encouragement, there, however, are open to an enquiring mind very considerable libraries, from which a man may gain a great deal of useful knowledge. But the case is, that they will not make use of them. And the young nobleman, who intends to fit himself for the service of the state, has to study history and politics; a few departments, which, if they are filled up, require talents and industry, and are equally useful and necessary for those whom their birth has destined for the government of the republic. Thus has my friend praised the talents of the Marquis; they seem, however, to me to be more of a glittering nature than founded upon learning. COUNT O——.

ation. I resolved to leave Venice. I locked myself up in my room for a few days, and then forsook a city in which I had lost two beloved friends. Before I went, I sent to the Prince a card of departure.

I had travelled about sixty Italian miles, when the idea that I might possibly save the Prince, obliged me to return. I was irresistibly compelled to act in this manner; for my mind, ever anxious for his safety, represented to me in black colours all that might befall him; and I looked upon it as criminal not to endeavour to rescue him. Fixed in this resolution, I entered upon the execution of my plan, without once considering the dangers and difficulties which surrounded such an undertaking. I took the precaution, however, for fear of being discovered, to dismiss my faithful servant, and the only one I had taken with me. I parted from him with deep regret; for he alone had sometimes, by his compassionate fidelity, afforded me consolation. I was now obliged to go without companionship: but it was absolutely necessary. He was an incomparable good servant; but he had one fault, which I could not break him of, although he had served me twenty years, and which was in opposition to every principle of my scheme,—he could not keep a secret. What he knew he published to the whole world; and, though he did not tell it in direct terms, his actions and behaviour betrayed it to every one he was acquainted with, if he thought well of them, and fancied they were possessed of the same goodness of heart as himself. It could not but happen that he was very often deceived, but this did not make him at all more prudent. To put unbounded confidence in every one was his maxim, from which he never departed; for he used to say, that he should feel it severely if he was suspected by any one; and for that reason he thought it would be the same to others: and that the whole world trusted him he was convinced. He believed every one that was at all reserved in his conduct to be free from guile. If one expressly told him to be silent upon any subject, he became anxious not to let any thing drop that could betray him, which never failed to lead him into an error. For he had always in his mind, and at his

tongue's end, what he should not discover, and very often repeated to himself my prohibition; and it frequently happened that he acted thus in society, and said to himself, loudly and significantly, "Caspar, don't forget that your master has told you so and so—" (and immediately mentioned the thing which he ought to have kept a secret,) "you must not chatter out what he has prohibited you to mention."

He no sooner heard that it was public than he maintained firmly that he had told it to nobody. This serious fault was, however, balanced by his other good qualities, which induced me to keep him. At first I thought of dismissing him my service, as I was not accustomed to put up with such conduct. I used to practise an artifice upon him, which succeeded extremely well, as he was obliged to keep every thing he heard a secret. I related to him, at the same time, something that was unconnected with the subject, and desired him particularly not to mention it: by that means I deceived him, and the subject I wished to be a secret was forgotten. I did not mention to him my determination respecting him; but wrote a letter, and sent him forward with it, under the pretext of bespeaking quarters for me. He was obliged to deliver this letter to a landlord at —, with whom I had frequently lodged, and who knew him to be an honest man. I requested him to inform my servant that I had thrown myself into a river. I enclosed a bank-note, and commanded him to make the inn his home; begging of him, at the same time, not to make any enquiries after me. To preserve appearances, and to give him an idea that it grieved me to part from him, I wrote an affectionate farewell-letter to him, and begged of him again to fulfil my last and particular request.

Poor Caspar's case was extremely hard; but I was under the necessity of treating him in that manner. Had I told him that I was obliged to part with him, on account of my intention to travel privately, he would have sought me every where, and would have enquired of every body, whether they had seen or heard any thing of me; my hiding-place, by that means, would have been discovered,

and my death the certain consequence. I was convinced that he would punctually fulfil my last request, and it would be very easy for me to find him again when I wanted him. I begged of him to be comforted; that he would not commit suicide I was convinced; for the respect which he had for the last request of a deceased friend was uncommonly great. I hope my readers will pardon this digression; Caspar was my faithful servant, and deserves more than this poor tribute for his gratitude.

After hesitating a considerable time, (suspicious, probably of my intention,) Caspar separated from me. With the greatest emotion I looked after him until he disappeared. I was now left alone. Quite undetermined which road I should take, I departed for ——. On the day of my arrival, I heard that, in the evening, there was to be a masquerade ball; and a thought struck me, which I immediately put in execution. I bought the habit of a Polish Jew, ornamented my chin with a large beard, coloured my eyebrows and face, and wandered thus towards Venice. The goods which I was possessed of, and my horse, I turned into money, and secreted it, with some jewels, in my belt. I did not doubt my ability to play my character faithfully; for I had been a long while in Poland, and had dealt with the Jews; inclination too, partly, as well as necessity, induced me to learn their language, in which I was so well skilled, that I have, even by the Jews themselves, been taken for one of their tribe. I travelled the greatest part of the way on foot, and about twenty miles from Venice entered an inn, where I met poor Caspar. He was sitting in a corner of the room, and seemed totally absorbed in thought. I was anxious to avoid being seen by him, and, for that reason, was about absenting myself from the room, when he came towards me, and asked me from whence I came? This made me bolder, and I told him the place where I had passed the night before. The word was scarcely out of my mouth, when he enquired if I had not seen his master? "No," I answered quickly, and reflected afterwards, how unthinkingly it was done; because it gave him to understand that both of them were known to me. But it did not strike Caspar in the same

way, and this *no* induced him to sit near to me, and to relate, with the most heartfelt sorrow, the history of his master. I reminded him to fulfil the last request of his benefactor, and heard, to my astonishment, that he did not think me dead. I immediately invented a story which convinced him of the fact. He departed early the next day, and promised me that he would faithfully observe my request. He took an affectionate leave of me, without knowing who I was, which convinced me that I might live at Venice in security; for I hoped to render the Prince services of great consequence.

Before I arrived at Venice, I met with an accident, which had great influence on my conduct. I stopped towards night-fall at an inn, which stood by the road-side. I found there a Polish Jew, who was at the point of death. He no sooner beheld me, than he addressed himself to me, and in a few minutes we entered into conversation, in which the greatest confidence was displayed. By my compassion, and the little service which I rendered him, I at last gained his utmost confidence. His illness increased; there was no hopes of his recovery. When we were alone, he called me to his bedside, and I experienced what astonished me beyond description. "I shall depart," he said, "very soon to Paradise, there to repose in the laps of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; but I have something of great importance, which I cannot carry with me. You have gained my confidence, and for that reason I shall deliver it to you."—I was obliged to swear that I would punctually perform all he required; at the same time, he assured me, that I should be very generously recompensed for it. He went on:—"The ——an confederates have sent me with a letter,"—(I was obliged to take it from the lining of his cap,) "instead of me, do you deliver it."

How great was my astonishment, when I heard the Armenian described from head to foot! He did not know who he was; but he told me the place where he was to be found, at certain hours, so that I could not possibly mistake him; he gave me, besides, a sign, which was unknown to any one else, and the answer of the Armenian would clearly prove him the person. He mentioned, with the greatest

care, every particular several times, that I might not err. Although I did not want this precaution, I seemed to be very attentive to what he said, that he might not suspect that I had any knowledge of the Armenian. I experienced by the ——an business a great support to my plan ; for I was anxious that they should think me the real messenger, and not suppose that this man had merely sent me. I considered I should, on that account, be trusted with greater confidence. It was for the first time in my life that I wished for the death of a fellow-creature ; but I certainly did in this instance ; for I counted upon what I knew already, and believed for certain, that I should save the Prince as soon as I could light upon the Armenian ; and this would all have been frustrated if the Jew had lived !

He died the following day. I performed, according to his request, the last service, and departed the next day. The letter I secreted in my cap. My heart beat with joy, and I offered up my thanks to heaven for its favour. I thought I should never reach the place of my destination. I arrived, at last, in Venice ; my heart palpitated. I took lodgings in a remote part of the city, at a small inn. Before I arrived there, however, I was very much alarmed. As I stepped into a boat, I beheld Biondello in the same. I was fearful of being discovered, because I could not trust to my disguise, as there were so many sly fellows in the city ; although I avoided being detected by Caspar (who knew me so well). But if a man studies to avoid being known, the more he acts his part, the sooner he is likely to betray himself. I was influenced by this consideration, and therefore put a good countenance upon the matter. Biondello patted my shoulder, and gave me to understand, that my presence was very dear to him. I might have given him some suspicion, if he had not disembarrassed me, by enquiring something of —— . I answered him, that he must observe I had made secrecy my rule of conduct. Instead of being angry with me for such a reply, he was very satisfied with it. This peculiar conduct was very mysterious, but by degrees it cleared itself up. To my great satisfaction I learned from him, that they were informed of my death, and believed it ; for he asked me if they had

found my corpse? I replied in the negative, alleging that it was impossible, on account of the ice that floated down the river—that I confirmed the report, every one will readily believe.

As soon as I arrived in the room which I had hired at the inn, I bolted the door, and opened the letter. The task was very difficult to perform; but I tried a variety of ways, and, at last, succeeded. To my great disappointment it was written in characters, and perfectly unintelligible. I made, however, several attempts to understand them, but in vain. I therefore copied them very exactly, in hopes, at some future time, to find the key to them. I closed the letter again, so that no traces of my having opened it could be perceived, and appeared the following day, at the appointed time, in St. Mark's Place. It was in the beginning of January: it was crowded with characteristic masks* and spectators, who were enjoying the entertainment. I did not mix with them; I was upon the watch for the Armenian. I pressed often through the crowd, and sought him in every corner, but he was not to be found. I resolved to wait until night, and then return again to the appointed place upon the *Broglia*, close to the church. The first person whom I saw was the Prince. He was in a domino, but his mask, which I knew, as well as his appearance, betrayed him. He stood before a pillar, upon which were a great many characters, and near him a mask dressed like a magician. The latter had a long white beard that descended to his belt, to which was attached a black rope, apparently as a symbol of his profession. In his right hand he held a stick, with which he pointed to the pillar, and seemed to explain something to the Prince, who listened very attentively. My curiosity prompted me to approach nearer, but it was useless, for they spoke so low that, in the tumult,

* I give this note for the information of those of my readers, who are unacquainted with the manners and customs of Venice. The characteristic masks are in Venice customary, from the time of the three kings, or wise men of the East, till the great feast day, which is the most lively in the whole year. All the streets and squares are, at that time, full of masks, and principally the St. Mark's Place. They represent all sorts of characters, nations, manners, and customs. Those who speak entertain themselves with every one who will talk with them; they personate faithfully their adopted character, and being sometimes men of wit, afford great entertainment. You frequently see amongst them the *Improvvisatori*, who are a kind of poets famous for impromptu.

no person could hear a single word. The magician, at last, turned round and discovered me. I thought that he played his character for mere pleasure, and was entertaining the Prince with his tricks ; but I was greatly mistaken. The more I reflected upon this event, the more I was convinced that it was designed for some particular purpose. The magician went leisurely away. I had made it always a rule to notice the smallest circumstance that concerned the Prince, and therefore followed him immediately: but he disappeared, and I saw the Armenian coming towards me. I gave him the sign and he answered it, bidding me, at the same time, follow him. I complied, and he conducted me into a dark street. He there unlocked the door of a house, and we went together into a small room. He took the letter from me, and, overlooking it slightly, seemed to be satisfied with its contents. He put several questions to me on account of the — business, which I answered so that I did not give him the least cause to suspect me. He desired me to meet him again the next evening. He had parted from me, when he returned back, and addressed me in the Venetian language ; he had before spoken, to my great astonishment, in German. My genius assisted me ; I shook my head, and told him that I did not understand him. He smiled, and said he had forgotten himself. He was willing to remind me once more not to mistake the appointed hour the next evening. I promised him that I would not, and he went away. This circumstance made me still more cautious ; and I maintained my character so well, that, when I quitted it, it became very difficult for me not to use the tone and manners of a Polish Jew.

