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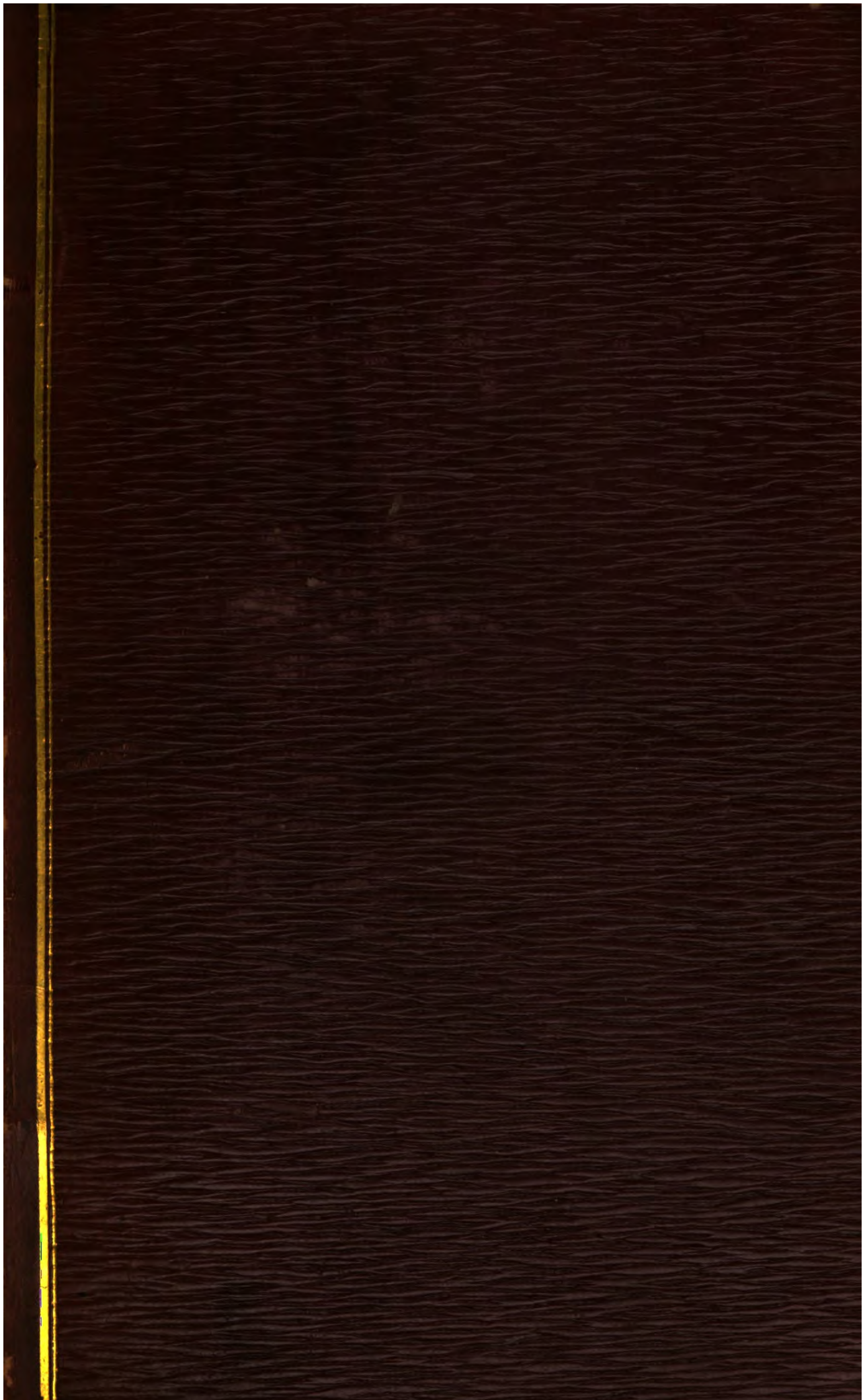
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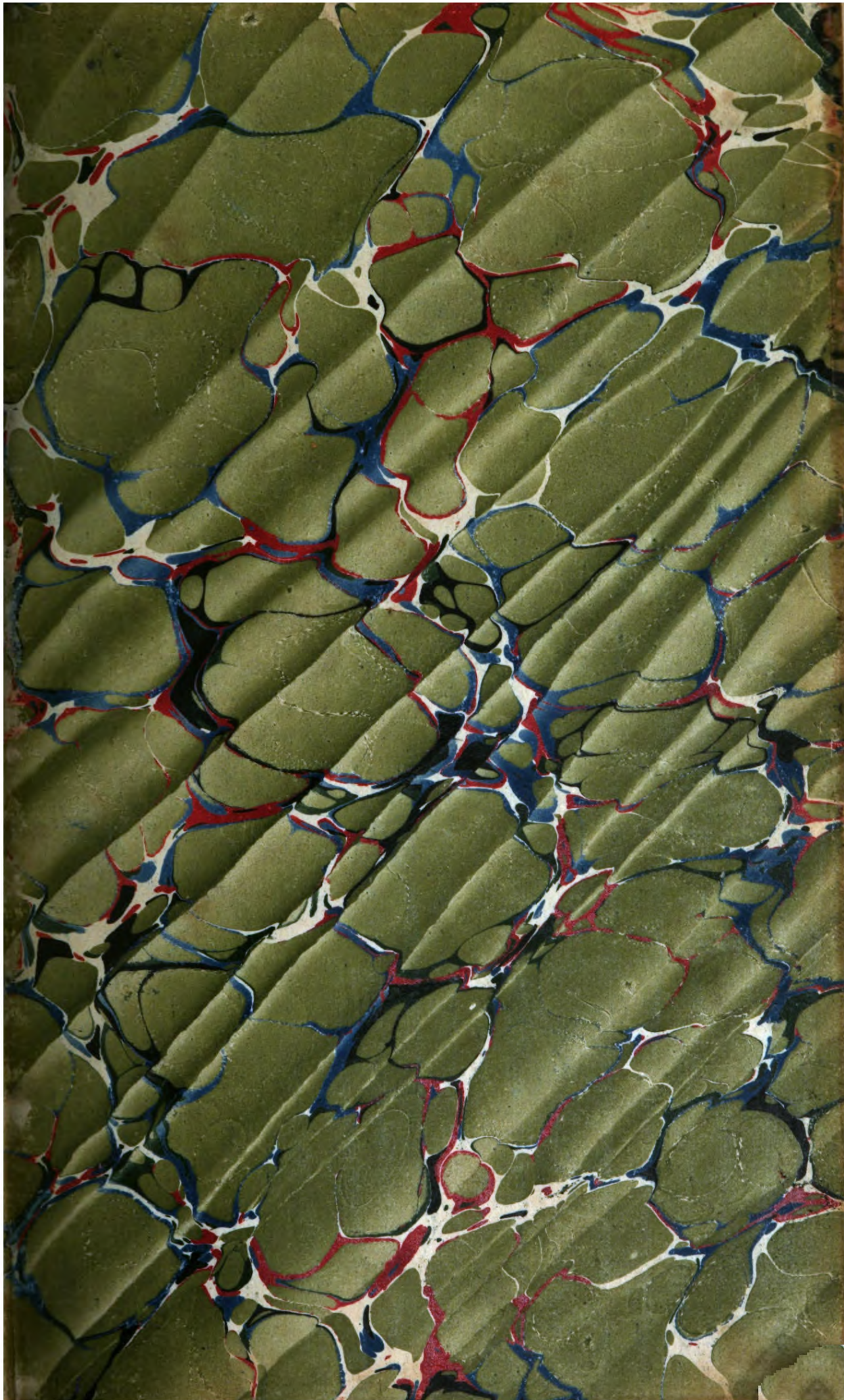
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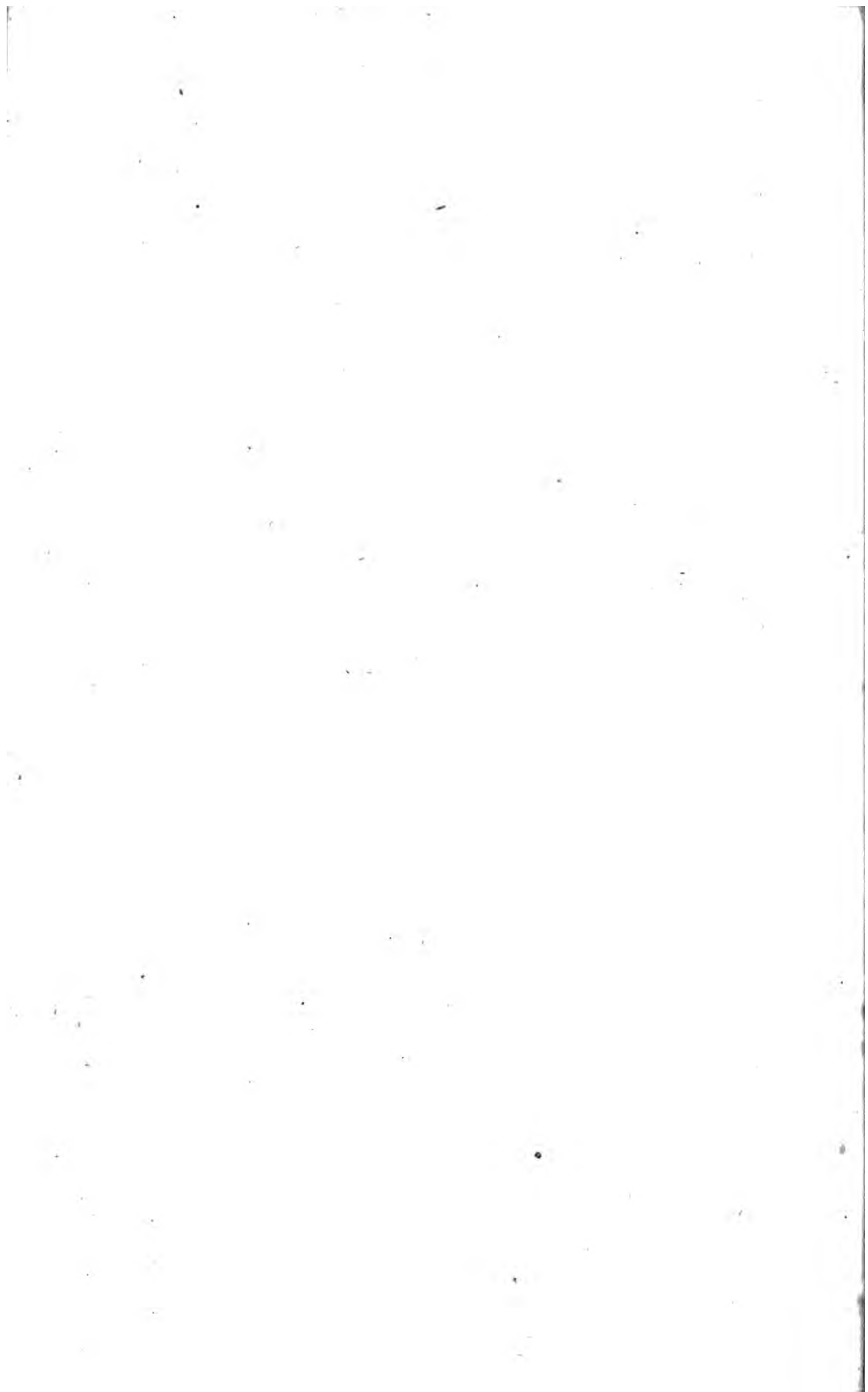


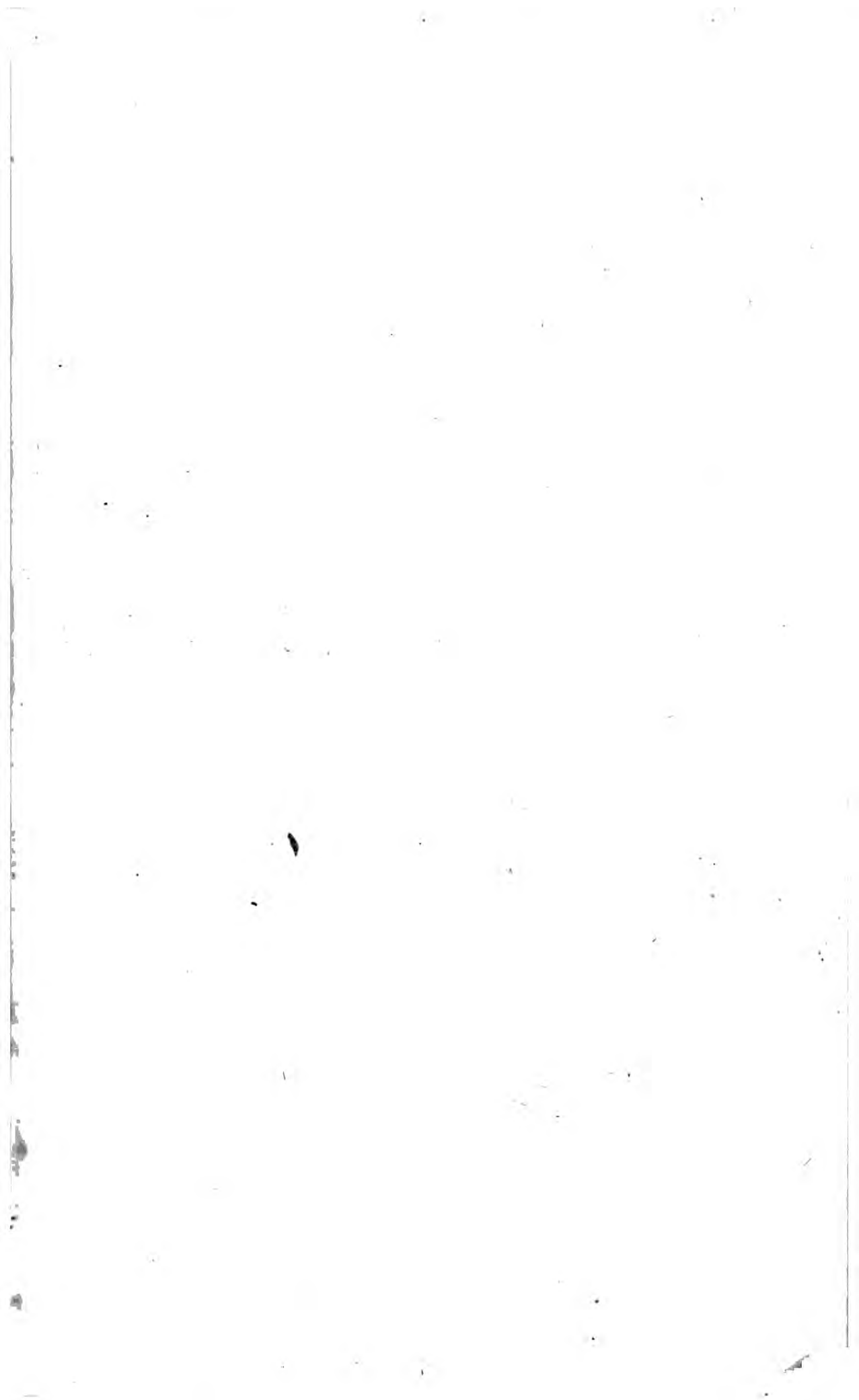
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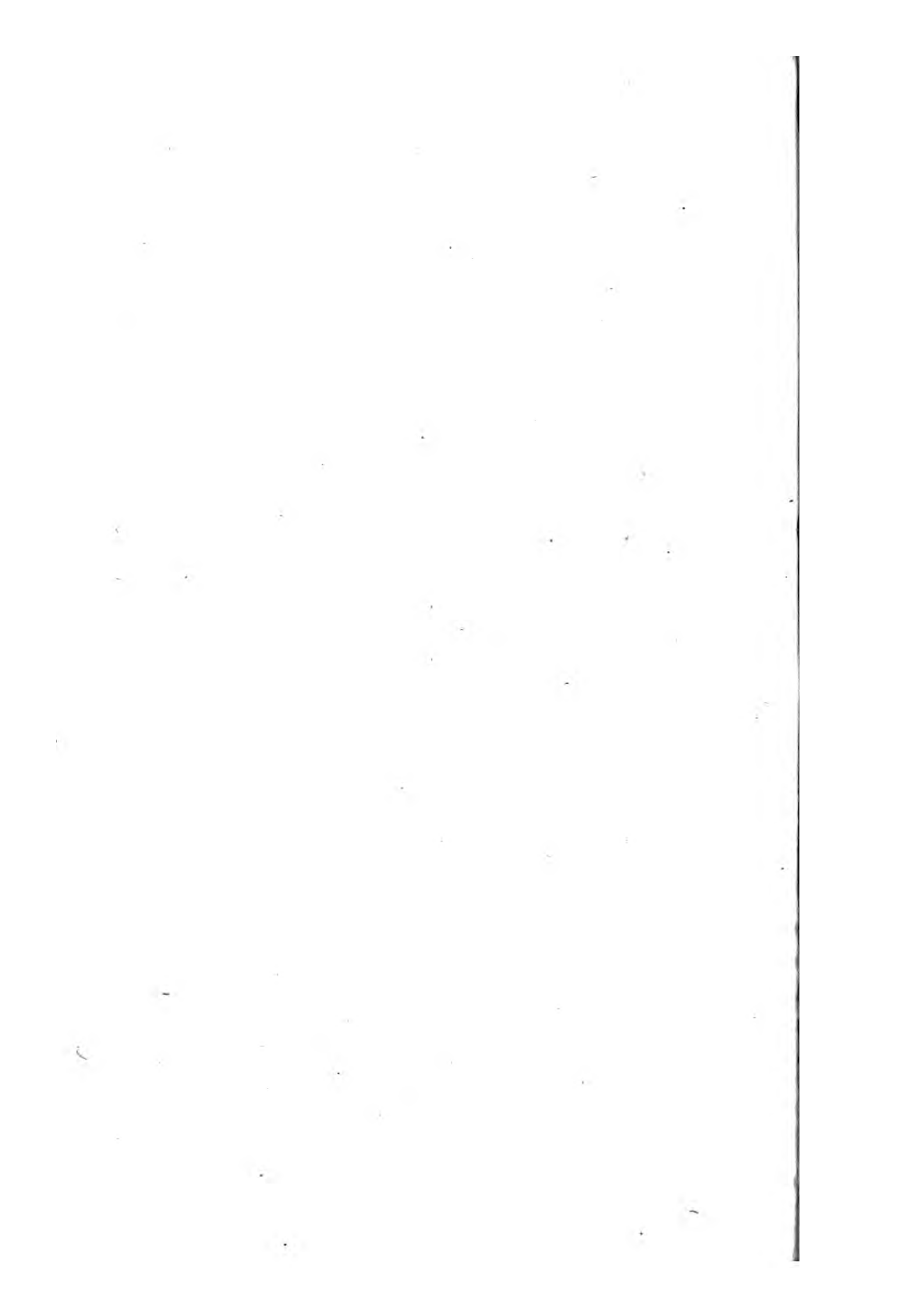


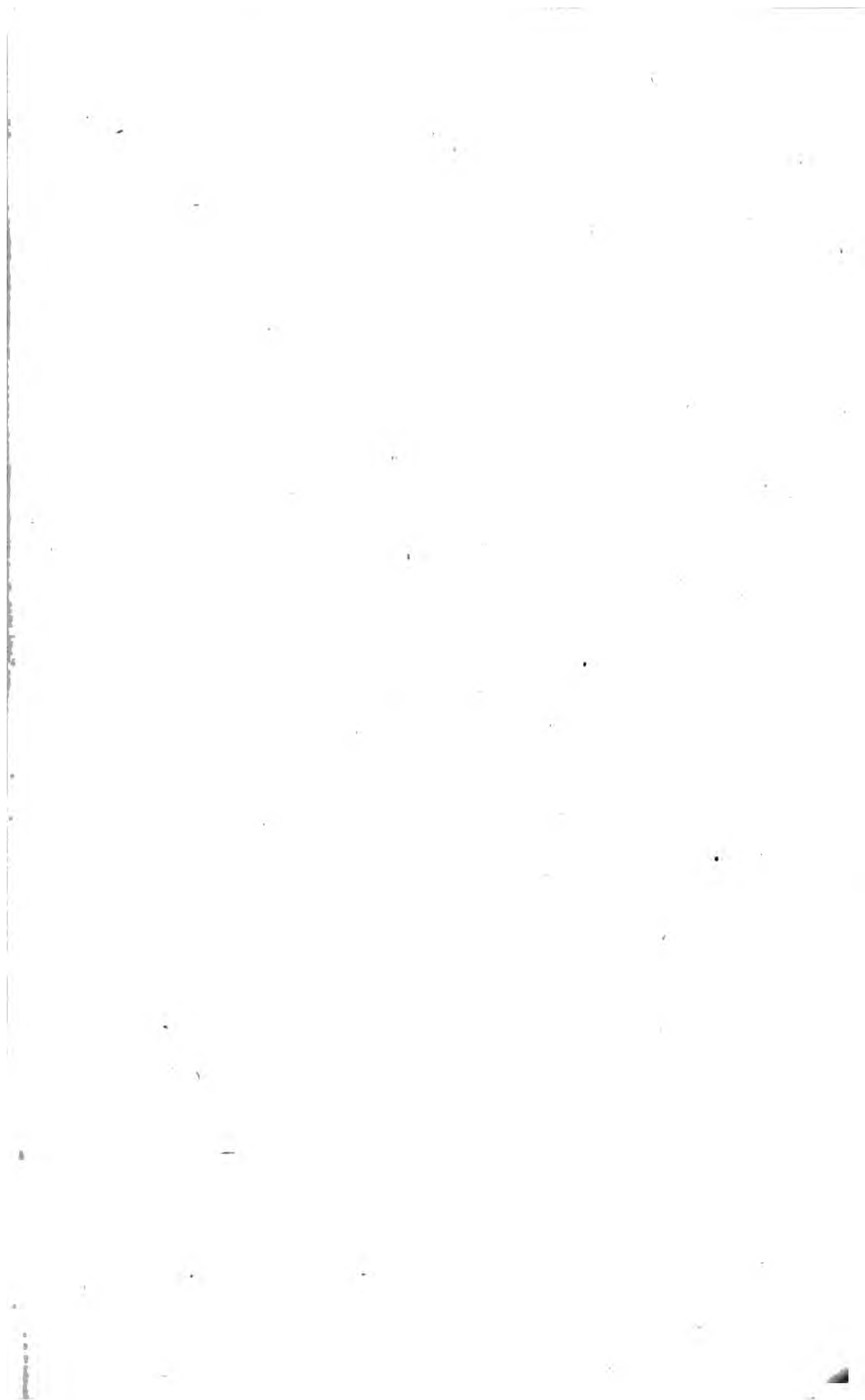
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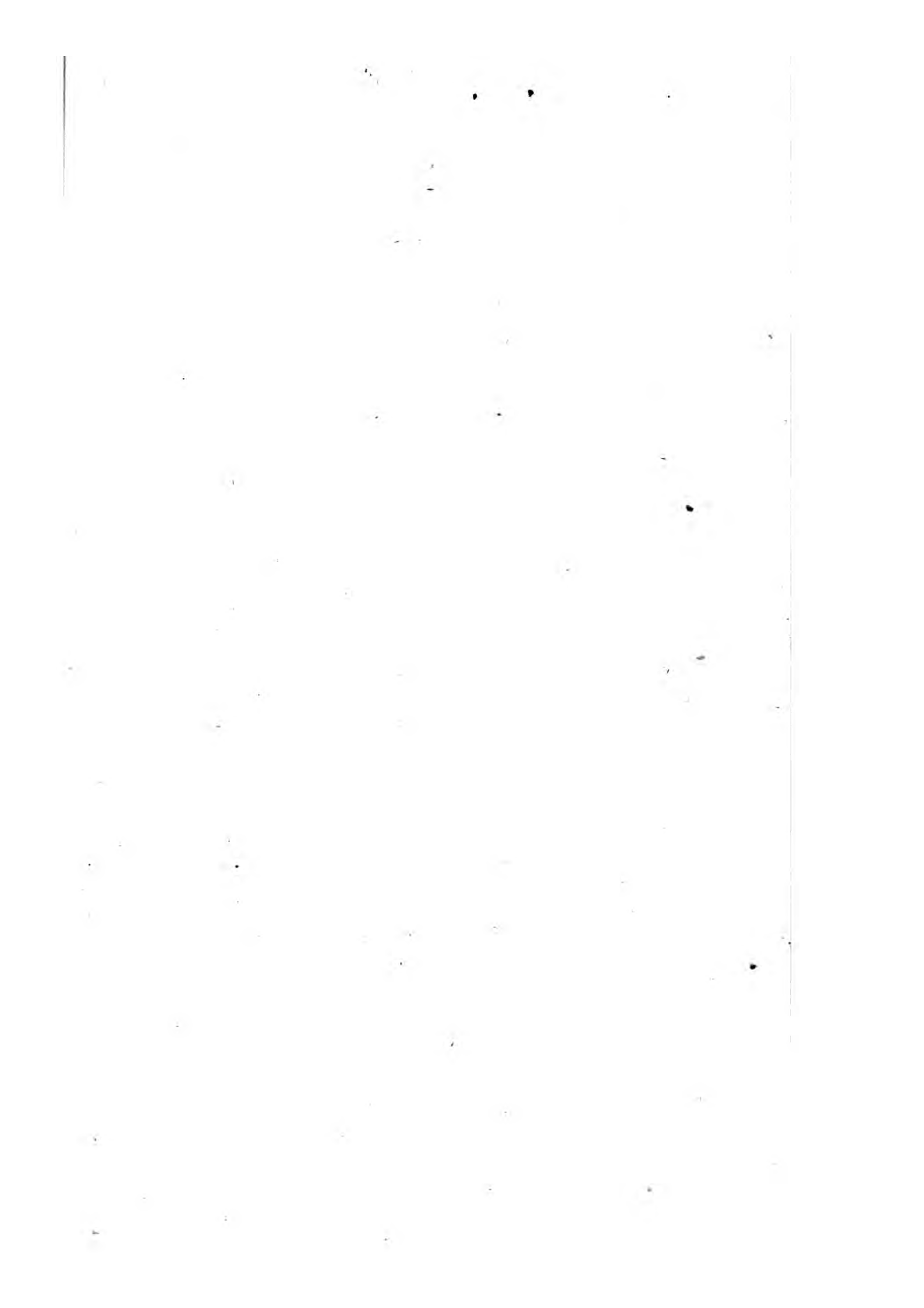












J. Still

THE
GERMAN NOVELISTS:
T A L E S
SELECTED FROM
ANCIENT AND MODERN AUTHORS
IN THAT LANGUAGE:
FROM THE EARLIEST PERIOD DOWN TO THE CLOSE OF
THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY.
TRANSLATED FROM THE ORIGINALS:
WITH
CRITICAL AND BIOGRAPHICAL NOTICES.

BY THOMAS ROSCOE.

IN FOUR VOLUMES.

VOL. III.

LONDON:
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POPULAR TALES.

VOL. III.

B

POPULAR TALES.

MUSÆUS.*

THE following sketch of this very pleasing and ingenious writer's life is from the pen of his friend and pupil, the celebrated Kotzebue. Like the productions of him whom it commemorates, it is written with kind and earnest feelings; and every where bears that stamp of sincerity and truth, which at once carries pleasure and conviction to the reader's heart.

“ He was once my instructor, and he afterwards became my friend,” observes Kotzebue: “ let my heart, then, speak, while his image continues still fresh in my memory. I wish I could excite something of the interest I feel, in the reader's bosom;— but he was unacquainted with him. It is of small consequence when and where such men as my friend were born, at what age they went to school, and

* German Popular Tales. By John Augustus Musæus. Edited by C. M. Wieland. 5 vols. 8vo. Gotha, 1805.

whom they married; they are every where sure of dispensing pleasure and of doing good.

“ Should I be esteemed too partial to do justice to his life, I may, at least, be permitted to pronounce his funeral oration. I have nothing more important than what is of daily occurrence, and familiar to all, on which to dwell—except his own good heart and fine genius.

“ Charles Augustus Musæus was born at Jena, in the year 1735. His father was a magistrate, residing at the same place, but who subsequently becoming a counsellor and intendant, found occasion to remove to Eisenach.

“ Young Musæus was of an open lively disposition; and he so far won upon the affections of his friends, that one of his elder cousins, the superintendant Wessenborn, of Alstadt, wished to adopt, and invited him to reside with him; and on being promoted to the general superintendantship at Eisenach, he returned with him thither the following year. At this period he was only nine years of age, and he remained under his relative's charge until he attained his nineteenth year.

“ He prosecuted his studies at Jena; took a degree of Master of Arts, and ultimately became an Associate of the German Society—a title which, at that time, meant more than it now does. Upon this he returned to the roof of his parents, and his name

was entered at Eisenach, during a space of nine years, as a candidate for the university. He is known, likewise, to have preached there with much credit and applause; but a somewhat odd circumstance shortly determined his future destination. He expected to have been elected pastor of Pfarrode, a small hamlet not far from Eisenach; but, on its being ascertained that he could dance as well as preach, the scrupulous elders refused to receive, as their spiritual comforter, one who had danced even once in his life.

“Sometime in the year 1763, he was made governor to the pages at the court of Weimar, and subsequently he became Professor in the Gymnasium at the same place. About the same period he married Juliana Kruger, by whom he had two sons.

“Thus his life had nothing remarkable in it; nothing distinguished him from the throng of fellow-citizens who surrounded him—except the qualities of his head and heart. The mind of an author survives him in his works: we may read and admire, but the heart of the man can with difficulty be duly appreciated. I can convey no clearer idea of it, than by the fact, that he wrote satires, and had no enemies: not a single being within the walls of Weimar wished him any ill; for in his own temper there was not a drop of gall. The arrows

of his wit were well pointed; but they were not dipped in poison. He extorted the respect of the great, and deserved the love of all the middle and lower ranks of people.

“ I fancy I can behold him going, as he daily did, with a book under his arm, from his own house towards the Gymnasium. The citizens on all sides saluted him as he passed, with his hat always in his hand, and a good-natured smile upon his face,—his only thanks. He was in the habit of walking to the gardens, without the city walls, to watch the citizens at work, conversing with each in his own way, so as constantly to interest all with whom he spoke, in whatever branch of rural economy they were conversant. Willingly would the pleased husbandman, leaning for some moments upon his mattock, and, holding his cap in his hand, join in the conversation; while Musæus had invariably his hat in *his* hand, which he never replaced until the other was first covered. It was thus he won the hearts of all; and if you wished to behold a kind and pleasant countenance, you need only accost Professor Musæus as he went by. It happened in the year 1780, while he was suffering under a very painful malady, that his servant maid was standing, surrounded by a number of people, in the baker’s shop. “ ‘ How is your master to-day ?’ he enquired.

Oh ! he is very bad.’

“ ‘ May God help and restore him !’ said the baker. ‘ I am not acquainted with him, but I sometimes see him passing by ; and I never hear any thing but good concerning him.’

“ In truth, he was alike esteemed by those who knew and those who did not know him ; his looks were every where a friendly passport for him : the magic he employed was a gentle and courteous spirit—the same which pervades, with a highly popular air, the whole of his fictitious productions. He rendered unto every one all that was due to him ; to rank, its minutest titles—and to all classes, respect and deference. When perplexed as to the exact title of a counsellor, he has been known to address him by ‘ My dear noble privy counsellor !’ and a noble, though only an ensign, with the words, ‘ Your Grace !’ for that, said he, pleases him, and costs me nothing. He censured no follies except in his writings, though his own little whims and singularities were often subjected to the strokes of his wit. He knew how to entertain his friends by sallies of the happiest humour ; and would keep them, for hours together, in a roar of laughter, along with his wife. His looks and manner were then inimitable ; trifles, the most insignificant, furnished him with amusing stories, numbers of which now occur to me, though without him they will not bear repetition.

“His habitual cheerfulness and serenity of mind seldom deserted him, though he suffered greatly, and in particular from violent head-aches, with a long series of other grievances. The remuneration afforded him by his office was trifling, though it occupied many hours daily ; and to add to it, he was compelled to give lessons, in his leisure hours, upon history, &c. to young persons of noble birth. Yet such was his passion for study, that feeling he carried within him an inexhaustible source of more lasting wealth, he resolved to devote himself wholly to his desk.

“Had Lavater’s physiognomical enthusiasm only served to give rise to the *Physiognomical Travels of Musæus*, they would justly be entitled to our gratitude ; for, with the exception of some early poems, it was with this humourous production that he first appeared, without a name, in the field of German literature. It was by no means, however, the first fruits of his genius ; for about the period when Richardson’s *Sir Charles Grandison* half turned the heads of the Germans, like Göethe’s *Werter* not long afterwards, he wrote a Satire, though none of the bitterest, entitled *Grandison the Second*, a work which reflects no disgrace upon the era in which it made its appearance. At the publisher’s request, who, after the reputation acquired by the *Travels*, wished to profit by the author’s rising fame, he was

induced, in 1781, from mere goodness of heart, to remodel this work, in the shape in which it appears at the present day. It abounds with original and humourous traits, and is full as entertaining, if it be not so well known, as *Ligefride of Lindenberg*.

“ These were some of the most successful essays of his early years ; to which, however, we may add a comic opera, called the *Gardener’s Maid* ; the *Four Steps of Human Life*, a *Prelude, with Songs* ; *Criticisms for the General German Library* ; and occasional poems ; all of which were given to the world. What ! the reader will perhaps exclaim, a genius like Musæus write occasional poetry ! Yes ; and I am free to add, that he wrote such pieces for money, though German poetry is a sort of exotic rarely nurtured by princes, or preserved from the rude blasts ; being doomed to draw its nutriment with the common herbs around it, from the same air and soil. I have seen the excellent Musæus, previous to the new year’s feast, occupied (in a single chamber, surrounded by his whole family, and the noise of rattling spinning-wheels,) in composing *New Year’s Verses* for the sexton of the town church at Weimar, and for which he charged no more than a dollar. These were printed, together with a list of births and burials ; bound in gold paper, and carried about to the different houses.

“ In fact, his exceeding modesty and diffidence of

his own powers, long restrained the free expansion of his genius, and led him to play a less brilliant part among some of his great contemporaries. He was attached to domestic peace and comfort with the strength of a passion, and he even rid himself of his pupils in order to indulge his taste for reading and composing with more assiduity and ease. He was invariably the last to feel convinced of the sterling merits of his own writings, and he timidly suppressed his name to the title-page of his *Physiognomical Travels*. As few persons knew that he was the author, he listened to the opinion of the world, remained silent while the voice of Fame proclaimed its merits, and suffered the literary journals of the day to name other men as the author.

“The name of Musæus, however, was destined to burst from its obscurity ; and the writer of the *Physiognomical Travels* was assigned a place near that of Swift and Rabner, while the German public acknowledged its justice with shouts of applause. Men of wit and talent, many of whom were then resident at Weimar, were astonished to find among them a man, with whom they had not even been acquainted as a companion and fellow-citizen, capable of such productions. All now courted his society ; his house was besieged, and his little boy became so accustomed to these kind of visits, that

one day looking out of the window, he exclaimed, 'Here are more coming to praise papa!'

"Yet Musæus was proof against the incense they bestowed,—at least it never mounted into his head; he preserved the same simple and modest manners as before. He stood exalted, as it were, above his fame; though he felt gratified as the father of a family, in having succeeded in uniting certain competency with domestic peace. His gains, indeed, were scanty, for his publisher repaid him ill: he received (*horribile dictu*) only eight shillings for his copyright of the Travels! a work by which M. Richter of Altenburg realised many thousand pounds.

"His path now lay smooth before him, and he continued to write assiduously. It was now he produced his Popular Tales, Friend Heine's Apparitions, The Plume, &c.; which are familiar to almost every reader. Yet it is probably known to few, that when he determined to write his Popular Tales, he assembled round him a crowd of old women with their spinning-wheels, inviting them to talk as much as possible, and watching their tone and language, which he subsequently repeated in his own manner. He conversed, too, with the children in the streets, made them tell him stories in their own way, and rewarded each tale with a farthing.

“He devoted every hour he could snatch from the business of his office to the instruction or the amusement of the public. He had a small cottage on the river Elm, just spacious enough to contain a table and a few chairs, whither he retired during the summer heats to enjoy the shade, with the river murmuring at his feet. There, too, I have been seated at his side, as he sat composing for posterity, while I was engaged in offering up my first incense to the Muses. After writing a few sides, he would often turn to me, and read them, watching the effect they produced; and these were some of the pleasantest hours of my early years. In the evening, when we were about to return home, we were in the habit of pulling a few dozen of radishes from the cottage-garden to season our frugal supper. On separating, it was always a condition to meet again as early as six o'clock on the following morning at the garden; and whichever of the two should be last was to treat the other to a cup of coffee. It occasionally happened that we approached equidistant from the garden; and then, when he first caught a glimpse of me (yes, I can still see and hear him), he began to run and laugh till he was almost out of breath, in order to anticipate me. All his pleasures were equally simple and innocent:—those were, indeed, delightful hours, and they will never return.

“ During the latter part of his life, he purchased a small piece of ground at Altenburg, not far from Weimar ; laid out his own garden, and built a pleasant little house. This became his favourite abode, and he delighted to observe the progress of the plantations and flowers which he had arranged with his own hand. Would that he might only have lived to behold every plant become a tree !

“ But the place soon passed into other hands : being sold by auction for the benefit of his widow, it was deprived of its beautiful prospect. Yet Musæus had resided there ; and this added greatly to its value. Should the reader ever happen to travel between Jena and Weimar, as the carriage rolls down the hill approaching the latter place, look out on your left hand, and you will see our favourite spot :—you would weep, too, if you had known its possessor, or you might weep that you knew him not ; for he was a rare—a very singular character ; in whose external appearance there was little ; as he never displayed more knowledge in his conversation than the person with whom he spoke could appreciate ; and he let every fool talk, and left him to his folly. He had nothing in common with those wits who are never able to check a witty sally, or who pique themselves upon the decoration of their person : he always went in his old grey coat, and with loose dishevelled hair, and he imagined he

always did his wife a great favour when he dressed himself in a new coat. Yet he always took pleasure in beholding his wife well dressed ; for he was invariably, till his final separation, the most indulgent and tender of husbands, as well as the best of fathers ; indeed, he was always a child with children. Never have I beheld him more full of mirth than on the Christmas festival, when the children were expecting the approach of the feast. I have seen him busily making the preparations :—there he sat very seriously gilding roses, apples, and nuts, cutting wax tapers, and decorating the sugar tree : then he placed an angel, with a flag of tinsel upon it, lighted the wax tapers himself, and loudly joined in the children's shouts of triumph, hopping and skipping, and making odd faces with the merriest of them.

“ He was often in the habit of making little tours on foot as far as Jena or Gotha. He invariably walked with an umbrella, which he used for a three-fold purpose, according to circumstances, to defend himself alike from the wet, the wind and dust, and from the sunbeams. Often, too, he went with his open waistcoat, and carrying his coat with clean linen upon a stick thrown across his shoulder ; being quite indifferent whether or no, in such equipage, he might be confounded with a travelling pedlar. Once I made a similar journey with him and Klinger as far as Gotha. At this place he bought a rock-

ing horse for his son, and hitting on no better expedient, he tied it also, on his return, fast to his stick, and thus reversing the rule, with the horse upon his back, he marched quite happy through the gates of Weimar. His singularities, like his genius, seemed bent upon affording amusement, and he was only, perhaps, the more beloved.

“ Alas ! why was not friend Heine grateful to the man who once so delightfully painted his apparition ?

“ Musæus died in the month of October 1787, in the 52d year of his age, and of that very singular disease, a polypus in the heart.* His death, therefore, was so far enviable as it was the work of a moment—but, alas ! what a moment for those who loved him !

“ He had for many years before been threatened with it, and it probably may have been aggravated by excessive study ; for, though of temperate habits, he was quite insatiable in his intellectual pursuits. After being occupied the whole day in his office, he was accustomed to seat himself at his desk after supper, and composed until two o'clock in the morning, drank cold coffee, and smoked cigars.

“ In this way, in spite of the repeated entreaties

* The polypus is a hard concretion of clotted blood that gradually forms in the heart.

and remonstrances of his wife, and of all who loved, that is, of all who knew him, he exhausted the powers of his frame and mind. He had long suffered, he had been warned by many alarming symptoms, but he paid no attention to them, and he died.

“The tears that were shed on the day of his funeral were the sincerest testimony of the affection of his fellow citizens, no less than the throngs of people that followed his hearse. The great Herder voluntarily came forward to preach his funeral sermon; and a simple and beautiful tablet was erected to him shortly after his decease, in the churchyard of Weimar, by some person unknown. There was, likewise, a bas-relief, bearing a striking resemblance to him, raised upon the walls of St. James’s Church; and under it appears an urn, upon which was laid a book with the inscription, “*To the immortal Musæus.*” And that name *is* immortal; spirit of my dear Musæus, my preceptor, and my friend! Hover near me, and wipe away these tears from my cheek, fraught with feelings to which the heart can give no utterance.

“Let the reader forgive me if I have narrated incidents unworthy of being given to posterity; let my friendship plead somewhat for the poignancy of my feeling. Let him think that he is passing by a grave, where a son has just been lamenting and scattering the last flowers over his father. Who

would not stop?—who would not give one charitable tear to the afflicted?