The time, until the hour arrived, passed very slowly ; at last, it was announced by a neighbouring clock, and I went immediately to the appointed place. I found the Armenian there, who hastily conducted me to a boat. Before we quitted it I was blindfolded, and when the bandage was taken from my eyes—guess my astonishment and terror ! —for I found myself in the same hall where I had witnessed the frightful appearances I have before mentioned. It was exactly the same, but I thought the assembly were

more numerous. The hall was splendidly illuminated. The horror with which I recognised the fatal chamber was very visible; for one of the assembly (by his speech, I guess it must have been the Armenian, for, as they all appeared masked, it was impossible to discover them,) told me to have courage. They said also, in the Venetian language, that a Jew was a singular animal, for he blushed at every thing but what related to traffic. The company took their seats at a long table, covered with black cloth. One of them seated himself at a little table, upon which there were pens, ink, and papers. He was probably the secretary of the society; for he questioned me very minutely respecting the letter of —, and as to every circumstance that was at all connected with it, and wrote down all my answers to his questions. I could easily guess by this how much their success depended upon my answers; for he read them over to me, advising me, at the same time, to alter what did not appear to me perfectly correct. I was too well prepared to drop any thing that might betray me; I had likewise time enough, as I was questioned by an interpreter (I believe it was the Armenian himself), to think of the best answers. They were perfectly satisfied with me, and gave me a considerable present. The secretary paid it to me. I do not know how it happened, but his mask fell from his face. He endeavoured to put it on again as quickly as possible, but I already had seen that it was—Biondello! The accident seemed to operate very forcibly upon the other members. "This circumstance," said they, "must now cost the poor Jew his life, to ensure our safety; for in such cases as these we cannot depend upon honour."

"Accursed principle!" I thought, as the sweat poured down my forehead. I had sufficient resolution left to affect not to understand what was said; for my attention was, to all appearance, directed to the money I had received. I heard their debates with apparent indifference, although they became so violent that they did not at all regard me. The question was, whether they should murder me or not. It was utterly impossible for them to understand each other, the tumult was so great. The Armenian, who had remained quiet for some time, now gave

a sign with his hand, and there ensued immediately a deadly silence.—This would have convinced me, had I not guessed it before, that he was the leader of this secret society. After a short pause, he began:—

“To provide for our safety, is our first and sacred duty. To maintain it, no sacrifice would be too great; but I cannot consent, on this occasion, to put a man to death whose services have been so essential to us.—I might say, and with justice, that it would militate against our plans, and destroy that which we have so carefully cherished.” He paused—but no one answered him. I became more composed. He proceeded. “And why should we kill him?—because he saw one” (pointing to Biondello) “unmasked!—Is he not in some measure a party concerned? and would it be possible for him, were this not the case, in the city of Venice, among so many thousand people, to find out one single person, whom he had but just glanced upon?—I moreover maintain, that the love of money, which is so natural to his nation, prevented his taking his eyes from the table. Our mere dress, without the mask, is sufficient to deceive any one who has not seen us in our ordinary habits.”

They all agreed with him. Biondello did not, perhaps, recollect that I had already seen and spoken to him in the boat; at least he would not mention it; or he might, perhaps, think I did not know him again. But to be certain of the fact, the Armenian asked me if I should be able to recognise the gentleman again whom I saw a few minutes ago unmasked? He put the question to me in such an insinuating manner, that many would have answered—“yes,” to give an idea of their powers for discrimination; but I knew too well how the business stood. I therefore made my answers accordingly. I affected not to know any thing of the matter; and, as I examined the money, I innocently asked, what they particularly wished me to do? “See,” said the Armenian, “I am not mistaken; he has not seen him!—He seemed to me too stupid to be a hypocrite, or to think of any thing but what leads to his interest.”

Several of the others made the same observation, and

seemed to regret that they had not chosen a cleverer fellow to transact their business. "Those who have sent him," answered the Armenian, "were prudent enough to see, that a task which did not require brilliant talents to execute, would have been faithfully and conscientiously performed by him; and indeed there is not so much treachery to be looked for in men that only know what they see, as in many others.—"Stupid people are always the most honest," added a fat gentleman (who probably could not boast of his abilities), and laughed at this impromptu so much, that the table, on which his belly rested, was very near falling down. I was dismissed, after they had enquired my place of abode, and commanded me to remain there for further instructions. They conducted me again blindfolded to the canal. My joy, when I found myself alone and safe, I need not describe; but the dreadful words, that they thought my death the only means of security, still resounded in my ears.

A whole month elapsed, in which I did not advance a step nearer to the completion of my purpose, notwithstanding my activity. My dress, and the promise which I had made to the Armenian (and by which I hoped to make some important discoveries), became now the greatest trouble to me; for it prevented me from instituting those enquiries which were necessary to aid my plans. It was impossible for me, as I was so surrounded by spies, to learn any thing that at all concerned the Prince without the greatest hazard. From what I had heard and seen in the secret society, I could only conjecture what they intended to do with the Prince; but it was impossible for me, an individual, to destroy the fabric which was built and guarded by so many.—I was continually reflecting upon these circumstances, which perplexed me very much. My sleep also was interrupted by the most frightful dreams, and was more fatiguing than refreshing. My imagination often pictured to me the Prince falling from a precipice. I caught him by his cloak, but it seemed to rend into a thousand pieces, and I saw him dashed upon the ground. I saw him struggling in a rapid stream; I ran to his assistance, and was drowned with him. I carried him from a

conflagration, and believed we were safe, when the flames suddenly surrounded us, and we were consumed. In short, the most horrible images, which my disturbed mind created, totally deprived me of my rest, and, I must confess, my weakness made an impression upon me the next day that was not easily to be eradicated; although I had very little faith in dreams.*

I was sitting one day (it was in the beginning of February, 17—) in my room, wrapt in reflection. The weather was very gloomy: flakes of snow, intermixed with rain, beat against my window, as the wind howled round the house. I did not quit my room the whole day. A gentle rap at the door at last roused me from my lethargy, and, before I could speak, I saw a man standing before me with a show-box upon his back. He asked me if I did not choose to see his raree-show? and without waiting for my answer, he set his apparatus before me. To get rid of him quickly, I gave him a piece of money, accompanied with a polite assurance that I had no desire to see his raree-show. I thought he would depart immediately, but I was very much mistaken. He first looked at me and then at the money. At last he said, "I never had so much given me before," and returned me the money. "You must have made a mistake!" I started. I found I had given him, in my hurry, a small gold piece—certainly too great a present for my situation. He observed my embarrassment. "Take the money back again," said he; "I will not profit by your error."

I did so; though I would readily have given it to him, through the fear of his being a spy. At that time the smallest circumstances were to me of consequence, and which I should not formerly have troubled myself about.—I gave him a smaller piece. He thanked me, but entreated me very much to look into his box. To get rid of him, I was obliged to comply with his request. He opened it, and I immediately started back—I beheld several scenes of the Prince's life (which could be known only to a very few

* I hope that no one of my readers will laugh at the Count O——'s weakness, which he himself so sincerely confesses. If I had observed this beforehand, I should have left out this little appendix, though I made it my duty to deliver every thing to the public as I have found it. — EDITOR.

persons), so accurately represented, that he who had a knowledge of them could not but recollect them. I looked significantly at the man; he disregarded me, and begged of me to see the other. — My astonishment now rose to the highest degree. I saw the figure of a Polish Jew, which exactly resembled me, with the following words under it: “The Count O—— as a Polish Jew.” — I lost all my patience. In an angry manner I pushed the box from me; — “Are the agents of hell to be found every where?” I exclaimed, and stamped upon the ground. “Not every where,” said the showman, as he grasped me by the hand. “Who are you?” I cried, starting with confusion. “Will you desert your friend?” I stood for a moment speechless. He drew a handkerchief from his pocket, and wiped his face. “Do you not know your friend Seymour?”

It was him. My joy bordered upon frenzy. At a time when I believed myself abandoned by all, when I could not even whisper my sentiments, for fear of being overheard and discovered, I found a friend, who had ever deserved my veneration and love. No one that has not been in the same situation can possibly have an idea of my sensations. Every misfortune operated upon me with double force, because I had no friend to whom I could communicate my sufferings. Now I was in possession of that valuable treasure, and pressed him with affection to my heart. After the first burst of transport was over, I begged of him to relate to me the cause which brought him hither, and what could have induced him to leave his native country? — That he never would really have followed the trade of a showman, was very clear to me. — “I wished,” he began, “as you will remember, to return to England. I travelled through Paris; and an accident obliged me to make a longer stay there than I at first intended. Several unforeseen events reduced my finances, and I was obliged, until new remittances arrived, to desist from pursuing my journey. In the mean time, I resorted to all the public places of diversion. I went one evening into a numerous society. The bottle circulated briskly, and the conversation became very agreeable. — At last a juggler came into the room, and begged to entertain us with his tricks. ‘If they

are worthy to be seen,' said a noble spark, 'the society will perhaps indulge you.'—'To prove that they are, I will show you a specimen,' continued he; 'and let your own judgment determine whether I shall proceed or not.'—He performed some that were not common, and which excited our admiration.

"The society unanimously desired him to go on; and every new trick he produced procured him fresh applause. That he was an Englishman I immediately perceived by his accent, which made me attentive to him. It seemed to me, that his features were not unknown to me; but I could not immediately recollect who he was. Under the pretext that I wished to learn some of his tricks, and to countenance a countryman, I asked him to call on me next morning, and to take his breakfast with me. He came, and in a little time I discovered that I had been intimately acquainted with him from a boy. His name was Johnson. My joy on this occasion was equal to yours when you discovered me. I had been educated with him. His father had been tutor at my father's. His talents, and cheerful heart, had acquired him the patronage of my father, and he suffered him to be my playfellow, and constant companion. All the privileges that I enjoyed were also bestowed upon him; he was instructed by the same masters, and dressed as I was. I could not show in my whole wardrobe a single thing which he did not also possess, and frequently, I observed, that he excelled me. Being the only child, the tender love of my mother (who was dead) had somewhat spoiled me; and I very often told the servants, haughtily, that I was the only heir to a large fortune. My prudent father employed this method, to show me distinctly that from merit alone our character must be estimated; and he gained his point by that means sooner than he would have done by moralising. I was at first angry with him, and hated Johnson; but this did not last long, for, on account of his polite and good conduct, he acquired the esteem of the whole family; and, by his sincere love for me, I soon was conscious of his good qualities. We became the best of friends, and endeavoured to excel each other in affection. He discovered a talent for mechanics. As I did not suffer

him to eclipse me in any thing, I also applied myself to the art ; but, by his superior industry and perseverance, he soon excelled me in that science : I also was not so much interested with it as himself. My father let us want for nothing. He hired masters who gave us the best instructions. Expensive instruments were also procured ; and Johnson soon finished a variety of curious things. From thence he went on farther. A genius like his was not satisfied with continuing in a beaten tract ; he had a desire always to see and study something new. Mathematics, which we had often read with our tutor, who was a very clever and expert man, had discovered to him several departments of knowledge, which he now wished to acquire. He made sun-dials, he manufactured optical glasses, besides electrical machines, and never failed to execute any thing that appeared worthy of his attention. To be brief, (for I see clearly that the recollection of my past days, and the qualities of my friend, have made me rather too loquacious,) he became soon so expert and ingenious, that he often, although a boy of fourteen years, was the object of admiration ; and, on that account, he was called the little Jack of all trades. He went on thus till he attained his twenty-second year, when, with great industry, he applied himself to chemistry ; in which he soon made many new and useful discoveries. About that time my father died, and he lost a friend who had never let him want for any thing, but gratified his wishes at any expense. He now determined to travel. All my persuasions to detain him were fruitless. He stood firm to his intention, and I could not even obtain a permission to travel with him. He even refused the considerable legacy which my father had left him. At that I became angry, for I willingly would have shared with him my whole fortune, which he knew perfectly well ; but I could not prevent him from executing his purpose. He would not even accept any money from me. ‘ Well then, you may go,’ said I, and embraced him with unfeigned sorrow.

“ It is impossible for me to discover what it was that induced him to desert the man who had acted towards him like a brother, and for whom he had the greatest regard. —

I was not able to guess it. A letter which, shortly after his departure, I received from him has discovered it to me. After a long apology for his conduct, he says, ‘that it was impossible for him to live any longer upon the bounty of his friends.’ He considered my father’s generosity as an act of charity—but it was a wrong idea. He, however, would endeavour to support himself. The death of my father caused him to reflect upon circumstances that never struck him before. He would not have a second benefactor, that he might not miss him; and wished not to expose himself to the danger of losing his support, when it had become impossible for him to exist without it. And if even he had not that to fear, he should be deficient in his duty, if he expected that from another which he was able to procure for himself.’—He added many other things; but this is sufficient to give you an idea of a man who will soon acquire your esteem; of one who rather chose to wander in the world, than to enjoy that rest and affluence which he could not procure by his genius. I will not detain you longer with his history, though it is very remarkable. You will be more pleased if you hear it from himself; and I am confident he will excite your admiration and respect.*

“The days which we spent together at Paris were exceedingly agreeable. We related our histories to each other, which indeed afforded a great fund of entertainment; for, since I received that letter, I had not either seen or heard from him. He said, that he had written several times to me; but, as I never obtained the letters, I could not answer them. I related to him the events which happened to me at Venice with the Prince —. After I had finished, he suddenly jumped from his seat, and ran up and down the room, as if influenced by some extraordinary idea. ‘We shall save him!’ he exclaimed. ‘What, the Prince?’ ‘Yes, the Prince!’ he replied firmly. ‘How will that be possible?’ ‘My dear friend! don’t reflect upon that at present; it wants but one desperate attempt. I see the possibility of the measure. Judging from what I have heard,

* He has, indeed, afterwards related to Count O—— his history, which also came to my hands with these papers. It is very remarkable; and, should I again have any leisure time, and my readers have a desire for it, I will publish it.

there is something serious at the bottom of these tricks. Let us destroy the plans of malice, which will perhaps be the ruin of many thousands, before they come to maturity.' ' Suppose they have in view something more than cheating him of his money, do you not believe that many are at work, and that resistance would be madness?' ' Undoubtedly, open resistance—but let us work against them where they do not suspect us, and in a way of which they cannot perceive the machinery, but only experience the effect of its operation. This, my friend, we certainly are able to undertake. I am too well acquainted with the deceitful tricks in this world which are published as wonders; and if I can do nothing more than merely chase away the mist from the eyes of the Prince, I may, perhaps, save him from being enveloped in their diabolical snares.'

" This proposition was so noble, that, although it may prove fruitless, I consented to it. When my remittances arrived, we made the best of our way to Italy. A trifling indisposition, which affected my friend, retarded our journey for a little time. Johnson requested I would dismiss my servants, and retain only one single footman, who was sufficiently faithful and prudent not to discover any of our plans. Johnson disguised himself and us so that we were quite unknown; a precaution which was very necessary.—He also observed, that in our mean dress we should be able to make more observations than otherwise; for he maintained, that they were less suspicious of the poor than the great. We took lodgings separately, at different inns, to have a more ample field for the execution of our plans; we even went so far as to have several lodging-houses, in which we alternately resided, having first changed our dresses, and concealed our country; for we all spoke different languages with equal promptitude. By that means, dear O——, I succeeded in discovering you, notwithstanding your disguise." " But how was that possible?" said I, interrupting him. " You betrayed yourself," he replied: " I lodged in the same inn that you did, and, by accident, was put into the room over yours. If I awoke in the night, I constantly heard some one speaking in your chamber. This made me attentive. I laid myself upon the floor of the room, and

overheard, through a crack, all that you said. I soon perceived that you were talking in your sleep. You must have been disturbed very much by frightful dreams, for your exclamations were generally—*Murder! Despair! Perish! Down! Down!*—Several times I heard you mention the name of the Prince; and this induced me to presume that you were the man whom I had such a great desire to see. I overheard you for several nights, and was at last confirmed in my opinion; for you spoke of things which no other person but yourself could possibly know. ‘Has he not similar views with us,’ said I; ‘knowing, as I do, that he was such a trusty friend of the Prince, and loved him so much? Is he not endeavouring to be useful to the Prince in that disguise; because he has rendered it impossible, by undeserved treatment, to appear in his true form.’”

“What!” exclaimed I, full of admiration—“You have been told, then, how the Prince has treated me?”—“More than that,” he answered. “You shall soon be convinced from Johnson’s letters, which I will communicate to you hereafter. However, I did not think proper to discover myself to you, as Lord Seymour, until I was fully convinced of the fact. I was suspicious, although it was improbable, that you were a spy in that disguise for the purpose of betraying me: I was, therefore, obliged to act with the greatest precaution. For that reason I appeared in the character of a showman. I had drawn, some time back, for my amusement, those scenes which I displayed to you, and it immediately struck me that they would be useful to me in this instance. Lest I should be deceived, which must have appeared in your conduct, I kept back your portrait until the last, which instantly gave me to understand that I was not wrong in my conjectures.

“It was some time,” continued Lord Seymour, “before Johnson and I were able to accomplish any of our plans, in spite of the greatest exertions. Every evening we met together, and communicated to each other our discoveries, and planned what measures we were to take in future. But, although we thought ourselves adepts at invention, we never could, by any stratagem, approach the Prince. ‘A good idea must be executed, though it may be founded on

a bad principle,' said Johnson, 'or all our undertakings will avail nothing, and our assistance probably arrive too late.' For that reason he wrote a note to the Prince, in which he invited him to appear alone, at the dead of the night, in a certain solitary place. He conveyed it, unperceived, into the Prince's pocket. He had written it so artfully, that the Prince, no doubt, presumed it came from the Armenian. The desire he had to be farther acquainted with this mysterious being, from whom he had heard nothing for some time, made us certain that he would not refuse this invitation. We were not deceived; he came. We hired two fellows to attack him, and came past as it were by accident. Johnson was to run to his assistance. For appearance-sake, he struggled with them, until they ran away at a noise made by myself and Matthias. Johnson conducted the Prince home, and we went, as quick as possible, to our lodging.*

"The success of this event you will find in Johnson's letters to me. They were sent, to avoid all intercourse with him, by a faithful waterman, to whom Johnson delivered them for me; and by that means he also obtained my answers."

And those letters I will communicate to the reader from Lord Seymour, from a French translation, which he made at my request, as I did not understand the English language. I have only omitted that which the public is already acquainted with from the preceding pages. Here the thread will be again united, which the death of my friend separated.

Johnson to Lord Seymour.

September 17, **

I am not able to recover myself from what I may justly call my extravagant happiness. Friend, rejoice with me—all has succeeded to my utmost wishes, and I look forward with pleasure to the time when the Prince will be freed from his enemies. My whole plan is fixed upon; and although every thing appears in confusion, I hope, how-

* I have omitted inserting this event before, which my friend the Baron F——, in his relation, has slightly mentioned, because I thought this the best place for it. COUNT O——.

ever, that time will produce the desired effect. I pity the Prince from my heart. I soon discovered how he was situated. He has a good understanding, and an excellent heart; and shame to them who have so industriously laboured to spoil both. But why do I communicate to you things which you know already better than myself? You may judge of the degree in which my happiness made me quite absent. I shall be obliged to act with more caution in future. My plans were on the point of being destroyed; for Biondello came suddenly into my room as I was writing. It was fortunate that I heard him approaching: I had just time enough to secrete all my papers, and walk with indifference towards the window. He did not seem to take any notice of me, but took his hat and cloak and went out, probably upon some of the Prince's errands. But I will now tell you every thing that appears to me of consequence, that I may not again be interrupted; it would be impossible for me to connect my whole train of thoughts.

I conducted the Prince home, as you already know, under the pretext of protecting him. He permitted me to do it without hesitation; for he did not seem to have recovered from his fright, into which the circumstance of meeting two ruffians, instead of the Armenian, had thrown him. He did not speak until we entered his room. He then introduced me to one of his barons and Biondello, who were in the same room, as the saviour of his life. He thanked me heartily, and told me to ask of him any favour.—I considered for some time, and at last told him, that he would show me the highest mark of friendship if he would keep me in his service; for I had some time ago lost my master, and had endeavoured in vain to get a new one. I gave myself out for an Englishman of a good family; I told him that my eldest brother, during my minority, spent my fortune, and forced me to the necessity of seeking for subsistence in the humiliating capacity of a servant. By the last part of my story, I hoped to excite his pity towards me; for I am confident that we feel always more compassion for those who are reduced from affluence to poverty, than for such as from their birth are accustomed to servitude. If he sympathised with me, I could very soon

claim his confidence. In that point I succeeded to my satisfaction in a short time. But what I am rejoiced at most is, that he has made me his chamberlain ; in which situation I shall often have an opportunity of being alone with him. He would not, he said, degrade the saviour of his life by a livery ; and regretted only that it was not at present entirely in his power to make me independent of the world.

As chamberlain, I am to have a small room to myself ; but this is not yet quite ready. Biondello has permitted me, for that time, to make use of his. He is very friendly towards me ; and, although I acknowledge his civility for appearance-sake, yet I do not trust him ; for he has so much flattery and cunning about him, that I fear he has very little honesty left.