“ Had you known him—the truly honest upright man, the faithful indulgent husband, the fond father, and the tried friend, always calm and contented with the little heaven bestowed upon him—sharing that little with his poorer brethren, and never cringing before wealth and rank, never courting favour ;—but no more ! The spirit of my friend even now reproaches me :—does the same modesty which was the companion of your life still survive in the Elysian scenes to which you are gone ? Be it so ! I am silent ! and silent and unheeded flow my tears ! ”

KOTZEBUE'S *Historical, Literary and Political Anecdotes.*

THE DUMB LOVER.

THERE was once a wealthy merchant called Melchior of Bremen, who always laughed and stroked his chin very complacently when the preacher read the parable of the rich man in the Gospel, whom, in comparison with himself, he considered but a poor pedlar. Such, indeed, was his wealth, that he had the floor of his banqueting-room paved with dollars ; for luxury, though of a more substantial kind, was prevalent in those rude times, as well as now : and while his friends and fellow-citizens were not much pleased at such a proof of his ostentation, yet it was, in fact, intended more as a mercantile speculation than for idle display. He was sagacious enough to see that reports would go abroad of his excessive wealth, which would greatly add to his credit even among those who censured his vanity. This was exactly the case ; his idle capital of old dollars so prudently, as well as ostentatiously employed, brought large returns of interest : it was a visible bond of payment, which gave vigour to all the wily merchant's undertakings. Yet, in the end, it proved the rock upon which the stability of his house was wrecked :

for Melchior one day partaking rather too freely of a rich liquor at a city feast, died suddenly, without having time even to make his will. His son, however, having just attained the age of manhood, succeeded to the whole of the property.

Frank was a noble-spirited youth, endowed with some excellent qualities. He was well made, strong, and very good-humoured, as if the old French wine and hung beef, of which he had partaken largely, had produced such happy results upon his constitution. Health glowed upon his cheek, while content and animation shone in his dark hazel eyes. He grew like a vigorous plant, which only requires water and a hardier soil to bear noble fruit, but which shoots to waste in too luxuriant ground. The father's prosperity, as it often happens, was the son's ruin; for no sooner did he find himself possessed of so princely a fortune, than he contrived how he could best get rid of it: and instead of smiling in scorn at the parable of the rich man, he imitated his example to a hair, and clothed and fared most sumptuously every day.

The feasts of the court bishops were far exceeded in superfluity and splendour by those he gave; nor will the good city of Bremen ever behold such substantial and magnificent proofs of hospitality, as long as it is a city, again: for each citizen was

presented with a fine joint of roast beef, with a flask of Spanish wine:—the people drank to the health and long life of old Melchier's son,* and young Mr. Francis became the hero of the day.

In this round of continual pleasure, no wonder he never thought of balancing his accounts—then the favourite “Pocket Companion,” the vade mecum of our old merchants, but since unfortunately gone too much out of fashion. Hence the evident tendency of the modern scale of calculations towards utter bankruptcy and heavy losses, as if drawn by magnetic influence. Still the old merchant's coffers had been so well stocked, as to give his son no sort of uneasiness; hitherto his difficulty was rather how to dispose of his annual income. Open house, well furnished tables, and throngs of parasites, loungers, gamblers, and *id genus omnes*, left our hero small time for reflection; one kind of pleasure followed another; his friends took care to provide a succession of extravagancies lest he should pause, and think, and snatch the luscious prey from their grasp.

Suddenly the source of such prosperity ceased to flow; Francis found he had drained his father's money-bags of their inexhaustible stores. He or-

* Hence, according to the tradition, a merry health was used to be drunk, which is still continued in a number of places—“Come! long live the good old fellow's son!”

dered his steward one day to pay a large sum ;—he was not, however, in a condition, and returned the bill. This was a severe reflection upon the young spendthrift ; but he flew into a violent passion with his cashier, instead of blaming himself. He gave himself no kind of trouble to enquire into the cause ; like other dissipated characters he swore some dozen oaths, and shrugging up his shoulders, ordered his cashier in a very laconic style “to provide money !”

This was good tidings for the old usurers and Jews of the city. They furnished Francis with means to continue his mad career, though on very exorbitant terms. In the eye of a creditor, a room well paved with dollars was then better security than bills upon an American house, or even upon the United Provinces. It served as a good palliative for a period ; but it shortly got wind that the silver pavement had disappeared, and was replaced with one of stone. Judicial enquiry on the part of the creditors followed, and it was ascertained to be the fact. No one could deny that a floor of variegated marble, like mosaic, was more elegant for a banqueting hall, than one of old worn-out dollars ; but the creditors disliking this proof of his improved taste, unanimously demanded their money. This not being paid, a commission of bankruptcy was issued against him ; and forthwith an inventory

was made of all that the family mansion, the magazines, grounds, gardens, furniture, &c. contained. All was then put up to auction; and spite of the law under which Francis tried to shelter himself, the law deprived him of all he possessed. The mischief was now done: it was done too late to ponder and philosophize; and he never once dreamed of terminating his perplexities by the summary method so prevalent in the present civilized age. He might have made a dignified exit by hanging, shooting, or drowning, or have turned his back upon his native city in high dudgeon for ever, as he could no longer cut a noble and fashionable figure in it. But no such thing: the light careless young fellow never once troubled himself with that formidable reflection for which we are indebted to French frivolity and fashion, of "what will the world say?" a saying meant to bridle some, and to spur on other follies quite as absurd. Luckily Frank's feelings were not sufficiently fine to make him ashamed of the result of his dissipation: he was like a man awakening out of a state of intoxication, almost unconscious of what had passed; and he lived on, heedless alike of sorrow and of shame, as most unlucky prodigals are known to do. He had saved a few of his mother's jewels from the general wreck, and with the help of these he contrived to prolong

existence for a period, though not in a very enviable manner.

He took up his abode in a retired quarter of the city where the sunbeams seldom shone, except towards the longest day, when they occasionally glanced over the high-built roofs. Here he found all he looked for in his present altered circumstances. He dined at his host's frugal board; his fire-side was a protection against the cold; and he had a roof to shelter him from the effects of rain and wind. There was one enemy, however, he could not so well deal with—a killing *ennui*; here neither stone walls, nor the fire-side, nor the moderate enjoyment of the table, were of much service to him. He had lost a whole host of parasites, who used to do their best to entertain him, and, along with them, his former friends. Reading was then too rare an amusement to kill much time; nor did the honest folks understand the art of weaving love-sick fancies, and other modern innovations, which are usually the product of the shallowest brains. Alas! he had neither sentimental, pedagogical, nor comic romances, to resort to; no popular, moral, and fashionable tales; family and monastic legends were rare; while novels, both new and old, had not then commenced their havoc upon good white paper, and converted the unfortunate race of poor

printers into mere slaves of the grocers and tobacconists : for, as yet, noble knights continued to break their lances at the tournaments—such as Dietreck of Berne, Hildibrand, and Liegfried the Horny ; and with Rembold the Strong, rambled in search of dragons and other fiery monsters, and encountered dwarfs and giants, each equal to more than a dozen men, cast in the modern mould. The old venerable Theuerdunk was in those times the great model of German art and sagacity ; his work was the earliest production of our national intellect, though it was only calculated for beaux esprits, poets, and philosophers, of his own age. Francis belonged to none of these classes ; and had, therefore, no occupation but to play upon the flute, to look out of the window, and take observations of the weather. But this led to no better conclusions than the rest of the theories of the soaring meteorologists of the day. It was lucky, then, that he met with a more engaging object of attention, which served to fill up the daily increasing vacuum both of his head and his heart.

Opposite his own window, in the same narrow street, dwelt a respectable widow, who gained a scanty living, not, however, without the hope of better times. She had a very beautiful daughter, who assisted her at the spinning-wheel ; and between them, indeed, they produced as much yarn as would

have encircled the whole city, walls and suburbs included, of Bremen. Yet they seemed born for a better fate than a spinning-wheel; they were of a good family, and at one period had lived in great respectability. For the Lady Brigitta's husband, and the fair Mela's father, was the owner of a merchant vessel, which he freighted on his own account, and every year made a voyage to the city of Antwerp. He had, however, the misfortune to be lost in a storm—ship, cargo, and crew, were all swallowed up in the waves.

His wife, a well-principled, prudent woman, bore the loss with exemplary fortitude; and the more so for her daughter's sake. Yet she nobly rejected all offers of assistance from the hand of charitable friends and relatives; declaring that it was dishonourable to receive alms so long as she was enabled to support herself by the work of her hands. She gave up her grand establishment in favour of the creditors, who had the meanness to take every thing, while she had sought refuge in daily toil, under her present humble roof. At first, to be sure, such occupation proved irksome to her; often she moistened the flax with her tears. Industry, however, went hand in hand with independence; she submitted to no uneasy obligations, and habituated her daughter to the same sentiments and the same mode of life. They lived so frugally, as

soon to save a small sum, which being laid out in the purchase of lint, they began to carry on business in a small way.

Still this excellent lady had no idea of spending the whole of her remaining days in this state. She anticipated better times, if not restoration to her former prosperity, so as to enjoy in the autumn of her days a portion of the sunshine which had enlivened the spring. Nor was it only an idle dream: it was founded on reasonable calculation; on the growing evidence of her daughter's charms, now fast ripening into womanhood, like a full blown rose, but not quite so soon to fade. She joined modesty and virtue to her beauty, with so many other excellent qualities, that her mother already derived consolation and pleasure from her society. With the view of conferring upon such a daughter every accomplishment, she almost deprived herself of the necessaries of life, being convinced that if a young woman could only be brought to answer the description given by Solomon, that royal friend of women, of a good wife, the costly jewel would be sure to be sought for, as the cheapest ornament a wise man could ever possess.

For in those good times, virtue added to beauty was in as much request among young men, as grand connexions and a vast fortune in the present age. There were far more rivals too for such a lovely

girl's regard, a helpmate being then considered as a chief requisite, and not, as in the present false hair-brained theory of economy, an incumbrance to a household.

The sweet Mela, to be sure, was blooming more like some rare exotic, than a hardy plant in the open air. She lived in seclusion under maternal sway; she visited neither public walks nor rooms, and was seldom seen above once a year beyond the precincts of her native city. This was in direct opposition to the present matrimonial and manœuvring system. The existing race of matrons are better informed; they consider their daughters' charms as available capital, to be brought into circulation; and not like the poor maidens of other days, to be kept under durance and duennas, though good matrimonial speculators knew well enough where the treasure was to be found. The lady Brigitta sighed for the period when she should thus be liberated from her servile Babylonish captivity in the narrow street—when she and her fair daughter were to be transported back into the land of milk and honey.

The charming Mela was justly considered by her mother, as worthy of the highest station; and she spared no pains in developing her natural fine qualities by every advantage of education.

Standing one day studying the weather at his window, Frank caught a glimpse of the lovely Mela

as she returned from church, where she never omitted going with her mother to hear mass. Hitherto he had paid no serious attention to the other sex : during his prosperous days, all his finer feelings had been blunted, his senses bewildered in a perpetual round of dissipation, encouraged by his boon companions. But now the wildness and effervescence of his youth was over ; the chords of his feelings were finely strung, and the least breeze was enough to ruffle the surface of his soul. Enchanted at the lovely sight, he instantly threw up his dry studies of meteorology, and entered on a more favourite pursuit. He began by questioning his landlord respecting his pretty neighbour and her mother, from whom he heard the chief part of what has been already related.

For the first time he began to accuse himself of his former wilful and extravagant conduct : he could not now offer a handsome fortune, as he might have done, to the beautiful Mela ; yet his wretched abode was dearer to him than a palace, and he felt that he would scorn to exchange it for the finest house in Bremen. His beloved dwelt opposite to him, and he passed whole hours together at the window. When she appeared, he felt greater delight, perhaps, than the astronomer Horocks himself, when he first beheld Venus passing over the Sun's disk at Liverpool. But her mother was as vigilant in her obser-

vations as her lover, and soon understood the meaning of his constant station at the window. Being no favourite with her, on account of his former conduct, she became so angry at his repeated watching and staring, that she drew close all the blinds, and then entreated Mela never to venture near the windows. She looked out also one of the thickest veils to wear in going to church ; and hastened round the corner as fast as possible, to screen her from the unhallowed gaze of her new admirer.

Young Frank was not remarkable for his penetration ; but love is known to sharpen the faculties. He fancied that his intrusive looks had given some offence ; and he retreated from his post at the window, vowing that he would look out at it no more, though the sacred host itself were to pass by. He began to contrive how he might best continue his observations unseen—a plan in which he easily succeeded. He procured a large mirror, and hung it so ingeniously in his room, as to reflect every thing which passed in the opposite sitting-room of the ladies. During several days he refrained from showing himself ;—the blinds were gradually withdrawn, and the looking-glass sometimes reflected, to his infinite delight, the form of his beloved. His passion was striking deeper root, and he longed to declare it to Mela, being infinitely anxious to learn how she felt disposed towards him.

But in truth it was far more difficult in those good times to get an introduction to the young ladies of a family, than it now is; and the poor youth's destitute situation added to this not a little. No morning visits were then in vogue; a *tête-à-tête* might have ruined a young lady's reputation; and the whole list of balls, masquerades, routes, suppers, walks, rides, &c. with a thousand other modern inventions to facilitate the intercourse of the sexes, were then unknown. The nuptial chamber was the sole place permitted to young lovers for a more confidential explanation of their feelings. Yet in spite of such restraint, things were carried on much in their usual manner. Weddings, christenings, and burials followed each other, particularly in a city like Bremen, as they do now, and were the only licensed occasions for entering into new compacts of the kind, so as to illustrate the old proverb, which says that "no marriage is consummated, but some other is sure to be planned." The underplot of appealing to the lady's maid, or other subordinate persons, was here beyond Frank's ingenuity,—the mother retained none in her service; she carried on her own little trade of spinning yarn, and might have served her daughter instead of her shadow. It was next to impossible, so circumstanced, for the lover to find an occasion of declaring himself; though he shortly invented a language, meant only to serve

as an idiom of lovers, which precluded the necessity either of speaking or writing. Not that our hero could boast of the discovery : it was known to many of those sentimental Celadons both of Italy and Spain, who chanted it under the balconies of their favourite ladies. More impressive than the finest eloquence of Tully or Demosthenes, its pathos seldom failed to reach the hearts of its fair audience, to inspire tender and delicious feelings, and express all the emotions of the lover. But in that illiterate age, poor Frank had neither heard nor read of it; and he had all the merit of original discovery in employing music, as an explanation of his passion.

In doleful hour, therefore, he seized his lute, and calling forth strains that far surpassed his usual powers, in about a month he made such rapid progress, that he might very well have been admitted to play an accompaniment to Amphion. To be sure his sweetest melodies were at first little noticed, but ere long they attracted the admiration of the whole neighbourhood; for, the moment he touched his lute, mothers succeeded in quieting their children, the riotous little urchins ran away from the doors, and at length he had the delight to behold a white hand open the window opposite, when he began to prelude an air. Having so far gained her ear, he played several happy and triumphant strains as if to express his joy :—but when her mother's presence

or other occupations deprived him of her sight, his sorrow broke forth in mournful tones, expressive of all the agony of disappointed affection.

Mela proved an apt pupil, and soon acquired a knowledge of the new language. Indeed she often made an experiment, to learn whether she interpreted it correctly, and invariably found that she could influence the invisible musician's tones according to her own feelings. Mild and modest young maidens are more correct in observation, and possess quicker perceptions than those wild careless creatures, sporting from object to object, like a simple butterfly, without fixing long upon any. Fair Mela's vanity was much flattered at finding she could bring just such strains as she liked best, whether mournful or merry, from her young neighbour's lute.

Occupied with trade, her mother paid no kind of attention to the music; and her daughter did not think it necessary to impart her late observations. She rather wished, either from inclination, or as a proof of her sagacity, to show that she understood, and also knew how to reply to the symbolical language, in some other that would discover equal skill. With this view, she requested her mother to permit her to place a few flower-pots in the window, and the good lady no longer observing the prying young neighbour, and dreaming of no possibility of any harm, easily gave her permission. Now to attend to

all these flowers, to water, to bind them up to the sticks, and to watch their progress in leafing and budding and flowering, brought their young mistress very often to the window. It was now the happy lover's turn to explain these hieroglyphics, and he never failed to send his joyous greetings across the way, to the attentive ear of his sweet young gardener, through the medium of his lute. This at length began to make a powerful impression on her young virgin heart ; and she felt vexed at her mother for calling him an idle spendthrift, a very worthless fellow, which she took great pleasure in repeating during their conversations after dinner : sometimes even comparing him to the prodigal son. Poor Mela, though with great caution, would venture to take his part, ascribing his follies to youthful indiscretion, and the seductions of bad companions ; only blaming him for not having attended in time to the good proverb, which bids us " Spare to-day, as it may rain to-morrow."

Meanwhile this young spendthrift, whom the old lady was so busily reviling at home, was indulging only the kindest feelings towards her, reflecting in what way, as far as his situation would permit, he could best improve her circumstances. His motive, to be sure, was rather to assist the young, than the old lady, by his gifts. He had just obtained secret information that her mother had refused his Mela a

new dress, which she longed to have, under pretence of bad times. Apprehensive lest the present of a gown from an unknown would be refused, and that all his hopes might be blasted were he to name the donor, it was only by chance that he was relieved from this awkward dilemma, and the affair succeeded according to his wishes. He heard that Mela's mother had been complaining to a neighbour that the crop of flax having proved so small, it had cost her more than her customers would pay her again, and that this branch of the trade was become wholly unprofitable. Frank directly hastened to a goldsmith's, sold a pair of his mother's gold ear-rings, and purchasing a quantity of lint, sent it by a woman to offer it to his neighbour at a more moderate price.

The bargain was concluded, and on such good terms, that on next All Saints' Day the lovely Mela was seen in an elegant new dress.

On her appearance on this occasion, such was the passion with which it inspired our hero, that had he been allowed to select one from among the eleven thousand virgins, that one would have been Mela. Yet, at the moment he was congratulating himself on the success of his stratagem, it was unluckily discovered. For mother Brigitta, desirous of doing a kindness to the good woman who had served her in the sale of the lint, invited her to a treat, very

common in those days, before tea and coffee were known, of rice milk, made very savoury with sugar, richly spiced, and a bottle of Spanish wine. Such a repast not only set the old lady's lips in motion, as she sipped and sipped, but likewise loosened her tongue. She declared she would provide more lint at the same price, granting her merchant would prove agreeable ; which, for the best of reasons, she could not doubt. The lady and her daughter very naturally inquired farther, until their female curiosity was gratified at the expence of the old woman's discretion, and she revealed the whole secret. Mela changed colour, not a little alarmed at the discovery ; though she would have been delighted had her mother not been present. Aware of her strict notions of propriety, she began to tremble for her new gown. The good lady was, indeed, both shocked and displeas'd at so unexpected a piece of intelligence ; and wished as much as her daughter that she alone had been made acquainted with it ; lest their young neighbour's liberality, by making an impression on the girl's heart, might eventually thwart all her plans. She forthwith determin'd to adopt such measures as should eradicate every seed of budding affection, which might be lurking in Mela's virgin heart. Spite of the tears and entreaties of its possessor, the gown was next day sold, and the proceeds, together with the profits of her late bargain,

returned under the pretence of an old debt, by the hand of the Hamburgh trading messenger to young Mr. Frank Melchior. He received the packet as a very especial blessing on the part of Providence, and offered up a prayer that all the debtors of his father's house might be induced to discharge their debts with as much punctuality as the honest unknown. The truth never glanced across his mind; for the gossiping old body was careful not to betray her own treachery; merely informing him that Madam Brigitta had wholly discontinued the lint trade. His more faithful mirror, however, shortly told him that a great change had occurred in the opposite dwelling, in the course of a single night. The flower-pots had vanished, and the blinds were drawn down even closer than before. His Mela was rarely to be seen, and when she did appear, like the lovely moon, gleaming through a mass of dark clouds on the benighted traveller, her eyes were downcast, she looked as if she had been weeping, and he fancied he saw her wipe a tear away. The sight of her filled his heart with sorrow: he took his lute, and in soft Lydian measures expressed the language of his grief. Then he tried to discover the source of her anxiety, but here he was quite at a loss. Not many days afterwards he remarked that his looking-glass was useless: it no longer reflected the form of his beloved. On examining more minutely into the cause, he found that the curtains had been removed;

that the rooms were not inhabited ; his neighbours had left the place in perfect silence, only the evening before.

Now, alas ! he might approach the window, inhale the fresh air, and gaze as much as he pleased. But what was all this to him—to him, who had just lost sight of the dearest object on the face of the earth ! On first recovering from the trying shock, he was led to make many sage reflections ; and, among others, the painful one that he had been the cause of their flight. The sum of money he had received, the cessation of the lint trade, and the departure,—each seemed to throw light upon the other. It occurred to him, that Madam Brigitta must have discovered his secret ; that he was no favourite with her, and that this was no kind of encouragement. Yet the symbolic language he had held with the fair maiden herself,—the flowers and the music, seemed to revive his spirit. No, he was sure she did not hate him ;—her melancholy, and the tears he had seen her shed, not long before she left, served to restore his confidence and courage. Of course, his first effort was to find out the ladies' new residence, in order to renew, by some means or other, his delightful intercourse with the lovely Mela. This he soon accomplished ; but he was grown too prudent to follow them ; contenting himself with frequenting the same church, whither they went to hear mass, and never omitting to meet them, some-

times in one place, and sometimes in another, on their return. He would then find opportunities of greeting Mela kindly, which was about as gratifying as a billet-doux.

Now, had Mela had more liberty, instead of being thus immured like a nun, and had her good mother not played the duenna, and guarded her as the miser does his treasure, her lover's dumb wooing would not have made half the impression it did upon her heart. She was just, however, at that critical period of a girl's life, when nature and a cautious mother are in the habit of teaching a different lesson. For the former gives birth to a succession of warm and novel feelings, which she instructs her to view in the light of the sweetest panacea of existence; while the latter carefully prepares her against the surprises of a passion, which she describes as more dangerous and destructive than a fatal disease. The former inspires her heart with a soft genial glow, peculiar to life's sweet season of the spring; while the latter would often have her remain ever cold and cheerless, as wintry snow. Two such opposite systems of two equally kindly-disposed mothers, both acting at a time upon the flexible feelings of the poor girl, made her obedient to neither, so that she was induced to take a sort of middle course, appointed her by neither. For Mela highly valued the virtue and propriety inculcated by her education,

though her heart was open to the most gentle impressions, Francis was the first who had appealed to her affections ; and she felt a secret inclination for him. Yet, of this she was hardly conscious, though a more experienced girl would have known it was love. Leaving her dwelling, therefore, was a cruel blow ; her lovely eyes were filled with tears ; but now she softly returned her lover's salutation with charming blushes, whenever he met her and her mother on their return from church. Yet both were mute : neither had exchanged a single word, though they as perfectly comprehended each other, as any language could have made them do. Both vowed in their inmost hearts to preserve the strictest secrecy and fidelity, and never even dream of forgetting one another.

In the neighbourhood of the place where the ladies had now settled, there were certain persons who made it their occupation to discover the abode of the most lovely young women, and the charms of the sweet young Mela did not long escape their attention. Almost opposite their humble dwelling, lived a thriving brewer, known among the wags of that period, by the title of the King of Hops, from his superior influence and wealth. He was a brisk young widower, whose days of mourning were drawing fast to a close, and who might now with strict propriety be again upon the look-out for a trusty

helpmate. On the decease of his late wife, he had offered up a secret vow to his patron, St. Christopher, that he would present his church with a wax candle as long as a hop-pole, if he might only be fortunate enough to possess in his second wife a little more happiness than he had done with his first. Scarcely had he set eyes upon the beauteous Mela, before he dreamed that he saw St. Christopher looking through his bed-room window on the second floor, to remind him of his promise. To the tasty young brewer this appeared an auspicious sign of his future happiness, and he resolved forthwith to try his fortune once more.

Next morning he ordered a quantity of well bleached wax, and then arraying himself in his Sunday attire, he sallied forth upon his new marriage speculation. Possessing no ear for music, he was of course unacquainted with the language of secret symbols and silent love, so familiar to his rival; but he had an extensive brewery, had immense capital, all of which was out at interest, a fine ship in the Weser, and a productive farm near town. Availing himself of these for an introduction, he might reasonably count upon success, even without the patronage of St. Christopher; in particular with a young woman who could boast no marriage portion. So, agreeably to the ancient forms, he first waited upon Madame Brigitta, and like a good neighbour,

declared the kind and filial intentions he was indulging respecting her, and her very pleasing and virtuous daughter. The visit of a patron saint or an angel, accompanied with such a revelation, could not have afforded the good old lady more pleasure than the brewer's. She was now about to reap the fruits of her long and persevering efforts;—her hopes would at length be gratified. She fancied she saw her daughter placed beyond the reach of poverty, surrounded with opulence, and happy. She thought how lucky it was that they had changed their place of residence; and considering poor Frank as in some measure the cause, she felt kindly disposed even towards him. Though she had conceived some dislike for him, she still promised after what he had done in her behalf, to give him, in some way or other, a share in their approaching prosperity.

She already fancied the marriage articles were as good as copied, only she felt herself bound in propriety to take a short time to deliberate. So she returned thanks to the honourable brewer for his kind intentions, said she would acquaint her daughter, and trusted she should be able to give him a favourable answer in the course of a week. With this promise, the King of Hops took his departure, very well pleased at the progress of the negociation.

Scarcely had he cleared the vicinity, before reels, spinning-wheels, &c. were all thrown aside,

in spite of their long services, as articles fit only for the lumber-room. On returning from church, Mela was surprized to see the alteration that had taken place in their parlour, where every thing was so elegantly arranged, as would have done justice to any church festival. She was still more surprized to find her industrious mother sitting idle on a week day, and smiling very complacently, so as to show that nothing unpleasant had occurred. Before she had time to inquire into the reason, the latter eagerly began to give a joyous explanation of the change. What a stream of eloquence flowed from her lips; her imagination was all in a glow, and in brilliant colours she described with female minuteness the approaching happiness in store for them. She looked into her dear girl's face for the mantling blush of virgin modesty—the earnest of future love, and full obedience to all her maternal wishes. Daughters in those ages were exactly in the same situation as modern princesses: their inclinations were the last thing to be consulted, and they were spared every kind of trouble in regard to the period of wooing,—they had merely to signify their consent at the altar.

How surprized, then, was Madam Brigitta to find herself mistaken: for, instead of blushing rosy red at these unexpected tidings, she grew white as a sheet, and had like to have fainted in her mother's

arms. On being recalled to life by the speedy sprinkling of cold water, her eyes were drowned in tears, as if she had just met with some great misfortune. Her more experienced mother was soon convinced that the rich brewer's proposal was not received with the least pleasure, at which she expressed her astonishment. She then spared neither prayers nor entreaties, with much good advice, to remove Mela's unaccountable objections to so desirable an offer;—for where would she find a wealthier husband? Still the latter could not be persuaded that she should be happy in a match to which her heart was so much averse, though the arguments on both sides were continued with little intermission for the space of many days. Early and late, before meals and after meals, until the period for returning an answer approached, was the spirit of their debate kept alive. The brewer was on the tip-toe of expectation; the grand, gigantic candle intended for an offering to St. Christopher,—a candle which might have delighted the heart of a king of Basan, to have been burning at his wedding, was now in readiness. It was beautifully ornamented with variegated flowers, yet with all this, the ungrateful saint had neglected to propitiate the heart and feelings of the fair Mela, to accept the jolly brewer's suit.

Meanwhile her mother's persuasions and appeals

affected her so much, that she became almost blind with weeping, and began to fade away like a blighted flower. Sorrow was busy at her heart—for three whole days she refused to eat, or to moisten her feverish lips with a drop of water. No slumber visited her eyes: in short, she fell very sick, and alarmed her mother by requesting to see a priest, in order to make her last confession, and receive the sacrament. Her fond mother thus beheld the last prop of all her hopes about to be snatched away; she became apprehensive lest she should lose her only daughter, and began to think that it would perhaps be more prudent to sacrifice the most flattering prospect, in preference to following her dear girl to an untimely grave. She wisely therefore resigned her own views to gratify those of her daughter. Yet it was not without many a severe pang that she did this; and submitted, as a good mother ought, to the superior authority of her pretty child, without even reproaching her. When the willing widower made his appearance on the appointed day, trusting that his heavenly mediator St. Christopher had been during the past week busily engaged in his favour, he was quite astounded on meeting with a refusal, though delivered with so much reluctance and politeness, that to the King of the Hops it tasted very like wormwood sweetened with sugar. Soon, however, he became more

resigned to his fate, though for some time after he was as much affected as if a good bargain for malt had been broken off. Yet he had no reason to despair; his native place abounded in amiable girls, many of whom exemplified King Solomon's description, being well qualified to make unexceptionable wives. So, spite of this disappointment, he still relied firmly on the assistance of his patron saint, who requited his faith so well, that ere the end of the month he had placed his promised gift with much ceremony on St. Christopher's altar.

But as to poor lady Brigitta she was once more compelled to restore her spinning-wheel to its place, and proceed with business. Affairs flowed back into their old channel; Mela recovered her cheerfulness, and her bloom;—she set to work with alacrity, and never omitted going to church. Her mother, however, could not disguise her grief at the failure of all her plans, her fond and favourite hope;—and she grew peevish and melancholy. But on the day appointed for the marriage of the King of Hops, she became quite unwell, and suffered extreme pain and uneasiness. Her sighs and groans, as she beheld the procession, attended by all the trumpeters, and fiddlers, and pipers in the city, proceeding towards church, were truly pitiable. They were the same she had uttered when she first heard tidings that her husband and all his fortune had

been buried in the waves. Mela, however, gazed on the festive train with much complacency ; not even the fine jewels and precious stones sparkling in the bridal crown, and nine rows of large pearls round the bride's neck, ruffled her composure. This was truly surprizing, when we consider that a new Parisian bonnet, or any other fashionable trifle, is often enough to disturb the peace of a whole family. Her kind mother's grief was the sole drawback upon her happiness, and it indeed made her very uneasy. She would often beg by a thousand little winning caresses to bring her into better humour ; and she so far succeeded, that the good lady became once more communicative.

Towards evening, when the dancing began, she exclaimed—" Oh, my poor daughter ! at this very moment you might have been the queen of the day ! What happiness would have been mine, so to be rewarded for years of care and anxiety. But you, turned away from Fortune's sweetest smiles, and I shall never live to see you led to the altar !"

" Put your confidence in heaven, dearest mother," answered Mela, " as I do : if it be ordained there that I should go to the altar, yes, you will live to adorn me in my bridal dress ; for when the right suitor comes, my heart will not long refuse its assent."

" Child, child !" exclaimed the more experienced mother, " portionless young women are not much

in request : they ought to accept those who will have them. The young men of our days are somewhat selfish : they only marry when it suits them ; and never think about other persons' diffidence. The heavens are not in your favour :—planets have been consulted, and they are not auspicious to such as are born, like you, in April. Only look what the Almanack says : ‘ Maids born this month will have kind, good-natured countenances, be of slender form, and changeable in their inclinations, much like the weather, and must keep an eye upon their virgin mood. Should a smiling wooer come, let them not reject his offer !’ See how well that suits you ! The suitor has been, and none will come after him, for you have rejected his offer.”

“ Mother, mother ! heed not what the planet says ! my heart whispers me that I ought to love and honour the man whom I wed ; and if I find no such man, or am sought by none, let me remain single all my life. I can maintain myself by my own hands. I will learn to be both content and happy ; and nurse you in your old age, as a good daughter ought. Yet, if the man of my heart should come, mother, oh, then bless us both ; and inquire not whether he be great, honoured, and wealthy, but only whether he loves, and is beloved.”

“ Love, my poor daughter, keeps but a scanty table ; it is not enough to live upon.”

“ But where love is, mother, there peace and content will abide ; yes, and convert the simplest fare into luxuries too.”—So inexhaustible a topic kept the ladies awake as long as the fiddles continued to play, nor could Madame Brigitta help suspecting that Mela’s magnanimity, which, in the bloom of youth and beauty made her hold riches in such slight estimation, must be owing to some secret attachment previously formed. She, moreover, suspected its object, though she had never before entertained the idea that the lint merchant in the narrow street occupied a place in her daughter’s heart. She had considered him merely in the light of an extravagant youth, who made a point of gallanting every young creature that came in his way. The prospect before her gave her very little pleasure; but she held her peace. Agreeably to her strict notions of propriety, she believed that a young maid who allowed love to enter her heart previous to marriage, was no better than cankered fruit, very well to look at, but with a maggot within. She thought it might do very well to decorate a chimney-piece, though it had lost its intrinsic flavour, and was of no kind of use. Henceforth, then, the poor old lady despaired of ever resuming her lost station in her native city ; resigned herself, like a good christian, to her fate, being resolved to say nothing to her daughter on the subject—least said, the soonest mended. Tidings

of Mela's refusal of the wealthy brewer having speedily gone abroad, shortly came to the ears of Frank, who felt quite overjoyed. He was no longer tortured with the suspicion lest some rich rival should supplant him in Mela's heart. He felt that he had ground for hope, and knew how to solve the problem which puzzled so many wise inhabitants of the city of Bremen. Love had metamorphosed a profligate youth into an excellent musician, but unfortunately that character was not a very strong recommendation for a lover in those times ; for it derived neither as much honour nor emolument as now. The fine arts were not then the means of riches and prosperity, but rather consigned their votaries to penury and neglect. No other wandering artists were then known, besides Bohemian students, whose loud shrill symphonies clamoured for alms at the doors of the more opulent. Frank could afford but a simple serenade, and his beloved had made too mighty a sacrifice of the king of hops, for his sake, to be rewarded by this alone. The idea of his former conduct now pierced his bosom like a sharp thorn, and in many a bitter monologue he execrated his previous infatuation and folly. " My dear, dear Mela," he cried, " would that I had known you sooner, you would have become my guardian angel ; you would have saved me from utter ruin !

" Ah, could I recall the years that are sped !

could I be again what I was, when I began my mad career, the world would look like a paradise, and I would make it a paradise for you ! Noble girl ! you are sacrificing yourself for a wretch and a beggar—one who has lost all, but a heart torn with love and agony ;—he cannot offer you a destiny worthy of your virtue.” He then smote his forehead, in a fit of passion, reproaching himself as a thoughtless, wilful being, whose repentance had come too late.

Despondency, however, was not the sole result of his reflections. The powers of his mind were put into action ; he became ambitious of altering his present condition, and he was resolved to try what exertion and activity would effect. Among other plans that occurred to him, the most rational and promising appeared to be, to examine into his father’s accounts, in order to see what debts were still due to the house. With such remnants of a princely fortune, should he be lucky enough to recover them, he trusted he might be some time enabled to lay the ground-work of another, if not as large as that he had lost, yet enough for the happiness and support of life. He resolved to employ the money he recovered in some business, which he hoped would increase by degrees, until, as he flattered himself, his ships would visit all parts of the world. But he found that many of the debts were due from persons residing at a distance, and

that he would have a better chance of succeeding, were he to wait upon the parties in person, and claim his own. Accordingly, to effect this, he sold his father's gold watch, the last remains of his inheritance, in order to purchase a horse which was to carry him before his debtors, under the title of a Bremen merchant.

All that he regretted, was his departure from his beloved Mela. "What will she say to my sudden disappearance? I shall no longer meet her coming home from church; she will perhaps think me faithless, and banish me from her heart for ever!" Such ideas made him very uneasy, and, for some time, he could discover no means to inform her of his real intentions. Ingenious love at length supplied him with the happy notion of having prayers put up for the success of his journey in the church, which Mela and her mother generally frequented, when they would no longer remain ignorant of his object. With this view he gave the priest a small sum, begging that a daily prayer might be offered for a young man compelled to go abroad upon business, as well as for the success of his undertaking. The same prayer was to be continued until his return, when it was his intention to purchase a thanksgiving.

On meeting Mela for the last time, he was in his travelling dress. He passed quite close to her; saluted her in a more marked manner than usual,

which brought the eloquent blood into the lovely girl's cheeks. Her mother scolded, made many unpleasant remarks, and expressed her dislike of him in no very guarded terms. She declared that such impertinence would injure her daughter's reputation, and spite of her vow to keep silence, she never dropped the subject during the whole of that day. Young Mr. Frank, however, had taken his leave of the good city of Bremen, and the most lovely eyes might now wander in search of him in vain.

Mela went to church, and heard her lover's prayer repeated very often ; and, in truth, it was intended rather for her ears than to mount to Heaven. Yet she paid little attention to it, such was her grief for the disappearance of her lover. The very words that would have explained it, escaped her ear, and she was at a loss what to think of it. In the course of a month or two, when her sorrow was a little abated, and his absence grew less trying, she had been listening to the sermon, and, for the first time, paying attention to the prayer, and comparing it with other circumstances, she suddenly guessed its meaning, wondering at her own stupidity in not sooner discovering it, and at the same time praising her lover's ingenious notion. True it is, that such prayers bear no great reputation for their efficacy, and are poor support for those who put their faith in them. In general, the warmth of piety is exhausted

before the end of the sermon, but in Mela's case it only just began, the prayers at the end giving fresh ardour to her devotion ; and she invariably joined in them, never failing to recommend the young traveller both to his and her own patron saint.

Protected by these invisible patrons, and attended by the warm good wishes of the lovely Mela, Frank, meanwhile, pursued his way towards Antwerp, where his father's debtors chiefly resided, and where he hoped to recover some considerable sums. Such a journey from Bremen to Antwerp was, in those days, more formidable than one from Bremen to Kamschatka in the present. The peace just proclaimed by the Emperor Maximilian was so little observed, that the public roads were in all parts infested with nobles and knights, who invariably despoiled the poor travellers who refused to purchase a safe pass from them, and frequently subjected them, in subterraneous dungeons, to a cruel and lingering death. Our hero nevertheless succeeded, in spite of these obstacles, in reaching his destination, having encountered only one solitary adventure.

As he was crossing over the sandy and deserted plains of Westphalia he was overtaken by night, before he could reach any place of sojourn. The day had been uncommonly sultry, and darkness came on with a terrific thunderstorm, and heavy showers, which drenched him to the skin. This

was extremely trying and novel to one of Fortune's spoiled children, as he had been. He had never been accustomed to the changes of the weather, and yet he might perhaps be compelled to pass the whole night in this horrid spot. The thought filled him with horror—when suddenly he saw a light, to his infinite relief, only at a short distance. On spurring towards it, he found a miserable little hut, which promised him small comfort. It was more like a shed for cattle than a human habitation; yet the inhospitable boor refused him admittance, declaring he had only straw enough for his oxen, and was too sleepy to get up and light his fire again for the sake of a stranger. At first poor Frank complained bitterly, but as it served no purpose, he laid his malediction on all Westphalian deserts and their unnatural inhabitants, while the boor proceeded to put out his lamp with the utmost indifference, without troubling himself about violating the laws of hospitality. Our incensed hero at length threatened and thundered at the door in such a way as effectually to prevent the brute's repose, who, better understanding such an appeal, soon found his tongue:—"Do you think, man, you will find a good supper and a soft couch here? If you do, you will be disappointed, friend; so please to be quiet. Can't you ride through the little wood on your left, and knock at the Castle-gate of Sir Egbert of

Bronckhost, instead of battering at my poor door? He welcomes a stranger like a knight-hospitaller does the pilgrim from the Holy Land. Heed thou not, though he be seized with a fit of madness, as he sometimes is; yet then he only wishes to give his guests a hearty drubbing before he takes leave of them. In all other respects, if you like to venture, you will find good entertainment."

Frank was some time at a loss how to act; yet he had rather run the risk of a sound drubbing, than stand drenched in his wet clothes the whole of the night. There was not much choice; he argued, suppose he were to get into the hut, between passing the night upon a wooden bench without supper, and a little flogging in the morning after enjoying a good supper and a bed. "Besides," he added, "such an application may, perhaps, drive away the fever which I am sure to take if I stay longer here, and that would be a sad thing." So he remounted, spurred away, and in a few minutes stopped before the gates of a gothic castle, at which he knocked pretty smartly. He was answered as loudly, "Who is there?" from the other side. Our hero begged somewhat impatiently for admission, and he would explain afterwards; but he was compelled to wait the pleasure of Sir Egbert, until the butler had ascertained whether he chose to give a night's lodg-

ing, for the satisfaction he would have in beating his guest in the morning.

This Sir Egbert had early in life entered the army of the Emperor ; had served under the celebrated George of Frondsberg, and subsequently commanded a company against the Venetians. Afterwards, on retiring from service, and settling at his castle, he began to repent of his sins :— he held open castle for the destitute, or the hungry and houseless traveller ; and when he had fared sumptuously, he was, on taking leave, flogged out of the Castle for a rogue and vagabond. Sir Egbert was a rude soldier, and retained the manner of a camp, though he had been living some years in retirement. In a few minutes the bars of the gate were withdrawn, with a melancholy sound, as if giving warning of the approaching flogging, and Frank had a fit of cold shivers as he walked across the court-yard. He was hospitably received, and a number of lacqueys ran to help him to dismount : one took his baggage, another his steed, while a third ushered him into the presence of the Knight. He was seated in a splendid hall, but rose to meet his guest, and shook him by the hand so heartily that Frank almost cried out with pain, and was struck with fear and awe. He could not conceal his terror, and trembled from head to foot at the warlike appearance of the Knight, full of fire and

strength, and apparently in the vigour of life. "What is the matter, young man?" he inquired, in a voice of thunder; "what makes you look so pale and feeble, as if you were just going to give up the ghost?"

Frank, too late aware that it was impossible to retreat, though convinced that he was likely to pay dearly for his fare, mustered up his courage, and tried to look impudent, to conceal his fears.