Several days after.—Thank God, I am in possession of my little room, and begin to write to you again, which was till now impossible for me to do, Biondello watched me so narrowly. I must not attribute that to the Prince, because he is never mistrustful. Yet I will not judge harshly. I have not yet conversed with the Prince ; but as my clothes are not come from the tailor's, I will ascribe it to that circumstance ; but if when I am equipped he shuns me, I must conclude that there is something more at the bottom of it.

One day later.—This morning, early, I obtained at last my dress ; and you are not able to imagine with what apparent rapture I put it on. Biondello was present, and gave me joy, on my exchanging my old clothes for such rich ones. But whilst I rejoiced to think how I had succeeded, he believed it arose from a childish love of finery, and this, I have no doubt, made him assure me that they fitted me extremely well. I let him enjoy his error, and to confirm his opinion, I took every part into my hands, and contemplated it with a foolish pride, smiled at myself in the glass, and neglected nothing that could convey to him the idea of my being a stupid clown. To make the joke complete, I told him that I intended now to take a walk, to show myself to the people, which I had not courage to do in my old coat. I intend, by that manœuvre, to send

you my first letter ; and I am sorry if you have been at all embarrassed on my account.

The same to the same.

October 1.

Biondello is the most cunning fox in the world ; but I have, in spite of his ingenuity, deceived him. By the confidence which he seems to put in me, he watches me so closely, that if I had not taken great care I should certainly have betrayed myself ; but I have at last made him believe that I am a perfect, unsuspecting blockhead ; and indeed it is the opinion that I wish him to have of me, in my present situation. He studied to find out in me more than I chose to let him know ; and the trouble he gave himself to accomplish this, is a sure proof that in him there is something more than the mere secretary of the Prince. The Prince has a very high opinion of him. He does not consider him as his servant, but his trusty friend. I pretended not to understand a word of the Venetian language (and Biondello thinks he is quite sure of it, for he has tried many experiments to prove the fact), and all those who do not speak English I converse with in French ; they are not at all suspicious of me, but often talk about things when I am present, which, if they knew I understood them, they would certainly conceal from me. As they look upon me to be of no consequence in opposition to their schemes, and the Prince likes me to be about his person, I now constantly attend him ; and he enjoys the advantage, as he supposes, of not being obliged to send me out of the room if he is conversing with any one, which he is always obliged to do with his other servants, as they understand the language.

Last night, as I was undressing him in his room, Biondello was present. After conversing upon some indifferent topics, they began about me. Biondello thought my qualities were stupidity, sincerity, and honesty. The Prince said that he was pleased with my person, and thought the qualities Biondello spoke of were better than good intellects united with a bad heart. " He is also courageous," said he ; " and to that I owe my life, at least my freedom."—

Biondello understood this hint. He altered his tone immediately ; for, at first, he was very satirical. He might have forgotten himself. He now talked a great deal about me, and said many handsome things of me to flatter the Prince. From that they turned to the subject of the attack made upon the Prince, and cracked their brains for a long time to discover the person who hired the bravos to murder him. That the note did not come from the Armenian, Biondello maintained ; for it was not likely that, if he meant to attempt the Prince's life, he would execute his plans with such temerity. The Prince agreed with him ; and the only doubt then remaining was, who could possibly have views upon his person, if it was not him, who had already given him to understand so. Biondello pointed out to him the possibility that his own court had done it, to lay hold of him. It immediately struck the Prince so forcibly, that he broke out into a most violent passion. It is true all circumstances united serve to strengthen this supposition ; for I learned, by the conversation, that the Prince had lately received a very rigorous letter from thence ; and Biondello reminded him of the conversation which passed at St. George. This circumstance apparently confirmed the fact in the Prince's mind. His expressions I will not repeat here. I do not know if I am wrong, but it seemed to me as if Biondello was pleased with the idea, that the Prince despised his court : for he knew the kind of language that would increase the Prince's anger, without letting him suspect his cunning. This man possesses dexterity sufficient to guide any person where he pleases, without his being able to perceive the thread with which he leads him. He sometimes appears quite different to that which you would suspect. Towards me he did not always act with such precaution ; for that reason I discovered more of his character than I otherwise could have done. He had strict orders from that hour to have his wits about him, and also to intercept the letters of Baron F—— (a cavalier of the Prince's household) to Count O——, to see if they would lead to any thing satisfactory. " For," added the Prince, " this F—— seemed some time back dissatisfied with my continuing here."

What this will lead to I am not able to see at present. I wish I could but give a hint to Baron F—— to be upon his guard ; for if Biondello conspires against him, he must fall a sacrifice to his plans.

Several days after.—Biondello every day puts more and more confidence in me, and it is, in all probability, because I communicate to him, with the greatest accuracy, all that I hear and see ; but you'll understand, I tell him only those things which he ought to know.—I seem to keep no secret from him. He often listens with the greatest patience to the ridiculous nonsense with which I endeavour to entertain him ; and he generally compliments me upon my talents and good conduct in trusting to him with such sincerity. Indeed, the method I have taken is the best way to ensure his countenance. But he is mistaken in my character, notwithstanding the accurate knowledge he possesses of mankind. In every conversation I distinguish more and more what an opinion he has of me ; indeed he begins to give me little commissions, but which at present do not consist of any thing farther than to have a watchful eye, in his absence, upon the Prince's conduct, and to communicate to him all that I have perceived and heard. And, to enable me to do this effectually, he takes care that every little new trait in my character is reported in a favourable manner to the Prince, who becomes every day more and more attached to me, and prefers me to all his other servants ; indeed he has of late appeared very suspicious of them, which is, in all probability, a contrivance of Biondello, in whom he puts the most unlimited confidence. That I should succeed so well, and in so short a time, I did not imagine ; it exceeds my most sanguine expectations. I will set it down as one of my great masterpieces of art, if I am able to outwit this Biondello.

A certain Marquis, by name Civitella, has just left the Prince. I have often seen him here. I question whether he seeks any thing beyond the honour of the Prince's friendship. They seem very intimately acquainted, and indeed I cannot blame the Prince for that ; for this Marquis has many good qualities, and seems to study to dis-

play them to advantage in the presence of the Prince. However, I have heard the Prince many times promise to pay him money; and, from what I could collect, it is not a small sum.—Then the Prince is in debt—it cannot be otherwise, from his present extravagance.—But how are his debts to be paid, when I know, for certain, that he receives nothing from his court? Is not this a diabolical plan of the Armenian, to detain him, and succeed in his designs upon him? I advise you, friend, to provide yourself with money, which may be had immediately upon your orders. I leave it entirely to your prudence, how you will accomplish this necessary object without betraying yourself.

I must tell you of a discovery which I have just made, and which I think of consequence:—The Prince generally goes out towards evening, and this happens very often; and, to-day I hear, he belongs to a certain society, called the Bucentauro. Could you not learn something about this sect; and whether we must also direct our attention to that? He was scarcely gone, when I hastened to my room to write to you. I had just finished the last line as Biondello came in. I must tell you that he does not suspect any thing when he finds me engaged in writing. I have told him that I have a great delight in making verses, and on that account I have always a poem lying at my side, which, as soon as I hear any person coming, I put in the place of the letter; and, to play my part well, I affect to translate it to him (for he does not understand English), and repeat the most stupid nonsense with a kind of poetic mania. This time he had not a desire to hear my poetry, but entreated me to defer reading it to a future opportunity, and go with him to his room; so that he might be present when the Prince arrived. This I did, and I was obliged to report to him all that had happened to the Prince during his absence. When we were in the height of our conversation, there came into the room an old man. He was bent low beneath his years; but there was an expression in his countenance which ill accorded with his age. His voice also was full and regular, and he had not that trembling pronunciation which generally affects aged people. Biondello told me that he was his

relation. I was going to absent myself, but he entreated me to stay; as his cousin, he said, did not understand any other language than the Venetian, and as, besides, he had nothing of consequence to communicate to him. The old man looked at me with suspicion, but I busied myself with a book, and took no notice of him. "Do you know for certain that he does not understand us?" said he. "Are you sure that he is not an impostor?"

Biondello told him he need not be under any apprehension.—He described my character to him, and said, that in spite of my stupidity he could make me of service to him. "I will believe you," he exclaimed, "for I am acquainted with your talent in the knowledge of mankind, and which makes you worthy of your dangerous employment. The greater part of the fabric, which I have curiously raised, rests upon your shoulders. Do not loose, for heaven's sake, at the moment of its accomplishment, that firmness which will prevent our being buried in the ruins. I know your caution and foresight are very great. Think also on the reward you will gain, when we behold your giant work completed. I expect letters from —, and we are then at the summit of our wishes; for the Prince will not make any resistance."

"The journey then, which you undertook, has been of great service?" "Is there any thing impossible? Had I not found great difficulty in persuading the court of —d— to agree in our plans, the mountains, which now appear before us, should long ago have disappeared. I did not mistrust you, believe me. Though it were so, I should forgive you; for how could you be able to penetrate into my schemes?—You believed that many things were the effect of chance, which I contrived and put into execution.—Can you suppose that the Prince of —d— came to Venice for nothing?" "No one can possibly imagine what steps your prudence takes." "You must know then that he came hither at my request, to entice our Prince to a licentious manner of living, and to bring him, by that means, nearer to the point on which my plans are centred." "Pardon me, when you could so easily

have communicated with the court upon the conduct of the Prince, why was that journey necessary?"

"Is it not easier to remove a prince from the place where it is likely his penetrating eyes would have pried into our designs, than to make thousands privy to our plans? I had only to write to the Prince to come, for we had settled it some time ago.—I knew he was a member of the order of——. I am one of them. I wrote to the superiors of the order, and they contrived to send messages to him, which made him believe he was invited to see the internal part of the sanctuary." "I am astonished! As often as I see you, you always appear to me in a new and extraordinary character." "Hear then farther. The second step was not difficult for me to take. The Count P—— is first minister at the court of——. For appearance sake, the feeble King wears the crown, but P—— governs: he is the machine by which every thing is regulated. This P—— has long been my friend. I was acquainted with him whilst he was ambassador at Rome, and I proposed him for a member of the order of——. At that time the sketch of the plan, which we are now about to execute, was shown to him, and which was always the same, although accident has changed the persons by whom it was to have been accomplished. I wrote to him that every thing was ready, and we waited for him only to complete it. Nothing was easier for him than to persuade his avaricious monarch to let out his troops to conquer——, to which his council had long before directed their attention. P—— met me at——i—— to bring me the happy account of his success; and the King suspected that he was gone to conclude a promised alliance."

"Do I dream? Is it possible to play thus with kings?" replied Biondello. "I did not expect such a question from you," said the old man. "Do you not know, that one may deceive kings much easier than other people; because flattery succeeds to a miracle with them; spreading, as it were, a mist before their eyes? And if they are prudent enough to disregard that illusion, we must then give them amusements to which they are attached, and never deprive them of any thing, but what relates to state affairs, for fear

of incurring their displeasure.”* “And does not the King of —d— know for what purpose he lends his powers?” “Is the architect obliged to explain his whole design to a mason, who is employed to place stones and execute the work, which probably he would not even then understand? He works for his daily bread, and if he obtains that, he is satisfied. Can the King of —d— desire more than the acquisition of —, which must be of great value to him, as it is immediately connected with his own territories? It is the object which he sets his heart upon. However, to satisfy your curiosity would take up that time in which I hope to hear more important accounts of the Prince.”