"Sir Knight," he boldly answered, "I am as completely drenched with rain, as if I had just swum through the Weser. I should like to change my clothes, and swallow a good warm posset, to check these shivering fits, which are as bad as the beginning of an ague; but a warm draught, I trust, will soon cure me."

"Well then," said the Knight; "make yourself at home, and ask for any thing you wish."

So Frank made the lacqueys run about, as if he had been Grand Turk; for having laid his account that he should have some hard knocks, he rather wished to deserve them. With this view, he contrived to torment the servants in the most unconscionable manner; commanding and countermanding in great style, in spite of their murmurs and curses behind his back.

"How!" he exclaimed, "this doublet was made for a grand swag-bellied Abbot; how dare you bring

it to me? Bring me one that will fit me. I'll none of it! Zounds! these slippers hurt my corns; let me have an easier, bigger pair! A plague on this collar! it is harder than a deal-board. I say, it will throttle me; bring me another, softer and easier, if you can."

The noble host, far from expressing the least displeasure at these liberties, spurred on the servants to fulfil his commands, calling them a set of jolter-heads, who did not know how to attend upon such a guest. When the beverage was prepared, both master and guest partook largely of it. Soon after, the former said: "Would you like to take some supper, young man?" "Let them bring up what the cook has got at hand, that I may see whether the larder be well furnished." Orders were sent down; and soon afterwards the servants brought up an excellent repast, worthy of a prince. Frank directly sat down, and without waiting for an invitation, he began to do justice to such a feast. When he had eaten enormously, he looked round, and observed: "If your cellars be as well supplied as your larder, I think I may venture to commend your good housekeeping."

The Knight forthwith made sign to his butler to fill a goblet of common table-wine, and the host emptied it in a good health to his guest. The latter did not forget to pledge him; when the knight,

observing that he had emptied his glass, inquired "What think you of this wine?"

"It's poor stuff," answered Frank; "surely it is not your best. It is tolerable, perhaps, for table drink." "You are a connoisseur, I see," replied Sir Egbert, and ordered the butler to bring some of the best. Frank tasted it. "Come, this is noble! pray let us keep to this!" This they both did: they filled bumpers, and drank healths to each other, until they grew very merry and complimentary. The Knight gave his guest an account of his campaigns; how he had fought against the Venetians, cut his way through their encampment, and slaughtered them like a flock of sheep. The subject appeared to revive the old soldier's enthusiasm; he began to break the bottles, brandished his huge carving-knife for a broad sword, approaching so near his companion, as to put his nose and ears into great jeopardy.

The Knight continued talking of his campaigns; and though it grew late, he was so much in his element, that he appeared to entertain no idea of going to rest. His narrative grew more animated at every bumper, and his guest began to be uneasy, lest this might prove the prologue to the principal plot, in which he was destined to perform a conspicuous, but not very pleasing part. He called, therefore,

for a parting cup, and wished to know where he was to pass the night ; expecting that he should still be pressed to drink ; which, if he refused, he should be dismissed with hard knocks, agreeably to the habit of the house. He was surprised, however, to find his request directly complied with ; the Knight observing, as he broke off his story, “ There is a time for every thing ; you shall hear more to-morrow.”

“ Excuse me, noble Knight,” replied Frank, “ but to-morrow I shall be on my road. I have a long journey before me, as far as Brabant, and must set out early. Let me take my leave, then,—now ; I should not wish to disturb your morning rest.”

“ As you please,” said the Knight, “ only you must not leave my house until I am up ; and see that you take a good breakfast. I will then accompany you to the gates, and take leave of you according to the custom of my castle.”

Poor Frank stood in need of no explanation of these words. He would gladly have waived these last ceremonies, upon which the Knight seemed to pique himself so much. He ordered his guest to be shown to his chamber, and Frank soon reposed his weary limbs upon a fine bed of down. Indeed he was inclined to confess before dropping asleep, that such princely entertainment would hardly be too dearly purchased by a trifling drubbing ; and viewing only the pleasant side of his subject, only plea-

sant dreams haunted his rest. He beheld his beloved walking in a garden of roses with her mother, gathering the most beautiful flowers. He thought he concealed himself behind some shrubs, so that the old lady could not get a view of him. Then he found himself at his old lodgings, where he still saw the delicate white hand of the maiden, busily arranging the flowers. He went and sat down beside her among the grass: he wished to confess how much he loved, but felt so bashful, he could find no words. Doubtless he would have gone on dreaming, on such a subject, until noon, had not the loud voice and step of the Knight, ready booted and spurred, roused him from it, about day-break. Frank heard him giving orders to the cook and butler to send up a good breakfast, and the rest of the servants to attend, to wait and help to dress him.

The dreaming lover parted very reluctantly with his dream and his hospitable bed: but his host's voice was too loud to think of sleeping any more. He knew he should have to get up, and, summoning all his fortitude, he did so. More than a dozen hands were busied with his toilet; and when dressed, the Knight himself conducted him into a hall, where he was seated at a small but well furnished table. As time elapsed, however, our hero's appetite began to fail. His host encouraged him to eat, in order to

keep the cold from his stomach in the morning air. "Sir Knight," replied Frank, "your supper was too excellent to permit me to take breakfast; but, if you please, I will supply my pockets, and eat when I am hungry." So saying, he proceeded to fill his pockets with the choicest viands upon the table. His horse, well cleaned, fed, and accoutred, being now brought to the door, he filled a glass of rich cordial to his host's health, imagining he was thus giving the signal for being set upon, and soundly beaten. To his no small surprize, the Knight only shook him by the hand, wished him a good journey, and sent his servant to open the gates. So he mounted, and spurred away at speed; and in a few minutes found himself beyond the castle-gate, none the worse by a single hair.

He felt greatly relieved, to find himself at perfect freedom, without any aching bones. He could not imagine how his noble host had come to spare him, contrary to the rules of the castle; and now first began to feel grateful for his kindness. He was curious to learn whether there were really any foundation for the report; and at length he turned his horse's head and rode back to inquire. The Knight was standing at the gate, passing his opinion on the points of poor Frank's steed, breeding horses happening to be rather one of his hobbies. Supposing his guest had forgotten some of his bag-

gage, he cast a reproachful look upon his servants :
“ What have you missed, young man ?” he shouted
to our hero, as he drew nigh.—“ Why don’t you pur-
sue your journey ?”

“ I wish to say one word, Sir Knight:—you
will excuse me:—but a malicious report has gone
abroad, severely aspersing your hospitable fame.
It is no less than that, although you regale your
guests well, you make a practice of cuffing them
well before you permit them to depart. On the
faith of this, I confess I did all in my power to
merit the custom, yet you have let me go away in
peace, without paying the usual hard reckoning.
How is this! can there be any truth in such a
report, or may I henceforth give the vile libellers
the lie ?”

“ No !” replied the Knight, “ Fame in this case
has only spoken truth:—no sayings among the
people are ever quite destitute of foundation. But
I will explain the affair to you, if you will alight !”
“ Thank you,” replied Frank, “ but, as I am mount-
ed, I will listen where I am.”—“ Do so,” said the
Knight, with a smile ; “ I will not detain you long.
Every stranger who approaches my gates, shares my
table and my wine ; but I am a simple German of
the old school, I speak as I think, and I wish my
guests to be as open and cheerful as myself ; enjoy
all I give them, and speak out, and ask for every

thing they want. Some of my guests, however, are always tormenting and making a fool of me, by bowing and scraping perpetually, concealing what they think, and talking without any meaning. In fact, they try to flatter one with smooth words, and they conduct themselves like silly women. When I say, Come, eat ! they help themselves with great reluctance to a mere bone, that I should be ashamed to offer to my dog : and if I tell them to drink, they just moisten their lips, as if they held good wine in contempt, and cared not for the bounty of Heaven, not they. Truly, they carried their follies to such a length, that I no longer knew what to do, until I fell into a passion, seized some of them by the collar, gave them a sound cudgelling, and turned them out of doors. This is now my plan, and whenever I meet with a sorry fellow of the kind, I make bold to chastise his folly : I keep a rod for the fool's back ; but such a guest as you will always be welcome ; you spoke your mind freely and boldly, as the good citizens of Bremen always do. Let me entertain you, then, on your return, fear nothing ; and now, fare you well !”

After this explanation, Frank rode on with fresh courage and alacrity towards Antwerp, wishing in his heart that he might every where find so good a reception as at the castle of the Knight of Bronckhost. On first entering the foremost among the

cities of Brabant, his expectations rose to a high pitch. Traces of wealth and luxury were every where visible; no penury, no wretchedness of any kind, were to be seen. "This is the seat of industry," cried Frank; "my father's debtors are doubtless in very good plight. They must have improved in their circumstances, and, I dare say, will be ready to pay me when I produce my vouchers for the justness of my demands." But first, on refreshing himself after the fatigues of his journey, he resolved to inquire into their actual situation and credit. "How does Peter Martens go on?" he inquired of some persons at table. "Is he still alive, and thriving?"—"Peter is a rich man," replied one of the company; "he is in good credit."

"What are Fabian of Pleers' circumstances, think you?"—"Why, he hardly knows how to employ his money—that is the fact. He belongs to the council, and his woollen-trade makes him ample returns."

"Is Jonathan Prishkur in a good line of business?"—"He would just be worth a plum, had not the Emperor Maximilian suffered the French to run away with his bride.* Jonathan had an order to provide lace for her bridal dresses, but the Emperor would not keep his bargain with his merchant, any

* Ann of Bretagne.

more than the bride with him. If you happen to have any young lady, to whom you wish to send a present of fine lace, I dare say he would sell you the royal bridal garment at only half-price."—"Has the house of Butekant failed, or does it still carry on business?"

"It was in a dangerous way some years ago, before the Spanish Caravelles* helped to give it a lift, so that it is now in a promising way."

On inquiring into the credit of several others, Frank found that most of those which had been bankrupts in his father's lifetime, were now in a thriving condition; which led him to conclude, that a timely bankruptcy was a good foundation for future prosperity. These were good tidings; Frank cheered up, and began to arrange his accounts, presenting the old bills at their proper places.

In the people of Antwerp, however, our hero met with much the same usage as his perambulating fellow-citizens of this age experience from shopkeepers in the provincial towns of Germany. Every one treats them well until they call to get in their money. Many would hear nothing of their old debts, declaring that they had all been settled at the time of the bankruptcy; and it was the creditor's fault if he had not accepted payment. Others said

* The Spanish ships, which traded in those times to America, were known by that name.

they did not even remember the name ; their books gave no account of any Melchior. A few submitted a large balance against Frank's father ; and in the course of three days he found himself safely lodged in prison, to answer for them to the very last farthing.

This was an unpleasant prospect for a man who had so far confided in the honest people of Antwerp, as to consider them as the authors of his future fortunes. The bubble had vanished in a moment ; and he began to feel all the tortures of purgatory—thrown into prison—his vessel wrecked just as he was making the harbour, where he hoped he should be safe from the storms of life. The thought of Mela was a dagger to his heart : there was no longer even a shadow of probability that he could ever emerge from this abyss of ruin into respectability and credit. Besides, were he able even to raise his head above water, his beloved was, on her side, perfectly unable to lend him the least assistance.

Cruel despair now took possession of him ; he felt no wish but to die, and to end all his torments. In fact, he did make an attempt to starve himself ; but, as such a process, especially with an excellent stomach, is not in every one's power, after two long days' abstinence, he was seized with such a griping fit of hunger, that he could resist it no longer. He

yielded, and obeyed its dictates, though the temptation was nothing greater than a crust of bread.

It was not exactly the meaning of the hard-hearted citizens of Antwerp to make him pay money, so much as to compel him to renounce all claims upon them. So that either the prayers he had ordered from the church at Bremen, or the citizens' reluctance to pay any more for his prison-board, at length brought him a release. At the end of three months Frank left his prison, upon condition of quitting the city within four-and-twenty hours, and never returning to it. He then received a small sum of money to defray his expenses home; for the law had already seized upon his horse and baggage, to pay the proceedings against him, and for his board. With no other companion than a walking-stick, and with heavy heart, Frank humbly took his leave of the proud city, whose walls he had shortly before entered with such grand expectations. Reckless and dispirited he wandered on, without marking the road which he had taken. He asked no questions, saluted no one, and took notice of nothing, until excess of hunger and fatigue compelled him to seek out some place where he might relieve his wants. Many days he thus wandered on without any aim in view, and even ignorant that he had, instinctively, as it were, taken the right direction homewards. Suddenly he

seemed to awake out of a disagreeable dream, and recognized the road he was going.

He now stopped to reflect whether he had better go on, or retrace his steps. He was overwhelmed with shame and trouble, at the idea of living a beggar in his native city, and soliciting the benevolence of those whom he had formerly surpassed in credit and opulence. How could he appear in the presence of Mela under such circumstances? She would die with shame to behold him! It was certain he would now lose her; and he turned away from the melancholy picture, as if he had already beheld the rabble gathering round and greeting his return, with scorn and mockery, to Bremen.

No! he determined he would rather make for one of the Dutch sea-ports, and enter on board some Spanish ship as a sailor. He would sail for the new world, try his fortune in Peru, where wealth abounded; and never return to his native land, until he succeeded in recovering that property which he had so heedlessly lavished. His beloved Mela appeared now only like some distant shadow that he should catch at in vain; though he felt a beam of pleasure warm his heart at the bare idea of her becoming connected with his future destiny; and he hastened rapidly forwards, as if he were about to reach the spot where she dwelt. He had returned as far as the frontiers of the Netherlands, when one

night, about sunset, he approached a small place called Rummelsburgh, which was subsequently destroyed in the thirty years' war. There were a number of carriers in the tavern, and he could find no room. The landlord bade him hasten to the next village, as he, in fact, mistook him for the spy of some gang of thieves, on watch, perhaps, for the carrier's goods. So, in spite of his increasing weariness, Frank found he must again take his bundle on his shoulder, and prepare for a farther journey that night.

As he went, however, he made some cutting reflections upon the landlord's inhumanity; inso-much, that, as if repenting of his own harsh proposal, he began to pity the poor traveller, and called out, "One word yet, young man: if you particularly wish to pass the night here, I think I can contrive it. There are plenty of apartments in the castle hard by; I have got the keys, if you should not think it too solitary for you." Frank willingly closed with the offer, requiring only supper and shelter, whether in a palace or in a hut. But mine host was somewhat of a wag, and, intending to revenge himself upon poor Frank for his abuse of him, he proposed a night's residence in the haunted old castle, where there had been no inhabitant for many years, owing to the cruel pranks of a spirit which had frightened them all in succession away.

This castle was erected on a steep cliff, on the

outskirts of the town, and directly opposite to the inn, being merely separated by the public road and a small brook. It was kept in good repair, on account of its delightful situation ; and was very well built and furnished, though it served its present possessor only for a hunting-seat. Occasionally he gave a splendid feast there, but was sure to leave it along with all his followers on the approach of evening, having already been terrified by the spirit, which made a hideous noise, and raged through the castle, though he never appeared during the day. However disagreeable to the lord of the castle, as a spectre, it had the good effect of protecting his property from robbers, the boldest of whom refused to venture near the spot.

It was now quite dark. Frank carried a lantern, accompanied by the host, and a little basket of provisions. He was soon at the castle gates, where the host had provided a good supper, and a bottle of wine, which he did not intend to appear in the bill ; likewise a pair of wax candles, as there were none in the castle, nobody remaining there after twilight. As they were walking, Frank observed the basket and candles, and though they would be quite useless to him, thought he might still have to account for them in the bill.

“ The piece of candle in the lantern is enough for me,” said our hero, “ until I go to bed. I hope

I shall not open my eyes before it be broad day ; for I feel very sleepy and want a deal of rest."

"Then I ought not to conceal from you," replied the host, "what report says. The castle is haunted by a plaguy ghost, who walks about all night. But we shall be so near, that you need not be the least afraid. Should anything occur, you have only to call out pretty loudly, and we shall be ready to assist you. People with us are stirring all night, and somebody or other will be at hand. Why, I have lived here these thirty years, and, for my own part, I have never seen anything, that is, anything *invisible*. The noise that is sometimes heard, proceeds, I take it, from cats, or other animals that harbour in the garrets."

Mine host spoke truth when he declared he had never seen anything invisible—not even the spectre ; he took care never to be near enough the castle at night. Even now the varlet did not venture to proceed across the threshold ; but opening the door, he handed Frank the basket, directed him which way to proceed, and bade him a good night. Our traveler entered the great hall without feeling the least awe ; despising the story as mere gossip, or some old tradition of a real event adorned with a little of the supernatural. He called to mind the report of Sir Egbert, whose heavy hand he had so much dreaded, and yet who had treated him with so much

kindness. In fact, he made a point of believing just the contrary of what he had heard, quite forgetting, as the knight himself stated, that all such reports were founded in truth.

According to the host's direction, he now ascended a winding staircase, which brought him to a door, the key of which the landlord had given him. He entered a long dark passage, where his steps echoed along the walls; thence he passed into a grand saloon, which led into a row of smaller rooms, well supplied with all that was necessary, both for ornament and use. He fixed on the most comfortable one he could find, with the windows looking towards the tavern-yard, whence he could gather every word that was spoken. This was reviving, and the room had a soft bed on which to repose his weary head. He now lighted his candles, sat down to his supper, of which he partook with as hearty a relish as if he had been eating at his old lodgings in the good city of Bremen. A large round-bellied bottle soon removed his thirst, and while his appetite lasted he had no time to think of the spectre. When he heard some noise at a distance, and fear whispered: "Listen! there comes the ghost!" his courage only answered, "Nonsense! the cats are fighting." After supper he listened rather more attentively, as it drew near midnight, and Fear uttered three anxious

ideas, before Frank's courage could find a single answer.

To protect himself against sudden surprize, he first locked and bolted the door, seated himself on a stone bench at the window, then opened it and looked out, to divert his mind with a view of the heavens, and the silvery queen of night. Gradually the street below grew quite silent, contrary to mine host's assurance, that his people were always stirring. Frank heard one door closed after another, the lights were extinguished, and the whole inn was buried in profound repose. The watch going his round, told the hour and the state of the weather; besides beginning, to Frank's great consolation, to sing an evening hymn directly under his window. Had he not feared that the man would be terrified away, if he heard himself spoken to from the haunted castle, he would gladly have entered into conversation with him.

Perhaps, in a noisy populous town, where a man meets with numbers of silly people, he may feel happy in retiring to some secluded spot, and think of the pleasures of solitude. He fancies it would be extremely soothing to the mind, dwells upon all its advantages, and sighs for its enjoyment. This is a different kind of solitude to that met with in the island of Juan Fernandez where once a shipwrecked sailor passed many years; or that of being quite alone, in a deep forest at midnight, or in some

old deserted castle, where damp walls and vast unexplored vaults awaken only anxiety and horror ; where there is no sign of living thing, save the melancholy ruin-haunting owl ; there solitude is hateful, intolerable ; and companions are pleasant, particularly if the lonely being should, like Frank, be momentarily in expectation of seeing a terrific spectre. So situated, a conversation from the window with a watchman, might be thought more entertaining than the most pleasing book in the world ; even than a treatise upon solitude itself. Had Zimmerman been put in Frank's place, in the old castle of Rummelsburgh, on the frontiers of Westphalia, he might then have projected as interesting a treatise on the pleasures of society, as its more tiresome members induced him to write upon solitude.

Midnight has been immemorially held sacred to the spiritual world ; a period when the more vulgar animal kingdom lies buried in repose. Then spirits begin to live and act ; and, for this reason, Frank very much wished to fall asleep before the exact hour arrived. So he closed the window, examined every corner of the chamber, and then threw his weary limbs upon the soft couch. Yet sleep did not soon visit his eyes ; he had a strong palpitation, which he attributed to the strong wine ; and he repeated his prayers solemnly, more fervently, indeed, than he had done for years. Soon after this, he fell

asleep ; but shortly awoke with a sudden start. Just as he was trying to recollect where he was, he heard the clock strike twelve, which the watchman in a few moments confirmed. Luckily, he could hear no other noise ; though Frank listened attentively.

Just, however, as he was turning on his side, half relapsing into sleep, he plainly heard a door open at some distance ; and then it closed again with a pretty smart noise.

“ Heaven have mercy on us !” whispered Fear, “ Here comes the Spectre !” “ No, it is the wind,” replied Courage, “ nothing more :” yet the sound came near and more near. It was the heavy step of a man, rattling his chains, as he moved along, or of the chamberlain of some decayed castle, surveying his rooms, and changing his bunch of keys. This could not surely be the wind ; Courage was vanquished, and Fear drove Frank’s blood to his heart, till it beat as if it would burst its confines.

The affair grew more serious as the noise drew near ; and Frank could not muster courage to get up, and call at the window for assistance. He only drew the bed-clothes closer over him, as the ostrich is said to hide his head in the bushes, if he can no longer avoid his enemy. Other doors opened and shut with hideous noise ; till, at length, an attempt was made on that in which our hero slept. A number of keys were tried, and the right one was at last found.

Still the bars held it fast: when a loud crack, like thunder, was heard, and the door flew open. A tall spare man entered, with a very dark beard. He was dressed in a very old fashioned style; had a sorrowful expression of countenance, with large bushy brows, that gave him a look of deep thought. A scarlet mantle hung over his left shoulder, and his hat was high and peaked. He stepped silently through the room, with the same slow, heavy step, as before; looked at the consecrated candles, and snuffed them. He next threw aside his mantle, opened a small bag he held under his arm, took out a shaving apparatus, and began sharpening a razor on a broad leather strap, which hung at his belt. Frank now actually perspired with fear; he commended his case to the Holy Virgin, and looked with much anxiety for the close of the last proceeding with the razor; not certain whether it was meant for his beard or his throat. He was glad, however, to observe the spectre pour water out of a silver ewer, into a small basin of the same metal; then with his long hand he mixed the soap into fine foaming suds, placing a chair, and with a singular look and air, anxiously beckoned the affrighted Frank to take his seat. He felt that it was as impossible to resist this appeal, as it is for a vizier to resist a mute who brings orders from the Grand Turk, to return with the said vizier's head. It is best, in the

like case, to make a virtue of necessity, and quietly permit oneself to be strangled. Frank obeyed; threw off the bed-clothes, rose, put on his dressing-gown, and took his seat.

The spectral barber tied the napkin round his trembling customer's neck, took his scissors, and slashed off Frank's hair and beard. He next lathered his chin, and even his head with the suds; which being done, he began to shave him, so smooth and carefully, that he shortly could not boast a single hair above his shoulders. The operation completed, the spectre washed and dried his customer very clean and nice; then bowed, packed up his shaving materials, took up his scarlet cloak, and turned towards the door. The candles burnt quite bright during the whole scene; and in a mirror opposite to him, he saw that the barber had made him look like a complete Chinese pagod. He was rather vexed at parting with his fine auburn curls, but he breathed more freely, flattering himself that he should escape unhurt, the spectre appearing to have no farther power over him.

The spectre barber walked away in silence, as he had come, to all appearance quite the reverse of all his glib-tongued brethren. Before he reached the door, he stood still, looking round him with a mournful air, particularly at his well-trimmed customer, while he touched his own black beard. This

he repeated three times ; and the third time, while his other hand was upon the door. It struck Frank that the barber's ghost wished him to render him some service ;—perhaps, thought he, the same which I have just received from him. In spite of his sad looks, the ghost appeared as much inclined to jest as to be in earnest, and as he had only passed a sort of trick upon, not injured him, our hero felt no longer afraid. So he beckoned, in his turn, for the spectre to take his seat, which he did with evident pleasure and alacrity. He once more threw aside his red cloak, put his bag upon the table, and sat down, with the air of a person who expects to be shaved. Frank took care to follow the manner which the spectre had observed ; first cutting off the beard and hair with the scissars, and then soaping his whole head, his new customer sitting the whole time as still as a statue. Frank was rather awkward, having never handled a razor, and, in fact, shaved the poor patient ghost so much against the grain, that he made him pull the queerest faces in the world. Sensible how much he bungled, Frank began to be afraid, recollecting the prudent precept, “ Not to meddle with another man's business,” though he still proceeded, trying to do his best, until at last he succeeded in making the ghost as clean and bald-headed as himself. The moment he ceased, the spectre barber found his tongue : “ Friend ! I thank thee for the

great and humane service thou hast rendered me. Thou hast thus released me from long captivity :— three hundred years bondage within these walls ! Here, when my spirit departed, I have been condemned to remain, until some mortal should be found to retaliate upon me, and inflict what I had inflicted upon so many others during my lifetime.

“ In times of yore, there once lived a sad infidel within these walls, who alike mocked both priest and layman. Count Hartman was no one’s friend : he observed neither divine nor human laws ; violating even the sacred ties of hospitality. No stranger ever arrived here, no mendicant solicited alms, but he was sure to be seized and tormented. I was his barber, said every thing to flatter his foibles, and led the sort of life I chose. Often the pious pilgrim was invited, as he passed the gates, into the castle : a bath was prepared, and, when he expected to refresh himself, I seized him by my master’s orders, shaved him quite bald, and then turned him from the castle with bitter gibes and mockery. The Count used to look out, and enjoy the sport from the castle window, more particularly when a crowd of mischievous boys got round and ridiculed and insulted the poor pilgrim ; running and crying out after him, like the malicious little urchins in Scripture :—‘ Old baldhead, baldhead !’

“ Well, Sir, once a holy pilgrim, just returned

from abroad, bearing a heavy cross upon his shoulders, like a true penitent, with the mark of two nails in his hands, two in his feet, and one in his side, his hair all entangled like a crown of thorns, approached the castle. He entered ; asked for water to wash his feet, and a piece of bread. Agreeably to our custom I prepared him a bath, and then, without the least veneration for his sanctity, I took and shaved him quite clean and close. But, alas ! the pious man uttered a heavy curse, which he laid upon me in the following words: ‘ Oh ! thou reprobate—after death both heaven and hell—yea, the iron gates of purifying purgatory, shall alike be closed against thy soul ! It shall remain a perpetual spectre within these very walls, until a traveller of his own accord, shall retaliate on thee this thy evil deed !’

“ I felt myself grow sick, as he concluded the curse—the marrow wasted in my bones ; I fell into a lingering decay, till I became a very shadow, and my soul soon separated from its mortal tabernacle. It remained, however, in these walls, as the pious man commanded ; and in vain I looked for deliverance from the chains that bound me to the spot. I was denied the repose for which the soul pines on leaving the body ; and every year which I have spent here, has appeared an age of torment. As a greater punishment I was compelled, also, to con-

tinue the occupation which I practised during my life-time. But how was this to be done? my very appearance, alas! banished its inhabitants in succession from the castle; pilgrims rarely came to pass the night here, and, though I shaved all who did come, not one of them would understand my wish, and render me a service that would have freed my soul from captivity. This you have done: I shall no longer haunt this castle, but hasten to my long, long sighed-for rest. Accept my thanks, then, once more, young stranger; if I had any secret treasure at my command, you should have it; but wealth I never had, and there is none any where concealed in this castle. Yet listen to my advice! sojourn here until your head and chin are again covered; then go back to your native place; and stop on the bridge over the river Weser, in the autumnal equinox, for a friend; who will be sure to meet you there, and inform you what to do, in order to thrive on earth. Surrounded with affluence and ease, pray do not forget me—but order three masses for the repose of my soul on each anniversary of this day. Farewell, I am departing hence, never more to return!”

Saying this the spectral barber vanished; after having clearly proved by his communicativeness his right of assuming the character of the castle barber. He left his deliverer filled with astonishment at his

strange adventure. For some time he doubted its reality, and thought he must have been dreaming, until happening to put his hand to his head, he found that it was all but too true; he felt very cold, and he had no wig to protect it. After reflecting a little while, he retired to rest, and it was near noon next day before he awoke.

The wicked landlord had watched from early dawn for the arrival of the castle guest. Anticipating a bald head, he was prepared to receive him with well affected surprize, but secret ridicule, at his night's adventure. As mid-day came, and no guest appeared, he grew uneasy lest the spectre had treated him too roughly—perhaps strangled, or frightened him to death. Not wishing to have carried the joke so far, he hastened with his servants in some anxiety towards the castle; and sought out the room where he had seen the light the preceding evening. He found a strange key in the door, but it was bolted, a measure Frank adopted on the ghost's departure. He knocked with such violence that Frank leaped up at the noise, thinking, at first, that the spectre was coming on another visit. But hearing it was mine host's voice intreating him to give some sign, Frank rose and opened the door.

“ Great God, and all his saints!” cried the landlord, lifting up his hands with apparent terror, “ then old Red Mantle has been here;” (the spectre

being known to the villagers by that name,) “and the tradition is true enough. How did he look? what said he? and more than all, what did he do?”

Frank, aware of mine host’s roguery, replied, “How should he look! as a man in a red mantle does; what he did is evident to any one; and I shall always take care to remember his words. ‘Kind stranger,’ he said, ‘trust not the landlord who dwells opposite, he knew too well what would happen to you. But leave him to me, I will reward him. I am going to leave the castle, and will take up my quarters at his inn—I will pinch and plague him to the end of his life; unless, indeed, he consent to receive you in his house, and treat you handsomely, until your hair and beard be again full grown.’”

Our poor host trembled sadly at hearing this threat; he crossed himself, and swore by the Holy Virgin that he would be glad to give Frank the run of his house as long as he pleased. He forthwith conducted his guest to the inn, and waited upon him, with the utmost obsequiousness, himself.

Our hero obtained great reputation as an exorcist, for the spectre was no longer to be heard at the Castle. He often went to sleep there, and a young fellow, who had courage to accompany him, returned without a shaven head. The owner of the Castle, hearing that the spectre had disappeared, sent orders, with great alacrity, to have the stranger

most hospitably treated, who had delivered his property from such a disagreeable house-steward as he proved.

By the approach of autumn, Frank's brown locks began to cover his temples again; and he grew anxious to proceed home. His thoughts were busied with conjectures about the friend whom he was to meet upon the bridge over the Weser—the author of his future fortunes. Being prepared for his departure, the landlord presented him with a fine horse, and a well-filled purse, sent by the owner of the Castle as some token of his gratitude for the service he had received. Thus Frank was enabled to re-enter his native city on horseback, quite in as good circumstances as those in which he had left it the year before. He sought out his old quarters in the narrow street, where he continued to live very retired, and contented himself with making inquiries after his beloved Mela, who, he learnt, was still single, and enjoying very good health. At present this was sufficient for him; as he would not presume to appear in her presence until his fate was ascertained; so that he did not even inform her of his arrival in the place.

He looked forward very anxiously for the period of the equinox; his impatience made each day appear as long as a year. The long wished-for time at last arrived; and the night previous he could not

close his eyes, on account of his eager anticipations: his heart beat strong, and he felt as if the blood was about to burst from his veins, just as it was in the Castle of Rummelsberg before the spectre's appearance. He rose at daybreak, in order not to let his unknown friend wait, and hastened to the bridge, which he found quite deserted. He then paced to and fro, anticipating the highest earthly enjoyment, in dwelling upon his future prosperity: for the mere belief that our wishes will be indulged, includes, perhaps, the fullest measure of human happiness. Our hero amused himself with planning a variety of modes of appearing before his beloved, when he had realized his grand hopes; not being able to decide whether it would be better to present himself in all his splendour, or to communicate the happy change of affairs by degrees. Then he was very inquisitive to learn who this secret friend of his might be. "One of my own old acquaintances, I wonder:—but they seem one and all to have abandoned me since my reverses. Then how will it be in his power to serve me so astonishingly? Will the affair be hard or easy to accomplish?" None of these questions did he know how to answer satisfactorily, in spite of all his earnest meditations. The bridge now began to be thronged with people, coaches, waggons, horse and foot passengers, hastening to and fro; besides a number of mendicants

of every description, one after another coming to take their usual stations in a place so favourable to their calling. They soon began to work upon the compassion of passengers ; and the first of this ragged regiment, who implored Frank's charity, was an old veteran, bearing his military honour of a wooden leg, having left the other behind him for his country's service. As the reward of his valour, he was permitted to beg wherever he chose ; and as he was a good physiognomist, versed in a knowledge of the human heart expressed in the lines of the face, he applied it with such success, that he seldom solicited alms in vain. He was not deceived with Frank on this occasion ; for the latter, in the joy of his heart, flung him a silver piece, as much as sixpence, into his hat.

For some time Frank did not expect to see much company, besides the lower classes, passing over the bridge ; the more rich and indolent still enjoying their morning slumbers. He imagined that his benefactor must, of course, belong to the wealthier class, and took no notice of the rest of the passengers, until, the courts of justice being opened, the lawyers and magistrates should proceed in their full dress to the Council, and the rich merchants to the Exchange. Then he began to grow very anxious, and peered into the faces of all the most respectably-dressed people who passed by. But hour after hour

elapsed, until the morning was gone. Dinner came, and business seemed to cease ; yet no friend caught our hero's eye. He paced to and fro along the bridge, where there remained only himself and the mendicants ; who now opened their srips, and dined on cold meat, still keeping their respective stations. Frank wished to follow their example ; but, having no provisions with him, he purchased some fruit, which he ate as he walked along. The members of the club, as they sat at dinner, remarked how long he had been haunting the same spot, without speaking to any one, or, like themselves, transacting business. They set him down for an idle youth, though most of them had experienced his benevolence ; and he did not escape their facetious observations. At length, they gave him the title of the bridge-surveyor ; with the exception of the old soldier, who noticed that his face no longer betokened the same cheerfulness ; that he seemed to have some serious business upon his mind ; his hat slouched over his eyes, his step slow and cautious : while he was engaged in eating the remnant of an apple, as if hardly conscious of what he was doing.

The old physiognomist wished to apply his observations to some profit ; he set his natural and artificial leg both in motion, passed to the other side of the bridge, and prepared to ask our musing hero for more alms, as if he had been a fresh comer.

He succeeded—the thoughtful visionary only thrust his hand into his pocket, and threw a piece of money without even looking at him.

After dinner, numbers of new faces appeared; but not a single person spoke to poor Frank, who began to grow impatient. His attention was still fixed upon every respectable passenger; strange, he thought, that no one addressed him—that all should pass him without the least notice; very few even deigning to return his salutation.

Towards evening, the bridge became once more deserted, the beggars one after another returning homewards, leaving our hero to his own melancholy thoughts, with hopes deceived; and the nappy prospect, that had shone upon him in the morning, vanished with the parting day. He felt a great inclination to throw himself into the river, and it was only the idea of Mela, and a desire of seeing her before he committed the fatal deed, which prevented him. He determined, then, to be on the watch for her on the ensuing day, as she went to mass, to gaze on her beauty with rapture, and then bury his passion for ever in the waves of the Weser.

As he was leaving the bridge, he met the old soldier, who had been, meanwhile, busily guessing at the motive of the poor young fellow, in watching on the bridge the whole day. He waited longer than usual, to see whether he would take his depar-

ture, until his patience being quite exhausted, he could not resist his curiosity to inquire into the reason of his turning the bridge into a dwelling-place. "Pray, Sir," he began, "may I be permitted to ask——?"

Frank, by no means in a communicative humour, and finding the long expected address come from the lips of an old mendicant, answered rather sharply—"What do you want, old grey-beard? speak out."

"Sir," said the old man, "you and I were the first who took our stations on the bridge to-day, and you see we are the last to leave it. As for me and my companions, it is our business; but you do not belong to our fraternity, and yet you have passed all the day here. May I be informed, if it be no secret, what can have been your reason, and what weighs so much upon your mind, that you want to get clear of here?"

"What boots it for thee to know, my old fellow, what ails me, and what lies so heavy upon my heart? it can avail thee nothing."

"But, Sir, I feel an interest in you; you have given me alms twice this blessed day, for which God reward you, say I. Yet your face is not half so happy as it was this morning, and I am sorry for it."

This simple honest expression of sympathy won Frank's heart; and losing all his misanthropy, he gave the old soldier a kind answer. "Learn, then,

that I have waited here so patiently the whole of this day to see a friend who promised to meet me ; but who has made me wait long enough in vain."

"No offence, Sir," said the old man ; "but such a friend, whosoever he be, is no better than a scoundrel, to think of making a fool of you. I would make him feel the weight of my crutch, had he ventured to treat me so. Why not send you word, if something prevented him from coming, instead of treating you like a school lad?"

"Yet," said Frank, "I ought not to condemn him : he did not exactly promise ; it was in a dream that he told me to wait for him." For Frank thought that it would be too tedious to relate the ghost's story, so he turned it into a dream."

"That is quite another thing," cried the old man : "I don't wonder you should be served thus, if you believe in dreams. Many mad ones have I had in my life, but I never was so mad as to give any credit to them. If I had now all the money which has been promised me in dreams, I think I might buy the whole city of Bremen ; but I never stirred a hand to inquire into the truth of them, for I knew that it must be all labour lost. Forgive me, but I could almost laugh in your face ;—to think of spending a good summer's day here for the sake of a dream, while you might have been passing your time merrily with your friends."

“ It would seem, from all we know, old friend, that thou art right ; yet I dreamed the thing so exactly to the minutest circumstance, more than three months ago, that I was to meet him on this very spot, and hear tidings of the greatest importance to me ; that I could not refrain from trying whether there was any truth in it.”—“ Truth, indeed !” replied the soldier ; “ why no one dreams more truly, as you may say, than I do : I had one dream I shall never forget. I can’t say how long back it was ; but my good angel certainly appeared in the shape of a fine youth, with yellow curly hair, two wings upon his back, and took his place at my bed-side. ‘ Listen, old Berthold,’ he said, ‘ and lose not a word, if thou dost wish to be happy. Thou art fated to find a large treasure, and enjoy thyself for the rest of thy life. So go to-morrow, after sunset, with thy spade in thy hand ; cross the river to thy right hand, pass all the houses, and the monastery of St. John, until thou reach a garden with four steps leading to it from the road. Wait there quietly, till the moon shines bright ; then push with all thy might against the door, and it will open. Walk into the garden without the least fear ; turn up a walk on thy left hand, overshadowed with vines, and behind them thou wilt see a large apple tree. Well, step up to the stem of it, with thy face towards the moon. About two yards distant, thou wilt find two

rose bushes; begin to dig close to them, till thou hittest against a stone plate, under which there lies an iron chest full of gold and other precious articles. Be it heavy and unwieldy as it will, heed it not, but lift it out of the hole, for thou wilt be rewarded for thy pains, when the key is found below."

Our hero stood mute with astonishment, as he listened to the old man's dream. He would not have been able to hide his agitation, if the darkness had not prevented his companion from seeing his face. He plainly recognized in the old man's description, a favourite garden that had belonged to his father, and which he had since sold. For the old gentleman had laid out the garden in a very stiff and formal taste, which Frank did not approve; but, for some secret reason, he had deposited there a portion of his wealth.

The cripple now became a very interesting object to Frank; for in him he had met with the very friend whom the spectre had promised. He would gladly have embraced him: he would have called him by the name of father, and of friend, had not prudence suggested another course. He merely said, "Yours was truly a clear dream: but what did you do next morning? Did you follow your good angel's advice?" "Not I, forsooth!" replied the old man: "you know it was only a dream; and have I not laid awake night after night, when my good an-

gel might have found me often enough, and told me to my face ; yet he never troubled himself about me. Do you think, if he did, that I should now, in old age, be going a begging." Frank here bestowed the last piece of silver upon his lame friend, saying, " Go, old father ! go, and drink my health in a pint of good rhenish : thy conversation has put me into a good humour. Come here again, every day. I hope we shall meet at the bridge again." It was long since the old cripple had reaped such a day's harvest : he blessed his kind benefactor from his soul ; limped into a tavern, and enjoyed himself most gloriously ; while Frank, flushed with fresh hope, hastened home to his narrow street.

The next day, he prepared his delving materials, though not the same as are generally employed by treasure-seekers. He had no forms of conjuration, no osier twig, enchanted girdle, nor hieroglyphics of any kind. Neither were they requisite, while the three chief implements,—a pick-axe, a spade, and the subterraneous treasure itself, were close at hand. Thus armed, Frank set out towards sunset, and concealed his implements near the spot, under a hedge. He had too much reliance on his ghost-barber's honour, to doubt the existence of the treasure ; and he waited for the moonshine with no little impatience. No sooner did he mark her silvery horns through the bushes, than Frank began his la-

bours, paying attention to every thing the old man had said ; by which means, he shortly laid hands upon the treasure, without incurring any opposition or difficulty, either from a fierce mastiff, or a scowling wolf, and without even having the light of a blue flame, to guide his steps.

He seized some of the gold coins deposited in the chest, with feelings of unspeakable joy ; which being somewhat subsided, he began to think how he might best convey his treasure secretly to his lodgings. It was far too weighty to carry without assistance, and he soon began to experience some of the anxiety so inseparable from the possession of wealth. The new Cræsus could hit upon no other plan but that of placing his riches in a hollow tree, which he found in a meadow near the garden. Then putting the chest back in its place, he covered it over with earth, and made it as smooth as he could. In the course of three days he succeeded in transporting the whole of his wealth safely into his lodgings, from the hollow tree. Believing that he was at length authorized to throw off all concealment, he forthwith arrayed himself in a rich dress, ordered the prayers at church to be discontinued, and in its place, a thanksgiving to be put up for a traveller on his safe return to his native city, after having brought his affairs to a successful issue. Then he concealed himself in a corner of the

church, where, unseen by his beloved, though his eyes were fixed upon hers, he might indulge that ecstasy, the idea of which had only a few days before prevented him from putting a desperate end to his existence. As the thanksgiving was repeating, her cheeks glowed, her eyes were suffused with joy, and she had such difficulty to conceal her raptures, that no one could misinterpret their subsequent meeting in the church, which was so truly expressive.