Biondello replied: “Every thing is in the same state as when you left us; and I have only here and there added a little where it seemed necessary.” Here Biondello related to him the event of that evening in which the Prince was attacked, and concluded with saying, that he had made use of that circumstance to enrage the Prince more against his court; for he made him believe, it was certain that the court intended to imprison him. The old man seemed satisfied with that, and immediately replied, “How is he as to his manner of thinking?” “He approaches more and more to a freethinker,” replied Biondello; “and I am confident but little is wanting to render him such entirely.” “Then,” said the old man, “my machines act as successfully as I can wish.” “How! was this also your work? Will a freethinker believe in apparitions? Will he bend his neck to the yoke of a religion which puts restraint on him, and which it is your opinion he will accept?”

“I see you are very little acquainted with the human heart. To shake a belief, which fundamentally rests upon conviction, is very difficult; but to guide the opinion of a sceptic is sufficiently easy. This may seem a paradox, but I will prove it to you:—Man—let him wear a crown, or

* I have written every thing down as I found it, and I do not know how far this may be true. But, if I may speak my opinion, it does not appear to me quite certain; for I have seen in my life but one king, and he seemed to me so full of wisdom and majesty, (probably the old King of P—, Fr. II.) that I would have sworn that his very looks would have awed those that dared to insult him.

the rags of a beggar—wants always a support in trying circumstances; and if he despairs at all, he sighs after comfort with double anxiety. And what offers to him the wished for consolation but religion? Hence, it is evident, that the religions of those nations who are still, as it may be said, in a state of ignorance, have infinitely more ceremonies than those that are enlightened. The Prince rejected this support, and launched boldly into the gulf of sophistry. The more he meditates upon it, the more it will perplex him. As he sinks beneath enquiry, he will greedily devour any new idea that tends to dissipate the former. And is not the Catholic religion, in which there are so many saints that he cannot doubt his preservation, exactly calculated for the purpose?”

“How! Do I hear right? Did you not extol the principles of doubt, and yet you called scepticism a tottering fabric? Have you also been converted, and have you found a greater consolation in contemplating the scapulary, than in your former rational way of thinking?” “Why do you let appearances so often deceive you? Is not the tool that is used by the mechanic for the most curious purposes, when placed in the hand of a child, a dangerous instrument, with which it innocently wounds itself? Does not solid food affect the feeble stomach, whilst it operates not upon a strong one? And will not a child throw from it the instrument with which it has wounded itself, whilst the artist would not sell it for any price? Will not the person of a weak stomach avoid food that is disagreeable to it, whilst the hungry healthy man enjoys it? But I will argue otherwise. What is belief, and what is disbelief? Does not the Mahometan think that his belief is founded upon principle and authority, and call the Christian an unbeliever; whilst the latter thinks the same of him? Hence, then, we may conclude, that belief depends merely upon conviction, the want of which is disbelief. — This is self-evident.”

“You think, then, a fundamental belief is that of which we feel convinced, and also that men may entertain different opinions upon the same subject, and yet be called believers.” “They both undoubtedly think that they are so.” “Is

not that an argument against you? If the Prince thinks that his belief is fundamental—" Then it would be difficult to wean him from it; but he does not think so." " And yet he adheres to it with firmness, and defends his opinion with the greatest warmth." " Let me ask you one question:— Does conviction always carry with it tranquillity of mind?" " I thought that they were inseparable."

" And do you find it with the Prince? Have you not often told me, that, when free from dissipation, he was dissatisfied with himself? He is the child who is pleased with the brightness of a knife, which he throws away as soon as he is hurt by it; he is the invalid whose stomach cannot digest heavy food; who guards against it as soon as he perceives the evil; and then, in order to rid himself as soon as possible of his former disorder, adopts a lighter diet as necessary. The Prince thinks that many of those things are beneath his notice which men seize upon with so much eagerness, and from which continual reflection and an unbiassed mind alone can deliver us. And I declare to you, that in a short time he will believe in spirits and apparitions. I do not know him — I do not know the human heart, if his former bigoted ideas of religion do not return with double force. Must not this consequence obtrude itself upon him as soon as his experience teaches him that apparitions do exist; that his present philosophy could not once make him disbelieve this, which is the most trifling and unimportant point that a man can doubt of. Would it not much less be able to eradicate that idea from his mind which education, custom, and our own partiality, have concurred to proclaim by an internal voice? Will he not pass from professed freethinking to the contrary extreme, and thank the man who leads him to it?"

Biondello was silent, and appeared perfectly convinced. The old man rose slowly from his arm-chair; Biondello then told him something which I was not able to understand distinctly; but I learned that he was to prepare the machines; for, the day after to-morrow, there was to be a grand feast.

Well, friend, what do you think of this conversation? The least that we can infer from it is, that Biondello

is concerned in the plot against the Prince. Who can possibly be that old man?—Is it not merely the gasconade which is always peculiar to those sort of people? because they by that method keep their underlings (of whom, in all probability, Biondello is one) in an astonishing dread of their power. So that I know not what to think of his making use of the —d— for the execution of his plan. And for what purpose was this employed? How can it have any reference to the Prince? How does this all agree with ——?—Ha! I have a thought—What if they intend to create the Prince King of ——?—Perhaps this may be the intention of the court of —d—. —I must confess sincerely, that, at present, all is a perfect mystery to me.

The same to the same.

October the 4th.

The Prince is invited to-morrow to a feast, which is given in St. Benedetto, and, as I understand, merely on his account. His whole household (except one) will be present! and who this one should be is a matter of great dispute. The lot will probably fall to Biondello, because he has pretended for some time to be indisposed. I call it a pretence, because, in my presence, he does not appear so, at least less than when the Prince is present. He will, perhaps, as soon as we are gone, employ his time in the preparation of the machines of which the old man spoke. His pretended indisposition prevents suspicion, and makes it more probable. And may it not be possible that this banquet is the idea of the old man? I shall have a watchful eye upon him, and, if possible, will remain at home.

October the 5th.

I know not what to make of the Prince to-day. He rose very early, looks pale and haggard, but studiously seeks to hide it; and is dissatisfied if we appear to observe it. It is the same with Baron F—— and Biondello. They are all silent, but the Prince laughs at them; yet I can observe that his mind is not easy.—Perhaps he has seen an appa-

rition. It is probable, although I cannot discover the truth.*

The whole house are gone to St. Benedetto, and I am the only inhabitant in this large building. A freezing horror surrounds me. My character, as I informed you, was mistaken by Biondello; and he begged of the Prince to accompany him. I am glad he is not here; for his carelessness has thrown into my hands his pocket-book filled with letters. He left it in his great-coat pocket. It contains, to all appearance, nothing of consequence; but I will not omit to secure any thing that, perhaps, at a future period, may be of great importance. I thought I should discover something more when I found it, but I was deceived; for there were only some little songs, poems, and love-letters. I was about to return it to its place, when I resolved to ransack it once more, and, behold, I discovered a secret pocket; in which there was what appeared to me to be the key to some private writing, that may one day or other fall into our hands; you will take particular care of it.

Several of the Prince's household are returned, and in great consternation. It is said the Prince has killed the Marquis Civitella, and is fled. The reason for this rash act I know not. God only knows how this unfortunate affair will end!

Count O—— in continuation.

As soon as I had read this, the letter which the Jew gave me for the Armenian came into my mind. I sought it, and found that the figure was indeed the key to the hieroglyphics. I hastened immediately to Lord Seymour, to inform him of this acquisition. We sat ourselves down, and, with that key, very easily unravelled the whole; part of which is as follows:—

“All that you desired is prepared to the greatest nicety, and ——inski is chief of the party; a man of great firmness and valour, who is beloved by all. He is satisfied with your promises, and wishes, as we all do, very

* The reader knows it already by the relation of Baron F——, and for that reason I omit the rest here. *Annot. of the Count O——.*

much that the — Prince may become our King. As soon as he has embraced the Roman Catholic religion, and has obtained the — crown, we shall immediately look upon him as our regent; and one single word will then be sufficient to make him our sovereign, and us —”

Our surprise at the contents was beyond conception — the execution of the scheme depending merely upon one word too. And what will be the consequence if the Prince should be King of —? The old man said himself, that these were the only means to accomplish the plan — and what could that plan be? — No other than that which would shake monarchies to their foundation, or totally subvert them. And if the Prince should obtain the crown of —, what would happen — Is there not besides him a successor? Now I perfectly understand the signification of these words, “Wish yourself success, Prince; he is dead.” I now perfectly recollect with what emphasis the Prince repeated those words. (As F—— has written to me) I was seized with horror.

“Friend,” said I to Lord Seymour, “let us not proceed in this business — what are we against so many? how shall we be able to swim against the stream?” “We will do it as long as our powers last,” he answered me, resolutely. “Suppose they are detected, and we are involved in the danger?” “Then we shall have the satisfaction of knowing that we have done all that we possibly could do, which will sweeten our hours, whether breathed out in a prison or a palace.” “But is it possible that he can have that consolation who throws himself through caprice into danger?” “We are not in that situation. — When the lives of thousands, or at least their happiness, is at stake, no danger is too great to brave, if there is any probability of succeeding.” “And is this the case?” “It is.”

“How, friend, can you effectually subvert power? Can you hinder a band of rebels from leading away the thoughts of the Prince, when they are attracted by force? Has he not already done what they at — desired him to do? Will not every action now become easy to him, when he considers that he can receive forgiveness of his

sins after every wicked deed?" "Friend, you do not consider that if our plans fail, there is still one left? Have you no idea of the power of the state inquisition here? If we discover only half of what we have heard to be true, every thing is lost. Will they not fear, and with justice, that in that secret society are also manufactured plans against the republic; and that they wish the Prince to assist them in the execution of their schemes? You must consider also, that we cannot be detected if we inform through the *Bocche Parlanti*."* "But what will become of the Prince? Gracious Heaven!—If we should be the means of forcing the sword of justice to be drawn against him."

"The Prince is excusable—whatever he has done, his rank will be taken into consideration. Punishment is not inflicted with that severity upon men of high birth; as it is upon the meaner class of mankind. But let the worst come;—is it not better that *one* man, even though a Prince, should die for the people, than that multitudes should perish on his account?—And though the mine in its explosion should even shatter us with the rest, from our ashes there will spring flowers which must make future generations revere our memory."