Henceforward Frank showed himself upon change, and entered into business. His transactions were equally fortunate; his growing affluence excited the envy of his fellow-citizens, who declared that he must have been more lucky than wise, to become rich by collecting old debts. He engaged a noble mansion opposite Sir Roland's statue in the great square; he hired clerks and domestics, and applied with great assiduity to trade. The despicable race of parasites again flocked around him, expecting to be again admitted to a share in his prosperity; but wiser by experience and adversity, he only made them civil speeches in return, allowing them to go empty-handed away. This he found to be a sovereign remedy for freeing himself from their company; he never asked them to dinner, and they returned no more.

Frank now became the topic of the day in the

good city of Bremen. Every body talked of the great fortune which he had so unaccountably made abroad ; it was equally the subject of conversation at feasts and funerals, in courts of law, and upon 'change. In proportion as his opulence increased, and became more known, Mela's happiness seemed to diminish. She thought her mute lover was at last in a condition to declare himself ; still he remained silent, except occasionally meeting her in the street, and even here he became daily less attentive. Such a demeanour showed but a cold lover ; and that harpy, jealousy, soon began to torment her, whispering the most unpleasant suspicions possible : " Let me banish the fond hope of fixing so variable a being, thus changing like a weathercock blown about by the least breeze. True, he loved, and was faithful to thee as long as he was thine equal in rank ; but with this revolution in his affairs, being raised so high above thee, he looks down upon the purest affection, because of thy poverty. Surrounded with wealth and splendour, he perhaps adores some haughtier beauty who abandoned him in his misfortune, but now with her syren voice calls him back. Yes, and the voice of adulation hath changed his heart. His new companions tell him to choose from among the richest and loftiest of his native place ; that no fathers would refuse their daughters, no maidens reject him as a lover. They will make

him fond of power and importance ; he will connect himself with some mighty family, and forget his poor Mela."

Thoughts like these, inspired by jealousy, tormented her incessantly. The first time she had heard of his prosperity, she hailed it with delight ; not because she was ambitious to share so large a fortune, but to gratify her mother, who had never enjoyed a moment's happiness since she resigned the wealthy brewer. Mela now wished that all the prayers which had been offered up for his success had not been heard, and that the traveller's business had not succeeded, as he would then, perhaps, have been faithful.

Her mother was at no loss to discover the cause of her daughter's melancholy. The report of the late lint merchant's improved circumstances had reached her ; she was aware of Mela's attachment ; and as he was now a busy reputable merchant, and the very model of good order, she could no longer see any reason for his delaying his offer of marriage, if he really wished to possess her. She never mentioned the subject to Mela, in order not to wound her feelings ; but the latter, no longer able to conceal her grief, at length confided the source of it to her mother. The old lady, however, only heard what she knew well enough before ; though it gave occasion for her to offer her opinion on the subject.

Above all, she avoided saying a single word of reproach, being resolved to make the best of every thing that could not be helped. In fact, she tried every means of consoling her unhappy daughter she could, teaching her to bear up against her blighted prospects with piety and firmness.

“Dearest child,” she would say, “as you have brewed, you know, so you must bake; you threw away Fortune when she solicited, and you must learn to bear her loss. Experience has shown me that the hope we most count upon is often delusive. Follow my example; listen to it no longer, and endless disappointments will no longer destroy your peace. Look for no favourable change in your fate, and you will soon be contented. It is better to honour our spinning-wheel, which procures us the means of living, than to dream of greatness and wealth, since we have learnt to do without them.”

Such philosophical remarks came from the good old lady’s heart, since the failure of her last dear hope connected with the worthy brewer. She had simplified her mode of life, so that it was hard for fate to interfere with it farther. Mela had not acquired the same philosophical resignation, and her mother’s advice had a different effect from that she contemplated. Her daughter’s conscience smote her as the destroyer of her mother’s fondest hopes, and she severely reproached herself. Though they

had never agreed in opinion regarding marriage, and Mela thought bread and salt, seasoned by love, enough for mortal happiness ; yet she was not deaf to the report of her lover's prosperity, she had even indulged in some pleasing domestic arrangements, was delighted at the idea of realizing her mother's luxurious dreams, and of restoring her to her former opulence, without doing violence to her own inclinations.

The pleasing illusion vanished with the gradual lapse of time, while Frank still refused to make his appearance. Next came a report that he was preparing an establishment for the reception of his bride, a rich lady of Antwerp, who was on the point of arriving. This was, indeed, a death-blow to her hopes, and was too much even for her feelings of resignation. She vowed to tear the image of the faithless wretch for ever from her heart, and to dry her tears,—while at the same time they flowed afresh.

In an hour,—and there were many such, when she quite forgot her vow, and was recurring with sweet and bitter fancies to the one loved idea, however she esteemed it unworthy her,—she was roused by a low tap at the door. Her mother opened it ;—it was Frank ; their old neighbour Frank, from the narrow street. He wore a rich dress, and his fine brown curls clustered round his forehead, and seem-

ed to perfume the room. So splendid an appearance betokened some more important object than selling lint. The old lady started—she attempted to speak; but the words faltered on her lips. Mela rose suddenly from her seat;—she blushed and grew pale by turns, but remained silent, as well as her mother. Frank, however, was perfectly at his ease; he now adapted words to the soft melody which he had often played on his lute; and in bold open terms he at length declared his long silent love. Then turning to the happy mother, he solemnly entreated her consent to his union with her daughter. Next he gave explanations of all suspicious and unpleasant circumstances, concluding by declaring that the bride for whom preparations had been making was only the fair Mela herself.

On recovering from her surprize, the ceremonious old lady determined, as a matter of propriety, to take one week's consideration, though tears of joy were in her eyes, and eloquently spoke the consent she could not. Frank, however, became so pressing, that she was compelled to steer a middle course between old custom and propriety, and the wishes of the new lover; and she delegated her daughter to give an answer agreeable to herself. A strange revolution had been at work in Mela's virgin heart since his entrance into the room. No stronger proof of his innocence could be imagined, than such a

visit; his apparent indifference was all explained. He had been so very assiduous and active in his business, and to prepare also for their marriage, that he had not sooner had time; but there was now no reason why she should refuse her consent. So, she was fain to pronounce the decisive word, confirming the hopes of love, which she did with so much sweetness of manner, that the delighted Frank could not help catching it in a glowing kiss.

The happy lovers had now, for the first time, leisure to translate into its proper language, the hieroglyphics of their secret correspondence, which they soon discovered they had already understood, and done justice to each other's sentiments. This supplied them with a pleasant subject of conversation, and it was long before Frank took leave of his charming bride. But he had business to transact on 'change, for Frank was now a man of business.

He now wished to meet with his old friend the soldier, whom he had always remembered, though he had apparently neglected him. On his side, the cripple had examined the faces of all the passengers who had appeared on the bridge, without recognizing his generous young friend, as he had been led to expect: but the moment he saw him approach, he limped as fast as his crutch could carry him, to bid him welcome; and Frank, kindly hailing the old man, said, "Do you think, friend, you could go

with me to the new town, on business? you shall be well paid for your trouble."

"Why not?" returned the old veteran, "I have a wooden leg that is never tired; and I can walk at a pretty smart pace when it suits me. Only wait a little, till the little grey man comes; he never fails to cross the bridge towards evening."

"There is no need to wait for the little grey man," said Frank: "what can you have to do with him?"

"What!" repeated the soldier, "why, the grey man brings me a silver groat every night of his life, from whom I neither know nor care. Sometimes I begin to suspect, that it must be the evil one, who wants me to barter my soul for money. Be that as it may, I know nothing of it, so it is nothing to me. I have closed no such bargain, and I shall not keep it."

"I fancy not," said our hero, smiling; "but if you will now follow me, you shall have the silver groat." So the cripple followed him through a number of streets, into a remote part of the town near the rampart. There he stopped before a small house, just newly built, and knocked at the door. On its being opened, Frank walked in, and said to the old man, "My friend, thou hast once bestowed upon me a very pleasant evening, and it is right that I should cheer up the evening of thy life. Behold

this house and all its contents ! they are thine, with the little garden beyond. There will be a person to take care of you, and you will find the silver groat every day upon your dining-table. Fear not the evil one on the score of thy silver groat, old fellow, for he in the grey jacket was no other than an agent of mine. He appeared only to bring you the money, until this thy new dwelling was provided. For as your good angel did not please you, I have undertaken to fill his place."

Frank then showed the old soldier his abode : the table stood ready covered, and there was every thing necessary for his comfort and convenience. Old Cripple was so astonished at his good luck, that he doubted its reality ; he imagined it could be no other than a dream, that a rich man should thus pay such attention to the poor. Frank soon convinced him, and the tears of gratitude started into his eyes. His benefactor was more than rewarded at the sight ; and, to preserve his adopted character of a good angel, he suddenly vanished, leaving him to explain the affair as he could.

Next morning, the abode of the fair betrothed most resembled a fair ; such was the throng of milliners, jewellers, lace-merchants, tailors, shoemakers, and sempstresses, all vieing with each other in laying their treasures at her feet. Mela spent the whole of that day in selecting from the fashion-

able stores whatever articles were most becoming and most pleasing to the eye, such as constituted a grand bridal dress in those times. She then gave further orders to the milliner and haberdasher. Meanwhile, the bridegroom went to see the banns published; as in those good times rich and great people were not afraid of informing the whole world that they meant to contract the serious engagement of marriage. Before the close of the month, Frank led his long-loved Mela to the altar; and such was the grand solemnity and splendour of the whole ceremony, that it far outshone even the wedding of the rich brewer.

What a day of triumph for the bride's mother, old Madame Brigitta! She saw her daughter united to a wealthy and excellent young gentleman, and enjoyed, during the evening of her life, that ease and affluence which she had so long sighed for. And Madame Brigitta, as she was henceforward called, likewise deserved her good fortune, at least at Frank's hands, as she turned out, luckily for him, one of the least troublesome mothers-in-law that was ever known.

FREDERICK SCHILLER.

A WORK of fiction, whose chief object is amusement, will hardly be expected to afford more than a brief sketch of the life and writings of one whose name is now nearly as familiar to the literati of other countries, as of his own.* The productions of Schiller have been rendered, more or less, into every language of modern Europe, while English literature, if not particularly enriched with them, abounds with notices both of his life and works, which would make any detailed account here, appear wholly superfluous. Nearly from the period of his decease, our literary journals have vied with each other in bringing his productions into more open view, in appreciating, and doing justice to his manifold merits. By these means he was first introduced to our theatres, to our drawing-rooms, and to our libraries ; while, still more recently, a more full and detailed life of him has appeared from the pen of one of our countrymen ; a work in every view worthy of the great character it commemorates.

* See Doering's *Memoirs of him, and Life of Schiller* ; Heidelberg. *Life of Schiller* ; Taylor and Hessey, London. Also, Jörden's *Lexicon*.

It is written, at once, in a liberal and judicious spirit of criticism ; abounds with many new and striking views ; and cannot be perused by lovers of German literature, without interest, and without advantage.

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. He 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. Though sprung from humble parents, they were desirous of conferring upon their only son the advantages of a good education. With this view, he was first placed under the care of the village pastor at Lorch, where he continued during three years. It was his parents' fondest hope that he would himself one day assume the pastoral charge, a plan to which, at that early period, he joyfully acceded.

He next 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 thereinculcated ; 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 ; would stand gazing on the heavens, or watching the progress of the storm. Instead of exhibiting any premature or rapid progress—any emulation with the boys of his own age and class, he reluctantly acquitted himself with very hasty, though often happy efforts, and not unfrequently is said to have incurred the animadversion of his superiors.

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, Goëthe, Garue, 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 his 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. As it has been justly remarked by Madame de Stäel, it displays the "intoxication of genius," which Schiller certainly possessed in early life. But the Robbers of Schiller's youth is the Wallenstein of his maturer powers; it bore the height and dimensions of his full genius, though destitute of its manlier tone, action, and consummate strength.

Who is there capable of resisting its tide of de-

voted and heart-rending passions, (such as he has pictured them) on its first perusal, in early life? Who has not hung over its scenes with a sense of strange, perturbed, indescribable sadness, half delight, half terror, such as at that period only can be felt? With the single exception of Wallenstein, it is justly, we think, one of the most popular of his dramas; worthy, with all its mistaken principle and exaggerations, of having laid the foundations of his fame.

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 Shakespeare, though the tragedy of Macbeth was the only one which he presented to his countrymen in a new dress. In fact, he judiciously abandoned the undertaking, and entered upon the subject of Don Carlos, which he borrowed from the French of M. de Real. 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 inquiry 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 was 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—laurels that will serve to perpetuate his name. The empire of fiction, like some fairy castle, rises only to dazzle the eye, and shortly passes away; while the fabric of history, of philosophy, and truth, connected, as it is, with the most vital interests of mankind, must continue, as long as these, to endure. Besides, Schiller had now outlived the extravagance and enthusiasm of his early genius; he no longer dwelt in a world of romance. He had learned to think, and to think deeply; his reading had been equally profound and extensive; he had grown weary of fiction, and he became ambitious of achieving objects commensurate with his enlarged powers. He was already familiar with the writings of Strada, of Grotius, and De Thou: the Revolt of the Netherlands had engaged his attention during the composition of “Don Carlos;” and he determined to become the historian, as well as the poet, of an era so glorious to European freedom. From his letters, it would appear that he had conceived the idea of far more extensive undertakings, to be pursued in a connected chain, of which this, and a first volume of the “History of the most remarkable Conspiracies and Revolutions in the Middle and Later Ages,” were merely to form a part. It were needless to

add that but a small portion of designs like these was ever executed, rapid and unintermitting as were the united genius and industry which grappled with them. At no period did Schiller more assiduously occupy himself with pursuits of the most arduous kind ; and 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.

A portion of the evening he spent 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. Goëthe 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 Goëthe's conversation exhibited.

The former declared, after the interview, that they 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 connexion with a lady of the name of Lengefeld, to whom he had sometime 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 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 doctrine, 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

* *Life of Schiller*, London. *Doering’s Life*. *Jörden’s German Lexicon*.

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 46th 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 perfect 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.

There are few productions in the class of fictitious writing from the pen of Schiller; though these few are enough to display the great powers which he possessed. The *Geisterseher*, of which we give the following fragment as it was first published, is one of the most important, and most striking of its kind. Still it was undertaken rather as an experiment, than with a settled purpose of adding his name to the list of novelists. Nor was he satisfied

with the kind of reputation which it acquired. Written with a view of exemplifying a certain doctrine, and peculiar views of human character, he had the mortification to find its more terrific features set down to the account of the usual romantic terrors abounding in the modern school, without any ulterior result. His purpose, on the other hand, was evidently to trace the progress and consequences of an attempt to impress a belief of supernatural agency, as connected with its own destiny, upon a powerful but imaginative mind. The same systematic and philosophical objects will be found to apply to the rest of his fictitious pieces—all composed for the purpose of conveying his own opinions—not intended as a mere description of human life and manners. Schiller was a truly systematic and philosophical writer, who aimed at lofty objects, in the exemplification or the discovery of intellectual truths. He could not, like Goethe, trifle with his genius; throughout the whole of his writings he seldom hazards a jest. He was too serious and sincere in all he felt and did, to write either for his own amusement or that of others; a mere sentimental novel was below his capacity; and we accordingly trace the spirit of a great dramatist, poet, and philosopher, even in his small fictitious pieces.

Schiller did not enter upon the career of letters with a feeling of mere choice; he felt the full intel-

lectual power and importance of the profession in which he had engaged ; he pursued it as a great task ; he was an apostle in the cause ; his efforts were proportionally gigantic, and he devoted himself to it, and died for it with the spirit of a martyr. There is a noble harmony and consistency in the whole intellectual labour of such a man, which render the perusal of each and all of his productions interesting to us. Thus in his "Walk under the Linden Trees," in his "Martyr to Lost Honour," his "Song of the Bell," and his "Sport of Fortune," in however narrow a compass, there are the same powerful exhibitions of human character and destiny, drawn from historical and philosophical sources, as we trace in his more voluminous works ; in his "Philosophical Letters," and in his Histories.

For the origin of the Geisterseher we suppose we are to look to the celebrated Count Cagliostro, of juggling memory, who succeeded in turning the heads of the Parisians about the period when Schiller composed the following story. He is doubtless the original of the Armenian ; whose exploits in mystifying the living, and restoring the dead, bear a strong resemblance ; though he can hardly be said to equal his Italian prototype, in transforming a Sicilian peasant into a rich and splendid Count.

In addition to its mystical and preternatural

character, and the moral that may be derived from it, Schiller's story exhibits some very interesting and powerful views ; the narrative is full of incident and fine description ; and the characters, though brought little under view, are well conceived, and sustained with much effect. It is, also, very ingeniously contrived, in regard to the production of magic terrors by physical agency, in their complete exposition, and in their repetition and final triumph, by compelling their victim to take refuge in the bosom of the Holy Church. But we are going too far : it is high-treason against a novel-reader to anticipate ; and we gladly leave him, with these few general observations upon the writer, to reap himself the whole of the interest that may be found in it. For the same reason we avoid adding a word in explanation of the shorter specimens attached to the tale of the Geisterseher.



THE APPARITIONIST;

A FRAGMENT.

[Extracted from the Memoirs of Count von O——.]

CHAP. I.

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. To the few who happen to be informed of a certain political event—provided, indeed, these pages ever see the light—it will be hailed as a happy disclosure, while, without such a key, it will be welcome to the rest of the world, as some addition to the history of the frauds and aberrations of the human mind. The boldness requisite for the object in view will excite astonishment—hardihood, which only villany can conceive and follow up; while the singularity of the means employed, is calculated to create no less surprise. Truth alone—simple but powerful truth, is the aim of the narrative before me;—for ere these pages are put forth, I shall have closed my earthly account—shall have nothing either to win or to lose from the judgment pronounced upon them.

It was on my return from a tour through Kurland, in the year 17—, about the time of Carnival, when I paid a visit to the Prince of —— at Venice. We had commenced our acquaintance while serving in the —— war; and we there renewed an intimacy which had been interrupted by the ensuing peace.

As it was, moreover, my wish to see the city, and the Prince merely delayed his departure until his receipt of letters of exchange, I was persuaded to pass some time in his society before I left the place. We agreed to bear one another, as long as we should remain at Venice, and the prince was even so kind as to invite me to his own residence. He observed the strictest incognito, wishing to live privately; and his small retinue for this purpose was not likely to betray his real rank. He had two officers on whose secrecy he could perfectly rely, in addition to a single faithful domestic; and he shunned extravagance rather from inclination than from parsimony. He disliked a life of pleasure; and, though only five-and-twenty years of age, he was proof against the worst allurements of a dissolute city. To woman he had hitherto shown himself indifferent,—deep study and contemplation, combined with an enthusiastic kind of melancholy, chiefly predominated, and influenced his exertions of mind. His inclinations were slow in forming, but persevering

beyond calculation ; his choice difficult and timid ; his attachment warm and durable. Placed in the midst of mixed throngs of his fellow men, he held on his path alone,—encircled in an imaginary world of his own ; and was for the most part a stranger in the real one. No one, perhaps, was more exposed than he then was, to suffer himself to be influenced and commanded by the opinion of others ;—more liable to mental weakness. Once won over, none was more positive and resolute ; he had courage to defend a prejudice once conceived, and to die in another's cause.

As the third of his family, he had no very likely prospect of succeeding to the government. His ambition had never been roused, and his passions had all taken a different direction. Eager to avail himself of another's opinion, he felt no desire to govern those around him ; confining all his wishes to the quiet enjoyments of private life—to intellectual conversation and pursuits. He read much—without selection ; a deficient education, and too early introduction into military life, had not afforded his mind time enough to expand and attain that maturity it might otherwise have done. The information he afterwards acquired tended rather to confirm his erroneous views than to correct them,—his knowledge being founded upon no solid principles. Of the Protestant persuasion, like the rest of his family,—not

from conviction, but by birth, he had never entered into a serious examination of its tenets ; though at one time he indulged a good deal of religious enthusiasm.

Such were some of the leading features of his character, which will be further developed by events as they occur. One evening as we were proceeding masked, according to custom, along St. Mark's, the throng beginning to disperse as the evening advanced, the prince observed a mask following, and apparently keeping us in his eye. It was an Armenian, and he was alone. We hastened our pace, and took several turns to mislead him ;—but it was in vain—he still kept his eye upon us.

“ Have you any intrigue upon hand, here ?” inquired the Prince : “ Venetian husbands are dangerous.”—“ None,” replied I, “ with any particular lady, I am sure.”

“ Then,” added the Prince, “ let us sit down here, and converse in German. I suspect that we are known.”

We accordingly seated ourselves upon a stone bench, waiting for the mask to pass on. Instead of this he made close up to us, and took his station at the Prince's side, who took out his watch, observing to me aloud, in French, “ It is past nine, they will be expecting us at the Louvre ;—let us go.”—This he said with a view of misleading the

mask.—“ Nine o'clock !” repeated the latter, in an emphatic slow tone, “ then congratulate yourself, Prince, (calling him by his real name) he died just at nine o'clock !” And having said this, he turned round, and disappeared.

We looked at one another with equal surprise. At length, after a long pause, the Prince said : “ Who is dead ? What can he mean ?” “ Let us follow,” I answered, “ and inquire—he is not far.” And we went, examining every corner of the Piazza ; yet the mask was no where to be seen. So we returned to our residence disappointed and ill at ease. The Prince remarked nothing on what had passed, though he appeared abstracted, and as if contending with some violent internal emotion, which he since confessed to me. It was only when we reached the house that he, for the first time, opened his lips :—“ It is really quite amusing, to think that a madman can thus affect one with a few words.”—He then bade me good night ; and, as soon as I had retired to my apartment, I sat down and entered the day and the hour when this incident occurred. It was on a Thursday.

The following evening the Prince observed, “ Will you accompany me to the Place of St. Mark's ? and let us try to discover our mysterious Armenian. I wish very much to see the *denouement* of our comedy.” I assented ; and we continued

until eleven o'clock on the Place, without meeting with the Armenian. This experiment we repeated for four successive evenings, with the same results.

On the sixth evening, before we left the hotel, I had the precaution, whether from design or inadvertently I can scarcely recollect, to leave word with the Prince's domestic where to find us in case any person called. Remarking my foresight, the Prince smiled, and praised my prudence. There was a vast throng upon the promenade as we approached; and we had hardly proceeded thirty yards when I remarked the Armenian, elbowing his way, and anxiously looking out for some one. We were just on the point of accosting him, when the Baron O——, one of the Prince's suite, came running breathless towards the Prince, and handed him a letter. "It has a black seal, your Excellency;" and we observed written upon it, "Speed." This fell like a thunderbolt upon me.—The Prince had approached a lamp, broken the seal, and was reading it. "My cousin is dead!" he cried.—"When?" inquired I, somewhat hastily. "On Thursday last," he replied, "nine o'clock in the evening."

We had not time to recover from our surprise, before the Armenian stood before us. "You are now convinced, gracious Prince," he said; "and if you will hasten home, you will find a delegate from

the senate ; but indulge no idea of accepting the honour intended you. The Baron F—— forgot to inform you that your letters of exchange are arrived." And having said this, the Armenian disappeared among the crowd.

We returned to our hotel, where we found every thing just as the Armenian had stated. Three noble deputies of the Republic were awaiting our arrival, to invite the Prince to accompany them, with all due pomp and ceremony, to receive the compliments of the assembled Patricians. He had only just time to hint to me, that I should sit up till his return.

About eleven o'clock he returned, and walked rather thoughtfully into his chamber. After dismissing his servant, he took me by the hand, and said, in the words of Hamlet,—

"There are more things in heaven and earth, Horatio
Than are dreamt of in your philosophy!"

"My gracious Prince," I replied, "you seem to forget that you are retiring to rest to night, more rich in splendid hope," (alluding to the death of the heir-apparent, son to the reigning aged and now childless Sovereign,) "than last night."—"Say nothing upon that head," replied the Prince ; "for, were a crown now laid at my feet, I should have more serious objects to occupy my attention. At least, if my Armenian be not very wide of his

mark.”—“How is that possible, my Prince?” rejoined I. “Why,” he returned, “I will barter all my princely hopes for a monk’s cowl with you.”

On the ensuing evening we set out earlier than usual towards St. Mark. A sudden shower, however, compelled us to seek shelter in a coffee-house, where a party was hard at play. The Prince placed himself behind a Spaniard’s chair, and looked on. I went into an adjoining room, to read the newspapers. In a short time after I heard an uproar. Before the Prince’s arrival, it appeared that the Spaniard had invariably lost, and now he won all before him. The whole game assumed another aspect, and the bank was in danger of being emptied by the Spaniard whom this lucky run had rendered bolder. The Venetian seated opposite, observed to the Prince, in an insulting tone, that he had ruined their play, and begged him to remove from the table. The Prince looked cool, and stood still, while the Venetian repeated his injurious words in French. Then, imagining that the former understood neither language, he addressed his party with an insulting—“What must we do, sirs, to make this dolt here understand us?” Then rising, he took the Prince by the arm, as if to remove him. Losing all patience here, he threw the Venetian from him with so much violence as to stretch him upon the ground. This set the whole house in

commotion; and in my surprise I ran into the room, and called the Prince by his name, at the same time adding, "Beware, for we are in Venice!"

At his name the whole company became silent; but soon there rose a stifled murmur, which seemed to bode nothing good. All the Italians were collecting into a group, and drawing aside. One after the other left the place, until at length we found ourselves accompanied only by a few French gentlemen.

"You are lost, gracious Sir," observed these, "unless you leave the city immediately. The Venetian, whom you have offended, is both wealthy and powerful; he has only to count out fifty zechins, and your doom is sealed." Here the Spaniard offered to watch over the Prince's security, and to accompany us home. The French joined him. We had just risen, and were deciding how we should act, when the doors opened, and some officers of the Inquisition appeared. They handed us a state mandate, in which we were both commanded to accompany them forthwith.

We were escorted under a strong guard as far as the canal, where a gondola was in readiness for us. They bound our eyes before we were permitted to enter. We were then conducted up several stone steps, and next, round a long winding staircase, over deep vaults, as we easily ascertained from the echo returned from the sound of our feet below.

At last, we reached another flight, which descended six-and-twenty steps into the vaults. Here a door opened into a hall, where the bandage was removed from our eyes. We found ourselves in a circle of respectable old men, all arrayed in black, as were the sides of the apartment, which was dimly lighted up, while a death-like stillness pervaded the place. Its impression was most appalling. One of these old greybeards, most probably the Inquisitor-general himself, approached the Prince, and addressed him in a very zealous tone, while the Venetian was brought forward on the other side: "Know you this man for the same whom you injured at the coffee-house?"—"Yes," replied the Prince, "I do."

Upon this, he turned to the other prisoner, pointing towards the Prince, "And is he the same whom, last night, you wished to assassinate?"

The prisoner replied it was; and the next moment the circle opened, and we beheld with astonishment the head separated from the Venetian's body. "Are you satisfied with this apology?" inquired the State-inquisitor. The Prince fell back into the arms of his conductors. "Go now," exclaimed the same voice in a terrific tone, "go, and judge in future less hastily respecting justice in Venice."

In vain we attempted to discover the secret friend who had thus, by directing the swift-current

of justice in our favour, rescued us from certain destruction. Struck dumb with horror, we were escorted back to our hotel. It was yet midnight, and the young chamberlain Z—— was impatiently expecting our arrival on the steps.

“How good it was of you,” he said, as he lighted us up, “to send to us. The account brought by the Baron F—— from the Place of St. Mark would otherwise have thrown us into the greatest consternation.”—“Sent!—I sent!” exclaimed the Prince; “I know nothing at all of it.”—“Yes,” said he; “this evening, soon after eight o’clock, you sent to inform us that we need not be anxious, if you should return later to-night than usual.”

The Prince here fixed his eyes upon me.—“Perhaps you took that trouble without informing me?” “No, I knew nothing of it.”

“It must, indeed, be so, your excellency,” added the Chamberlain; “for here is your repeater, which you sent as proof of it.” The Prince felt for his watch, it was gone; and the one now handed him was it. “Who brought this here?” he inquired in astonishment. “An unknown mask, dressed like an Armenian, who retired immediately.”

We stood gazing at each other. “What think you of this?” exclaimed the Prince, after a long silence; “surely I have met my secret soothsayer in Venice.” The horrible adventure of the night

threw the Prince into a degree of fever, which compelled him to keep his chamber for above a week. During this period, the hotel thronged both with natives and foreigners, whom the discovery of the Prince had attracted; and who came to offer their services, each desirous of recommending himself in his way. Our affair with the Inquisition was no longer dwelt upon. While the court of —, desirous that the Prince's departure should be delayed, sent notice to several Venetian bankers to advance him a considerable sum of money. He was thus obliged to remain in Italy longer than he had intended; and at his request I also consented to remain.

When he was so far recovered as to leave his room, his physician advised him to take a trip upon the Brenta, in order to change the air. The weather was fine, and, a party being formed, the proposal was accepted. As we were on the point of entering our gondola, the Prince missed the key of a little box which contained some of his most important papers. He recollected, he said, having locked it the day before, since when he had not been out of his chamber. All search for it was in vain, and we desisted, in order not to lose the pleasure of our excursion. The Prince, whose mind was bent on every untoward occurrence, gave it up for lost, and begged that no one would say any thing more

about it. Our excursion was delightful ; the prospect highly picturesque, and growing upon us in richness and beauty as we advanced. The heavens were purely bright,—it was the middle of May,—delicious gardens and tasteful villas, overlooking the Brenta without number ; while behind us lay majestic Venice herself,—her hundred towers and masts aspiring from the bosom of the deep,—altogether displaying one of the proudest and most animated spectacles in the world. We yielded ourselves to the enchantment of the scene—our feelings were highly excited, and the Prince, losing his usual seriousness, joined in the light and festive spirit of the party. Fine music came borne upon the breezes, as we stept from our gondola, at some miles distant from the city. It proceeded from a small village, where an annual market was held, and a most motley society of human beings was collected. A group of young girls and boys welcomed us, arrayed in a theatrical style, and dancing in a very pantomimical fashion. It was extremely novel ; grace and agility were expressed in every motion. Before the dance was quite finished, appeared the leaders themselves, who presented their queen, as suddenly as if she had been introduced by an invisible arm. All stood still in a moment :—the music ceased, not a breath was to be heard as she stood in the midst of the assembly, wrapt in deep musing, with her eye

fixed upon the heavens. Suddenly, as if inspired, she cast a wild glance around. "A king is among us here!" she exclaimed, tearing her crown from her head, and laying it at the Prince's feet. Every eye was at once fixed upon him, uncertain whether there were any meaning in the part she was acting, or whether it were to give credit to the serious and impressive manner in which she performed it. A general clapping of hands at length broke the silence; and casting my eye upon the Prince, I observed that he looked not a little perplexed, and seemed to avoid the penetrating glance of the spectators. He threw money among the children, and attempted to make his way through the throng.

We had proceeded only a few steps, when an aged bare-footed friar was observed to be making up to the Prince. "My lord, he said, bestow some portion of your wealth upon our Madonna, and she shall pray for you." This he spoke in a tone that surprised us, but the crowd bore him away. Our own party meanwhile had increased; consisting of an English lord, whom the Prince had once met at Nizza: some Leghorn merchants, a Dutch canon, a French abbé with ladies, and a Russian officer. The countenance of this last had something very extraordinary in it, that attracted, yet defied the eye. Never had I seen one presenting such variety of feature, and so little character; at once combining an

expression of good nature with a repulsive coldness. All human passions appeared to have done their work ; to have left deep traces ; but as if they had burned themselves out. Nothing remained beyond that quiet, yet deep searching glance of a master of the human character,—a glance avoided by every eye. This singular man followed us at some distance, apparently taking a very trivial interest in what passed.

We stopt before a shop where a lottery was going forward. The ladies put in their names, and we followed their example, not excepting the Prince. He won a snuff-box, and, as he opened it, I observed him turn pale. It contained the lost key. “ What can this mean ? ” said the Prince to me, when we had a moment to ourselves. “ A superior power seems to follow me, an invisible hand guides my actions, and omniscience sweeps around me. Yes, some secret power, which I cannot avoid, directs all my steps. I must find out this Armenian, and extort some information from him.”

The sun was going down as we approached the pleasure-house, where the evening festival was held. The Prince’s name had now increased our numbers to sixteen, including, besides those mentioned, a certain virtuoso from Rome, a Swiss, and an adventurer from Palermo in his uniform, and a soi-disant captain. It was agreed to spend the evening here,

and to proceed home by the light of torches. The entertainment was very excellent, all very lively ; and the Prince excited the curiosity and wonder of the party, by relating his adventure of the key. A long argument upon it took place, most of the audience stoutly maintaining that there must be some trick, some deep game at the bottom of the whole. The Abbé, pretty well flushed with wine, revolted at the idea of the spiritual world ; the Englishman talked blasphemy, while the musician made sign of the cross to avert the devil. A few, among whom was the Prince himself, declared for a suspension of judgment upon similar occurrences ; while the Russian officer, busily engaged with the ladies, appeared to pay no attention to the conversation. It was not remarked that, during the heat of the discussion, the Sicilian had slipt away, and in the course of half an hour returned, enveloped in a mantle, and placed himself behind the Frenchman's chair : " You are courageous enough to declare war against the whole world of spirits, Mr. Abbé, would you like to encounter a single one ?"

" Done," cried the Abbé, " if you will engage to supply me with one."

" That will I do," replied the Sicilian, as he approached nearer, " should these ladies and gentlemen be agreeable."

" Why so?" inquired the Englishman ; " a

good bold ghost is surely not afraid of a small party."

"I cannot be sure of the consequences, sir."

"Then in Heaven's name no! desist," cried all the women round the table, as they rose from their seats.

"Nay, let the ghost e'en come," continued the Abbé; "but warn him, beforehand, that he will be spitted without ceremony," pointing to a neighbour's sword, "if he should not behave himself."

"That you may settle as you think proper, when the time comes," said the Sicilian very coolly, "if you can maintain the same courageous mood." Then turning towards the Prince, "My gracious lord," he said, "they maintain that your key has fallen into some one's hands; do you know whose?"

"No."

"Can you imagine no one?"

"In truth I have a suspicion."

"Should you recognize the person, were you to see him?"

"Indeed, I should."

Here, the Sicilian, throwing his mantle aside, drew forth a mirror which he held before the Prince.

"Is this the person?"

The prince recoiled from it with affright.

"What has your Excellency seen?" I inquired.

"The Armenian."

The Sicilian replaced the mirror under his

mantle. "Was it really the person you suspected?" inquired the whole party.

"The same," replied the Prince.

All changed colour—their laughter ceased: every eye was fixed upon the Sicilian.

"Monsieur l'Abbé," cried the Englishman, "the affair is becoming serious—you had better retract."

"Yes; the fellow is possessed," exclaimed the Frenchman, as he ran out of the house. The women were at his heels; the virtuoso followed the women with the same feeble cry; the Dutch canon snored in his chair, and the Russian took no notice of what passed.

"Perhaps," said the Prince to the Sicilian, "you have only been joking with us," as he cast his eye over our diminished numbers,—“or were you, indeed, thinking of keeping your word?”—“That was I, of a truth;” returned the Sicilian. “With the Abbé, indeed, I *was* joking, for I well knew the poltroon dared not redeem his pledge. It is, besides, rather too serious an affair to turn into jest.”

“Do you pretend to boast then that it is really in your power to do as much as you have said?”

Our magician paused at the question some time, and seemed to be measuring the Prince sharply with his eye.

At last he answered—“Yes!”

The Prince's curiosity was now raised to its highest pitch. It had always been his leading weakness to imagine himself in some way connected with the spiritual world ; and the appearance of the Armenian, from the first, had revived this enthusiastic propensity, which maturer reasoning had begun to dissipate. He took the Sicilian on one side, and I observed that he conversed with him in a very confidential tone.

“ You have here a man before you,” he continued, “ who burns with impatience to obtain conviction upon a subject like the present. Whoever would undertake to remove my doubts—to tear the scales from my eyes,—him would I esteem my benefactor, him would I embrace as my dearest friend. Do you pretend to be enabled to confer so signal a benefit upon me ?”

“ What proofs do you want from me ?” said the conjuror, somewhat thoughtfully.”

“ Only a single proof of your art. Permit me to behold an apparition !”

“ To what will that lead ?”

“ To inform me, by a closer inspection, whether I be indeed worthy of higher instruction than I have received.”

“ I prize your worth, my gracious Prince. There is a secret power in your countenance, which you are not yourself aware of, which impressed me at first

sight. You are more powerful than you imagine. You may draw as largely upon what art I possess, as you please—but—”

“ Then only grant that I may see an apparition.”

“ But, I say, I must first be convinced that you do not make such a request from mere curiosity. If invisible powers, indeed, be actually at my bidding, I am still under the sacred bond not to reveal their holy secrets for any profane purpose—I must not abuse my art.”

“ My views are pure—I seek only truth.”

Here they left their places, and retired to a window, whence I could no longer hear what they said. The Englishman, who had also listened, touched me on my shoulder.

“ Your Prince is a truly worthy man,—I am sorry to see him league himself with an impostor.”

“ He will soon free himself,” replied I, “ when he sees further into the affair.”

“ I will tell you what,” said the Englishman. “ The poor devil wants to enrich himself. He will afford us no specimen of his art, until he hears the money clink. We are nine of us: let us make a collection, and, by dint of bidding high, lead him into temptation. He will break down in the trial, and the Prince will see with his own eyes.”

“ Well,—I am ready.”

The Englishman threw six guineas upon a plate, and began to make a collection. Each subscribed some louis, and, in particular, the Russian appeared eager in the scheme, and laid down a bank-note for one hundred zechins—a contribution which greatly astonished the Englishman. We handed the collection to the Prince: “Will you have the goodness, gracious Prince, to intreat the gentleman on our behalf, that he will consent to treat us to a specimen of his art, and receive this small tribute of our gratitude in return.” The Prince, throwing a handsome gold ring upon the plate, handed it to the Sicilian.

“My good lords and patrons,” he began, after some moments’ consideration, “your liberality shocks me. It would seem that you mistake me;—however, I will humour your good wishes: they shall be fulfilled. But this gold does not belong to me, and with your permission it shall be applied to some charitable uses in behalf of the neighbouring convent of St. Benedict. The ring I will reserve, as a very precious token to remind me of an excellent Prince.”

Our host here stepped in, and received the money from his hand. “He is, nevertheless, a great rogue,” whispered the Englishman to me. “He refuses the money, because he expects to make more by the Prince.”

“ Or,” said another, “ the host understands his cue.” “ Whom do you wish to see ?” now inquired the Sicilian. The Prince considered a moment:— his Lordship said, “ let us see some great man. Say the learned Pontiff Ganganelli ; this will give the master very little trouble.”

The Sicilian bit his lips : “ I dare venture to mock no one who has been consecrated.”

“ That is bad,” said the Englishman : “ perhaps we might learn from him of what illness he died.”

“ The Marquis of Launoy,” said the Prince, “ was a French Brigadier General in the late war, and my very dear friend. At the battle of Hastenbeck he received his mortal wound ; he was carried to my tent, and died in my arms. While in the last agonies, he beckoned me nearer to him : ‘ Prince, I shall never behold my country more : let me confide a secret to you, of which I only have the key. In a convent on the borders of Flanders, resides a’
———here he stopt, and breathed his last. Now if you could contrive to bring him here, and inform me what he would have said——”

“ Well put, by God !” “ cried the Englishman. “ I will call thee a second Solomon, when you supply the rest of the sentence.”

We all commended the Prince’s choice ; meanwhile, the magician strode up and down the room, apparently undecided in what way to act.

“ And was that all the dying man communicated to you ? ”

“ All ! ”

“ Did you make no further inquiries—none in his native country ? ”

“ They were all useless. ”

“ And had the Marquis led an upright life ? It is not every dead man I should like to call. ”

“ He died in penitence, lamenting the errors of his youth. ”

“ Do you happen to possess any memorial of him by you ? ”

“ I do ! ” and the Prince here took out a snuff-box with a miniature portrait in enamel on its surface, which I had before observed lying near him on the table. ”

“ Nay I do not wish to know———Leave me alone now, and you shall see the deceased. ”

Here he motioned us into another apartment, to remain until we should be called. Then he directly began to remove all the furniture in the room, threw up the windows, and closed the sashes very carefully. He desired the host, with whom he appeared on very good terms, to bring him a vessel of live coals, and to extinguish all the rest of the fires in the house. Before going, he required from each, on our word of honour, the most unqualified secrecy in regard to every thing we should either see or

hear. The doors of all the chambers beyond the pavilion into which we retired, were fast locked and bolted.

Past eleven at night, an awful silence pervaded the place. As we went out; the Russian inquired if we had any of us loaded pistols by us. "For what?" I inquired.—"Against any emergency," was the answer; and observing that he would go and inquire, he left us. Baron F—— and I threw up a window overlooking the same pavilion, and we thought we could catch the voices of two men whispering, and a noise like the procession and then the setting down of a bier. Still this was only conjecture, and I could not venture to pronounce it real. The Russian returned with a pair of pistols; he had been absent about half an hour. We watched him load them heavily. It was nearly two o'clock before our magician again appeared; when he informed us that every thing was in readiness. Before we re-entered, he bade us pull off our shoes, and appear only in our under-dress—in our shirts and hose. The room was fastened behind us, as before.

As we walked into the hall, we found a large circle described with coal, which would easily include us all,—being ten. The boards had been taken up round the four sides of the place, so as to leave us standing, as it were, upon an island.

There was an altar, hung round with black crape, raised in the midst of the circle, underneath which was spread a cloth of scarlet satin. A Chaldaic bible lay near a human skull fixed upon the altar; to which a silver crucifix was attached. Instead of candles, some kind of spirit was burning upon a silver cover. A thick cloud of olibane darkened the room, which nearly extinguished the light. The exorciser appeared clad like ourselves—only bare-footed; and round his naked neck he wore an amulet tied to a chain of man's hair; over his loins he wore a white apron, wrought with strange cyphers and symbolical figures. He requested us to join hands in a ring, and to preserve strict silence; enjoining us particularly to put no question to the apparition. He entreated the Englishman and myself, whom he appeared most to distrust—to hold two naked swords in the form of a cross, about an inch above his head, during the continuance of the interview. We stood round him in a half-circle;—the Russian officer pressing close on the Englishman, and next to the altar. His face turned towards the east, our magician now placed himself on the foot-cloth of the altar, sprinkled holy water to the four quarters of the world—and prostrated himself thrice before the bible. His conjuration lasted little more than five minutes; quite unintelligible to us; and on its conclusion he made

sign to the one next him to hold him fast by the hair of his head. Then, in the wildest emotion, he called on the deceased by his name—repeated it three times, and at last stretched forth his hand towards the crucifix.

Precisely at the same moment we each of us felt a shock, like that of lightning, communicating from one to another; a crash of thunder shook the house, the doors slammed together, the locks clanged, the wick in the silver case fell, the light went out; and on the opposite side of the wall, over the chimney, there stood a figure—a human figure, in bloody shroud, and pale was the countenance as that of a dying man.

“Who calls me?” cried a faint and hollow voice.

“Thy friend,” replied the magician; “one who honours thy memory and prays for thy soul;” at the same time mentioning the Prince’s name.

The answers followed at long intervals: “What wishes he?” said the voice in a sad tone.

“He wishes to obtain the rest of your confession; of your dying words, only half uttered in this world.”

“In a convent upon the Flemish borders——” Here the house trembled under a fresh shock; the doors suddenly sprang open, lightnings illumined the apartment, and another bodily form, bloody and pale as the former, but far more ap-

palling, stood on the threshold of the door. The spirit lighted up of itself, and the whole place grew lighter than before.

“Who is among us?” cried the magician, in real alarm, and cast a sharp glance, full of agony, at us all: “I have not called thee,” he said. But with slow majestic step, the form approached the altar, stood upon the foot-cloth opposite us, and grasped the crucifix. The first figure was no longer to be seen.

“Who calls me?” inquired the second apparition. The magician shook from head to foot: we stood fixed in mingled surprize and dread. I seized a pistol, but the magician snatched it out of my hands, and turned it away from the figure: the balls rolled out slowly off the altar, while the figure came unchanged from amidst the surrounding smoke. The magician now sunk senseless to the ground.

“What means that?” cried the Englishman, in great surprize, at the same time making a pass at the figure with his sword. It stretched forth its arm, and the weapon fell to the ground. The dew of agony stood on my forehead. Baron F. as he afterwards confessed, was praying. The Prince stood perfectly calm and fearless, his eyes fixed intently upon the form.

“Yes, I know you,” at last he cried, full of

emotion ; “ you are Lannoy—my friend ! Whence comest thou ? ”

“ Eternity is silent. Speak respecting our past life.”

“ Who resides in the convent which you mentioned ? ”

“ My daughter.”

“ What ! were you a father ? ”

“ Woe to me ! too little so, indeed.”

“ Are you not then happy, Lannoy ? can I confer upon you the least service in this world ? ”

“ None !—only look to — only think of yourself.”

“ How must I do that ? ”

“ At Rome, you will learn !——no more.”

A fresh thunder-clap was heard ; a thick, dark cloud filled the chamber ; and when it again dispersed, no figure was to be seen. I opened a window-sash ; it was now morning. The magician at length recovered from his swoon. “ Where are we ? ” he faintly inquired, as he caught the day-light. The Russian officer stood close behind him. “ Juggler,” he cried, casting a terrific look, “ never shalt thou call a spirit more.”

The Sicilian was staggered ; — glanced keenly at him, for a moment ; and uttering a loud shriek, fell at his feet. All of us now gazed stedfastly at the supposed Russian. The Prince soon recognized

the features of his Armenian ; and the accents he was about to utter died upon his lips. Surprise and horror seemed to have rivetted us to the spot. Motionless and silent, we regarded this mysterious being ; who, with a haughty, quiet look of power, seemed to read our souls. This awful pause lasted a minute ; and again, another. No one of us all was heard to draw his breath.

Loud knocks at the door had, at length, the effect of restoring us to ourselves. The next moment it was shattered into pieces, and officers of justice rushed into the room. " Here we find them all together," cried their conductor, turning to the party. " In the name of the Government, I arrest you."

There was no time to think ; we were surrounded ; while the Russian, now known to us as the Armenian, took the head officer aside ; and as soon as I had presence of mind, I remarked that he whispered something in his ear ; at the same time, showing him a written paper. With a silent and respectful motion, the chief officer left him, and taking up his hat, said to us, " Forgive me, gentlemen, for confounding you together with this vile impostor here. I make no inquiries who you are ; it is enough that this gentleman assures me you are men of honour." He motioned to his attendants, who left us ; while they proceeded to bind, and keep guard

over the Sicilian. Their officer then remarked, "The knave was once too quick for us: seven months long we have had our eye upon him, without success."

This wretched being was truly an object of commiseration. The double shocks, just received, from the second apparition, and from this unexpected calamity, had completely overwhelmed him. They bound him like a child; his eyes were fixed, his face deadly pale, and his lips shook with involuntary motion, without uttering a word. We expected him every moment to fall into convulsions. The Prince compassionated his condition, and promised to exert himself on his behalf with the ministers of justice; this he also did upon the spot.

"Perhaps, your Excellency," said the officer, "does not know the man, for whom you so greatly interest yourself. His last knavish attempt is the least of his manifold offences. We have the evidence of his accomplices, which is frightful; and he may truly congratulate himself, if he escape with the galleys." Meanwhile, we beheld our host, together with his servant, all bound, marched through the court. "Him, too!" cried the Prince, "what has he done?" "He was an accomplice," replied the officer; "long since familiar with his knaveries and impostures; and a partner in his booty. Your Excellency shall soon be convinced," he continued, turn-

ing towards his men; "let them be searched, and bring me an account of every article found."

The Prince now looked round for the Armenian: he was no longer among us; in the general confusion which ensued, he had contrived to escape unnoticed. His Excellency was inconsolable: he wished to despatch the whole of his attendants in pursuit, as well as to accompany them. I ran to the window; the house was surrounded with the inquisitive of all ranks, so thronged as quite to block up the way. This I hinted to the Prince: that if it were really his object to keep concealed, he knew the method, far better than we, how to find him out, and he might set all our inquiries at defiance. Perhaps these officers, to whom, if I saw right, he introduced himself, may throw some light upon the subject.

We now recollected, for the first time, that we were in our undress, and we retired to our rooms to array ourselves as fast as possible. When we returned, the enjoined search was completed.

On removing the altar, and some of the boards of the room, a large vault was discovered, in which a man might sit upright, with a door at one end, which opened upon narrow steps leading into the cellars below. Here there was found an electrifying machine; a watch; a small silver clock, which, as

well as the machine, communicated with the altar, and with a crucifix attached to it. A window shutter, opposite to the chimney-piece, was found divided, with a sliding board attached, so as to admit, as we conjectured, a magic lanthorn, which reflected the figure, as we afterwards learnt, on the other side of the wall. From the ground-floor and cellars, were brought a number of large drums, with leather balls attached to them by strong cords, intended to imitate the noise of thunder, such as we had heard.

On examining the clothes of the Sicilian, a case containing different kinds of powder was found, along with mercury, in phials and boxes; a ring, discovered to possess magnetic power, being found to hang from a steel button; a paternoster in his coat pocket, a Jew's beard, a pair of pocket pistols, and a dagger. "Let us see whether that be loaded," cried one of the officers, as he took one and fired it into the chimney. "Oh, Jesus Maria!" cried a voice which we recognized for that of the first apparition, and the next moment a bloody figure tumbled out of the chimney. "Art thou not yet laid, poor ghost?" cried the Englishman, while all the rest of us drew back in alarm. "Home to thy grave! thou hast appeared what thou wert not;—now thou wilt become what thou didst seem."

"Jesus Maria! I am wounded," repeated the

man from the chimney. The ball had shattered his right leg, and surgical assistance was instantly procured for the poor ghost.

“ Who are you then, and what evil demon stuck you here in the chimney ?”

“ I am a poor barefooted friar,” replied the man ; “ a strange gentleman offered me some zechins, if I——”

“ If you would repeat the liturgy, I suppose,” said the Englishman ; “ and why did not you withdraw after service ?”

“ He was to give me a sign to come out, but this was forgotten ; and when I wished to come down, I found the ladder was gone.”

“ And what was really the task assigned you ?”
Here the man fainted, and prevented our hearing any thing farther from him. When we drew nearer, we found he was the same person who had accosted the Prince with so much warmth the evening before.

Meanwhile the Prince turned to the chief officer : “ You have rescued us,” he said, presenting him with a gold piece, “ from the hands of an impostor, and, without any explanation, done us the justice to acquit us from any participation in his views. Will you add a further motive to our gratitude, by informing us who the stranger was who procured our freedom from your hands, by exchanging a few words.”

“Whom do you allude to?” replied the officer, with an air which showed plainly how useless the question was.

“I mean the gentleman in Russian uniform, who took you on one side, showed you a paper, and whispered something in your ear.”

“What, did not you know him?” inquired the officer; “did not he belong to your party?”

“No,” said the Prince; “and for very weighty reasons, I wished to become better acquainted with him.”

“And I,” repeated the man, “know nothing more of him; even his name is unknown to me, and I never saw him in my life before.”

“How! and in so short a time, by a mere word, could he so far influence you, as to lead you to pronounce him and the rest of us all innocent?”

“It is true—by a single word.”

“And this was—I confess that I wish to know it.”

“This unknown, my gracious Lord—” while he shook the zechins in his hand—“You have been too generous with me to refuse you any thing, however secret—This unknown was an officer of the Inquisition.”

“Of the State Inquisition?—this!”

“No other, gracious Sir. And upon his information I acted in coming here in order to arrest the

conjuror." We here exchanged looks of astonishment.

"This, then, makes it clear, why the poor devil of a conjuror was so horribly frightened when he looked into his face. He knew him for a spy, and so made that dreadful outcry, and fell at his feet."

"And yet more!" exclaimed the Prince; "this man is every thing he wishes to be, and all that he instantly wishes that will become. What he really is no mortal has yet been able to learn. Did not you observe the Sicilian sink into nothing when he cried in his ear 'Thou shalt never call a spirit more.' There is more in this. No one shall convince me that affright such as his resulted from any human agency."

"Respecting this the magician himself ought to be the best judge," said his Lordship, "if this officer will be kind enough to afford us some opportunity of examining the prisoner;" turning to the deputy of the Inquisition.

The officer promised that we should; and we then agreed with the Englishman that we would pay him a visit on the ensuing morning.

Early the next day Lord Seymour appeared, and was soon followed by a trusty person despatched by the minister of justice, to conduct us to the prisoner.

I have forgotten to mention, that during some

days past, the Prince had missed one of his huntsmen, born at Bremen, who had served him faithfully for many years, and possessed his utmost confidence. Whether he had met with some accident, or had run away, no one knew. There was no probability of the latter, inasmuch as he was a steady sober man, who had never even been accused. All that his companions could say of him was, that latterly he had been very melancholy, and was in the habit, whenever he had a leisure moment, to repair to a monastery of the minor brethren at the Guidicca, where he was familiar with some of the monks. This led us to suppose that he was perhaps turned Catholic, and in the hands of the holy brethren; and as the Prince was then very indifferent as to this point, he ceased to think, after making a few inquiries, any more about him.

Still he was concerned to lose so good a servant; one who had accompanied him in his campaigns—steward him faithfully; and his loss, in particular in a foreign land, could not so easily be supplied.

To-day, as we were just setting out, the Prince's Steward, who had been commissioned to find a successor, presented his Excellency with a well-dressed, well-built, middle-aged man, who had long been secretary to a procurator, could speak French, and a little German, and possessed the best character. His features were pleasing, and when he moreover

heard that his salary would depend upon the Prince's approbation of his services, as with his other officers, he expressed his satisfaction at the terms.

We found the Sicilian in private captivity, where he was placed in order to make it agreeable to the Prince, as we learnt from the officer, before he was consigned to the leaden-roofed prisons, from which there was no exit. They constitute the most terrific captivity in all Venice, lying underneath the Palazzo San Marco, where the unhappy convicts are subjected to the piercing rays of the sun, collected, as in a focus, so as often to produce raging madness and insanity of the worst kind. The poor Sicilian had recovered from the effects of his late trials, and respectfully bowed to the Prince. One leg and hand were chained; but so as to permit him to walk about the apartment. The guard, as we entered, immediately retired.

"I come," said the Prince, after we had taken our station, "to intreat an explanation with you in regard to two points. In one you are my debtor, and it will prove nothing to your disadvantage when you satisfy me as to the other."

"My part is played," replied the Sicilian: "my destiny is in your Excellency's hands."

"Perfect candour and sincerity only, can at all relieve you."

"Then speak, most gracious Prince; I am eager to reply, for I have now no more to lose."

“ You exhibited to me the countenance of the Armenian in your mirror ! how did you contrive to do that ? ”

“ It was no mirror which you saw. It was merely a pastil-painting shown from behind a glass, presented by a man in an Armenian habit, which deceived you. My dexterity, the duskness of the evening, your own astonishment, countenanced the deceit. The portrait will be found among the other articles, collected in the court of the hostelry.”

“ Yet how came you to read my thought, and hit so suddenly upon the Armenian ? ”

“ This was not difficult, gracious Prince ; doubtless you have yourself conversed of the adventure before your domestics, at your own table. One of my creatures commenced an acquaintance with an huntsman in your service, and drew from him at the Guidicca every thing that was necessary to my purpose.”

“ Where is the huntsman now ? ” inquired the Prince ; “ I miss him, and you doubtless know where he is.”

“ No ; I swear that I do not in the least. I have never seen him, and my sole business with him was what I have mentioned.”

“ Proceed,” observed the Prince.

“ In this manner I got my information respecting your residence and affairs in Venice, and resolved to take advantage of them. You see, gracious Sir, that I am candid. I knew of your intended

excursion upon the Brenta ;—I had taken my measures ; and a key which you accidentally let fall, afforded me a ground-work for my scheme.”

“ How ! then I was greatly in error. Was the box with the key in it your work, and not that of the Armenian ? Do you say that I dropped the key ? ”

“ Yes, when you drew out your purse ; and I seized the opportunity, when no one saw me, to place my foot upon it. The person at the lottery was my accomplice : and it was contrived that you should draw from a vessel in which there were no blanks, and the key had long lain in the box before you won it.”

“ I take you now ; and who was the bare-footed monk who threw himself in my way, and spoke so pointedly.”

“ The same man who, I hear, has been wounded in the chimney ; and one of my accomplices who, under that habit, has rendered me a variety of services.”

“ But for what purpose was this done ? ”

“ In order to excite your curiosity and astonishment, and make you imagine I was in some way connected with you—that there was something mysterious.”

“ And the pantomimic dance, which took so strange and unexpected a turn,—was that, too, your idea ? ”

“ Yes, the maiden Queen was instructed by me

in the part she played. I was aware it would have the effect of surprising your Excellency not a little, to be accosted by your own name, and you must confess that your adventure with the Armenian was sufficient to authorize my views upon you, and to lay a fresh train of supernatural agency."

"In truth," exclaimed the Prince with an air of surprise and vexation, as he cast a speaking glance at us, "in truth, I had not calculated upon this! Again," he continued, after a long pause, "how did you contrive to raise the figure which appeared over the chimney on the wall?"

"By means of the magic lanthorn which was placed on the opposite side of the window-shutters, where you doubtless found the aperture."

"But how did you contrive," inquired Lord Seymour, "that we were none of us aware of it?"

"Please to recollect, my gracious lord, that a thick smoke obscured the whole hall when you returned into it. I had also the precaution to remove the floor, and place the boards against the window, where the magic-lanthorn was inserted; so that you could not easily discern this part of the window-sashes. Besides, the lantern remained concealed by means of a sliding-board, until you had all taken your places, and there was no danger of your making any further search."

"How came it," I inquired, "that we heard a noise like that of letting down a bier, as we looked

out of the window towards the other pavilion — was it really such?"

"Quite correct. The litter brought my companion, conveyed secretly through the window, in order to direct the magic-lantern; and thus produced the noise."

"The figure," continued the Prince, "bore some resemblance to my deceased friend; for he had a pale complexion. Was this mere coincidence?"

"No; your Excellency may remember that you placed a small box near you on the table, with an officer's portrait in enamel on the surface. I inquired of you, whether it were that of some friend, preserved as a keep-sake; and you informed me it was. Possessing some talent for taking likenesses, I found it easy to make a duplicate, and the more so, as the most striking features of the Marquis lie in the eyes."

"Yet the form appeared to move?"

"Yes, appeared; but it was only the thick smoke put in motion by its shining appearance."

"And did the man whom we shot in the chimney speak in its name?"

"Even so."

"I should think he could hardly have heard the question put."

"That was not necessary. Recollect, gracious Prince, that I enjoined you to put no questions to

the spirit. My question and answer were already prepared, and, to avoid all fear of mistake, I ordered a long pause between, according as the clock struck."

"You commanded the host to extinguish all the fires in the house, in order, doubtless——"

"To place my companion in the chimney out of danger, the flues of the chimneys all communicating; and I moreover suspected some of your Excellency's train."

"How happened it," inquired Lord Seymour, "that your ghost came neither sooner nor later than he was wanted?"

"My ghost had been ready a good while before I had occasion to summon him; he was there, but you could not discern him as long as the oil was burning; he was cast into the shade. When my conjurations were finished, the lights extinguished, and all was dark, the shadow stood out from the wall upon which it had long been reflected."

"When it appeared, however, we each, and all of us felt a strong shock, like being struck with lightning."

"Yes, from my electrifying machine, which you since discovered under the altar. You saw him stand upon a silk foot-cloth; I placed you in a half circle, taking hold of each other's hands; when I bade you take hold of my hair. The crucifix was

the conductor, and you received the stroke the moment I touched it."

"You commanded Count O—— and myself," said Lord Seymour, "to hold two crossed swords over your head, as long as the conjuration and interview should continue. Why was this?"

"Merely to distract your attention from the object I had in view, by engaging your attention; and you may recollect that I enjoined you to hold the swords exactly an inch above my head, so as to prevent you from directing your looks to other objects. Yet, alas! I omitted my worst enemy—I was not aware of his presence then; our eyes had not met."

"I confess," said Lord Seymour, "you displayed no little foresight; but why were we to appear in our undress?"

"Merely to give more importance to the ceremony, and to raise your imaginations beyond the common pitch."

"The second apparition did not permit your ghost to finish his sentence," said the Prince: "what was he going to tell us?"

"Merely the same thing which you heard afterwards. I inquired purposely, whether your dying friend had declared nothing more than what you had stated to me; and if you had not made some further inquiries, in order to obviate any danger of

conflicting evidence between your information and my ghost's confession. I inquired respecting his youthful errors, and whether he had led an upright life, adapting my answer accordingly."

"You have now," said the Prince, after a long pause, "given us a satisfactory explanation. Yet there remains one point upon which I wish to be fully informed; and it is the most important."

"As far as it may be in my power, command me."

"No protestations, no conditions; justice, in whose grasp you now tremble, would not put the question to you in so mild a manner. Who was the unknown, before whom we saw you recoil and fall? What know you of him, how did you become acquainted, and what is your connection with the second apparition?"

"Most gracious Prince——"

"When you looked at him, you uttered a loud cry, and fell at his feet. Why did you do this? what does it mean? I must know all."

"This unknown, my gracious Prince—" he paused: his emotions here became evident; he glanced at us all round with a distracted eye. "Yes, by Heavens! most gracious Prince, this unknown is a terrific being."

"What know you of him, I say?" cried the

Prince, catching his look of horror. "What is your connection with him? Nay, hope not to conceal the real truth."

"Of that I have, indeed, no hope; for who will assure me that he is not, at this time, standing among us?"

"Where?—who?" cried we all at the same moment; and looked at each other with an attempt at laughter, but with real surprise and terror. "It is not possible!" we added.

"Know you the man—or rather the being, whatever he may be:—there are things possible, which are yet difficult to conceive."

"Who is he then?—Whence springs he?—Armenian or Russian?—And how much truth is there in what he appears to be?"

"He is nothing of what he appears. You could mention no situations, no characters, no nations, of which he has not assumed the mask. Who he may be, whence he came, and whither he goes, are questions no one can solve. That he long took up his residence in Egypt, and there, in one of its old pyramids, prosecuted the strange mysterious inquiries, and acquired the power and wisdom he commands, I will neither pretend to aver, nor to deny. Among us he is only known by the name of the Unfathomable. How old, for instance, should you suppose him?"

“ Not much on this side of fifty.”

“ Quite right ;—and, if I were to tell you that I was a boy of seventeen, when my grandfather informed me of this wonderful being, whom he accidentally met at Zamaqusta, precisely of the same age as he now appears”—

“ That is absurd, incredible, and extravagant.”

“ Not a whit, I assure you ; and were not these bonds in my way, I could cite you witnesses whose name would be sufficient to convince you. There are many entitled to credit, who can recollect having seen him alive in different quarters of the world at the same time, and have compared dates. No sword’s point can reach him,—no poison search his vitals ; nor fire burn, nor ship swamp, in which he is. Time seems to possess no power over him ;—years cannot touch his stamina,—and man’s appointed days blanch not his head with snow. No one ever beheld him eat ; woman hath never felt his touch ; his eyes require no sleep ; and out of the twenty-four hours of the day there is only one known over which he is not the master, during which no one has ever seen him, and in which he transacts no worldly business.”

“ So !” cried the Prince ; “ and what kind of hour is that ?”

“ The midnight hour. When twelve has tolled, he no longer belongs to the living. Wherever he

may then happen to be, he must away ; whatever work he is engaged in, he must abandon it. The last toll of the clock snatches him from the arms of friendship—from the altar ; and would even so—from the agonies of death. It has never been ascertained whither he goes—nor what he does. No one ventures to inquire—much less to follow him ; for the moment the fated hour arrives, his features assume so dark and terrific a cast,—so appalling is the anxiety and seriousness they express, that the courage of the boldest fails to fix their eye upon his, or to address him. A death-like silence suddenly interrupts the most lively conversation, and all around him, with inward shuddering, await his return, without venturing to rise from their seats, or to open the door through which he passed.”

“ But is there nothing remarkable in his appearance on his return ?” inquired one of us.

“ Only that he looks pale and weary, not unlike a man who has undergone some severe operation, or heard some dreadful tidings. Drops of blood have appeared upon his shirt ; this, however, I allow may have been placed there.”

“ And has it never been attempted to deceive him in regard to the hour—to engage him so deeply in some affair, as to get it over without his notice ?”

“ Only once, it is said, he overstepped the exact

time. It was in a large company—purposely kept up till very late ;—all the watches were carefully altered ; and a warm argument ensued, which he entered into with a spirit which carried him away. When the stated hour arrived, he suddenly paused ;—gazed round, trembling from head to foot, and his limbs grew stiff. Soon his eyes were set, his pulse beat no more, and all means applied to recover him were fruitless. In this state he continued until the hour was passed,—when he suddenly recovered, opened his eyes, and resumed the thread of conversation at the very syllable he had dropped it. The general confusion of the party betrayed what had passed ; and he then explained that every spectator of the scene might well congratulate himself at escaping with only a shock :—and the fearful earnestness with which he pronounced this, convinced all present of its truth. He left the place that very night, and returned no more.

“ The prevailing opinion was that during the fated hour, he had been engaged in secret communication with his genius. Some persons suppose him to be some deceased, who has been fated during three-and-twenty hours of the day to walk the earth ; only the twenty-fourth being reserved for his appearance and punishment in the world below. Others believe he must be the celebrated Apollo-

nius of Thyana, and others again for Johannes the younger ; who, it is reported, is to remain on earth until the day of judgment."

" Respecting so extraordinary a character," said the Prince, " a variety of conjectures must undoubtedly be hazarded. All that we have hitherto heard wholly rests upon hearsay ; and yet his deportment towards you, and yours towards him, goes sufficiently to prove your mutual acquaintance. Now, is there no strange history at the bottom of this, with which you are intimately connected ; and which you seek to disguise from us ?"

The Sicilian cast a doubtful glance, and was silent.

" Should it relate to some affair you wish to keep secret," continued the Prince, " I assure you in the name of both these gentlemen, that such secrecy shall be most sacredly observed : only speak out, without the least reservation."

" Could I venture to hope," said the prisoner, after a long pause, " that you will not employ such kind of information to my prejudice, I would relate a very singular adventure, of which I was an eyewitness, with this Armenian ;—an adventure calculated to remove all doubt of his mysterious power. I must be permitted, however, to omit some names connected with it."

“ Cannot you contrive to give us your story, without such a condition ?”

“ No, I dare not, gentlemen : there is one family deeply implicated in it ; whose reputation I have reason to consult.”

“ Well, let us hear,” said the Prince.

“ It may be about five years ago,” began the Sicilian, “ when I was engaged in practising my art with tolerable success at Naples, that I met with a certain Lorenzo del M——te, a Cavalier of the order of St. Stephen’s, sprung from one of the first houses of the kingdom. He soon gave me his entire confidence, and informed me that the Marquis, his father, was an enthusiastic admirer of the Cabbala, and would consider himself fortunate in having a philosopher, such as he esteemed me, under the same roof with him. The old count resided at one of his estates, near the coast, about five miles from Naples ; where, wholly secluded from society, he wept over the fate of an affectionate son, snatched from him in the most heart-rending manner. The Cavalier gave him to understand that both he and his family were in a peculiar situation, which might perhaps induce them to avail themselves of my secret science, which would possibly succeed in throwing some light upon a subject to which all natural means had been applied in vain. He added, more-

over, with peculiar emphasis, that he should some time, perhaps, have occasion to date his whole earthly happiness from my kind offices and interposition. I did not then venture to question him farther, and he gave me no farther explanation. The affair betrayed itself, however, in the following manner.

“ This Lorenzo was the Count’s youngest son, intended for an ecclesiastical life, while his brother was to inherit the family estates. His name was Jeronimo ; he had spent several years in travel, and returned about seven years before the period to which my narrative applies, in order to celebrate his nuptials with an only daughter of the neighbouring house of C——tti, an alliance contemplated from their childhood, with the view of uniting the property of the two adjacent families in one. Notwithstanding this arrangement, solely a matter of expediency, in which the choice of the parties was not consulted, the hearts of the betrothed had voluntarily become attached, requiring little art to promote the object in view. Antonia, accustomed to behold her Jeronimo as her destined companion, early opened her whole heart and feelings ; while the harmony of their characters, approaching closer and closer, soon ripened into fervent love. Four years’ absence had not cooled it ; and Jeronimo was now hastening to

claim his bride, as passionately as if he had never left her side.

“ The delight of meeting was scarcely over, and the preparations for the nuptials completed, when the bridegroom disappeared. He had been accustomed to spend his evenings at a villa, commanding a view of the sea, and often took an excursion on the water. One night he remained longer than usual ; messengers were sent in pursuit ; boats were put out ; but no one met with him. None of his servants were missing, and none had accompanied him. The night elapsed without his making his appearance :—the morrow, mid-day, evening, and yet no Jeronymo. The most alarming prognostics were now indulged. Next, tidings came of Algerine corsairs having scoured the coast the day before, and carried off several of the neighbouring inhabitants. Two galleys were instantly manned, the old Marquis taking the command of one, with the resolution of saving his son, if possible, at the risk of his own life. On the third day he got sight of the corsairs, of whom they had the advantage of the wind, and at length approached them so close, that Lorenzo imagined he could behold his brother’s signal on the enemy’s deck, when suddenly they were separated by a storm. With difficulty the shattered vessels stood the sea ;—their prize disappeared, and

they were compelled to seek refuge at Malta. The wretchedness of the family was beyond description; the aged father tore his hair, and the life of the young countess was in imminent danger.

“ During five years, their incessant inquiries were in vain. They went over the whole line of the Algerine coasts—vast sums were offered for ransom, in case he survived, but without avail. At length it was concluded, that the piratical vessel by which he was captured must have been lost in the storm, along with all its crew. Yet, however probable, this did not utterly destroy all hope:—it was still possible that the lost one might appear. Soon the family must either relinquish all expectation of succession, or the younger brother must resign his ecclesiastical profession, and enter upon the elder’s rights.

“ Whatever degree of injustice there might appear in thus disinheriting the eldest brother, as far as there was no certainty of his death, yet such a possibility was so remote, as not to be placed in competition with the total extinction of an illustrious house. Grief and age had now nearly brought the Marquis to the tomb; the last remnants of hope forsook him; he saw the approaching fate of his ancient name and family, only to be avoided by an act of apparent injustice towards his oldest and dearest son. He wished to fulfil his contract with the neighbouring family of C—tti, which would

only require to change a single name ;—the object of both families might yet be realised, by the Countess Antonia becoming the consort of Lorenzo. As the aged Marquis's expectations of his eldest son's return became more and more extinct, he turned to the nuptials of the younger as the sole means of mitigating the uneasiness he felt.

“ The chief obstacle to this arrangement lay in the young Lorenzo. Not flattered by the prospect of such possessions, nor feeling the passion that had actuated the heart of his brother, he evinced the most generous reluctance to investing himself with that brother's rights, and receiving his betrothed bride to his arms. Besides, he might still be in existence, and return to claim his own. “ Is not the sad captivity of my dear Jeronymo enough,” he would say, “ without embittering his lot by depriving him of every thing he once held dear? How could I hope for Heaven's or his forgiveness, were he to return and find his bride in my arms ;—with what face could I hasten forward to greet him. Even supposing that he is snatched from us for ever, can we better honour his memory than by leaving the vacancy he has left in our society, still empty ; as if we had buried our best hopes with him in the grave, leaving them sacred, a sacrifice to the dead !”

“ These truly fraternal and sensitive objections were soon, however, overruled by the aged Marquis,

who longed to perpetuate a family which had flourished so many centuries; though it was not before the lapse of two years that Lorenzo would consent to lead Jeronymo's bride to the altar. During this last period, their inquiries were redoubled, Lorenzo himself taking several voyages, and no expense was spared to obtain a clue of his lost brother; but these two years elapsed as all the former ones had done.

“And the Countess Antonia?” inquired the Prince; “you say nothing in regard to her. Could she deliver herself up tamely to her evil destiny?—I cannot believe it.”

“Antonia's situation was truly pitiable: it was a conflict between duty and passion—aversion and surprize. The unavailing generosity of her lost love's brother touched her. She could not avoid honouring the being whom she could not love; and her heart was torn by a variety of contending emotions. Her dislike seemed to increase, too, in proportion as he sought to win her regard. He viewed her uncomplaining grief with evident concern; tender compassion took the place of indifference, and this treacherous feeling soon betrayed him into a real passion. Yet he still appeared to give ear only to his more generous feelings at the expense of his heart:—he was the only one who seemed to protect the unhappy victim ready to be sacrificed for his sake. Yet all his wishes to serve her were

vain, though they served to place his magnanimity in a still more favourable light, and to deprive the young Countess of almost every excuse for resisting the wishes of the family.

“ Such was the situation of its affairs at the period the young Cavalier invited me to his father’s villa. The warm recommendation of my patron obtained for me a reception beyond my most sanguine hopes. I must not here omit to mention that, owing to some successful operations, I had succeeded in acquiring a reputation which greatly added to the confidence reposed in me, and raised the old Marquis’s expectations of me to a high pitch. To what a length this had proceeded, and by what means, I am about to inform you ; and from what you already know, you will easily be able to decide as to the rest. As I availed myself of all the mysterious works of the old Marquis’s excellent library, I soon began to converse with him in his own tongue, and to bring my system of the invisible world in harmony with his own opinions. In short, I made him believe what I pleased, and he placed as much faith in the communications of philosophers with sylphs and salamanders, as in any article of the canon law. Being, moreover, very religious, and his confidence in our system being carried to the most unbounded degree, my stories soon obtained credit, and I had so completely mystified and wrapped

him in my magical web, that he would lend an ear to nothing which was merely probable or natural. In truth, I was a favourite oracle with the whole house. The usual scope of my disquisitions was, the possible exaltation of the human mind to a connection with higher beings;—and my authority was the infallible Count Von Cabalis. The young Countess, who, since the loss of her betrothed, had conversed less with the living than with the dead, and whose warm imagination took a lively interest in objects of such a nature, welcomed my spiritual communications with a kind of shuddering delight. Even the domestics attempted to gain admittance to hear my instructions,—delighted if they could catch the meaning of a word here and there, which they repeated to their companions in their own way, with appropriate comments.

“I had spent about two months at this noble residence, when one morning the Cavalier entered my chamber. Deep grief was visible in his features; he appeared almost convulsed, and threw himself into a chair with all the wildness of one in despair.

“ ‘ Captain!’ he exclaimed, ‘ it is all over with me: I must away: I can bear it no longer!’

“ ‘ What is the matter with you, Cavalier? how is this?’

“ ‘ Oh, this terrific passion! I have contended

with it like a man, but I can do so no longer !' and he threw himself into my arms.

“ ‘ With whom does it remain, but with yourself to be happy, my dear friend ; every thing is in your own power, your father, your family ?’

“ ‘ Oh ! what are all to me ? ought I to accept her reluctant hand, or even a friendly acquiescence ? Have I not a rival—a rival, perhaps, among the dead. Let me then find him ; let me visit all ends of the earth, to find my brother.’

“ ‘ What ! after so many disappointments, do you still indulge hope ?’

“ ‘ Oh, no ! it has long since fled. Yet say there were—say he were found, should I be happy, so long as a gleam of hope inspires the heart of Antonia. Two words, dear friend, would end all my sufferings ; but it is vain, my lot is cast, until eternity breaks its awful silence, and graves become witness for me ?’

“ ‘ Is it this certainty, then, of his death, that would make you happy ?’

“ ‘ Happy ! that I fear I can never be ! but a state of perpetual doubt is the most frightful punishment ;’ then, after some minutes’ silence, he added with a voice of woe, ‘ Oh, that he could see my sufferings ! would this constant attachment to him, which forms my utter misery, prove a source

of pleasure to him? Must the living become victims to the dead, who can enjoy no more? Surely, if he knew my grief,—and here he burst into fresh lamentations,—‘surely he would come, return once more to my arms.’

“ ‘Then, is this so perfectly impossible?’ said I.

“ ‘What say you, my friend?’ he inquired with a look of terror.

“ ‘Far lighter motives than these have brought back the departed into the rank of the living. Should the entire happiness of a man, a brother—’

“ ‘Entire temporal happiness! Oh, I feel that! How truly have you said it, my complete felicity!’

“ ‘Besides, the peace of a sorrowing family; surely all would be sufficient to justify any means, by invisible power, whenever an earthly occasion may offer itself, though it were to disturb the peace of the blessed, to make use of a secret power.’

“ ‘For God’s sake, friend,’ he cried, ‘no more! Ere I would indulge a thought like that, even though I may have said it; I hate, I abhor it.’

“ ‘You may already perceive,’ pursued the Sicilian, “to what this was tending. I was attempting to root out the Cavalier’s doubts, in which I at length succeeded. It was resolved to cite the ghost of the deceased, for which I required a fortnight’s fast, in order, as I pretended, to make myself worthy of so high an office. After the lapse of this time,

when my machinery was in readiness, I availed myself of a very gloomy evening, while the family was assembled round me, to inspire them with the same wish, in such a manner, as to let the proposal come from them. The greatest obstacle was the young Countess, whose presence was so important; but her enthusiastic feelings were soon roused in our favour, in addition to a gleam of hope, that her lover might yet be in existence, and not answer to the invocation. Want of faith in the affair itself, and doubt in my own skill, were the sole obstacles which I had not to vanquish.

“As soon as the family consent was obtained, the third day was appointed for the ceremony. Prayers prolonged until midnight, fastings, watching, and mysterious instructions, united to interludes of music, from a peculiar instrument, whose tones I had found productive of very happy effects, were among the means resort ed to, in order to add to the solemnity of the scene, which so far elevated the fancy of the audience, as to recite even my own imagination, and give more complete illusion to the whole ceremony. This was what I aimed at; and the expected hour at length approached.”

“Beware,” said the Prince, “how you offer to mislead us! but go on, go on!”

“I do not, most gracious Prince! The invocation went off according to our best wishes.”

“ But how !—where is the Armenian ?”

“ Do not be alarmed,” replied the prisoner ;
“ he will make his appearance but too soon.”

“ I shall enter into no detail of the ceremony, which would carry me too far. Enough, that the imposture perfectly succeeded. The old Marquis, the young Countess, her mother, the Cavalier, and some of their relatives, were present. You may well imagine that I had not allowed the time I spent at their residence to pass away, without making myself intimately acquainted with their concerns, more especially as they related to the deceased. A variety of portraits of him afforded me an excellent resemblance for my ghost ; and as he was only made to speak by signs, I ran no hazard of being detected by the sound of the voice. The deceased appeared arrayed in the habit of an Algerine slave, with a deep wound upon his neck. And you will please to remark, that here I at least observed probability in squaring my apparition with popular belief, not, however, in consigning him to the waves, as I imagined that this unexpected turn would be entitled to more credit from the peculiarity of its appearance, while too near an approach to what was quite natural and obvious might have been productive of danger.”

“ I conjecture,” said the Prince, “ that this was well chosen. Out of a list of extraordinary appa-

ritions, as it appears to me, only the more probable ought to be displayed. Skill to catch the proposed object would here only be a means tending to success ; skill to invent might be liable to create suspicion ; for why raise a ghost at all if we are only to be informed by him respecting what, without him, we might arrive at by the unassisted efforts of reason ? But the astonishing novelty and difficulty of the discovery is here likewise a warrant for its supernatural character, through which it must succeed ; for who will be inclined to call in question the miraculous nature of an action or operation, when it is made to appear clear, that such operation cannot be executed by any human power. But I am interrupting you," added the Prince ; " finish your narrative."

" I inquired of the ghost whether he had not given up all title to what had been dear to him in this world ? he pointed towards Heaven, and then shook his head ; and before he disappeared, he drew from his finger a ring which had been found since Jeronymo was missing ; and upon nearer inspection the Countess recognized it for her marriage-ring."

" Her marriage-ring !" cried the Prince with surprize ; " how was this obtained ?"

" I——it was not the right, gracious Prince ; I had it—it was merely an imitation."

" An imitation !" repeated the Prince : " you

must have had the original even for that, and how could you contrive to obtain it when the deceased, doubtless, never took it from his finger?"

"That is very true," replied the Sicilian: "but from a description which I had of the real one—"

"A description you had!" interrupted the Prince: "how?"

"Yes, long time back—it was quite a peculiar gold ring—with the name of the young Countess—I believe: but you have broken the thread of my narrative!"

"And what next?" replied the Prince, with a more suspicious and unfriendly mein.

"It was now finally concluded that Jeronymo was dead. The family openly announced the circumstance, and went into mourning. The appearance of the ring had, likewise, deprived Antonia of her last hope; and gave the addresses of the Cavalier more authority. Yet the shock she sustained from the apparition threw her into a dangerous illness, which had very nearly extinguished her lover's hopes for ever. On her recovery, she would have taken the veil, had not the moving appeals of the old Marquis, in whom she placed the utmost confidence, deterred her. By this means, united to the incessant solicitations of the Cavalier, they at length extorted a reluctant consent from the unhappy Antonia.

“ The final day of the mourning was fixed upon for that of the marriage, which was likewise to be distinguished by admitting the Cavalier into the full enjoyment of the family possessions.

“ It came—and the happy Lorenzo led his trembling bride up to the steps of the altar. The day passed away, and a costly feast awaited the approaching guests, in a gaily lighted hall, while the sound of music from a thousand strings welcomed the entrance of the bridal party.

“ The aged Marquis was desirous that the whole country should witness his happiness ; the gates of his palace were thrown open, and welcome were all who seemed to participate in his son’s enjoyment. Amid this throng was—”

Here the Sicilian drew in his breath, and we all caught the contagion of terror.

“ Amidst this throng,” he continued, “ my attention was drawn by some one at my side, towards a certain Franciscan Monk, who stood as motionless as a statue. He was gaunt and tall ; his face was of an ashy pale, with a look full of earnestness and sorrow fixed upon the bridal party. The enjoyment of the scene before him made not the slightest impression upon him ; he preserved the same unchanged seriousness of mein, standing like a bust among the living. The strangeness of his glance, which checked me as I met it in the ardour of pleasure

which swam around me, withdrawing my attention from the scene, impressed itself so powerfully upon my soul, as to have since enabled me alone, to recognize the features of the monk in those of the Russian—the Armenian—or what he will. Under any other circumstance this would have been impossible. Often I attempted to withdraw my eyes from that terrific figure ; but it returned, it haunted me,—and I observed it was the same with my companion. The same surprize, too, ran through the whole company ; conversation was at an end—there was a general pause : the Monk only sat unmoved ; his serious and mournful eye still directed towards the bridal pair. Each guest was impressed by his presence : the young Countess alone seemed to take a sad delight in sympathizing with the grief so deeply seated in the stranger's countenance, as if it were the sole enjoyment she could find to communicate with one who seemed to read her own soul. Soon the company began to disperse—midnight was past—the music died gradually away—the lights burned few and dim,—conversation slow and languid—and more and yet more empty the darkening bridal hall now became. The monk alone stood motionless—always himself—with the same quiet and mournful glance directed at the bridal pair.