Every one of my objections made the Englishman more firm; and I was at last convinced that he was right, although I suffered much in the encounter. I suppressed my tears with the hope of a better issue to our plan than that which we supposed; and sought, as much as I could, to persuade myself of its being practicable, though I acknowledged the feeble foundation upon which it rested. I trusted principally to Johnson's prudence, which was evinced in a great degree by his letters.—With the greatest anxiety I hastened to my lodgings, and read the following letters written by him. Two of them I have omitted entirely, as they did not contain any thing but

* These *Bocche Parlanti* are large lions' jaws, of marble; there are many of them to be seen in the Palace of St. Mark. All secret denunciations are put in them, and over every one is written the kind of accusation which you are to deliver. The State Inquisitors examine them every evening, and take into consideration the letters they find in them. By that means it is easy to remain unknown; for he who expects a recompense for his information detains a piece of it to show it.

what has already been related. And if I found in the others what I wished for, the reader will easily discover it.

Johnson to Lord Seymour.

October the 25th.

Since the events which have of late happened to the Prince, he is quite changed. He flies the societies which he formerly sought. — He locks himself up in his room, and appears gloomy and melancholy. I do not wonder at this; but it has taken too strong a hold of him, for I am fearful that he should lay violent hands on himself. — Would you suppose that, under the pretence of being ill, he has sent away the Marquis, who shows so much tender care for him, and is devoted to the completion of his happiness, and who was a little while ago his most intimate friend; and will you believe me when I tell you, that Biondello is not now so frequently about his person, and that his love for solitude is equal to his master's. Necessary as this might be under other circumstances, it now makes me more anxious for him. He has so entirely separated himself from the world, that he seems cold even to his bosom friends: a state of mind by which suicide must be encouraged, and less resolution be required to commit it. That this is already the case with him, I experienced last night. I was alone with him in his room. This happens now very often; for, as soon as it grows dark, he does not like to be alone; he therefore obliges me to be with him, as he believes he can vent his sorrows in my presence, without my being able to understand him, and that I cannot, from stupidity, learn any thing from his gestures. This dread of being alone in the evening, which he was before not accustomed to, gives me (besides the advantage of observing him) hopes that he may, perhaps, even yet, adopt other sentiments; for, in my opinion, solitude by candle-light must rather strengthen than alter such a resolution. And I think, that as long as one yet fears something, or, which is the same thing, thinks one has something to lose, let it be ever so trifling, which one would not willingly be deprived of, the ties are not entirely severed which unite us to this mortal life.

Now to the business. I was alone with him one evening, when he rested his head upon his hand, and sat for some time almost without animation. He sighed deeply, and lamented that he had ever been born. At last he rose, and opening his writing desk, took out of it a red riband. He pressed it to his heart and lips. Oh! that I were able to describe his look. It pierced me to the heart—I will give you, to the best of my recollection, his soliloquy.

“ Oh! thou only remains of my beloved Theresa!” (the name of the Greek lady.) He pressed the riband to his lips, as the tears burst from his eyes. The stress which he laid upon these words, and his deep sorrow, almost deprived me of my senses. I never saw a man in such a terrible situation. His eyes were wildly expressive, and his voice hollow and monotonous. I believed his feelings had almost driven him to insanity. The burden seemed too heavy for his soul to bear. He remained for some time fixed like a statue:—at last he spoke. “ My Theresa! my all! my ——. Ah! how can this miserable earth afford any relief to my sufferings!—this pitiable state which cannot produce one single being who is perfectly happy. Which could murder a Theresa!—an angel!—murder!—murder!—murder!” (This he spoke with dreadful agitation.) “ Ha! what prevents me from breaking the bands which separate me from her? Who can blame the lion that bursts the chains which deprive him of his liberty, and which separates him from his young? But can I find her again? Irrecoverably lost! Irrecoverably! I would seek her through the world, but she is irrecoverably lost! What would I now give for the sweet ideas of eternity, which console so many under their afflictions! What would I not sacrifice, if I knew for a certainty that man had still a farther destination after his death? I would endure the painful torments of hell, could I hope by that to recover my Theresa. Why was a form so beautiful created to be the food of worms, that prey indiscriminately upon the works of nature? Oh! thou that dwellest beyond the stars, if thou existest, restore her to me again, and I will believe in thee!!—Ha! what is that? What thoughts prey upon my mind?—Shall I then never more

forget her? Will she be always united to every idea?—Wilt thou—eternal Being!—give me a hint of thy existence? Oh! what a sea of doubts and uncertainty! Who can save me from it? I shake like a reed, which the wind will break. But I will not wait for it—I will prevent it. I will attain the truth—I will draw back the curtain which hides her from my sight!”

He walked up and down in the room in violent agitation. He did not seem to regard me at all. His eyes glanced upon the riband, which he held fast in his hand. He started with surprise. It was green! “What is this?” he exclaimed. “Will you tear from me this also, ye invisible powers? I am, perhaps, still to be happy?—Ah!—Ah!—Happy!—(after a pause.) But I have it still. It is, perhaps, the dear shade of my Theresa that is near me, and will administer comfort to my heart. Hope! Oh! without thee there is no comfort left!”

You see, dear Seymour, that he believed the change of the colour was a miracle. If I had dared, it would not have been a difficult task for me to unravel the mystery; for, when I consider that Biondello has a false key to the bureau, the change is easily explained; and should we not suspect such a man of every thing? It was very late, and the Prince did not seem disposed to retire to rest. His mind still dwelt upon his beloved. His soliloquy was a strange mixture of belief and doubt, and both were apparent equally. “Yes, it will, it must be so; with the thread of life will also be destroyed my piercing torments!” He had scarcely finished the last word, when Biondello rushed into the room, and threw himself at the Prince’s feet. Alarm and terror were expressive in his countenance, his eyes seemed starting from his head, his hair was dishevelled, and he was half dressed. “Alas! my gracious Prince,” he at last cried, with a tremulous voice, and pressed himself closer to him. The Prince was quite embarrassed, and said not a word. “Pardon, pardon, gracious Prince!” exclaimed Biondello again.

“Are you mad, Biondello?” said the Prince. “Why do you ask my pardon? What have you committed?” “It would be well if I *were* mad. Alas! my gracious, my

beloved master!" The Prince had great difficulty to bring him to his senses. At last he succeeded, and then related his reason for this strange conduct; after having entreated once more his pardon for what he should relate. The Prince granted it, and he at last began.

"Since your Highness has devoted your hours to solitude, I have led a most miserable life. It is the more painful to me, when I consider that I have lost your affection. It seemed I was no longer worthy of it, nor of the happiness to be with you, gracious Prince! I did not perceive in you any traits of your former humiliation; but, in its place, I beheld your countenance shadowed by melancholy. I questioned myself from what this could proceed. I doubted whether from the effect of the apparitions, or the great losses you had sustained. But you did not reflect upon them at the moment;—it was from mature deliberation, and when there was nothing to be feared. Sudden and violent sorrow is seldom of long duration; but that which comes after it is so much the more dangerous, as it takes deeper root, and deprives us of that consolation which we in general treasure up for ourselves. Anxiety for you, gracious Prince, oppressed my soul, disturbed me during the day, and chased away slumber from my eyes.—I had scarcely laid myself down, and offered up a prayer to my Saviour, and all the saints, that they might take you under their protection, when on a sudden I thought I saw a light. I opened my eyes, but I was obliged to shut them immediately. A figure stood before me in the midst of splendour, which blinded me. I could not on that account open them again. With an agreeable, yet thrilling voice, it spoke as follows:—'Thy master is big with thought, which is supported by his disbelief. He means to fly by suicide into futurity, for which he is not yet prepared. I dared not to appear to him myself. Tell him this, and warn him of the consequences of so rash an act.'"

The Prince turned pale, seized Biondello by the collar—"Impostor," he exclaimed, with a fearful voice, "you have overheard me!"—Senseless he fell upon the ground. I hastened to his assistance; but the Prince prevented me, and dragged him to an arm-chair. His look was ghastly.

It was a long time before he could recover himself, in spite of our endeavours. But as soon as he opened his eyes, he threw himself again at the feet of the Prince, and begged pardon that he was obliged to say what he did. The Prince repented his intemperance. "It is the effect of imagination, Biondello," said he to him; "go to bed. To-morrow I will send a physician to you. I forgive your conduct, because it shows your love for me. Be composed on my account, and go to bed."

"I have not dreamed, gracious sir, and my fancy has not at all deceived me. Behold here is the proof of it."— He put something into the hand of the Prince, who looked at it with astonishment. "Yes, it is," he exclaimed; "it is the ring of my Theresa, which I gave her on her birthday.— Oh what a day of happiness was that to me! But how came it into thy hands? How is that possible? She took it with her into her grave; I saw it myself!" "The spirit gave it to me.— 'Here,' said he, after having uttered those dreadful words, 'carry this to your master, and tell him that patience and resignation will be his best guide.' He disappeared, and I hastened hither."—"Hope and patience conduct us to the end which we desire! What is this! If she— It cannot be her—"

At this moment there was a great knocking at our gate; it was opened, and the Marquis Civitella came in. His dress, as also his countenance, indicated the greatest embarrassment: from his eyes flashed anxiety and fear. He hastened immediately into the Prince's room; and when he saw him he seemed to be more tranquil.— Can you guess, friend, for what purpose he came hither at such an unusual time?— He had seen the same apparition as Biondello had; every word was the same, only that he did not obtain the ring, which the Prince had forced, with great difficulty, upon his finger. It is therefore but too true, that he also belongs to the party, and that all this is an invention. I cannot doubt it for a moment. If I were not already a little prepared for their plans, they would have deceived me, so masterly did they act their parts. And I must give myself credit, that I looked upon all this for deceit, and not for fact, so great was their deception.

Judge yourself, by that, if it was possible for the Prince to doubt a moment on the subject ; and the ring—from whence they obtained that I should like to know. As far as I can learn, the Greek lady is buried in the vault of a church of the convent ——, where no person can obtain an easy access. We must presume then, that there are some monks of the order engaged in the execution of the plan ; and even if they knew not any thing of this circumstance, they may have been corrupted by money ; which, from the character of the priests, I naturally conclude must have been a considerable sum. Do not laugh at my observation, if it should seem singular to you. I thought it necessary to refute what you said in your last letter ;—that the desire of acquiring wealth might probably be the aim of the conspirators. That is certainly not the case ; for what sums of money might they not already have spent, which the Prince, in his present situation, never could repay them ? And if that was their aim, could they not have obtained it quicker and surer ? How you came at present to have such an idea, I cannot comprehend. Do not deceive yourself with the delusive dream of hope : and, for heaven's sake, do not believe that your bank-notes will be sufficient to subvert the plans which are laid for the Prince. Let us make use of them for our own support, whilst we are endeavouring to destroy their views. And that cannot happen until I experience more of the business ; for we are not able, at present, to prevent the attacks upon the Prince's religious opinions, unless his good genius should assist us ; but we cannot expect that at present. I am not perfectly clear as to the extent of their design. I believed that they wished to make the Prince a mere proselyte ; for we already have a number of instances of the kind, and of the tricks made use of by the church, to tear what they call a stray sheep from the claws of the devil. But this seems to me very improbable, for they would have found this an easier task than that which they are pursuing. And what could induce the old man to have said, that he had already sought to bring the court of —d— over to his plans, if he did not mean to prove himself a pitiful boaster, which could not have been his

intention. But, because I cannot find out their aim, it does not prove that it must necessarily be the desire of acquiring authority. If I was willing to entertain you with more probabilities, I could fill my letter with them. But what am I about? I see that my letter has increased very much, and yet I have not related to you all that my heart wishes, and what it is necessary for you to know. You see how clearly I was determined to support my opinion. Have you entirely forgotten that I like to quarrel with you, and that you used to call me, in a joke, the quarrelsome friend? This harangue is sufficient to recall that to your memory.