“ At length, the tables were removed, the guests

disappeared here and there ; while the family was gathered into a small circle. I know not how it was that no one ventured to accost the monk, and he spoke to no one ; nor was he invited to join the circle. Already were her female attendants and friends gathering round the bride ;—she cast a sad and appealing look towards the sorrowful stranger : to which, however, he did not reply.

“ The gentlemen were all collected round the bridegroom. There was a long anxious pause ; and then the old Marquis, who, among all present had appeared to take not the least notice of the unknown, said—‘ To think that we should all be thus happy here to-night, and my dear son Jeronymo absent !’

“ ‘ Have you invited him, then, and is he not come ?’ inquired the monk. This was the first time he had opened his mouth ; and we regarded each other in alarm.

“ ‘ Alas !’ replied the aged father ; ‘ he is gone, and he will never return,—gone whence no one returns more ! My worthy Sir, my son Jeronymo is dead.’

“ ‘ Perhaps he is only afraid to make his appearance in such a company,’ continued the monk. ‘ Who knows but he may be looking out. Let him hear the voice which he heard for the last time. Bid thy son Lorenzo call thy poor son Jeronymo.’

“ ‘What does he mean? What is that?’ murmured the company that still remained. Lorenzo changed colour, and I confess that my hair began to stand on end. Meanwhile the monk approached the sideboard, filled a glass of wine, and put it to his lips;—‘To the memory of our dear Jeronymo,’ he cried; ‘let all who held him dear follow my example.’

“ ‘Whoever you may be, my worthy Sir,’ continued the Marquis, ‘you have mentioned the name of one very dear to me. You are welcome. Come, my friends,’ he said, as he passed the bottle, ‘let not a stranger have to remind, and put us to the blush; drink to the memory of my son Jeronymo.’

“ ‘Never, I think, was a health drank with less zest.

“ ‘A glass still remains full there,’ continued the old man, pointing to his son Lorenzo; ‘drink to the memory of your brother.’

“ ‘Lorenzo received it trembling from the monk’s hand—trembling he carried it to his lips;—‘To the memory of my dearly beloved brother, Jeronymo!’ But he stopped, and shuddering, put down his glass.—‘I hear the voice of my murderer,’ cried a terrific figure, which suddenly rose up amongst us, clad in bloody garments, and covered with deep gashes.”

Here the Sicilian broke off. “Ask me no far-

ther what happened," he said, with all the signs of internal agony upon his countenance. "My senses seemed to forsake me the moment I cast my eyes upon the face, and the same with every one present. When we recovered our presence of mind we found Lorenzo struggling in the agonies of death. Monk and apparition had both disappeared. The Chevalier was borne, in frightful convulsions, to his couch. No one was left with him besides the priest and his wretched father, who followed him, within a few weeks, to the tomb. His dying confessions lay buried in the breast of his father, who received them, and to no living being were they communicated.

"Shortly after this event, it happened that there was occasion to enlarge a well lying in the back court of the villa, hidden by wild shrubs, which had been neglected for years. When a part of the rubbish had been removed, a human skeleton was discovered. The house where this occurred is now no longer standing; the family name of M—— is extinct; and at a convent not far from Salerno, is seen Antonia's grav .

"You now perceive," continued the Sicilian, observing that we all stood dumb with astonishment, and no one wished to make any remark,— "you see in what manner my acquaintance with this Russian, or this Armenian, first commenced. Judge, then, whether I had cause to tremble before

such a being, who threw himself twice in this terrific character across my path."

"You must now," observed the Prince, "reply to a few questions I have to put to you. Have you been quite candid in your account of what happened to the Cavalier?"

"I know nothing else," replied the Sicilian.

"And did you actually look upon him as an honest man?"

"That I did, by Heavens!" exclaimed the prisoner.

"What! even when he gave you the ring you mentioned?"

"How! he gave me no ring!—I never said he had given me the ring."

"Good," said the Prince, looking at his watch in the act of going. "And the spirit of Lanoy," he added, as he turned upon his steps, "do you really believe that it was a *bonâ-fide* ghost?"

"I can account for it in no other way," replied the Sicilian; "I mean the ghost that followed mine."

"Come," said the Prince to us. The gaoler now entered. "We are ready," he added to him. Then turning towards the prisoner, "You, Sir, shall hear from me again."

"Might I not, think you, my gracious Prince," I said, the moment we were left alone,— "might I

not repeat your last question to the knave we have just left—‘ Do you really believe it was a *bonâ-fide* ghost ?’ I mean the second one ?”

“ What, I ! no, certainly—no more now !”

“ No more ! then you believed it before ?”

“ I cannot deny, that for a moment, I was dazzled with this phantasmagoria—not a little puzzled !”

“ And I should like to see the person who, under these circumstances, would be able to shake off a similar impression. But may I ask what reason you have to alter your previous opinion ? From what we have already heard of this Armenian, our faith in his superhuman power ought rather to increase than diminish.”

“ What ! from the account such an abandoned wretch has given us of him ?” inquired the Prince with peculiar earnestness of manner ; “ for you cannot doubt but that we have had to deal with such an one.”

“ No,” said I ; “ but should his testimony, therefore——”

“ The testimony of a knave !—besides, granted that I had no other ground for my doubts, can it for a moment be admitted against the dictates of truth and sound reason ? Ought a man, who has often imposed upon me, whose declared profession is imposture, to be credited in such an affair, when he must first be impressed with a sincere love of

truth, to be at all entitled to credit? Does such a man, who, perhaps, never spoke truth except when compelled, deserve to be admitted as evidence against human reason and the eternal order of things? Upon this doctrine, we might prefer giving authority to the branded villain in preference to untainted innocence, and let him appeal against it!"

"But what reason could he have for conferring so high a character upon a man whom he has so many reasons to hate, or at least, to dread?"

"Suppose I cannot penetrate into his motive, is that any proof that he has had none? Do I know at whose instigation, in whose pay he wishes to receive me? I confess I cannot unravel the whole web of his villany; but I am sure he has done the cause for which he contends very little service, by representing himself as an arch impostor, and perhaps something worse, in the back-ground."

"Assuredly the circumstance of the ring does look very suspicious!"

"It is more," said the Prince, "for it is proof. This ring, granting that the whole narrative be true, he received from the hands of the murderer, and he must have felt assured, at the time, that he was the murderer. Who but his assassin could have rifled the deceased—of a pledge too of affection, constantly worn by him?—Suppose he were to allege that he had himself been deceived by the Cavalier,

while he imagined he was all along deceiving him, what would he gain in point of credibility? He must feel how much he lost by admitting his connection with the murderer. His whole narrative is plainly nothing but a tissue of inventions, upon which to hang his minor truths, in order that we might give him credit for the whole. And ought I rather to pin my faith upon the eleventh lie told me by a knave, having detected ten preceding it, than upon the unalterable laws of nature, in which I never found the least deviation?"

"I cannot answer that argument," I replied: "yet I am still no nearer comprehending the real nature of the apparition we last night saw."

"Nor I," replied the Prince, "though I am resolved to do all in my power to find the key of the secret."

"How?" I inquired.

"Don't you recollect that the second figure, the moment it entered the room, went to the altar, stood on the silk foot-cloth, and grasped the crucifix?"

"So, indeed, it appeared."

"Well, the crucifix, as we are informed by the Sicilian, was a conductor;—therefore he hastened to charge it. The blow which Lord Seymour aimed with his sword, was consequently powerless, the shock of the electric fluid depriving his arm of motion."

“To the sword, indeed, this may apply ; but not to the ball from the pistol fired by the Sicilian, and which we saw roll slowly along the altar.”

“Are you convinced that it *was* the same ball which was shot from the pistol? I shall say nothing respecting the puppet or real man who represented the ghost—doubtless so well stuffed as to be quite sword and pistol proof: then just consider *who he* was who loaded the pistols.”

“That is true!” I exclaimed—and a sudden light broke upon me: “the Russian loaded them, yet this he did before our eyes ;—and how could he have contrived to cheat us?”

“How could he?—Only suppose that you had then had reason to mistrust this man, and kept your eye upon him ;—suppose you had examined the balls before they were charged, and found them made of quicksilver or painted clay:—did you take special notice that he did not slip them into his hand, instead of the muzzle of the pistol? Besides, can you swear that he did not take the pair of loaded ones with him, and change them in the other pavilion for a pair that were empty, while we were all busy preparing, and undressing for the ceremony? And might not the figure, while the smell of powder was in our nose, let fall another ball, with which he was purposely armed upon the altar: for which among all these suppositions is impossible?”

“ You are right. But then the astonishing likeness of the figure to your deceased friend. I have often seen him, and I confess I recognized him in the features of the spirit.”

“ And I, I can only say, that the deceit was very cleverly got up. But if our Sicilian could contrive to catch the resemblance from a miniature on a snuff-box, by a few glances, so as to deceive us both, how much more the Russian, who had the full use of my snuff-box at table, and who enjoyed moreover, the advantage of having heard me confidentially declare the identity between my friend and the portrait upon the box: add to this, as was observed by the Sicilian, that the old Marquis was mightily weak upon these points, where is the difficulty of *illustrating* the whole of this apparition?”

“ But the meaning of his words: the disclosure made by your friend?”

“ Well! did not the Sicilian himself say, that from the little he had extracted from me, he had composed a very probable kind of history. Does not this show how very natural it was to hit upon such an invention? Besides the oracles pronounced by the ghost were so obscure, that he ran no hazard of being contradicted. Only grant that the creature of this juggler, who played the ghost, had sufficient dexterity and confidence, with a little instruction in regard to the circumstances, how far

might not this species of imposition have been carried?"

"But, consider, Prince, what a preparatory scope must have been taken by the Armenian to produce such results, beforehand: what a length of time, even to paint one head so like another as we saw in these. Then to instruct the ghost in his part, so as to be provided against any gross or flagrant error? What power of observation must all the little accessaries, on such an occasion, have required, of which he was compelled to avail himself; though they might have blown up his whole scheme. And recollect that the Russian was not, in all, absent above half an hour. Could he, in this time, have arranged every thing in such a mode as to give it quite a supernatural effect? Truly, gracious Sir, never yet was there a dramatic writer who set at naught Aristotle's three essential unities; who could get up an interlude so replete with incident, nor have inspired the spectator with so profound an opinion of his art."

"How? do you hold it altogether impossible, that all these preparations should have been made within the half hour?"

"Why, I think it amounts to much the same thing."

"Such an argument," said the Prince, "I do not understand. Do you maintain it to be contrary

to all the laws of time, of place, and of physical operations, that so nimble a genius as this same Armenian, with the help of creatures as nimble as himself, favoured by the night, watched by no one, with all means and appliances to boot; without which no juggler of his stamp ever steps upon the stage;—do you maintain, I say, that he could not bring the whole of his machinery to bear upon us in half an hour? Is it, after all, so incredible, that with the application of a few ready words, commands, becks, and nods, understood by his accomplices, that he should be able to bring his wide laid, yet concentrated scheme, into action! Nothing, however, but the most absolute impossibility ought to be placed in competition with the invariable laws of nature. Would you rather believe in a miracle, than admit an improbability? rather admit a violation of the powers of nature, than a very artful and unusual combination of these powers, in order to produce a supernatural impression on the mind?”

“But suppose the affair not to produce such very powerful results, yet you must confess that it is quite above our comprehension.”

“No! I have a great notion of disputing even this with you,” cried the Prince, with singular archness and defiance of manner; “for how, my good Count, if I should assert that not only a poor half hour, full of haste and hurry, but that the

whole evening and ensuing night may have been appropriated by our Armenian to the task? Do you consider, that the Sicilian devoted nearly three hours to his preparations on the same occasion?"

"The Sicilian, gracious Prince?"

"Yes: how will you prove that he had not as great a share in the conjuration of the second ghost as of the first?"

"How so, your highness?"

"That he was only the principal accomplice of the Armenian;—in short, both are jugglers, who vary only in degree."

"It is very difficult to believe it," said I, in some surprize.

"Not so difficult, perhaps, as you imagine, Count. Why, it might happen that both jugglers met, entertaining the same design, against the same person, at the same place; and that there occurred a respective harmony of combinations, and an unanimity of purpose, that produced the effect of playing into one another's hands. Suppose he should have availed himself of the first exhibition, as a sort of foil for his own: a sort of pilot-balloon, to learn which way the wind blew, and how far he might count upon your credulity. Then it served to expand our imaginations, to familiarize himself with his imaginative victims, and to prepare the way for his *grand finale*—his last *coup d'esprit*. Suppose,

moreover, that he did it in order to direct our observation one way, and withdraw it from more important objects, which he wished to avoid. Besides he may have made previous inquiries, applied to the exhibition of his art, in order to remove suspicion from its actual tendency."

"Why do you think that?"

"Why? grant that he bribed one of my people to furnish him with information, calculated to further his object. I missed my huntsman; and have a right to conclude, that in his abduction the Armenian and he were in league: a letter may have been seized: a domestic fond of tale-bearing. In fact, his whole reputation falls to the ground, when I discover the sources of his apparent omniscience: it strikes at either of the jugglers, in whatever way they aimed their strokes at me. As to the situation and designs of this Armenian, it is of no consequence thus early to speak. Probably my suspicion, that this last is the only real impostor, may turn out to be correct; and I will be bound that the Sicilian was only the puppet with which he intended to amuse me, while he himself, unsuspected and unseen, might secretly wind me in his web of deceit."

"Very good; but how does it agree that he himself assisted in detecting the Sicilian's imposture, thus exposing the secrets of his art to profane eyes?"

Must not he have been apprehensive lest the detected fallacy of one, carried to so high a pitch of probability as the Sicilian's, must have injured the credit of a second attempt, and given him less hold upon our credulity."

"What are these secrets which he would have me prize so highly? None, which it was his object to exercise against me. He lost nothing, then, by profaning them: but what a triumph, on the other hand, to explode these juggling tricks with sure and visible power, and yet strengthen my faith in his; to succeed in turning my vigilance to another direction; to fix my silent growing doubts upon objects which are the furthest possibly removed from the reach of our preceding ideas. He might expect that, sooner or later, owing to some suspicion, I might be seeking out some key to account for his wonders in the juggling art itself. What, indeed, could he do better, than place himself by the side of another, and then put the scale of merit in my hands, so that, whilst he prescribed a certain degree of art, my ideas should be so far elevated or misled? What a number of conjectures has he destroyed by a single stroke of art! how many illustrations afforded us, which finally, perhaps, I might have understood!"

"Still he has acted against his own system vilely, inasmuch as he sharpened the eyes of his spectators, instead of blinding them, and weakened

the impression of their faith in the supernatural, by unmasking the artful imposture. You are, yourself, my gracious Prince, the greatest obstacle to his plan, admitting that he has any."

"He has, perhaps, been mistaken in me;—but he has not judged less accurately on that account. Could he foresee that I should hit precisely on the key to the whole miracle? Was it part of his plan that one of his creatures should lay himself open to me, as he has done? Are we assured that this Sicilian has not widely overshot his mark? It is certainly so in regard to the ring:—yet it is chiefly this circumstance which has given me a decided mistrust of him. How easily may a deep rogue's plot miscarry by the clumsiness of his instruments! Truly, I did not think that the juggler would unfold any story, which might in the least tell against him afterwards. How, for instance, could he have the face to assure us that this necromancer is compelled to abandon all worldly pursuits at the twelfth hour of night, when, if you recollect, he was then among us, plain enough to be seen?"

"That is true, indeed," cried I. "He must have failed here."

"Yes, it lies in the character of these gentry to drive their practice too far; to lose every thing by doing too much: whereas, a more modest and moderate portion of imposition would have succeeded."

“ Notwithstanding all you have said, my gracious Prince, I cannot prevail upon myself to admit that the whole was nothing more than a premeditated cheat. Consider the fright of the Sicilian, his swoon, his convulsions, and his wretched appearance altogether ; such as to excite our deepest sympathy. Was all this nothing but a well-acted farce ? Now, granting that such dramatic imposture can go as far as the latter, can the art of the actor by any means produce such deep impression upon the vital organs ? ”

“ There is nothing in that, my friend. I have seen Garrick :—and were we at the moment tame and cold enough to remain mere unmoved spectators, could we pronounce upon the effect felt by these men, when we could not master that felt by ourselves ? Moreover, the decisive crisis, even for an impostor himself, being so very important, produces by expectation nearly the same strong symptoms as astonishment does in those whom he deceives. Add to this the unexpected apparition of the state officers——”

“ These too, gracious Sir,—it is good you remind me. Would he have ventured to submit a place so fraught with danger to the eye of justice ;—to bring the faith of his creature to so severe a proof—and to what purpose ? ”

“ Leave that to his discretionary knowledge of

his own people. Do we know by what secret crimes he may have purchased the silence of this man? We have heard what was his office in Venice. And suppose we let this previous work belong to the other tale;—what will it cost him to bring this creature of his clear, he being the only witness against him?"

And, in fact, the result justified the Prince's suspicion. When we called some days after, to inquire respecting the prisoner, we were informed that he was no longer to be seen.

"And do you inquire for what end? By what other than forcible means could he have prevented the scandalous confession, in which he was so deeply implicated, which must have ensued? Who, but an abandoned man who has nothing more to lose, could come to so humiliating a conclusion? Under what other circumstances should we have believed him?"

"All granted, my gracious Prince," replied I. "Both apparitions must have been impostures. The Sicilian merely treated us to a story, enjoined him by his principal: both aimed at one object,—were in compact; and from this the whole of the mysterious circumstances which surprised us may be easily explained. The prophecy at Venice, which opened the tragic farce, is still unsolved, with all that ensued, and we need the key to the whole of these, though we have happily resolved a part."

"Carry it yet further, dear Count," said the

Prince ; “ for what signify all his wonders, when I prove the fallacy in one case? As to that prediction, I confess, it goes beyond my powers to explain. Had they stopped there, the Armenian might have closed his play as he opened it,—and, I confess, I know not how far he might have deceived me. In this humiliating society you seem to be a little less suspicious than I.”

“ Granted, gracious Sir : yet the affair remains very unaccountable ; and I challenge all our philosophers together, to find a solution of it !”

“ I question whether it be really so unfathomable as you think,” said the Prince, after some pause. “ I am very far from making any philosophical pretensions ; and yet, I think, I could engage to give something like a natural solution of it ; or at least, deprive it of all supernatural ornament.”

“ If you will do that, my Prince,” replied I, laughing, “ you shall yourself be the only miracle to which I will pin my faith.”

“ And, as a proof,” he continued, “ how little we need be inclined to have recourse to supernatural sources, I will point out two different ways of accounting for the incident, without violating the laws of nature.”

“ Two keys at once ! I am curious to hear.”

“ You read along with me the account of my deceased cousin’s illness. It was an attack of fever,

in which, however, he died by a sudden apoplexy. The singularity of this death led me to consult a physician, and what I learnt from him gave me a clue to the imposture. The illness of the deceased had this peculiar symptom,—that the patient, during the attack, lay sunk in profound repose; in which, on the second attack of the paroxysm, he died. These attacks returned, very violently, at stated intervals, in such a way as to enable the physician to pronounce upon the exact hour of his death. The third paroxysm of the tertian ague, or fever, occurs generally on the fifth day:—and precisely in a stated time would the letter arrive informing me of my cousin's death. Now, admit that the Armenian was in correspondence with some creatures about the person of the deceased—that he had an interest in obtaining accounts from that quarter,—and having designs on me, which a supernatural impression would tend to accelerate, he announced to us the time when the death was expected to take place; and the physician's prognostic which he only repeated, turned out to be correct. Here you have a natural solution of the mystery you think so inexplicable. Enough that you see the possibility of a third person giving an account of a death, which at that moment is taking place at fourteen miles distant."

" Upon my word, Prince, you here connect matters which, taken singly, may find a natural solu-

tion, but which cannot be brought to act together in the way we have seen, except by sorcery."

"What! are you less startled at the supernatural than at the improbable?"

"How," I replied, "could it be mere accident?"

"Doubtless something more," replied the Prince. "The Armenian knew my cousin's danger. He met us at St. Mark's; and the opportunity was too inviting not to hazard the prediction. Had it failed, there was only the loss of a word: but if true—it was likely to prove of great importance. It succeeded: and he then first seized Fortune by the forelock, and put it all to the account of a grand-laid scheme. Time must either illustrate such a secret or not: but, believe me, friend," he added, laying his hand upon mine, with an earnest look, "that a man who has real power at his command, will not avail himself of trick: he will despise it."

Thus concluded a conversation, which I have stated at length, to show the difficulties which the Prince had yet to vanquish, and which I hope will produce the good effect of freeing his mind from his former impression, that he was urged blindly forwards by some secret power or fiendish enmity. "Not all," continues the Count Von O—"who at the moment I am writing this are laughing, perhaps, at his weakness, and in proud uncertainty of their own untempted and so unshaken reason,

think themselves entitled to break the rod of damnation over his head—not all I fear would have so manfully met, and triumphed over this first attack, or even have stood so firm. If, notwithstanding this auspicious commencement, he should be found to have fallen a victim in the sequel, though warned by his good genius at the distant view of this dark design against him—and his evil destiny be finally fulfilled ; there will be less reason to indulge ridicule at his folly, than surprize at the depth of the imposture, capable of overpowering so fine a judgment as he possessed. His terrific destiny is closed ; his soul has long purified itself at the fountain of all truth, where mine, too, will long have rejoined it, before these unhappy pages are before the world. But let the tears which I shed over the memory of my dearest friend fall unchecked and free ; for sad and difficult as my task is, it forms a contribution to the annals of justice, and I must write on. He was an excellent, noble character, and must assuredly have proved an ornament to a throne, which threw a strange illusion round him, from a desire of ascending it by—a crime.”

CHAPTER II.

NOT long subsequent to these last occurrences, continued Count Von O——, I began to perceive an important change in the Prince's mind. Until this period, he had avoided entering into any serious inquiries as to the truth of the tenets he embraced, satisfied with exploding the received notions, both crude and superficial, imbibed in his education, by more elevated views, though without examining the foundation of his faith. He more than once avowed to me that religious objects, in particular, exhibited themselves to him, beyond the mortal pale, like some enchanted castle, in which one could not set one's foot without shuddering; and that it was far better to step by with respectful resignation, without encountering the risk of being lost in its labyrinths. Yet, spite of this, there was a strong predisposition which tempted him to enter into some inquiries connected with such a subject.

A bigoted and servile education was the source of this alarm; it had impressed forms of terror upon his tender intellect, from which he never succeeded in entirely emancipating himself in after-life.

Religious melancholy was the disease of his fa-

mily ; the education of both his brothers was calculated to indulge it ; while the preceptors, to whom they had been entrusted, were, on this head, either enthusiasts or hypocrites. The hilarity of boyhood was quenched by the cold hand of spiritual power, as the surest method of obtaining the approbation of the royal parents.

This dark cloud hung over the entire youth of this Prince ; and even pleasure was banished from his sports. All his religious preparations had something appalling in them—it was something threatening and hard, first imprinted upon his lively imagination, which he ever afterwards retained. His God was a terrific idol, delighting to punish ; and his worship an act of servile fear, or a blind, powerless proof of obedience. His religion was at variance with all his boyish and youthful inclinations, which excellent health and a strong frame rendered more violent and uncontrollable. He was at strife with all the sensibilities of his youthful nature—to him religion did not come so much as a benefit, as a scourge inflicted upon his passions. By degrees, a silent ill-will thus sprung up in his heart against it, which assumed the form of respectful faith united to blind fear—a feeling of compulsion, like that of a servant towards his master—a strange mixture of dislike and reverence.

It is not surprising that he sought the earliest

opportunity of throwing off so cruel a yoke; he absconded, like a hard-used slave, from his task-master, still retaining, in the midst of freedom, a feeling of his servitude: for he had not renounced the tenets of his early years from calm conviction—not waited until the maturity of his reason might gradually remove their influence. In fact, he had released himself like a deserter from his post, upon whom another's right of property still continues valid; insomuch, that after all his wanderings, all his efforts to escape, he is always compelled to retrace his steps. He had escaped with his chains, and was exposed to become the prey of any impostor who discovered them, and knew their use. That such an one did, indeed, appear, if it has not already been conjectured, will be made clear in the following pages.

The confessions of the Sicilian were followed by more important results over the Prince's mind, than they deserved; and the small triumph which his reason had achieved over this first weak invention, had given him greater confidence. The ease with which he appeared to have unravelled the mystery almost surprised himself. Truth and error still disputed their sway over him so very equally, that he could not quite separate them; insomuch that it often happened he mistook the arguments of the one for those of the other. Hence it was that the

whole foundation of his religious faith was shaken ; much like an inexperienced man, who, having fixed his choice unwisely, either in friendship or in love, begins to lose his esteem for them, having mistaken mere contingencies for their real properties, and treats them accordingly. Having unmasked the cheat, he began to grow suspicious of truth itself, unfortunately adopting the same mistaken views in regard to it.

This presumptive triumph was the more flattering, in proportion to the weight of the yoke which he believed he had thrown off. From this period he began to indulge a scepticism which no longer spared the most sacred subjects.

A variety of circumstances concurred to confirm him in this state of mind. The comparative solitude in which he had hitherto lived was broken in upon, and made room for a new mode of life, full of variety and distraction. Attentions, which he must return; the etiquette attendant upon his rank; drew him into the vortex of the fashionable world. His station, no less than his personal qualities, introduced him into the most intellectual circle in Venice. He was brought into contact with some of the most distinguished characters of the Republic, consisting both of scholars and statesmen. This compelled him to leave that uniform and narrow circle, to which he had been accustomed; and he

began to be sensible of the confined scope of his ideas, and of the necessity of a higher tone of mind. The old confined mould in which his intellect had been cast, though accompanied by so many fine qualities, offered an unfavourable contrast to the existing taste of the society around him, while his inexperience in the most familiar matters placed him in a somewhat ludicrous point of view, and he stood in awe of nothing so much as ridicule. The early unfavourable prejudices he had imbibed in his own country, appeared to offer opportunities for it, in his person. Add to this a degree of eccentricity in his character, which gave him a dislike to the attentions bestowed upon his rank, not upon his personal merit. This humility was in particular apparent in the presence of those distinguished for personal and intellectual endowments, which outshone the splendour of their birth. To find himself remarked only as a prince in society like this, produced a sense of shame and mortification, while he unfortunately imagined, that owing to such distinction he was excluded from any participation in it. Altogether this convinced him of the necessity there was for more enlarged intellectual cultivation, which he had hitherto too much neglected, in order to place himself more upon a level with the world of intellect and wit, in regard to which he believed he was so inferior.

With this view he entered on a course of modern study, with all the enthusiasm of his character. The bad choice, however, which was here purposely made for him, or at least suggested, tended neither to improve his reason nor his feelings. His inclination, likewise, led him into subjects of a doubtful and mysterious cast, which had irresistible charms for him, rousing observation and reflection, which he felt for no other subjects. His heart and reason meanwhile were free. But this *ignis fatuus* of the soul was daily leading him farther and farther astray. One author's shining style carried him away; the artful sophistry of another imposed upon his reason. His intellect was calculated to accommodate itself to either, or indeed to any writer who assumed a sufficiently lofty tone.

Such a course of reading pursued during more than a year with passionate assiduity, had hardly presented him with any fixed and useful ideas. He doubted more than before: and having so long impressed itself upon his character, scepticism at length infected his heart. To state it in short;— he had so far involved himself in this labyrinth, first, as a kind of religious enthusiast; secondly, as a sceptic; and lastly, as a freethinker; that he scarcely knew where he was.

Among the society into which he had been drawn, there was a particular one, which went by

the name of the *Bucentauro*; which, under the ostensible form of a noble intellectual liberality, really encouraged the most unbounded degree of licence—even of the passions. Numbering several members of wit and spirit, with the name, too, of a cardinal at its head, the Prince was the more easily led into its snares. Certain dangerous truths, thought he, could not be better deposited than in such hands, already bound to moderation; and which boasted the advantage of having heard and proved the opinions of the opposite party. The Prince here did not consider that libertinage of mind and feeling in persons of their rank, leads to more serious results, inasmuch as there is less rein to curb them; not having the fear of sanctity, like more profane people, before their eyes. This was the case with the *Bucentauro*, most of whose members, by aid of a false philosophy, and of their passions, quite worthy of such a guide, forgot what was due to their station, as well as to humanity itself.

The society boasted, likewise, its secret degrees; and I am willing, for the Prince's honour, to believe that he was never admitted into the sanctuary. Whoever entered into their councils, was compelled, as long as he was a member, to lay aside all distinctions of rank, country, and religion, in fact all conventional forms and differences, and take his station in the class of universals. The election of members

was itself a strong measure, depending solely upon superiority of intellect. The society arrogated to itself the most delicate judgment in matters of taste and ton ; and its reputation in this respect stood high throughout Venice. This, together with its apparent equality, had great attractions for the Prince. A highly animated society, distinguished for its wit, its information, and all the best talent that was to be met with, both in the classical and the political world, here centered, as it were, in a focus, long disguised from him the dangerous character of his new connection. As the mask, however, was gradually thrown aside, and it appeared in its real colours, he found it very difficult to retrace his steps ; and though the society, at length, avowed itself, motives of personal security, and false shame, induced him to disguise his real feelings.

Yet, from previous confidence in their principles and opinions, if he did not fall into imitation, he lost the beautiful simplicity of his character, and the delicacy of his moral taste. His understanding, destitute of solid principles and information, was unable, without foreign aid, to rescue him from the web of sophistry which had been wound around him ; and by degrees, the hateful poison he imbibed, corroded all the most beautiful portion of his early character and feelings. The natural ground-work of his happiness, he threw as a sophism aside : it

had failed under him at the most important moment, and compelled him, therefore, to betake himself to the first best support that offered itself.

Perhaps a truly friendly hand might even yet have snatched him from the abyss that yawned to receive him: but I was not then acquainted with the secret nature of the Bucentauro system;—the evil was already done, and I was called away at the commencement of this period, by important business from Venice. Even Lord Seymour, a valuable acquaintance, whose cool head resisted every attempt at delusion, and might have proved of essential service to him,—even he left us at this time to return to his own country. Those, indeed, in whose hands I left him, were all honourable men, but inexperienced, of narrow religious views, whose insight into the impending evil was as little as was their influence over the Prince. The only answer they afforded to his dangerous sophisms—the only remedy they suggested, was a dogmatical degree of faith, which neither alarmed nor attracted him. He saw through the plan too easily; while his more comprehensive intellect speedily compelled these bad defenders of a good cause to complete silence. Others, who succeeded in obtaining his confidence in the sequel, were too much occupied in plunging him deeper into the mischief. When, in the en-

suing year, I returned to Venice, how altered, alas ! did I find every thing around him !

The effects of the new philosophy were soon visible in the Prince's mode of life. The more progress he made, and the more friends he acquired in Venice, the faster his old acquaintance began to drop off, I was daily less satisfied with him ; we saw each other more seldom, and in particular *he* seemed to require it less. The current of the world was bearing him away. His house was almost always filled with company when he was at home. One entertainment, one kind of pleasure, followed another. He was the male toast—the male coquet of all parties ; the king and idol of the first circles. Serious to encounter as he had imagined the great world to be, in his retreat, he was now surprised to find it so trivial in reality. It came quite as a matter of course—every thing he said was thought excellent, while his silence was pronounced injustice to the world. This species of worldly good fortune—this general success, inspiring him with fresh courage and confidence, made him appear greater than he really was. The increasing good opinion which he thus came to entertain of his own merit, led him to give credit to the extravagant praises and respect that were lavished upon him, which, when unsupported by this enlarged sense of

his superiority and self-complacency, would have proved at least suspicious. But now such unanimous applause only seemed to confirm what his secret vanity had begun to whisper him—a tribute which he conceived was, of right, due to him.

Doubtless he would have risen superior to this affectation, had he been allowed time to breathe, and to compare his real worth with the idol so flatteringly exhibited, as through a mirror, to his view. But his whole existence was become a state of intoxication—a perpetual tumult—a fever of the spirits. The higher he had been raised, the greater the efforts required to maintain his station, and this incessant stretch of intellect was gradually wearing him away. Repose was banished, even banished from his pillow. His weak side was now too apparent—and the passion fixed upon to cherish it too well adapted to the purpose.

It was now also bruited by his noble attendants that their princely master was become a prime man. Those deep feelings and noble truths to which his heart was still so strongly attached, were the last to give way: but they, too, at length became the object of his own ridicule and wit. He avenged himself upon the truths of religion for the tyranny they had at one time exercised over him, tending even to madness; yet, as there was a voice which he could not falsify, often whispering from his heart

appealing against the madness of the head, so was there more of bitterness than happy courageous wit in the sarcasms he thus levelled. His temper began to change, and he grew capricious. The chief ornament of his character, his simplicity, his modesty had disappeared. Flatterers and hypocrites had poisoned the fountain of his heart and feelings: his kind and delicate demeanour which had once almost led his dependants to forget their master, was succeeded by a harsh and commanding tone, which was the more difficult to bear, as it did not proceed at all from his princely station which he slighted, but from an injurious spirit of personal superiority, which led him to despise others. If some reflections occasionally visited his pillow, which he eluded in presence of the world, they had only the effect of rendering him harsh to his own people, and unhappy; whilst he enlivened other circles by his forced merriment and wit. With sympathizing feelings we beheld him giving way to this wild and dangerous impulse: but he heard the voice of friendship no longer—he could not be stopped in mid career, for he then felt too happy to listen to us.

“ Early in the first period of this career, I was recalled to the court of my sovereign by an affair of importance, which I could not, as I valued the strongest claims of friendship, venture to neglect. An invisible hand, which I did not discover until

long afterwards, contrived to embroil my affairs there, while reports were at the same time spread against me, which required my personal interference. To leave the Prince so situated was very trying to me,—while to him, alas ! it was so much the easier. The bands had long been giving way which bound him to me. Still his destiny had awakened my warmest sympathy ; and I would not leave before I had obtained a promise from the Baron von F——, to present me, from time to time, with a written narrative of his proceedings ; at least of their most important and striking features. Having from this last period no longer been a witness to the ensuing occurrences, I may be permitted to give a place to the epistolary account communicated by my friend the Baron, so as to preserve the unity and interest of the whole, entire. It must still be recollected, that the arguments and observations of the Baron F—— are no longer mine, as I have purposely avoided introducing any change, even in the words, in order that the reader may the more easily render himself master of the simple truth.

THE BARON VON F—— TO COUNT O——.

LETTER I.

May, 17.

“MANY thanks, dear respected friend, for the permission so kindly granted, to continue our former confidential intercourse, although absent from each other, which formed one of my chief pleasures while you remained with us. Here you are well aware there is no one with whom I dare venture to converse upon certain topics, which they might turn to my prejudice:—for they are a set of people whom I dislike. As the Prince, moreover, is become one of their society, wholly throwing off his former intimacy with us, I find myself almost a solitary in this splendid and populous city. Z—— takes it much easier, and the Venetian ladies seem inclined to make him forget his anxieties, which he is thus compelled to share with me at home. And what do you think he had to complain of in all this? He only beholds, and wishes to behold, a master in the Prince, which he finds to his full content; while I—but you already know how deeply interested I feel in the welfare of our Prince, and how much cause I have for my anxiety. I have now been sixteen years about his person, and from long habit,

feel as if I lived only for his sake. He was only nineteen when I entered into his service, from which period, I may say, we have never been separated. I have invariably been under his own eye; a long intercourse has shown him what I am; and I have borne a part in all his adventures, both great and small. My happiness is bound up in his: and until this last unhappy year, I have ever beheld him in the light of an elder brother, as well as of a friend: I basked, as it were, in the sunshine of his happiness, over which no cloud then hung: a noble and delightful career lay before us:—we came to Venice, and all that was so fair and so honourable vanished. Since your departure every thing has assumed a new aspect. The Prince of D—— has been here several weeks, along with his suite, and given a fresh impulse to our already animated and tumultuous style of life.

“ Being so nearly related to our own prince, and being hitherto on a pretty good footing together, they are likely, during his residence here, which I am informed will be prolonged over the feast of the Ascension, to continue pretty inseparable companions. They have already entered into the spirit of the thing with energy;—during ten days the Prince has scarcely been permitted time to take breath. The Prince of D—— has likewise taken it with a high hand, which he may the easier do,

as he sets out again so very shortly ; but the worst of this is, that he has hereby offended our Prince, as he could not well exclude himself from the society, and at the same time thought himself entitled, from the peculiar kind of connection between the houses, to assert the rank of his own. Hence, it is probable, our own departure is at hand, within a few weeks at least ; without which it would be necessary, ere long, to curtail the extravagant style in which he lives.

“ The Prince of D——, as it is said, is occupied here with affairs of the secret order ; in which he imagines he shall play an important part. That he has, likewise, been introduced among all the connections of our Prince, you will readily suppose. In particular he was conducted into the society of the Bucentauro with distinguished pomp ; having for some time flattered himself that he was destined to cut a great figure for his wit and spirit ; inasmuch as he had already acquired in his extensive correspondence, through all parts of the world, the flattering appellation of the ‘ philosophical Prince.’ I know not whether you have ever had the good fortune to meet with him. He has very intelligent features, keen eyes, an expression full of tasteful intellect, much show of reading, much acquired nature, if you will forgive me the word—united to a princely condescension towards humanity, with an

heroic confidence in himself, and an all-comprehensive eloquence. Who could resist paying his homage to such shining qualities in a Prince? If we wish to form a comparison, to learn where the advantage lies between the once quiet, unboasting, and sterling worth of our Prince, and the blazing reputation of the other, we must look to the event.

“ Various important changes have taken place in our establishment since you left us. We have taken a new splendid house opposite that of the new Procurator, the Prince’s late residence being too narrow and confined. Our suite has increased by twelve additional names of pages, Moors, Heyducs, &c., and every thing is still on the increase. You were accustomed to complain of the expenditure when you were here ;—I wonder what you would say now.

“ The terms we are upon are much the same as before ; except, indeed, that the Prince, no longer feeling the influence of your presence, is perhaps become more cold and distant towards us, while we receive little more from him than is sufficient for our apparel. Under the plea that we speak bad French, and no Italian, he contrives to seclude us from most of his favourite circles ; a measure I should not much personally regret, did I not perceive that it arose from a feeling of contempt—that he is

ashamed of us; and this, I am sure, we have not deserved.

“ As I know you wish to hear all particulars, I must here mention, that the Prince has dispensed with the service of nearly the whole of his domestics, except Biondello, whom, if you will recollect, he took into pay about the time he lost his huntsman, and who, in the new mode of life he has adopted, seems quite indispensable to him. The rogue knows every thing in Venice,—and how to avail himself of his knowledge. He would seem to be Argus-eyed, with the thousand hands of Briareus, ever in motion. This he says he acquired from assisting the Gondoliers; and he is particularly well adapted to the wants of our Prince; giving him a knowledge of all new faces that arrive, and secret information which has always proved correct. He is thus an excellent master of French and Italian, which has already acquired for him the situation of the Prince’s secretary.

“ One trait, however, of disinterested fidelity I ought to relate to you, which is rarely enough met with in persons of his class. Lately a reputable merchant, arrived from Rimini, entreated an interview with the Prince. His object was to lay a heavy complaint against Biondello. It appears his former master, the Procurator, had come to an open breach with his relations, in regard to which Bion-

dello possessed his utmost confidence. In fact, he was entrusted with all his secrets, and had vowed never to reveal them, for the advantage of the old man's relatives, who should survive him. On these conditions his master promised to leave him a handsome legacy. When his will came to be examined, there were found both in it, and in his other papers, certain omissions and doubtful points which only Biondello could clear up. But he stoutly denied that he knew any thing on the subject, refused to accept a very considerable legacy, and preserved his secrets. Large offers were repeatedly made him on the part of the surviving relatives, to betray them ; but all to no purpose. At length, wearied with their importunities, and to avoid their threats of proceeding against him, he determined to enter into the Prince's service. The heir—this same merchant, directly resolved to apply to his Highness, at the same time making fresh proposals, to any amount, if Biondello would consent to listen to his views. No, even the wishes of the Prince were unable to induce him to forfeit his promise to his late master. He admitted to the Prince that such secrets had, indeed, been entrusted to him ; nor did he deny but that the deceased had been too violent in his enmity towards his own relations ;—‘ yet,’ added he, ‘ was he not my benefactor, my kind master, and one, too, who wholly confided in my silence

and integrity living, and who died in the same belief. In short, I was the only friend whom he left in the world—and to show myself unworthy of his sole confidence ; — his last dying hope !’ He even added stronger motives for his long and persevering refusal :—declaring that such avowal would not be strictly compatible with the reputed character and good name of the deceased. Was not that, my friend, delicately and nobly thought ? You may well imagine that the Prince did not much insist, after such an explanation, upon his discovering the nature of the secrets which Biondello sought to conceal. This rare example of fidelity towards his deceased master, has obtained for him, at least, the most unlimited confidence on the part of his present one.

“ Farewell ! once more, my dear friend. How much I sigh for the same quiet mode of life in which you here found us, and for which you so pleasantly rallied us ! I fear those good times for me in Venice are now over ; and it is much,—but the same observation might be applied, also, to the Prince. He cannot long continue happy in the element wherein he now breathes, or, otherwise, sixteen years’ experience must have been thrown away upon me.”

THE BARON VON F.—TO COUNT O——.

LETTER II.

18th May.

“ Good tidings ; though I had never imagined that our residence in Venice would have been productive of any good at all. Yes, he has saved the life of a fellow-creature—and I am reconciled to him once more.

“ Not long ago the Prince was returning from a meeting of the Bucentauro, accompanied only by two domestics—Biondello being one. By some accident the sedan in which he was carried broke down, and he was compelled to proceed the remainder of the way on foot. Biondello advanced first: the way lay through several close passages, and the dawn of day being at hand, the lamps were either burning dim, or altogether extinguished. In about a quarter of an hour Signor Biondello made the discovery that he did not know where he was. The similarity of the bridges had deceived his eye, and, instead of bearing for St. Mark's, he found himself in Sestiere di Castello. As he was traversing one of the most remote streets, which led into a main one much longer and broader, he heard a cry of murder ! The Prince coming a little way behind, though unarmed, snatched a staff from the hands of

one of his servants, and ran without the least hesitation towards the spot. There he found three fellows setting upon a single man, who along with his guide seemed to make but a feeble resistance; and the Prince was only just in time to prevent the fatal blow. With his voice as well as hand, followed by his servants, he so far alarmed the ruffians, who had relied upon the secrecy of the transaction in so lonely a spot, that after venturing to make a slight defence they took to flight. Half fainting and exhausted with his defence, the wounded man sunk into the Prince's arms, while his attendant informed us that it was the Marchese Civitella, nephew to the Cardinal of ———, whom he had saved. Having lost a deal of blood, the Prince's attendant, Biondello, tried his surgical skill in binding the wounds, after which the Prince had him carefully conveyed to his uncle's palace, which was near at hand, whither he accompanied him. When he found him quite safe and quiet, he took his leave without mentioning his name.

“ This, however, was soon discovered by means of a domestic, known to Biondello. On the following morning, the Cardinal, an old acquaintance at the Bucentauro, waited upon the Prince. The visit lasted more than an hour:—the Cardinal evinced great emotion;—the tears came into his eyes, and even the Prince was moved. The same evening,

the patient was pronounced likely to recover ; the thickness of his mantle had protected him against the force of the blows. From this period, not a day elapsed without the Prince paying a visit to the Marquess, or receiving one from his uncle, the Cardinal, and a strong intimacy between the houses appears likely to follow.

“ The Cardinal is a respectable-looking sexagenarian, with dignified features, full of animation and good cheer. He is esteemed one of the wealthiest prelates throughout the dominions of the Republic. He had early the sole management of his immense possessions, which, with prudence, he has not diminished, though without depriving himself of any kind of worldly gratification.

“ This nephew is his sole heir, though he has not always continued upon the best terms with him. So little is the old Cardinal an enemy to pleasure, as to permit the most avowed toleration in regard to the principles and the conduct of the young Marquess. His free opinions, and still more free life, seem to bring into action only his weaknesses and vices ;—the dread of fathers, and the husband’s curse. It is said, that he owed his last attack to an intrigue set on foot with the — Ambassador’s lady. He has often been implicated in other, and more serious affairs, in which it required all the Cardinal’s wealth and influence to save him. If we

except this trait, he is, perhaps, one of the most enviable men, from his numerous fine qualities, and the possession of all that renders life desirable, in all Italy. But this family failing is a blot upon all his endowments, while the Cardinal can take no real enjoyment in his vast possessions, from his anxiety lest he should, at last, have no heir and successor to whom to leave them.

“ The whole of this information I have received from Biondello ; and the Prince appears to possess a real treasure in him. Every day he becomes more and more indispensable, and he discovers some fresh talent and trait continually. The Prince lately complained of a slight access of fever, and could procure no repose. His night-lamp was extinguished ; he rang time after time in vain ; his household were plainly gone out some where for their own amusement. So, at length, he rose, and determined to seek them out ; but he had not proceeded far, before he heard strains of delicious music in the distance. Half enchanted, he followed, as near as he could, the sounds he heard ; when, approaching Biondello’s apartments, he saw him playing upon the flute from his window,—his whole suite gathered round, listening to him from below. The Prince can hardly believe his eyes or his ears,—while he commands the musician to proceed. With a surprising degree of facility, he

began to vary a very touching adagio air with some fine extempore accompaniments, executed with the happiest tones, and all the taste of a virtuoso. Being a good judge, as you well know, the Prince declares that such a musician deserves to be heard in any of the finest chapels in the place.

“ ‘ I shall be compelled,’ he said to me the morning following, ‘ to dismiss so excellent an attendant ; for I cannot afford to reward him according to his deserts.’ - Poor Biondello caught these words as he entered the room ; ‘ If you do that, most gracious Prince,’ he cried, ‘ if you dismiss me, you will indeed deprive me of my best deserts.’

“ ‘ But you are fitted,’ said his master, ‘ for something better than a menial office. I do not like to stand in the way of your good fortune.’

“ ‘ Nay, my honoured Prince, impose no better fortune upon me than such as I have chosen for myself.’

“ ‘ To neglect so fine a talent as you possess !— No ; I should never forgive myself.’

“ ‘ Then permit me, most excellent Prince, to exercise it, during some short period, in your presence.’

“ After some discussion, this was at length agreed to. Biondello had an apartment assigned him next to that of his master, whence he was to try to hush him to sleep with his strains, and also to awaken

him with the same. The Prince then insisted upon doubling his salary, which he refused, unless his master would consent to let him deposit it as a little capital in his hands, which in a short time he might, perhaps, in this way find useful to him. The Prince is in expectation, however, that his favourite attendant will soon be coming forward with some petition in lieu of all this; and whatever it may be, it will, doubtless, be granted.

“Farewell, my best friend. I shall expect to hear tidings of you from R——n with some anxiety.”

THE BARON VON F—— TO COUNT O——.

LETTER III.

“THE Marquess of Civitella, who is at length quite recovered from his wounds, has been introduced by his uncle the Cardinal, to our Prince, and seems to follow him every where like his shadow. The information I obtained respecting him from Biondello, turns out to be incorrect; at all events, his account of him was very extravagant. His features are highly engaging, and his manners almost irresistible. It seems impossible to be offended at him—his very first glance completely disarmed me. Imagine a highly imposing and pleasing figure, with corresponding grace and dignity—a countenance full

of energy and expression, open and inviting physiognomy—a very flattering tone of voice united to flowing eloquence, and a glow of youthful health, rendered more dazzling by the most finished manners and education. He is, moreover, free from that mean pride and ceremonious stiffness so intolerable in the rest of these nobles. He appears to breathe only in an atmosphere of vivacity and good-nature, added to much sensibility. I think his dissipated habits must have been sadly overcharged, as I never beheld a more perfect and pleasing picture of sound health. Were he, indeed, so wholly abandoned as Biondello has represented, it is as certain that he must prove altogether irresistible.

“Towards me, likewise, his manner was very open and candid. He confessed, with the most flattering marks of confidence, that he was by no means on the best terms with his uncle the Cardinal, and that he had well deserved his displeasure. He had adopted serious resolutions of reform, which he entirely owed to the example set him by our Prince. In this way alone, he added, was there a chance of becoming reconciled to his uncle, the Prince’s influence over the worthy prelate being unbounded. In fact, he had long had serious failings: the chief failing, however, he now laboured under was that of a sensible friend and guide, such as, he trusted, he had at length met with.

“ Indeed, the Prince assumes every quality of a mentor ; though, at the same time, this gives the Marquis a counter influence, of which he knows how to avail himself. We see them almost inseparable at every party, except at the Bucentauro, for which the Marquess is very fortunately a little too young. Wherever he appears in company with the Prince, he introduces him with all that delicacy and fine breeding which is quite peculiar to him. But no one has yet been found capable of taming him ; and the Prince will deserve to be immortalized in a legend, should he succeed in so Herculean a task. I much fear the tables may chance to be turned upon him, and the guide be led away by the pupil, as many previous circumstances seem to portend.

“ The Prince D—— has taken leave of us, much to our satisfaction, not excepting that of our master. What I formerly observed to you, dear O——, has already happened. Between two characters so widely opposed ; and from so very unexpected a collision, a good understanding was not long to be looked for. During the short period he resided here, he produced a very serious schism in our intellectual world, one which threatened to deprive the Prince of half the admiration he had hitherto attracted. Whenever he appeared, he was sure of meeting him as a rival—he everywhere crossed his path ; possessing precisely the degree of cunning

and jealous vanity, that enabled him to avail himself of the least advantage afforded him by our Prince. He had no scruples, also, as to the practice of all those little arts to raise his other qualities, from which a feeling of self-respect deterred our Prince ; insomuch, that the former would speedily have counted numbers on his side, whose brains were their weakest portion, while he stood at the head of a party, which was quite adapted to him.* It would have been more prudent to have condescended to no kind of competition with such a rival ; and a few months earlier, I feel convinced, such is the plan which our Prince would have adopted. But he was then too far carried away by the stream, to make the shore at once ; trifles had assumed a degree of importance in his eyes, which, in other circumstances, he would have despised ; his pride would not permit him to retreat ; more especially, at a moment when the resumption of his former more dignified and retiring character, might have been construed into a sense of inferiority and fear. The

* The harsh judgment which, both here and in other parts of his first letter, the Baron Von F—— thus pronounces upon a very able and accomplished Prince, will appear much too severe to all those who have had the pleasure of his Highness' acquaintance ; and such opinion can only be referred to the prejudice and prepossessions of the young writer.

Note by Count O——.

tone adopted by them in argument was, by no means the most delicate and forbearing; a spirit of rivalry was awakened between their parties, which soon involved the principals themselves. In order to preserve the acquisitions he had made, and the place which he occupied in the opinion of the world, he believed he ought, as far as possible, to increase the opportunities afforded him for shining, by adding to his princely establishment. With this view, he made feasts and pleasure parties, splendid concerts, presents, and played high. While this absurd rage for dissipation extended, likewise, among their Highness' followers, as an affair of honour, a far stronger motive than their sense of duty, their masters conceived it incumbent upon their liberality to encourage it. Thus, a connected chain of folly, productive of proportionate inconvenience and penury, was the consequence; all originating in the Prince's weakness—the weakness of a moment.

“ It is true we are at length freed from this unmeaning rivalry, though our losses are not so easily retrieved. The Prince's finances are empty; he has squandered the produce of years of economy, and we shall now be compelled to leave Venice; unless, indeed, we prefer being involved in debt, which hitherto he has cautiously avoided. Our departure is already fixed, the moment we receive fresh letters of exchange. One need not have regretted all this

expense, had the Prince reaped any kind of satisfaction from it ; but, on the contrary, he appears less happy and cheerful than before. He feels too sensibly that he is no longer what he was ; he wishes to recover his self-respect ; he is dissatisfied with himself, and rushes into new temptations, in order to escape the recollections of the last. His connections seem to increase, and to involve him deeper in the consequences which he would fain avoid.

“ One thing is certain ; we must away ; there is no other chance of redemption ; we must abandon Venice. Not a single line from you yet, my dear friend : to what ought I to attribute—how explain this long and cruel silence ? ”

THE BARON VON F—— TO COUNT O——.

LETTER IV.

June 12th.

“ ACCEPT my thanks, dear friend, for the proof of your recollection of me, transmitted through the medium of the young B——hl. At the same time, what did you promise me in regard to writing ? yet no letter follows—no, not a single line. What a very circuitous route must that you have sent been

running all this time. In future, friend O—, when you are disposed to favour me with an epistle, despatch to me by way of Trent, under the address of the Prince my master.

“ We have at length been compelled to adopt a step that we have hitherto avoided. We have received no remittances, and been so hard pushed for cash as to be under the necessity, for the first time, of applying to a notorious usurer, a secret mode of raising the wind, for which the Prince must in future smart. What is worse, it will likewise delay our departure from this place.

“ Upon this occasion I entered into some explanations with the Prince. The whole affair was entrusted to the hands of Biondello, and the Jew was driving his bargain before I entertained any suspicion of the matter. I was shocked at witnessing the Prince reduced to so humiliating a dilemma. Full of regret for the past, and of apprehension for the future, I resolved to express my feelings upon the subject the moment the Jew retired. The Prince, having been compelled to conclude very disadvantageous terms, was pacing the room in no happy mood of mind; the deeds were lying upon the table; and I stood at the window engaged in counting the number of sashes in the Procurator's house opposite. There was a long pause:—at length the Prince broke silence.

“ ‘ F.’ he began, ‘ you know I do not like to see gloomy faces about me.’

“ I said nothing.

“ ‘ What ! won’t you answer me ? Don’t I see that your heart is almost bursting to get rid of some of its spleen ? Upon my soul, you must speak ; for what, in the name of wonder, are the sapient reasons to tie your tongue ?’

“ ‘ If gloomy be my looks, my gracious master, it is only because I do not see you merry.’

“ ‘ Yes, I know,’ he continued, ‘ you think me out of my senses some time since ; you are dissatisfied with all my proceedings, in short. When did you hear from Count O—— ?’

“ ‘ The Count has never written to me.’

“ ‘ Not written !—how—would you deny it ? Why, you are two of the most confidential wretches in the world. So you may as well confess ; though I do not wish to pry into your secrets.’

“ ‘ Count O——,’ replied I, ‘ has not hitherto answered the first of three letters which I have written to him.’

“ ‘ I have done you injustice, then,’ he rejoined ; ‘ it is not true !’ seizing at the same time one of the papers. ‘ I ought not to have done this.’

“ ‘ I suppose it was not a matter of choice,’ said I.

“ ‘ I say I ought not to have put myself under the necessity.’

“ Again I was silent.

“ ‘ The truth is, I believe,’ said the Prince, ‘ that I ought never to have indulged my wishes at all, but have become an old man at once, when I was grown up. If I once attempt to look beyond the dismal uniformity of my past life, or to discover the source of any real enjoyment ; if I——’

“ ‘ Were it only an experiment, gracious master, I have no more to say ; as the advantage you might thus derive from it would more than trebly compensate you for your loss. It grieved me, I confess, to think that the world’s opinion was to decide you on a point connected with your whole happiness.’

“ ‘ It is well for you, Baron, if you can afford to despise it. I am its creature—its very slave. What else are we but opinion ? Every thing relating to princes consists in it. Our nurse and preceptress in childhood—our law-giver and our idol in future years—our only staff in age,—what should royalty do without it ? Take away our portion of opinion, and the ‘ lowest of the low ’ would be a prince compared with us ; for his destiny at least permits him to console himself with the help of reason and philosophy. But a prince who pretends to laugh at opinion, is like a priest who should get up and declare that there is no God.’

“ ‘ And yet, my gracious Prince——’

“ ‘ I see what you would say : you think I might burst the magic circle of my birth ;—but, can I as easily rid myself of all those false and delusive impressions, arising from education and habit ; and which have struck deep root, by means of the careful and assiduous cultivation afforded them by a long succession of weak-headed courtiers ? Every one, therefore must needs be what he is. Our existence at the best is nothing beyond what may be termed *happy display*. Now, because we cannot contrive to be what you would make us, are we to be nothing at all ? If we cannot draw our happiness from the pure source of truth and nature, are we to be permitted to receive it in no artificial form ; to obtain no compensation, even from the hand which refused us the enjoyment of the former ?’

“ ‘ Yet once you possessed such sources in your own heart.’

“ ‘ Why remind me of them, when they are no more ? And, alas ! why are they so ? When once I betook myself to this idle, dissipated existence, in order to stifle that internal voice, that steeped my whole life in wretchedness ;—in order to calm this weak, grovelling, yet still inquisitive reason, cutting like a sharp knife through the brain, and at every fresh impulse of thought, lopping off some remain-

ing branches of the blighted plant of human happiness.'

“ ‘ My excellent master,’ I exclaimed, as he rose up, and paced the chamber in more than usual emotion.

“ ‘ Yes, the foundations are giving way before me—behind me; the past lies like a monotonous waste, one sad unvaried region of rock and stone—the future offers me nothing. I behold the entire circle of my existence, as it were, confined within the narrow limits of the present. And who shall presume to reproach me, if I seize these golden moments by the forelock; if I receive them with the ardour of a lover; exhaust their last drops of pleasure; and embrace them warmly, though but shortly, ere they flee from my grasp for evermore.’

“ ‘ Once, Prince, you believed in more substantial good.’

“ ‘ Yes, the image of a golden cloud, that mocked the eye; restore it with the same strength of illusion, and I will worship virtue still. What pleasure can it afford me to waste my benediction upon shadows, that ere the morrow will disappear, such as I? Is not every thing upon the wing around me;—mark how each thrusts his neighbour aside from the fountain of existence, to catch himself only a few drops, and hasten thirsting away. Even now, while I ap-

pear to be rejoicing in my strength, my dissolution is preparing to make room for some future being. Give me something which I can hold fast,—that will endure ; and then I will become a virtuous man.’

“ ‘ Then, what, my Prince, are become of those noble, benevolent feelings, once the delight and the rule of your life ? Those were seeds for plants of future maturity ; of a high and glorious order, to last—’

“ ‘ The future ! to last ! Let us take away all that man derives from his own breast, all that he worships as his self-created Divinity, with nature and habit for his laws ; and what remains ? What I have hitherto experienced, and what is yet to happen to me, only arrests my eye like two black impenetrable curtains, which hang a veil of mystery over both sides of this our mortal destiny, and which no living being has drawn aside. Already hundreds of generations of men have cast the light of their intellectual torches upon their dark and heavy folds, speculating upon the scenes that were transacting behind. Many behold their own shadows ; the shapes of their terrific passions, growing larger, and starting to life and motion, from the canvas of the future ; while, shuddering before their own image, they pace along. Poets, philosophers, and statesmen, have arrayed themselves in their dreams, in sombre or enlivening colours, just as their destined heaven shone clearly or gloomily over their heads, and the perspective

opened to their view. Here, jugglers of all kinds stepped forward to clear their benighted vision, and by exhibiting strange distorted masks, made puppets of the imagination, and stretched it to bursting, with wonder and alarm. Yet they broke not the deep silence that reigns beyond the impenetrable veil: no voice replies to us from behind; we hear only the echo of our words returned, like a voice from some deep abyss. And in this utter ignorance we are condemned to burst the fatal veil; and, with recoiling, shudder to encounter the reception that may await us; "quid sit id, quod tantum perituri vident." Infidels indeed came to our aid, declaring that we merely deluded ourselves, and that we might well see nothing behind the curtain, where there was nothing to be seen; and then to demonstrate their argument they hastened there, but told us not.'

" ' It was, indeed, a rash conclusion, having no stronger ground for their opinion than that of seeing nothing.'

" ' Now mark me, dear friend; I am modest enough not to be inquisitive, or indulge a wish to tear away this veil, and the wisest plan with me would be to keep me in the same humour, by turning my eyes another way. Yet while I consent to confine myself within this narrow circle, limited to the present, this little point of time must be allowed

to be important to me; and more especially as I was very near falling into the opposite course, the danger of which I have been portraying. What you were just now pleased to dignify with the name of the great aim of my existence, exists no more; is of no farther importance to me. I know I cannot avoid my destiny—I cannot promote it; I feel quite assured that such object of my existence remains to be exactly fulfilled. I am like a messenger, who is bearing a sealed packet to the place of its delivery. What it may contain, is the same thing to him; he has nothing to do but earn the price of its carriage.

“ ‘Alas!’ I cried, ‘how poor a thing you leave me!’

“ ‘Yet,’ continued the Prince, ‘into what a maze of argument have we struck!’—and he laughed as he cast his eye upon the usury deeds upon the table. ‘But after all, not so far wide,’ he added, ‘as you may still, perhaps, live to see me adopt this new kind of life. In fact I could not so easily wean myself from my former self-created and peculiar properties, nor so speedily undermine the foundations of my morality and happiness, connected so intimately with the most flattering dreams, with all that I had yet felt and experienced: I sighed for a portion of the frivolity which rendered the existence of most men

so much more tolerable than my own. Every thing that seemed to withdraw me from myself was most acceptable. Shall I freely confess it to you? I wished to lower myself, in order, if possible, to destroy the sources of my suffering with my health and strength together.'

"Here we were interrupted by a visit;—shortly, however, I shall communicate some news, which you may easily anticipate, indeed, from the tenor of a conversation, such as that of to-day. Farewell!"

THE BARON VON F——, TO COUNT O——.

LETTER V.

"As our departure from Venice is now fast approaching, the present week will be appropriated to the inspection of what is most deserving, especially in regard to public edifices and pictures, of a stranger's attention; too generally delayed, in a long residence, to the last. The marriage of Cana, from the hand of Paul Veronese, has been more especially held up to us as an object of wonder and applause. It is to be seen in the Island of St. George, in a Monastery of Benedictine Monks; but you must expect no description from me of this great master-piece, which astonished, though it did not charm me so much as I had been led to flatter myself it would.

It would have required as many hours as we could afford minutes to study a composition consisting of a hundred-and-twenty figures upon a ground more than thirty feet in breadth. What human eye is capable of grasping so vast an harmonious whole ; or to enjoy, in one impression, the perfect beauty which the artist has every where lavished upon it. It is to be lamented that a work of so high a standard, which ought to be exhibited for the gratification of the public taste, should be allotted no wider a sphere than a monkish refectory. The Church of the same Monastery is no less entitled to regard, being one of the finest in the whole city.

“ Towards evening we made a party to visit the Guidecca, intending to spend a few cool and pleasant hours in the charming gardens. Our small company soon dispersed itself in various directions, while the Marquess Civitella, who had been seeking an opportunity the whole of the day, drew me aside to speak with me.

“ ‘ You are the Prince’s friend,’ he began, ‘ one in whom he seems wholly to confide: I have very good reasons at least for believing so. Happening to go into his hotel this very day, I met a man whose occupation is well known to me, coming forth; and there was evidently a cloud upon his brow as I accosted him. I wished to clear this matter up, and you cannot deny it,’ he continued.—‘ I knew

the man too well. And is it really possible that, while he boasts friends who would lay down their lives for him in Venice, the Prince will deign to avail himself of such creatures, at every slight inconvenience? Be candid with me, Baron; is the Prince in any difficulty? If so, it were in vain for you to conceal it; for what you may refuse to confide to me, I am sure to learn from my man, who knows every thing.'

" ' My good lord !'

" ' Pardon me ! I feel I must appear intrusive, in order to escape the charge of ingratitude. To the Prince I am indebted for my life ; and what is yet more, for a reasonable use of it. Shall I behold him, then, taking steps hardly worthy of his high station—shall I feel it in my power to assist, and a moment delay such assistance?'

" ' The Prince,' I replied, ' is not in difficulties. Some letters which we expected by way of Trent, have not hitherto reached their destination : doubtless by accident, or perhaps from some uncertainty as to his departure,—some expectation of hearing farther accounts from him. This has already taken place, and until then—'

" He shook his head :—' Do not mistake me,' he added : ' there can be no question of my serious obligations to the Prince ; which the entire wealth of the Cardinal, my uncle, would be inadequate to re-

pay. My sole object is to spare him the anxiety of a few uneasy moments. My uncle is possessed of immense property, over which I have unlimited power. A lucky accident permits me to avail myself of the sole means I have of rendering myself useful to the Prince. I know,' he continued, 'all that delicacy exacts from me: this, however, is mutual, and it would only be generous in the Prince, to afford me this slight gratification, were it merely for the appearance, in order that my sense of the infinite obligations he has conferred upon me should be known.'

"Having said this, the Marquess refused to leave me before I made him a solemn promise to do every thing in my power, to prevail upon the Prince to accept his offers, though I had small hope of success. He confessed he was willing to receive any conditions from him; but that it would certainly grieve him much, were the Prince to refuse to treat him in the business wholly as a friend.

"In the warmth of our conversation we had lost sight of the rest of the company, and were looking out for them, when Z—— approached us.

"'I am in search of the Prince;' he cried; 'is he not here?'

"'No; we are looking for him. We supposed he was with the rest of the party.'

"'The company is all together, but he is not to be

met with. I cannot imagine how he contrived to elude us.'

" Here the Marquess suggested that he was, perhaps, gone to examine the neighbouring church about which he had appeared to be very curious. We directly set out thither to seek him. At a distance we caught sight of Biondello, who appeared to be waiting in the porch. As we drew nigh, the Prince issued hastily from one of the side doors; with a glowing countenance his eyes sought Biondello, whose name, at the same time, he called. He appeared to be enjoining him something very urgently, with his eyes still directed towards the door, which remained open. Biondello then ran hastily into the church; while the Prince, without remarking us, mingled in the throng, as if hastening back to his party, which he rejoined before our arrival.

" It was our intention to take supper in an open pavilion belonging to the garden, where the Marquess was prepared to surprize us by the performance of a little concert. There was one young singer, in particular, whose delicious voice and charming figure created general admiration. The Prince, however, spoke little, and seemed to pay no attention to her. His absence of mind was evident; his eyes were directed towards the spot where he expected to see Biondello; and he appeared as if struggling with some deep internal emotion. Civi-

tella inquired how he liked the church, but he was unwilling to enter into any discussion. Several very fine pictures were then mentioned ; but it was plain he had not seen them. These questions at length appeared to annoy him, and the subject was dropped. Hour elapsed after hour, and still no Biondello returned. The Prince's impatience now grew extreme ;—he rose early from table, and sought one of the most retired walks, which he paced up and down alone. No one could form an idea of what had happened to him. I did not venture to inquire into the cause of so strange an alteration of manner ; as it is long since I resigned the place I formerly held in his confidence. With equal impatience, therefore, I awaited Biondello's return, to cast some light upon this new mystery.

“ It was after ten o'clock before we again saw him. The tidings he brought the Prince had no effect in rendering him at all more communicative. In evident ill-humour he returned to the party ; the gondolas were prepared, and in a short time we found ourselves at home.

“ I could find no opportunity of conversing with Signor Biondello during the whole of that evening ; and I was compelled to sleep upon my curiosity. The Prince left us early ; but a thousand distracting thoughts prevented me long from closing my eyes. Late at midnight I was awakened by a

voice ; and I felt a hand drawn across my face. Starting up, I saw the Prince standing, with a light in his hand, at my bed-side. He said he could not compose himself to rest, and entreated me to assist him in getting through the night. I was preparing to dress myself, but he bade me lie still, and took his station at the foot of my bed.

“ ‘ I met with an occurrence, to-day ;’ he began, ‘ whose impression will be erased only with my life. I left you, as you are aware, to see the church, respecting which the Marquess had piqued my curiosity ; and which had already attracted my eyes at a distance. As neither you nor he were just at hand, I traversed the short distance alone, Biondello stationing himself in the porch-way. The church I found empty : a cold dead chill seemed to strike me as I entered from the glowing and sultry day without. I stood alone amid the spacious vaults, where a death-like stillness reigned around. I then paced through the centre of the dome, and gave myself up wholly to the impression it was altogether calculated to produce. By degrees my eyes became more fixed upon the grand and solemn aspect of that majestic place ; I was absorbed in deep and transported contemplation. The steeple tolled the hour above my head ; the sound echoed softly through the spacious aisles ; and even through my soul. Some altar-pieces, at a distance, attracted my attention : I had

wandered, unobserved, through the whole of that side of the church, to the farthest end of the opposite side. Here I came to several steps raised round a pillar, which conducted me into a chapel, where there were several little altars, and statues of saints inserted in the niches. As I turned into the chapel, towards the right, I heard a whispering of persons, speaking both soft and tenderly. I directed my eyes towards the sound, and beheld, only a few steps from me, a female figure; but it is quite impossible to describe it. I was at first seized with such a feeling of alarm and awe,—soon changed to one of the most delightful astonishment.

“ ‘ And this figure, my dear Prince,—are you sure that it was some living and breathing object—quite real—and no pale picture, no illusion of the fancy?’ ”

“ ‘ No. Hear farther:—it was a real lady; but, till then, I must assuredly have never beheld any of her sex. All looked dark around; day-light shot only through a single window into the chapel, and the sun’s rays rested only upon her form. With inexpressible devotion, half kneeling, half lying, she was stretched before an altar; one of the most striking, most lovely, picturesque objects, presenting the most beautiful outline in all nature. Her robes were black, enveloping the most exquisite shape, and then spreading in most ample folds, like the Spanish dress, over her body; her long light

auburn hair divided into two broad ringlets, the weight of which had apparently burst their folds, and they had escaped below her veil, and flowed in beautiful disorder down her shoulders. One hand held fast the crucifix, and she supported herself, as if sinking to the ground, upon the other. Where shall I find words to convey an idea of the angelic light and beauty of her countenance, in which the soul of a cherub seemed to have fixed its throne, raising to perfection each separate charm? The evening sun shone upon it, the golden beams apparently environing her brows with a saint-like glory. If you can just recall the fine Madonna of our Florentine, here she was indeed personified, even to the admirable want of regular proportions, that sort of peculiar beauty which so irresistibly attracted me in the picture.'

“In regard to the Madonna thus commended by the Prince, I ought to relate the following circumstance. Shortly after we set out, he met with a Florentine painter in this place, who had been invited to Venice, in order to ornament an altar for one of the churches, whose name I do not recollect. He brought three other pictures along with him, intended for the decoration of the Cornari palace. They consisted of an Heloise, a Venus, very lightly apparalled, and a Madonna; all of surpassing beauty, and so equal in point of execution, as to render

it impossible to show any fair preference for the individual pieces. The Prince, however, decided in a moment; no sooner had he fixed his eyes upon them, in succession, than the Madonna seemed to absorb his whole attention. Though he indulged his admiration of the other two, highly commending the painter's skill, in this he seemed to lose all idea of his art, his whole soul being absorbed, as it were, in the work. The emotion he felt was great; it was with difficulty he could cease to gaze. The artist, well aware of its impression on the heart, as well as the judgment of the Prince, had the avarice to declare, that he would not separate the three pieces, for which he required 1500 zechins. One half this sum was in vain offered him for the Madonna; though, who knows what might have been the result, had he had to deal with a less pertinacious purchaser. Two hours afterwards, none of the three were any longer to be seen. This picture of the Madonna now recurred very forcibly to the Prince's mind.

“ ‘ I stood,’ he continued, ‘ gazing on her in astonishment. She did not observe me, so wholly absorbed did she appear in her devotions. She was adoring the Divinity, while my adoration was fixed upon her, surrounded as she was, by nothing besides holy things. The images of saints, altars, burning tapers, had often appealed to my soul in

vain : now, for the first time, the spirit of devotion came over me, as if I stood in the inmost sanctuary. Shall I confess it ?—at that moment I felt perfect faith in the symbol which she clasped in her beautiful hand. I already read her answer in her eyes : thanks to her charming piety, it drew me irresistibly after her up into the regions of the sky.

“ ‘ She rose ; and, for the first time, I recovered my presence of mind. In trembling haste I turned aside, but the noise I made as I went discovered me. The near presence of a man might, doubtless, alarm her ;—she might blame my intrusion ; yet neither of these feelings were expressed in the look she gave me. Peace, only ineffable peace, with the beautiful smile of virtue, played over her face. She was descending from her heaven, and I was the first blissful being she hailed on her return. The last outpourings of her adoration still shone round her ; her feet had not yet touched the earth.

“ ‘ Some persons stirred in another corner of the chapel ; there was an elderly lady who rose from a cushion close behind me, whom I had not before perceived : she was only a few steps from me, and must have observed every motion I made. This confused me ; I cast my eyes upon the ground, and they passed by me. I watched her as she went through the porch : how finely rose her at once lovely and majestic figure !—what grace of carriage !

She no longer looked like the same being: fresh charms enveloped her, as I followed her in the distance, uncertain whether I should venture to hazard, and perhaps receive back, another glance. Did she not, thought I, fix her eyes upon me as she went by, though I did not venture to raise mine from the ground? Oh, how much this mere doubt racked my soul!

“ ‘ I observed they stopped;—yet strange, I could not stir a step from the spot. The elder personage remarked the disorder of her hair, and handed her a parasol, while she proceeded to arrange it. Ah! how much more disordered did I wish to behold it! how much I wished I could have paralyzed the old lady’s hands! Her toilette was soon finished, and she approached the gates. I hastened my steps:—half her figure was already gone,—all;—I caught only her shadow. She is gone! I said. No, by heavens, she is coming back: a flower has fallen from her breast:—she stooped—she looked back—it was at me. For what object could she be seeking in the cold dead walls behind her? No, I was no longer a stranger to her, though she had the heart to leave me behind as well as her flower;—for my dear F——, I am ashamed to confess how very childishly I doated upon a single look, not intended, after all, perhaps, for me.’ On this last point,

however, I kindly attempted to re-assure the Prince.

“ ‘Strange,’ he proceeded, after a deep silence ; ‘strange that there should be something which one has never known,—never missed ; and yet that in a few moments one should live and breathe for that alone ! Can a single moment so perfectly metamorphose any human being ! It would now be as impossible for me to indulge the same wishes, or the same pleasures, of yesterday, as it would be to return to the toys of my childhood ;—all since I beheld a single object, which lives and rules in the inmost recesses of my soul. It seems to say that I can love nothing more with such intensity ; that nothing more the world has to boast, can produce any impression upon me !’

“ ‘But consider, my gracious Prince, in what a very romantic situation you were placed when the apparition surprised you ; what a combination of circumstances laid siege to your imagination : thus suddenly encountering the awful stillness of the place ; its contrast to the noisy crowd and the sunny day-light which you had just left. You gave way to its impressive character, as you observed ; and, from the contemplation of artificial beauty around you, your feelings were wrought up to a favourable pitch for the reception of its real forms ;

one of which, in all its lively reality, contrasted with the lifeless, breathless figures around you, took you by close surprize. Her beauty, which I admit may be great, was beheld through a favourable medium, in a touching position, which a devotional feeling raised into dignity and grandeur ;—and what could be more natural than that your vivid fancy, feasting upon the ideal, construed it all into something more than mortal ?

“ ‘ What ! can the imagination give what it never received ? and, in the whole scope of my experience, of all I have seen and felt, what is there I can place in competition with this single image ? Perfect and unchanged, as at the moment I first beheld it, it is yet impressed upon my memory :—there is nothing beyond this single form ; yet out of this, you might construct for me a world.’

“ ‘ My gracious Prince, that is love.’

“ ‘ Must it necessarily possess a name—under which I am to be happy ? Love ! degrade not my feeling by giving it a mere name, so misappropriated by many thousands of weak spirits. Who ever before felt what I do now ? The same being never before existed ; and how can the name be admitted before the emotion to which it is meant to refer ? Mine is quite a novel, peculiar feeling, connected only with this single being, and only capable of ap-

preciating her. Love! no, I am safe from what is called love.'

“ ‘Of course you despatched Biondello in pursuit of the lady, merely to hear tidings of her safe arrival home. What might be the nature of *his* information?’

“ ‘He! he discovered nothing—at least *as much* as nothing. He overtook her at the church door. An elderly, respectably-dressed man, resembling rather a decent citizen than a domestic, made his appearance to conduct her to her gondola. A number of mendicants stationed themselves in rows, and lost sight of her with evident regret. Just at this time a hand was stretched forth containing some precious stones. The lady said something to her companion, which escaped Biondello; though he is inclined to think that she spoke in Greek. When they had walked a good part of the way towards the canal, a throng of people began to collect together; for her extraordinary fine features seemed to arrest all the passengers. No one knew her: but beauty like hers is born for sovereign rule. Every one made way for her with the most respectful air. She threw a dark veil over her face, which reached half-way down her waist, and hastened to the gondola. Along the whole canal on the Guidecca, Biondello kept her in view as far as he possibly could; but

the throng prevented him from finding where she disembarked.'

“ ‘ But did he take notice of the boatman, so as to recognize him again ?’

“ ‘ Yes, he thinks he shall be able to find him ; though he is not acquainted with any of his class. The poor mendicants, whom he inquired from, could give him no farther direction than that the Signora had visited the spot on the Sunday evenings, for some weeks past, and each time had divided a gold piece among them. It was a Dutch ducat which he had obtained in exchange, and which he now presented to me.’

“ ‘ She is apparently a Greek,—in point of rank, or at least in point of fortune, sufficiently respectable. Enough, and perhaps too much, to be granted at first, gracious Prince. But a Greek lady to be met with in a catholic church !’

“ ‘ Why not, Sir ? She may possibly have changed her creed : besides, there is some mystery ; for why come only once a week—and on a Sunday evening, to visit this church ? Next Sunday evening at latest must decide this question. Until then however, my good friend, assist me to while away the intervening slow and heavy hours. But my desire to behold the termination of them is winged with an eagle’s speed.’

“ ‘ And when that day shall appear, what is to be done then? what will happen, do you think?’

“ ‘ What will happen?—I shall see. I shall, in the first place, inquire her place of residence—who she is? What can that signify?—what I saw made me happy; and I already know what will make me happy!’

“ ‘ And our departure from Venice the beginning of next month?’

“ ‘ Nay, how can I be sure that Venice can at that time boast of possessing such a treasure. You are inquiring into my life of yesterday. Have I not entered upon a new existence from this time forth?’

“ I now imagined I had found an occasion of keeping my word given to the Marquess. I hinted that our prolonged residence here would not very well suit the state of our finances, and that, in case he put off our departure beyond the prescribed period, there would be no maintenance for his establishment. I was now informed of a secret—no other than that his sister, the reigning Princess of —, had often, to the exclusion of his other brothers, made over to him very considerable sums, which she was content to double, in case of his finding his household troublesome.

“ This sister, a strange enthusiast, as you are well aware, thinks she cannot better appropriate

the savings derived from her own contracted establishment, than by furnishing her brother with additional means of indulging his well-known beneficence, which she so warmly commends. I already knew that an intimate correspondence subsisted between them; but while I had all along attributed the Prince's expenditure to the usual sources, I was not aware of its increase by these means. It is, therefore, clear that he has availed himself of such means, unknown to us, as he still continues to do; and, if I may venture to decide from what I know of his character, he would not admit any other mode of assistance, as being inconsistent with his ideas of honour. And yet I fancied I had fathomed him: but, after this discovery, I felt it would be rash to venture the Marchese's proposal of assistance. Judge, then, of my astonishment, when at length it escaped my lips, to find it accepted without the slightest difficulty. He even commissioned me to arrange the affair with his friend in the manner I conceived best, and instantly to discard the usurer. Doubtless he must, meantime, have written to his sister.

“ It was already morning before we separated. Disagreeable as I admit the occurrence thus explained to me to be, both in itself and its probable results, perhaps the worst of all is, that it seems to threaten a further residence in Venice. From this

new passion, indeed, I should rather augur good than evil, as the most powerful motives for withdrawing him from his metaphysical dreams into the concerns and feelings of real life. I should flatter myself that it would not merely be attended with the usual crisis, like some ably treated distemper, but carry off the old inveterate one along with it.

“Farewell, my dear friend: the whole of these tidings you receive fresh after the incidents that produced them. The post is on the wing; and you will be presented with this letter, and the one previously written, on the same day.”

THE BARON F—— TO COUNT O——.

LETTER VI.

July 20th.

“THE Marchese Civitella is certainly one of the most worthy young fellows in the world. The Prince was scarcely gone before I received a note from him, enforcing his former offers with renewed earnestness. Of course, I instantly forwarded him a bond in the Prince’s name, amounting to 6000 zechins, and in less than half an hour I received nearly double the amount both in letters of exchange and in solid cash. The Prince, at length,

assented to this increase ; though the bond, which ran for the period of six weeks, must at the same time be accepted.

“ The whole of the ensuing week was devoted to inquiries after the mysterious Greek. Biondello set all his instruments to work, though all without success. He, indeed, found the gondolier ; but from him he could learn nothing, except that he had landed both ladies on the Isle of Murano, where two sedan-chairs were in waiting for them. He believed them to be English, both of them speaking a strange tongue, while they paid him in gold. He did not even know their guide, though he took him to be a glass-manufacturer from Murano. We were now, at least, certain that she was not to be met with in the Guidecca, and that most probably she must reside somewhere in the island of Murano ; but, unluckily, the Prince’s description of her person was not adapted much to give a third person a correct and sober idea of it.

“ In fact, the passionate interest which he had felt in a single glance with which she had favoured him, had prevented his seeing her ; and in a case where most others would have become lynx-eyed to all that passed, he appeared to have been struck blind. According to his account, a person would have felt inclined to seek her prototype in the poetical descriptions of Ariosto or Tasso, rather than in

a Venetian Island. Besides, such inquiries must be instituted with the utmost caution, lest they should awaken suspicions that might defeat their purpose. Biondello, being the only person besides the Prince who had seen her, and that only through her veil, was selected to seek her out, as being able to recognize her in all public places at which she might possibly appear; insomuch that the poor rogue's life, during a whole week, was a scene of incessant hurry, running from one street to another, and visiting every spot in Venice. Throughout the Greek churches more particularly, the search was very active; yet with the same result.