Civitella stayed with us the remainder of the night. They had no idea of retiring to rest; I was therefore obliged to call up the cook, to prepare a meal as quickly as possible.* They sat themselves down to the table, but had no appetite. In vain did Civitella endeavour to be witty; in which he, in general, succeeds very well. The conversation turned upon apparitions; and Civitella now found an opportunity to reproach the Prince for his former coolness towards him. He excused himself, by pleading the state of his mind. Civitella seemed satisfied, but begged of the Prince to follow the methods which he would propose, to eradicate his disorder. His plans were all of such a nature, that he could not help smiling; and by that means he succeeded, at last, to make the company somewhat merry; to which the Prince, however, contributed very little, but gave no signs of dissatisfaction. He at last promised to follow the advice of the Marquis, who could not conceal his joy on the occasion.

“Then, we have you again, my Prince,” he exclaimed in exultation. “Do not triumph too soon, Marquis,” said the Prince; “will you always be able to find the right means to chase away my gloomy thoughts?” “Always, if you follow my advice, gracious Prince!” “You flatter yourself too much. — When you have proved it to my satisfac-

* At Venice this is not at all extraordinary; for the desire of eating is (probably on account of the sea air) very great. We seldom see Venetians without having something to eat in their hands. In the city, on every side, you see victuals of all kinds to be sold. Even at the Opera-houses you are frequently interrupted by the noise of sellers of provisions; and in every house at midnight you find victuals preparing.

tion, I will believe you ; but I fear that you will not succeed so easily as you expect." " Do you know that confidence is half the remedy ? — Above every thing else, likewise, comply with my first request, and rather make yourself acquainted with the corporeal than the spiritual world ; for, although I know, by experience, your influence in the latter, I nevertheless cannot help fearing, that the gloom, which is the inseparable attendant upon creatures devoid of flesh and bones, might have a greater effect upon your mind. — But did the apparition, which I beheld this night, appear in consequence of your command, or have I incurred your displeasure by any other means ?"

Civitella betrayed great anxiety as he spoke these last words, and the Prince sneered — probably from the association of ideas. The Prince soon resumed his former countenance. I was obliged now to serve tea, and could not hear the end of the conversation ; yet I concluded, from several words which I caught by accident, and from the Prince's countenance, that it had taken a happy turn, and that the entertainment must have ended very well. The midnight hour is past, and although I would willingly chatter with you a little longer, I must finish my letter — I wish for repose.

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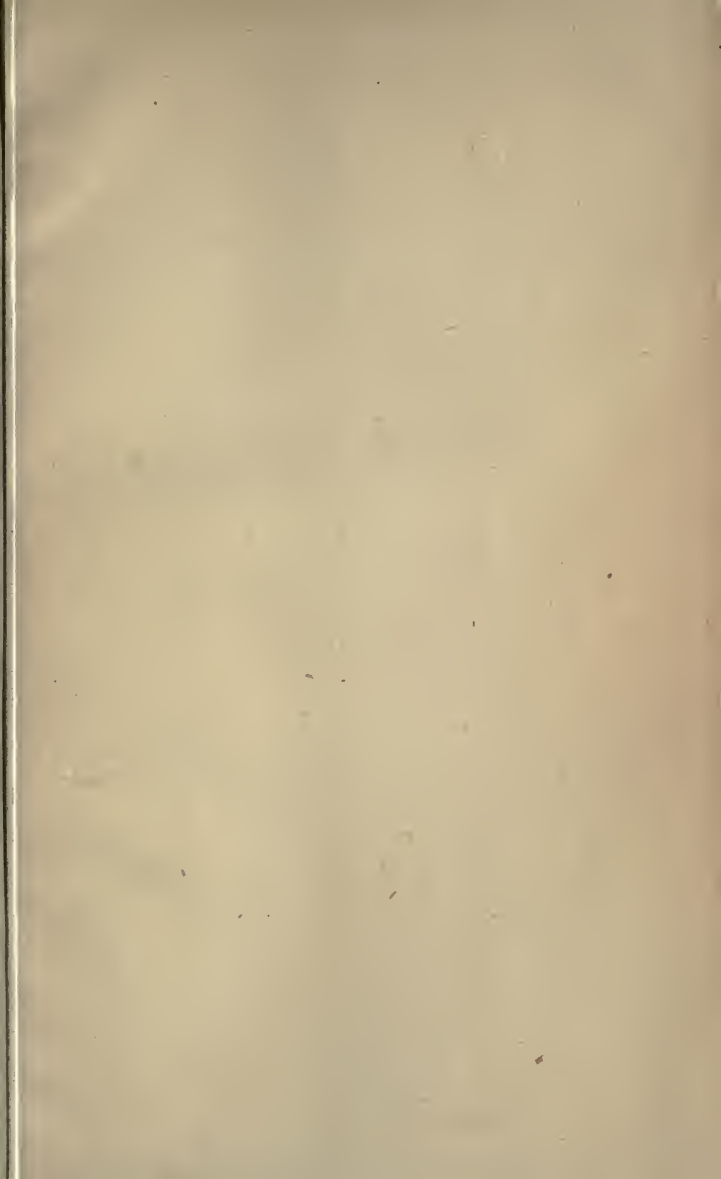
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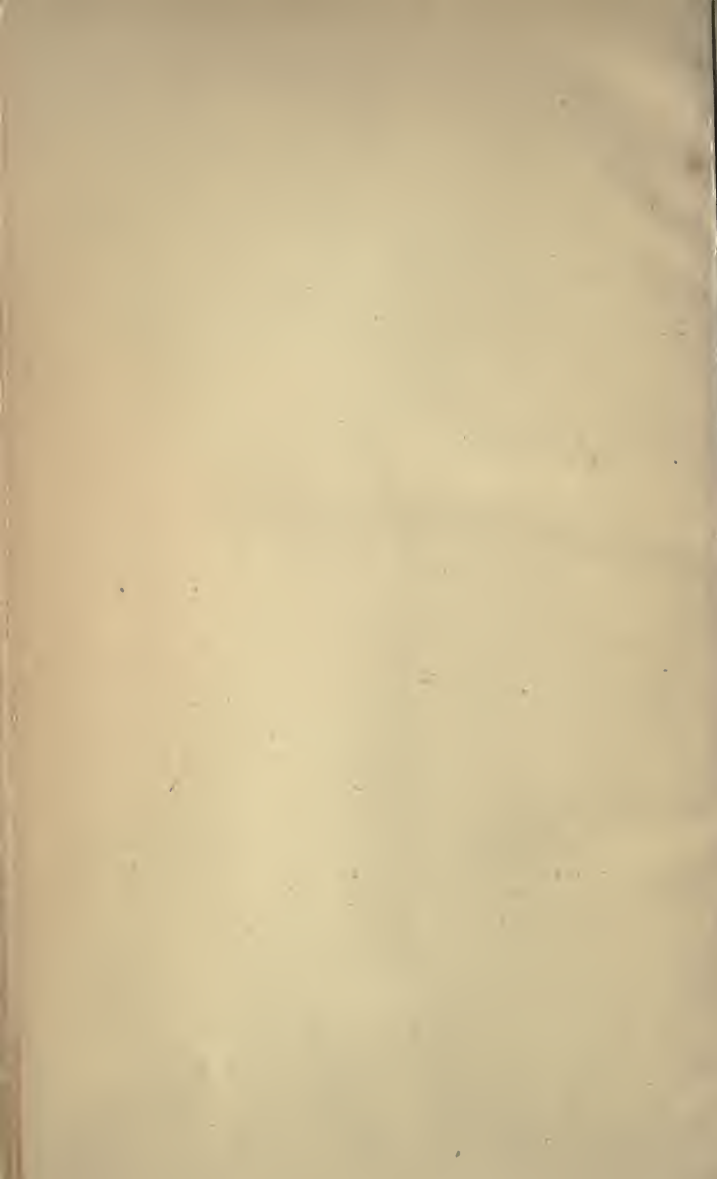
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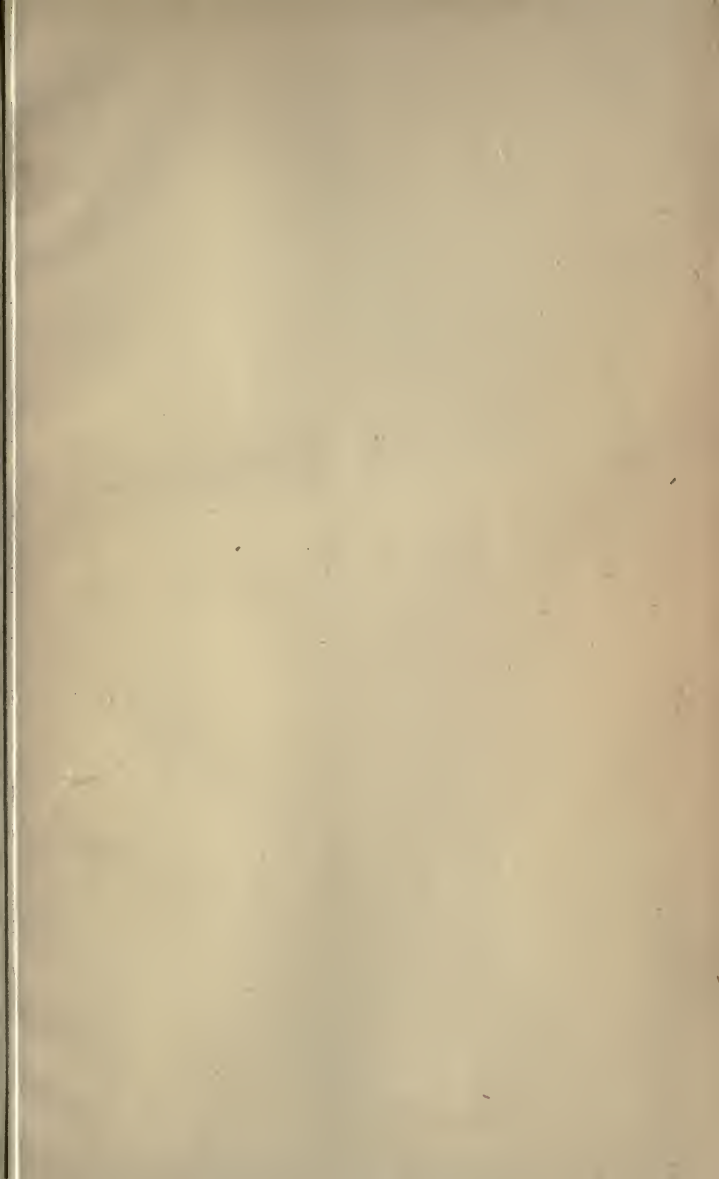
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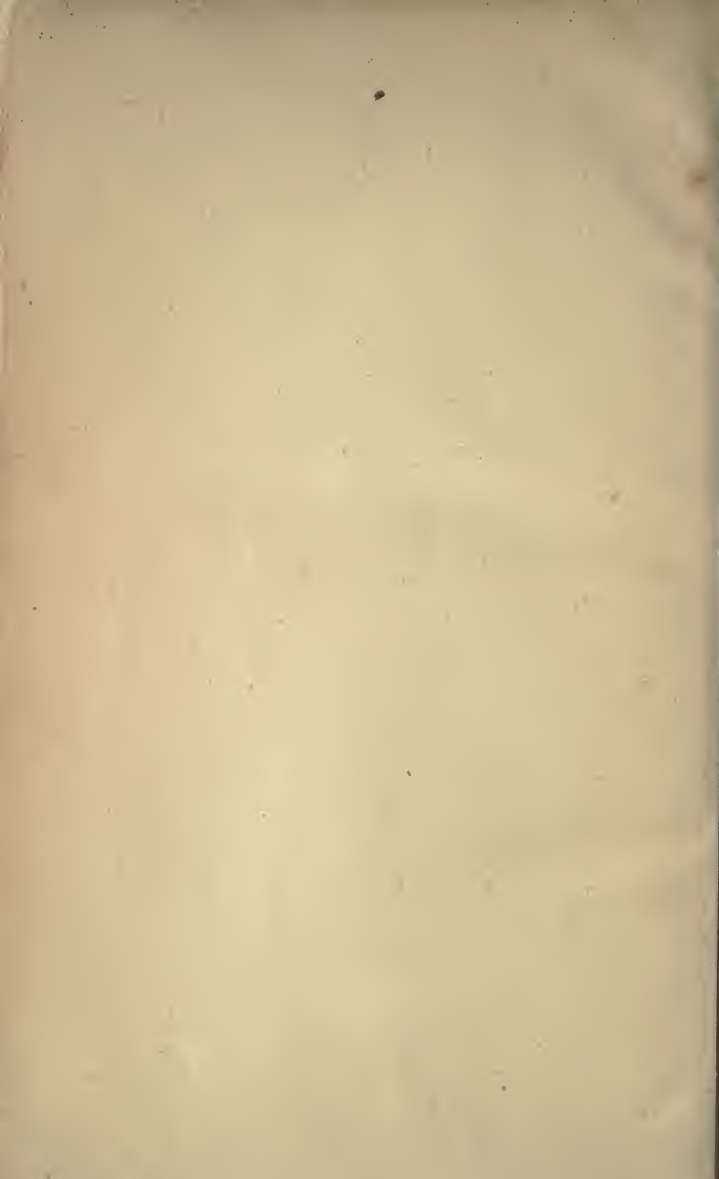
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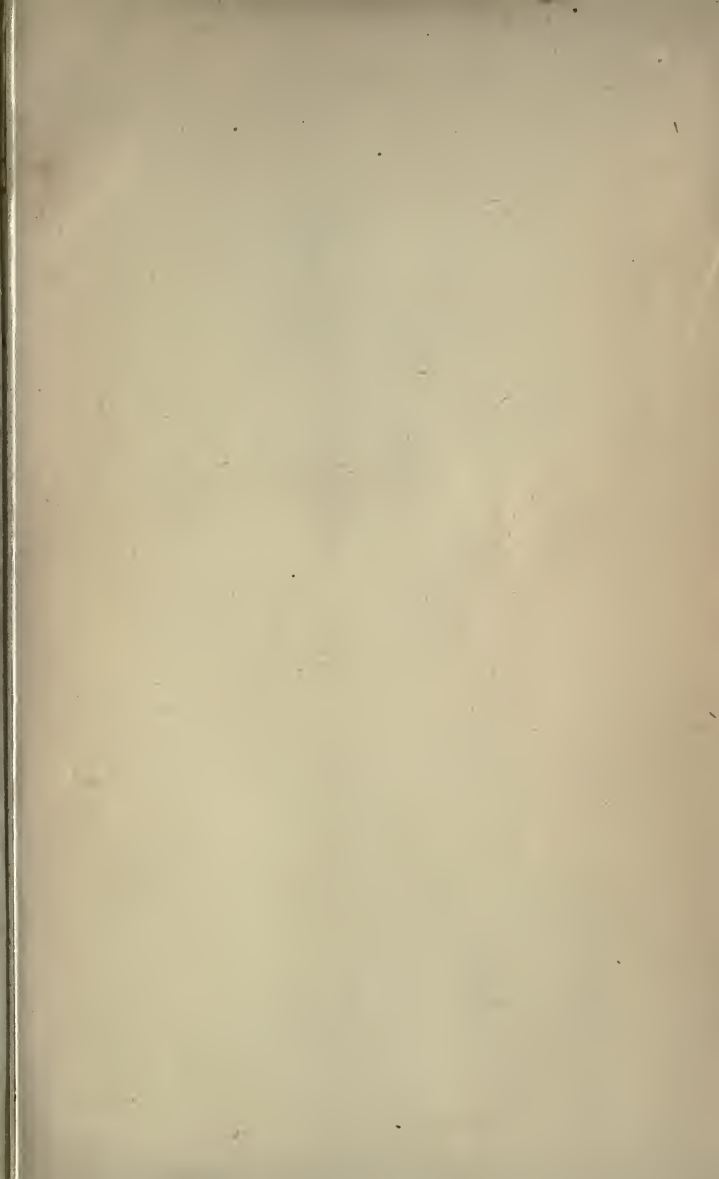
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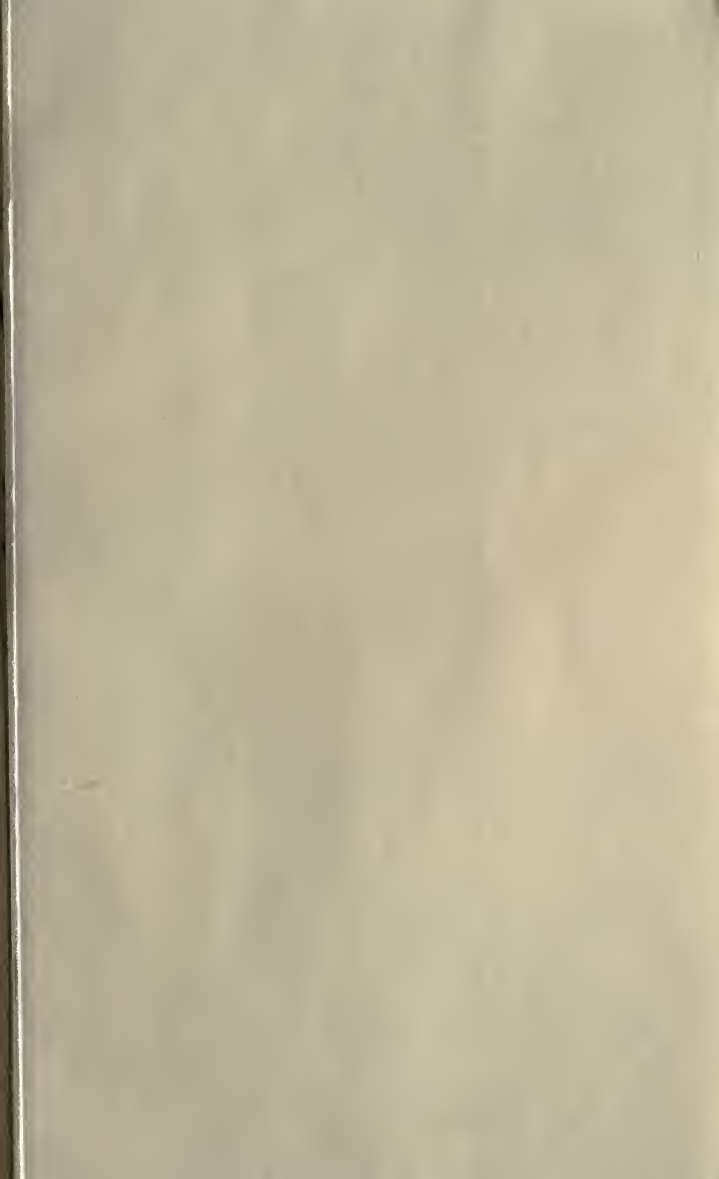


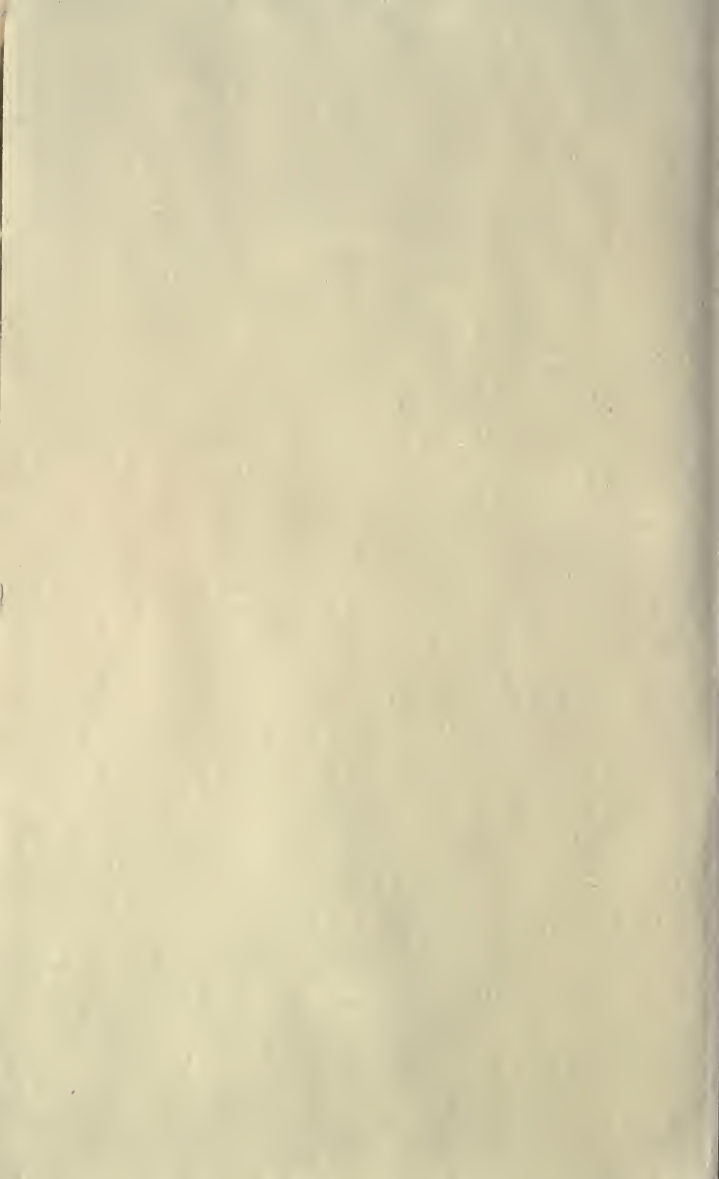












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