“ The Prince, whose impatience only increased with disappointment, now solaced himself with his last hope of meeting her on the Sunday evening. His uneasiness was excessive. Nothing could withdraw his attention from that one subject; nothing direct it to any other object. He was in constant feverish emotion; he threw off all society; and his passion was increased by solitude. Yet never, perhaps, had he been more pestered with visits than during that week. His approaching departure had got wind, and brought a press of people. It was necessary to keep them in play, in order to withdraw their prying curiosity from the Prince; while he too must be employed, to prevent his yielding himself wholly up to his fancies. In this exigence

Civitella stepped to our assistance, and performed his part admirably in driving away the throng, by introducing high play, with which he hoped again to attract the Prince, and so divert the romantic passion which he had so unreasonably imbibed. 'Cards,' observed the Marquess, 'have preserved me from committing many a folly, and repaired many which were committed. The reason and repose of which I had been robbed, by a pair of fine eyes, I often found waiting for me at the faro-table; and never had woman more dominion over me than when I have been in want of cash to play.'

"I leave you to judge how far the young Marchese's reasoning is just: but the means proposed soon began to prove more serious than the evil we sought to remove. The Prince, for whom gambling boasted no charm, unless accompanied by high wagers, confined himself within no limits. For once he appeared quite out of his own element. He seemed to do every thing in a passion; he was all eager impatience; and his well-known indifference to money, was in this carried to complete insensibility. Gold ran through his fingers like drops of water. He lost invariably, for he played without the slightest caution. His losses soon amounted to immense sums, while he still betted away like one reduced to despair. I state the amount, my dear

O——, with a deep regret ; in four days he threw away more than 12,000 zechins.

“ Now do not reproach me ; my own reproaches are enough to bear. Yet how could I interfere ? would the Prince hear me ? Could I do more than argue with him ? Certain, I did all in my power ; I have no reason to accuse myself.

“ The Marchese, likewise, lost considerably. I won about 600 zechins. The unlucky bets of the Prince began to make a noise ; the more so as he appeared incapable of tearing himself from the table. The Marchese, whose joy was evident in thus binding the Prince, as it were, to him, handed him the different sums ; and it was long before the dice were removed. The Prince then found himself indebted to his friend Civitella in the sum of 24,000 zechins. Oh ! how I long for all the spare cash of his frugal sister ! Are all princes the same, think you, dear friend ? The Prince conducts himself like one who pays the Marquess a particular compliment, a high honour ; the latter, meanwhile, has driven a good bargain.

Civitella wished to persuade me that these excessive losses on the side of the Prince, would be the best possible means of restoring him to the calm enjoyment of his reason. He, however, stands in no need of money ; he does not even feel such losses,

citing the suspicions of the party, as to the object in view. Thus you see, my dear Count, that we have taken our measures with equal ability and prudence, so that no blame can be attached to us, should the fair one escape.

“ Never, perhaps, were more ardent wishes offered upon any church before, and never were they more egregiously disappointed. There sat the Prince until sunset, starting at the least voice, at the rustling of every dress, the jarring of every door,—his eyes on all sides, following the sound. Seven long full hours had elapsed, and no signs of the fair Greek. I need make no comment upon the state of his mind during this period. You know what hope deferred is ; how much worse when cheated altogether! a hope upon which he had feasted for the space of seven days, and as many nights.

THE BARON VON F—— TO COUNT O——.

LETTER VII.

July —.

“ This mystery attaching to the Prince’s fair unknown, has reminded his friend the Marquess of a romantic incident, which happened some little time since to himself. With the view of dissipating his friend’s chagrin, he said, if we had no objection,

he would communicate it; and I shall give it to you in his own words. You must not, however, expect to find the same lively spirit which he so happily infuses into every narrative that issues from his lips.

“ ‘ In the spring of last year,’ began Civitella, ‘ I was unlucky enough to embroil myself with the Spanish Ambassador, an ancient gentleman, who had fulfilled the age appointed to man by upwards of six years, being full three score and ten; yet who had the folly to dream of marrying a young Roman girl of eighteen. His vengeance pursued me; my friends insisted upon my saving my life by timely flight, and not to return until the hand of Nature, or some lucky change, should have deprived my waspish old enemy of his sting. As I felt it too severe a punishment to leave Venice altogether, I consented to take up my abode in a retired quarter of Murano, where I took a solitary residence, under a strange name; passed the day under a cloud, and duly gave the night to friendship and to pleasure.

“ ‘ My windows overlooked a garden, the west side of which communicated with the ring-fence, or walls, if you will have it, of a convent. Towards the east there lay a view of Laguna, in form of a peninsula. The garden enjoyed the most charming site possible, though it was little frequented. When

my friends used to break up in the morning, I generally sat a few moments at my window, watching the sun rise over the great gulf; and then bid him a good night. And, if you, my dear Prince, never yet had the pleasure of a similar prospect, I recommend exactly the same station, the best, perhaps, in all Venice, to enjoy so grand a prospect in perfection. The purple night, if I may so say, hangs enchanted over the deep; while a golden mist is perceptible in the distance, on the skirts of the Laguna. The heavens and the sea repose in delicious silence; as if awaiting the return of day. In a few seconds look again, and you will see its glorious waves like one flood of fire! Oh, it is truly a transporting sight; it ought to be seen. Well! one morning as I was thus employed, I happened to remark that I was not the only spectator of the scene. I heard voices in the garden, and turning my ear to the sound, I observed a gondola darting close along side of the bank. Soon a male and female figure were visible in the garden, attended by a little black boy; the lady arrayed in white, a diamond ring on her finger, though it was too dusk to perceive more.

“ ‘ My curiosity was piqued. Trust me, said I, here is an assignation, and a loving pair; yet in such a place, and at so very unusual an hour—it was scarcely three o’clock;—and every object was

still veiled in the dusk of night. I thought the incident a novel one, and a good foundation for a romance ; so I took the trouble of awaiting the result.

“ ‘ I lost sight of them very soon in the garden bowers, and it was long enough before they re-appeared. Meanwhile a delightful song was heard, probably from the lips of the gondolier, who hit upon this method of curtailing the tedious time. One of his comrades, not a great way off, duly replied to his strains. The verses were Tasso's : time and place were in perfect unison, and the melody fell sweet and softly on the ear of night.

“ ‘ Day in the meanwhile dawned, and objects were discerned more plainly. I sought my people, whom I found hand in hand in one of the broadest walks, often standing still, but always with their backs towards me, and proceeding farther from my residence. Her fine easy carriage convinced me at once of her rank, while her noble, yet lovely air and shape, made me augur as much of her beauty. They appeared to converse but little ; the lady, however, more than her companion. The full blaze of day, which threw all surrounding objects into the clearest light, seemed to make no impression on them : they walked as unconcernedly as before.

“ ‘ Whilst I next was employed in adjusting my glass, so as to bring them as nearly as possible into

view, they again eluded me by turning into a side walk ; and it was some time before I caught another glimpse of them. The sun was now quite up ; they were approaching straight towards me, and fixed their eyes upon my face.

“ ‘ What a heavenly form did I behold ! Was it illusion, or was it the effect of magic ? Surely I beheld something more than mortal, for my eyesight seemed to fail me before the angelic brightness of her look : so much gentleness, so much majesty united in one. What dignity and spirit, and what divinely blooming youth ! But why attempt to describe what I saw ? enough that I had never been blessed with the sight of true beauty before.

“ ‘ The interest of their dialogue seemed to drop as I drew nigh, and I had full time to feast my eyes upon her face. As I next turned my eye upon her companion, I was even more surprised than I had been with all her beauty. He was in the prime of life, of very noble stature, rather slight than full ; but what a spirit beamed from his eyes and rested upon his ample brow—so full of godlike and noble thought. Even secure as I conceived myself to be from all discovery, I was unable to stand proof against the piercing glance that shot from beneath his dark thick eye-brows. Yet there was a touch of sorrow in his looks, while a fine expression of bene-

volence relieved the deep and serious earnestness which cast a shade over his whole countenance. He had also a certain cast of features not quite European, which, together with his dress, of the first fashion, yet in a taste both rich and appropriate, that could scarcely, however, be imitated—altogether gave him a peculiar air, so as not a little to heighten the impression of his whole appearance. A degree of wildness in his eye seemed to announce an enthusiast, though his whole exterior character and deportment showed that he must have basked in the eye of the world.

“ ‘ Z——, who, as you well know, can never conceal what he thinks, could here no longer restrain himself. ‘ Our Armenian !’ he cried ; ‘ it can be no one but our Armenian !’ ”

“ ‘ Armenian ! what do you mean ? if I may inquire,’ observed Civitella.

“ ‘ Has no one informed you ? it is a mere farce,’ replied the Prince. ‘ But no interruption ! I begin to feel interested—what of him ? Pray, proceed with your narrative.’ ”

“ ‘ There was something inexplicable in his whole deportment. His eyes were fixed upon the lady with a remarkable expression of anxiety and passion whenever she did not observe him ; but the moment her eyes met his, he looked down abashed.

‘Is the man in his senses?’ thought I. I should like to know more of him,—an age would not afford too much time to examine him.

“‘The trees again concealed them from my view. Long did I again await their return; but this time in vain; though I caught a glimpse of them from another window. They were standing before a piece of water, at a certain distance from each other, neither uttering a word. In this situation they remained silent for a considerable space of time. Her full soul-expressive eye was turned upon him with a penetrating look, as if catching the thoughts as they rose in his mind. Instead of meeting this sort of challenge with a firm and open air, he cast a sidelong and irresolute glance towards the water, as if musing upon her image in the transparent wave; or gazed stedfastly at the figure of a dolphin, playfully casting up the stream into the basin. It is impossible to say how long this dumb show might have continued, had the lady been able to support it: she was evidently too deeply interested. In spite of his strange abstraction, she now approached him with the most engaging sweetness of manner, and throwing one of her fine arms over his shoulder, took his hand in hers and pressed it to her lips. Even this appeared to make little impression upon him; he seemed rather to permit

than to enjoy it; nor did he return that lovely being's caress.'

“ ‘ There was something, however, very affecting in the manner of it, more particularly in regard to him. Deep emotion was labouring at his breast; an irresistible power appeared to impel him towards her; a secret arm to drag him back. Silent, yet agonizing, was the struggle; the lovely temptation being so near him. No, I said to myself, he is undertaking to do too much. He will, he must, sooner or later yield.

“ ‘ At a sign from the unknown, the little negro boy disappeared. Now I counted upon a tender scene, indeed;—that I should behold him upon his knees, soliciting her forgiveness with a thousand tender appeals, but there was nothing of the sort. This strange being only took out a sealed packet from his *porte feuille*, and put it into the lady's hands. An expression of sorrow crossed her features as she gazed upon it, and tears sprang to her eyes.

“ ‘ After a short pause, the scene broke up. An elderly lady now drew nigh from a side alley, where she had doubtless been in waiting, though she had joined them. The two ladies left him, walking slowly, and conversing as they went, while he availed himself of this occasion to retreat, though he frequently stopped, gazing after her; and seemed

irresolute in what way to act. At length he disappeared among the trees.

“ ‘ Again they appear in sight, as if anxiously looking for him ; and stop to await his return. But he comes not ; the lady looks more fearfully than before, and redoubles her steps. I explore all sides of the garden with my eye, but there are no signs of him: he returns no more.

“ ‘ Suddenly I hear a rustling sound from the canal, and a gondola pushes from the shore. It is he ; and with difficulty I restrained myself from calling to him. It was now day-light, and there was the parting scene. They now appeared to suspect what I knew: the young lady hastened towards the shore, faster than her companion could follow her. It was too late ; the gondola skimmed the water like an arrow, and soon the waving of a white handkerchief was all that was to be seen. Shortly I observed the ladies proceeding in another boat.

“ ‘ Awakening out of a short slumber, I began to laugh at the illusion I had experienced. My imagination had been busy with the past scene, and its reality appeared to me veiled in dreams. I saw a maiden, charming as a Houri, from my windows, wandering with her lover through the garden bowers, ere the break of day:—a lover, who was dull enough not to turn such an hour to better account.

This altogether appeared to me so strange a medley, as to be well enough adapted at once to excuse and to fire the fancy of a dreamer. But the dream was too beautiful not to attempt to renew it as often as I could ; even the garden, which had conjured up so many charming objects for the eye, would appear more delightful than before. I was rewarded for my absence from the window, during several ensuing days, by taking advantage of the first fine evening to station myself at my favourite post. Imagine my astonishment, when the white robes of my fair unknown soon burst upon my eye. It was she : it was, indeed, she herself : and no longer was it all a mere dream.

“ ‘ The same elderly matron was with her, holding a little boy by the hand ; the lady, however, appeared lost in her own thoughts, and walked apart. Every spot was visited in succession, which she had before trod in company with her unknown. She hung long over the piece of water, and she gazed and gazed upon its surface, as if again hoping to catch his image reflected in the pure element.

“ ‘ If her beauty had at first surprised me, she now attracted me by features of a softer, though not less powerful character ; and I had full opportunity to contemplate them. Her form corresponded with the angelic cast of her countenance, and my astonishment was now lost in feelings of a sweeter

kind. The glory had vanished from her brows, and I now beheld only the loveliest of women, one that set my whole frame in a glow. I came to the conclusion that she must at once be mine.

““ While I was eagerly debating whether I should venture out, and approach her, or first make some farther inquiries respecting her, a small door opened from the convent-walls, and a Carmelite Monk made his appearance. Hearing his approach, the lady left her place and proceeded towards him with an eager step. He drew a paper from his bosom, which she seized, while a flush of pleasure brought the blood into her face. Just at this moment, my evening visitors interrupted me, and I left the window, desirous of preserving this stolen pleasure for myself. I passed a whole hour with infinite impatience in their company, before I succeeded in ridding myself of them. Instantly I returned to my station, but all had disappeared.

““ I ran down: the garden, alas! was quite empty, and not an oar to be heard upon the canal—not a trace of a human being left. I neither knew whence she had come, nor whither she was gone. Casting my eyes keenly on all sides of me, I thought I caught something white glittering in the sand at a distance from me. I ran towards it, and found a folded paper upon the ground; the same, it struck me, which the Monk had delivered into the lady's

hands. "What a lucky hit," I exclaimed; "the whole mystery will be cleared up here, and henceforward I shall become master of her destiny."

"The letter had a sealed cypher, with a sphinx, and was without any direction. But I was not dismayed, for I had skill enough to decypher similar epistles. I copied it in a moment, dreading that on missing it she would return to claim it. Were she not to recover it, she would naturally suspect that the garden was frequented by other persons, which might have the effect of deterring her from revisiting it. And what could prove so disastrous to me as such a result?

"What I predicted came to pass. I had scarcely finished my copy before she reappeared, with the same companion, both evidently searching for something they had lost. I fastened the letter to a splinter which I got from a roof, and threw it down in a part of the ground by which she was most likely to pass. The lovely pleasure which shone in her face, as she recovered it, was a sufficient reward for my generosity. With a piercing glance, as if she were about to detect my profane touch, she turned the letter over and over, but the gratified manner in which she consigned it once more to her bosom, showed that she indulged not the least suspicion. She then left the place, casting a look of grateful homage to the genius of the spot, which

had so faithfully preserved the cherished secret of her heart.

“ I now hastened to decypher my new treasure. I tried it in a variety of tongues, and at length found it answer to the English. Its contents were so very remarkable that I acquired them by heart.

“ I am here interrupted, and must reserve the conclusion for another post.”

THE BARON VON F—— TO COUNT D——.

LETTER VIII.

August.

“ Indeed, my dear friend, I think you are unjust towards poor Biondello. Your suspicions are surely unfounded. I give up all other Italians to you—only this one, he is honest. You seem to consider it quite unaccountable that a man of his shining talent, and with such manners, should voluntarily enter upon a menial office, unless he had some secret object in view; and that such designs, if entertained, must prove dangerous. But why? Is it so very extraordinary that a man of sense and shrewdness, of no great prospects, should desire to make himself agreeable to a Prince, who, in such case, may become the patron of his future fortunes. Has not the man clearly shown that his attachment

to the Prince is personal? Has he not already declared that he had a petition he meant to prefer at some future time? This will doubtless clear up the whole mystery, such as it now appears to you. He may, to be sure, entertain secret views, but this by no means proves them to be dangerous.

“ You express your surprise that the man should have concealed his accomplishments during the first month, while you resided with us, when he made no kind of display; and that he should have since brought them into active play. True; but when had he opportunities afforded him sooner. The Prince did not look for them; and his recent abilities were discovered by mere accident.

“ He has still more recently proofs of his integrity and devotedness, which must tend to remove your suspicions altogether. The Prince is evidently watched. Secret inquiries are on foot respecting his mode of life, his acquaintance and his connexions. The source of this inquisition is unknown; but hear what follows.

“ In the neighbourhood of St. George here is an open house of entertainment, which Biondello occasionally frequents—for what purpose, except some love-affair, is uncertain. A few days ago he was there; and met a party of advocates and officers of the Government, all former friends and acquaintance of his, and all greatly surprised, and pleased to re-

cognize him. Each began to relate his adventures, and Biondello was likewise called upon. He despatched them in a few words. They expressed their good wishes for his advancement in his new career; they had heard of the Prince's gay style of life, and more especially of his liberality towards certain people, who knew how to keep a secret; that his arrangements with the Cardinal A—— are well known; that he was fond of play, &c. They then began to rally him upon his affected mystery, though every one knew that he transacted all the Prince's affairs. The members of the law got him between them; the bottles were sent round, and they challenged poor Biondello glass after glass. He begged off as far as he was able, bearing very little wine, and contenting himself with appearing only to join in the carouse.

“ ‘ Yes,’ cried one of the advocates, ‘ Biondello understands his cue; but he has not yet learned all; he has to learn—he is only half-bred.’

“ ‘ In what am I wanting?’ inquired Biondello.

“ ‘ Why,’ said the other, ‘ he knows how to keep a secret, that is clear; but not how to make the best use of it, by giving it wind.’

“ ‘ Is there a purchaser for it, then?’ asked he again.

“ The rest of the party here withdrew, leaving him between his two legal friends, who continued

their questions. In short, they attempted to bribe him to inform them of the Prince's connexion with the Cardinal, of the source of his vast expenditure, and of the nature of my correspondence with Count O—— in particular. Biondello once more excused himself; but as to who was the real author of these inquiries, he could learn nothing. From the splendid offers, however, made him, if he would confess, they must, doubtless, proceed from some wealthy individual.

“ The Prince was informed of the whole affair only yester evening. At first, he seemed desirous of securing the agents in this transaction, but was dissuaded by the representations of Biondello. It was clear that they must have been again set at liberty; when not merely the faithful fellow's credit, but his life would be placed in the utmost jeopardy, from the vengeance of the whole legal body, which is known to stick very compactly together on similar occasions. He would prefer, he said, to have the chief counsel of Venice his declared enemy, rather than appear in the light of a traitor to a class of people, among whom he should thus lose his credit, along with the power of being useful to his Prince.

“ We have debated a good deal upon the real source of these inquiries. What Venetian, for instance, can be interested in the knowledge of our

Prince's establishment—of all he receives and disburses—and what is the nature of his arrangements with Cardinal A——, in addition to my correspondence with you? Can it possibly be at the instigation of the Prince of D——, or must we attribute it to a fresh attempt of the Armenian?"

THE BARON VON F—— TO COUNT O——.

LETTER IX.

“ Tidings indeed! the Prince is almost mad with delight and love! He has found his fair Greek. Hear in what manner this occurred.

“ A stranger, just arrived by way of Chiozza, and who had a deal to say respecting the fine site of that city, and about the Gulf, excited the Prince's curiosity to behold them. Yesterday was fixed for the excursion; and, in order to avoid all constraint as well as expense, it was determined that only Z—— and I should accompany him, with Biondello for our attendant, the Prince wishing to remain unknown. We met with a pleasure-boat just on the point of sailing, and agreed for it. The society was of a very mixed kind, but by no means remarkable, any more than our voyage thither. Chiozza is erected upon a very spacious pile, resembling Venice, and contains about 14,000 inhabitants. It has

few nobles, but you meet with sailors and fishermen almost at every step. He who boasts a wig and a mantle is pronounced a wealthy citizen; while a cap and band are the symbols of a mendicant. The situation of the city is beautiful; if we put Venice out of the question.

“ We did not long amuse ourselves: the vessel, which had also other passengers, being bound to return to Venice, and the Prince not wishing to stay any longer. When we approached, the rest had already taken their seats, and as the number had greatly increased on our return, we agreed for a separate place for ourselves.

“ The Prince inquired what other passengers were there, and hearing that they were only a Dominican Monk, and some ladies returning to Venice, he expressed no sort of curiosity to join them.

“ The fair Greek had been the object of our excursion, and of our conversation as we came; and so it was on our return. The Prince was dwelling upon her appearance in the church with eloquent warmth; fresh plans were projected and refused; time sped away, and before we had the least idea, Venice lay before us. Several of the passengers now went aloft, and the Dominican was one. The captain went to seek the ladies, separated from us only by a thin partition, in order to learn where he was to set them down.

“ ‘ At the Isle of Murano,’ was the answer ; and the house was likewise mentioned. ‘ Isle of Murano !’ exclaimed the Prince, as a suspicion of the truth struck upon his soul. Before I had time to reply, Biondello rushed into the place : ‘ Does the Prince know the companions of his voyage ?’—The latter sprang to his feet. ‘ She is here, herself !’ added Biondello. ‘ I come this moment from her guide !’

“ The Prince hastened out. The room was too close for him : the world itself would at that moment have appeared too narrow. A thousand contending feelings took possession of his breast. He changed colour ; his knees trembled ; and I almost caught his emotion ; it was more powerful than I can describe.

“ At Murano the vessel made the shore. The Prince was the first to spring on land. She came : and I saw from the Prince’s look when she was coming. A first glance removed every doubt ; never did I behold a more lovely form ; all the descriptions I had heard were less than the truth. A glowing colour came into her face as she caught sight of the Prince : she must have heard the whole of our conversation, and felt convinced that she was herself the object of it.

“ She cast a speaking look upon her companion, as much as to say ; That is he ! and she then cast

down her eyes overpowered with confusion. A narrow board was thrown across between the vessel and the shore, over which she had to pass. She looked anxiously towards it a few moments; but less, as it struck me, from fear of crossing, than from inability of doing so before the company she was in; but the Prince was already at her side, and had given her his hand. She accepted it, and was over in an instant. His excessive emotion made him forget his usual courtesy; the elderly lady seemed to await his return, but in vain. What might he not, indeed, have omitted at such a moment?

“ In this exigency, I proffered the old dame my services; and this led to a conversation, an example already set us by the younger party.

“ The Prince still held her hand in his; more, I conjecture, from confusion of mind than a voluntary act on his part.

“ ‘ It is, I believe, not the first time, lady—that—that’—and there he stuck fast.

“ ‘ I should, I think, remember,’—she said in a low tone.

“ ‘ In the—the church,’ he rejoined.

“ ‘ In the church, it was, I believe,’ repeated the lady.

“ ‘ And could I have suspected that here—today—so near you—’

“ Here she withdrew her hand gently from his

grasp: the Prince was evidently losing his way. Biondello came to his assistance; and left the guide.

“ ‘ Please your Highness, the ladies have sedan-chairs ordered at this place; but we have arrived earlier than the hour mentioned. There is a garden close at hand here, where your Highness might seek refuge, until the time, from the surrounding throng.’

“ This proposal was accepted, you may imagine with how much satisfaction, by the Prince. They went, and continued there until evening. It devolved upon Z. and me to entertain, meanwhile, her elderly chaperon, in order that the Prince’s dialogue with the fair Greek might not be interrupted. That he availed himself of this occasion sufficiently appears from the fact of his having obtained permission to visit her. Even while I am engaged in writing, he is there; and when he shall have returned, I will inform you farther of his views.

“ Yesterday, on our returning home, we found letters of exchange awaiting our arrival, accompanied by a letter, which threw the Prince into a violent passion. It contained his recall, conveyed in terms to which he has been little accustomed. So he forthwith replied in a similar tone, and intends to remain. The remittances are just sufficient to en-

able him to pay the interest on the capital, which he has borrowed. We are looking forward, with some anxiety, for an answer to the Prince's letter from his sister."

THE BARON VON F——. TO COUNT O——.

LETTER X.

September.

"THE Prince is at open breach with his own court, and all our usual resources are cut off.

"The six weeks, at the expiration of which he was to refund the sums lent by his friend the Marquis, had within a few days elapsed, and yet no farther remittances; neither from his cousin, whom he had the most urgently solicited, nor from his own sister. You may well imagine that Civitella made no allusion to the subject, though the Prince entertained well-grounded suspicions that such would be the case. Yesterday, about noon, we received an answer from the royal court.

"Not long ago, we had entered into a fresh contract for our present hotel, and avowed our intention of prolonging our residence here. The Prince handed me the letter without any remark; but his eyes sparkled, and I read its contents on his brow. Could you have conceived it, dear O——? The most trifling particulars relating to

the Prince's affairs and his connections in this place, with the addition of a thousand false reports and accusations, have been noised abroad at court. 'It has been ascertained,' say their last advices, 'that for some time past the Prince has thrown off his former character, and adopted a line of conduct completely at variance with the irreproachable mode of life he had at one time observed. He had abandoned himself, in the most shameless manner, to women of pleasure and to play; overwhelmed himself with debt; lent himself to the impostures of jugglers and seers, and entered into intimate relations with prelates of the Catholic Church. That he had, likewise, retained a court, and an establishment to which his income was wholly inadequate; and that, as it is farther rumoured, he is about to seal the enormity of such a course of life, by an example of apostacy from the religion of his family and his country. If, moreover, he is desirous of refuting this last charge, a speedy return home offers the only real means. In this case, he must apply to a Venetian banker, rendering an account of his whole debts, who will have orders to furnish him, after his departure is made known, and he is actually on his way, with a certain sum, with which it would not otherwise be thought fit to entrust him.' What accusations! and in what a tone conveyed! I read the letter again; I wished to lay

hold of something to soothe the Prince's feelings : but no, it was quite impossible ! ,

“ Z. now reminded me of the secret inquiries made from time to time respecting our movements from Biondello. The time, the nature of them, all circumstances favoured the supposition. We were mistaken in attributing them to the Armenian: it was now clear from what source they proceeded. Apostacy, too! yet who could thus be interested in so vilely defaming the character of our princely master. I apprehended it might have originated with the Prince of D——, whose policy led him to adopt such means of removing so formidable a rival from his favourite Venice.

“ The latter remained silent ; his eyes fixed on vacancy, in a manner which alarmed me. I threw myself at his feet: ‘ For Heaven’s sake, my dear master,’ I cried, ‘ adopt no violent resolutions. You will, you must, always command ample resources at your pleasure. Leave the arrangement of such matters to me. It is altogether beneath you to notice such calumnies: only permit me to remove every slightest imputation of blame. The calumniator will be found, and the eyes of the world open to the truth.’

“ In this situation we were joined by Civitella, who inquired with astonishment into the cause of our emotion. Both Z—— and I remained silent.

The Prince having been long in the habit of making no distinction between his friend, the Marquis, and ourselves, and being too violently affected to adopt the most prudent part, commanded us to hand him the letter. I wished to oppose this; but, snatching it from my hand, the Prince himself presented it to him.

“ ‘ I am your poor debtor, Marquis,’ he began when the latter laid the letter down, with looks of great surprise: ‘ but do not let that disturb you; accord me only twenty more days’ grace, and you shall then be satisfied.’

“ ‘ Dear Prince,’ exclaimed Civitella, in deep emotion, ‘ do I deserve this?’

“ ‘ No!’ said the Prince, ‘ you never reminded me. I have to acknowledge your delicacy; but, in the course of twenty days, as stated, I shall have the pleasure of refunding you.’

“ ‘ How can that be?’ inquired the Marquis, evidently at a loss; ‘ how should this follow? I cannot divine.’

“ We explained as far as we were able, and he recovered from his surprize. ‘ The Prince,’ he added, ‘ ought, I think, to enforce what is due to him, and abstain from violent measures. Meanwhile, I trust, the Prince will deign to accept my influence and credit, as far as they will go.’

“ The Prince said not a word, and the Marquis shortly took his leave. Our master paced the room at a quick step; he appeared to labour with some strange emotion. At last he stopped, and uttered something between his teeth: ‘ You may congratulate yourself: he died at nine o’clock.’

“ We both gazed on him with a feeling of terror.

“ ‘ Congratulate yourself,’ he continued.—‘ Good fortune! I shall congratulate myself! Said he not so? What did he mean by that?’

“ ‘ Why do you allude to that now,’ cried I, ‘ what has it to do here?’

“ ‘ I could not comprehend, at the time, what the man meant. Now I do. Oh, it is an intolerable, hateful burden, to have a master over one—’

“ ‘ My noble Prince!’

“ ‘ Who can make us feel our servitude. Ah, it must be sweet!’ Here he checked himself: but the expression of his countenance alarmed me. I never witnessed such before.

“ ‘ The lowest of the low,’ he continued, ‘ or heir presumptive to the throne! It is all one! There is only one distinction between mankind: that of commanding, or obeying.’

“ Here he again cast his eye upon the letter: ‘ You have beheld the man, who had the audacity to write me such a letter. Now would you deign to

notice him in the street, if destiny had not appointed him to be your master? By Heavens! there is something grand about a throne!

“ He continued in the same tone; and expressions fell from his lips, which I should be sorry to put to paper. At the same time, he let drop a circumstance which surprized me not a little; and one which may be followed by the most dangerous results. It would appear that we have all along been in a great error, respecting the nature of the family connections at the ——— court.

“ The Prince then proceeded to answer the letter on the spot; notwithstanding all my remonstrances, and in a tone, which leaves little hope of future accommodation.

“ You will doubtless be desirous, dear O——, of learning something farther respecting the fair Greek; and I am concerned to add, that this too is a subject upon which I can convey no gratifying intelligence. No kind of information is to be elicited from the Prince himself, whose interest, as well as whose duty, I suspect it to be, to preserve the progress of the whole affair secret. That the lady, however, is not of a Greek family, is clear; she is of noble birth, and a German. I have traced a certain report, now got abroad, which refers her, on the mother's side, to royal origin; the fruit of unhappy love, which has made a good deal of noise in Eu-

rope. She has been compelled, according to the same authority, to seek refuge in Venice, from the snares laid for her by a great personage ; the cause of that mysterious secrecy, which so long defied the Prince's researches after her place of abode.

“ The high respect with which the Prince invariably mentions her name, combined with other considerations in regard to her, appear to confirm the truth of such a supposition.

“ The passion which he has conceived for her daily acquires fresh strength. At first his visits were short and seldom : in a week or two, they became more frequent, and not a day now passes without an interview.

“ The evenings are spent in her company ; and when absent from her, his motions remain secret to us. He appears to be greatly changed ; he wanders abroad more like one in a dream, than the same being who so lately interested himself in a variety of pursuits which are now become quite indifferent to him.

“ In what must all this end, my dear friend ? I confess to you, I tremble ; yes, I indeed tremble for the future ! This open breach with his own court has already placed him in the humiliating situation of depending for support upon a single person ; he feels he is the pensioner of the Marquis Civitella. He is become master of our secrets, I may add of

our whole destiny. Will he always continue to think as nobly, in regard to such circumstances, as he now appears to do? Will this good understanding bear the test? is it wise or well to entrust even the most excellent of mankind singly with so wide a range of importance and of power?

“ A fresh despatch has just been forwarded to the Prince’s sister. I trust I shall be able to acquaint you with the result in my next letter. At present, farewell.”

[*The Count O— here writes in continuation.*]

But, alas! this promised letter never arrived. Three months elapsed before I obtained any fresh tidings from Venice: an interruption, the cause of which too fatally appeared in the result. The whole of my friend’s letters, from the period mentioned, were intercepted and destroyed. The world may imagine my feelings of sorrow and astonishment, when, in December of the same year, I received the following account:—

“ You have never yet written. You answer none of my letters. Oh, lose not a moment! hasten hither, if you retain any remains of love, of fear, for us; fly on the wings of friendship—our last hope is in you. Read this over and over, ‘ our sole hope

is in you !' The poor Marchese's wounds will prove mortal ; the cardinal vows bitter revenge, and his assassins are in pursuit of the Prince. Oh ! my dear, my unhappy master ! oh, vile, yet agonizing destiny ! Is it, indeed, come to this ! Must we be compelled to hide ourselves, like the last of wretches, from the weapons of assassins,—of murderers ?

“ I address this from our sanctuary, oh God ! from the convent I mean, whither the Prince has fled ! He is now reposing on a hard couch near me ; yes, he sleeps, but it is the slumber of mere exhaustion, which must awaken him to a keener sense of his sufferings. During the ten days of the Marchese's illness, no sleep visited his eyes. I was present at the opening of the body ; traces of poison were detected. To-day it is to be interred.

“ Need I say, dear O——, my heart is torn with anguish. I have been witness to a scene which no time will ever erase from my memory. I stood before her death-bed. Yes ; she too is fled : the lovely saint employed her last moments—the dying eloquence of her sighs and tears—in feeble language, to lead her lover into the heavenly path she was fast pursuing. Our fortitude—the fortitude of all who heard her, was put to a severe proof : the Prince alone stood firm ; firm, while he suffered threefold the agonies she endured. Yes, he had even strength

of mind to refuse the fond enthusiast the last sweet prayer she preferred to him, to follow her in the path she was going."

(In this last letter was contained the following :)

“ TO THE PRINCE OF — FROM HIS SISTER.

“ That holy and absolving church alone, which effected so bright a triumph over the passions of the Prince of —, will not withhold its consolations, nor its means of directing you likewise, in that line of life and conduct, the result of such a triumph. I have shed tears ; I have uttered prayers over your errors ; but my hand is open no longer for means of supplying the abandoned.

HENRIETTA.”

Upon receiving such a mass of terrific intelligence, I instantly set out, and posted day and night ; in the third week I found myself in Venice. But I only arrived to offer useless consolation and assistance, for I found him happy ; the Prince no longer stood in need of my weak support. My friend F—— lay stretched upon a sick couch ; he was too ill even to see me, though I received the following lines, under his hand : “ Hasten away, my dearest O——, hasten whence you came. The Prince is no longer in want, either of your services, or mine. His faults and errors are all expiated,—

the Cardinal himself appeased, the Marchese again restored. Do you recollect the Armenian, who perplexed us so much last year? In his arms the Prince is to be found—the Prince who, within these five days past, has heard the first mass.”

Notwithstanding these dissuasions, I hastened to see the Prince, but was shown from the door. At the bed side of my friend I afterwards heard the whole of this strange, unaccountable history.

THE SPORT OF DESTINY.*

ALOYSIUS VON G—— was the son of a commoner of some note, in the —— Company's service, and the germs of his naturally happy genius were early unfolded by a liberal education. While yet young, but well grounded in the principles of knowledge, he entered into the military service, under his native Prince, to whom he soon made himself known as a young man of great merit, and still greater expectations. G—— was now in the full glow of youth, and the Prince about the same age. G—— was rash and enterprising; while the Prince, of a similar disposition, was fondly attached to such characters. Endued with a rich vein of wit, as well as information, which gave a zest to their intercourse, G—— became an agreeable addition to every circle in which he moved, from the evenness of his good humour, and the charm and spirit which he infused into every subject. The Prince had, likewise, good sense enough to appreci-

* In the original, this tale is farther entitled "a Fragment borrowed from real History," in order only (most probably) to give it a more striking air of sincerity and truth.—T.

ate his virtues ; virtues which he himself possessed in no ordinary degree. Indeed, all he attempted, even his recreations, bore a lofty character : difficulties deterred him not, and no disappointment could vanquish his spirit of perseverance. The value of this last quality was heightened by a very pleasing figure ; an appearance of blooming health and Herculean power, animated by the eloquent play of a spirit which shone in his eye, in his carriage, and even in a natural dignity, relieved by a due share of modesty of manner. If the Prince was charmed with the spirit of his new associate, his seductive exterior appealed no less powerfully to his approbation and his taste. Similarity of age, of inclination, and of character, shortly led to a degree of intimacy, which to all the warmth of friendship, added all the fervour and sympathy of early youth. G—— stepped from one promotion to another ; although these proofs of favour still appeared in the eyes of the Prince, to leave him far behind what his deserts entitled him to. His good fortune rapidly advanced, for the author of it was his greatest admirer and his warmest friend. Not yet twenty-two years of age, he already saw himself placed upon an eminence formerly attained only by the most fortunate at the close of their career. But his active spirit was incapable of reposing long in the lap of ease

and idle vanity, or contenting itself with the glittering trappings of a large fortune, for the application of which, however, as well as its enjoyment, he by no means wanted either inclination or power. Often when the Prince was engaged in parties of pleasure, his young favourite would seek the calm oak or beechen shade, and devote himself with unwearied assiduity to affairs, in which he at length became so skilful and judicious, that no opportunity of employing him was omitted in which the talent of a single individual was required. From the mere companion of his pleasures, he soon became first counsellor and minister, and finally the director of his Prince. In a short time there was no way to obtain the royal favour but through him. He had the disposal of all rank and offices ; all rewards and remunerations were received through his hands.

Still G—— was far too young and inexperienced, and had risen by too rapid strides, to enjoy his vast influence with moderation. The height on which he contemplated himself, made his ambition giddy, and all modesty forsook him when he achieved the last honours which he had in view. The respectful humility and attentions shown him by the first nobles of the land, by all who, in birth, fortune, and reputation, among the oldest and most experienced of their age, so far surpassed him, excited the

slumbering embers of pride and tyranny, while his unlimited power produced an evident hardness of character, which thenceforth, throughout all the variations of his fortune, remained. There was no service, however painful or great, which his friends might not venture to solicit ;—but woe be to his enemies ! for, in proportion as his favours exceeded all due limits, his revenge was bitter and fatal. He was less solicitous to enrich himself than a number of his creatures ; such as were most eager to do him fealty, and obey him as the author of their fortunes, while sheer whim, not justice, dictated his choice of them. Yet by exacting too much, by the haughtiness of his commands and whole demeanour, he soon weaned from him the hearts even of those who were most bounden to him ; while his rivals, and secret enviers of his power, were quickly converted into his deadliest enemies.

Among others, who kept the most jealous eye upon all his motions, and with the quick, steady hand of hate were collecting the materials for his future accusation, and slowly undermining the pillars of his greatness, was a Piedmontese count, named Joseph Martinenzo, belonging to the Prince's suite. G—— himself had promoted him, as a poor harmless obedient creature, to his present post,—that of supplying his own place in attending upon the plea-

asures of his princely master,—which he began to find too irksome, and which he willingly exchanged for some more important occupation.

Viewing this man merely as the work of his own hands, which he might, at any period he best pleased, again consign to its original nothingness ; he felt assured, from equal motives of fear and gratitude, of the fidelity of his creature. He thus fell into the same error as was committed by Richelieu, in entrusting Lewis the Thirteenth to the care of the young Le Grand, as one of his playthings. Without Richelieu's ability, also, of repairing so great a mistake, he had moreover, to deal with a far bitterer enemy than the French minister had to encounter. Instead of boasting of his good fortune, or allowing his patron to feel that he could venture to dispense with his farther patronage, Martinenzo was only the more cautious, to maintain the show of dependance, and to bind himself with affected humility in closer alliance with his benefactor. Meanwhile, he did not omit to avail himself of the advantage afforded him by his office, to ingratiate himself by every means in his power, personally with the Prince ; until from being useful, he became indispensable to him. In a very short period he made himself master of the Prince's mind—he discovered all the avenues to his confidence and favour, in both which he then gradually usurped a place. All those

arts which pride, and a natural elevation of character, had taught the minister to hold in contempt, were brought into play by the Italian, who was not any way scrupulous in the attainment of his object, about the means employed, however vile and despicable. He was well aware that mankind never stand so much in need of a guide and companion as in the career of vice, and that nothing so much conduces to unreserved confidence as participation in common foibles. With this knowledge he proceeded to play upon the Prince, to excite passions which had hitherto lain dormant, and direct them, as his confidential adviser and accomplice, to the worst of purposes. By a train of the most seductive arts he plunged him into excesses which admitted of no participation and no witness; and thus finally became master of secrets which were to be entrusted to no third person. Upon the progressive degradation of the Prince's character, he now began to lay the foundation of his own fortunes; the secrets which rendered him so formidable, soon obtained for him complete dominion over the Prince's feelings, before G—— even suspected that he had a rival.

It may appear strange that so important a change should escape the minister's sagacity; but he had, unluckily, too high an opinion of his worth, to suspect that a man like Martinenzo, would venture to start up as an opponent; while the latter was him-

self too cautious to commit the least error, which might tend to rouse him from his proud security. The same overweening confidence which had caused the downfall of so many of his predecessors from the slippery summit of royal favour, was fast preparing the minister's ruin. The confidential terms upon which he saw his own creature Martinenzo with his master, gave him no uneasiness; he was glad to resign a species of favour which he despised, and which had never offered itself to him as the goal of his ambition: it was only as it smoothed his path to power that he had ever valued the Prince's friendship, and having ascended the summit of his wishes, he inconsiderately threw down the ladder by which he had risen.

Martinenzo was not the man to play a subordinate part. At each step in the Prince's favour, his hopes, too, rose higher, and his ambition, in so friendly a soil, began to strike deeper and stronger roots. His artful game of humility towards his benefactor became daily more hateful to him, in proportion as the growth of his reputation excited haughtier feelings. The minister's deportment towards him, on the other hand, so far from becoming more delicate with his rapid rise in the Prince's favour, evidently aimed at humbling his growing pride, by wholesome admonitions reminding him of his dependence—a species of tyranny which finally

grew so intolerable, that he eagerly laid a plot to end it at a single blow, and aimed boldly at the destruction of his rival. Under an impenetrable veil of dissimulation he brought his plan to full maturity. Still he did not venture to enter into open competition with his rival: although the first glow of the minister's favour was at an end, it had commenced too early, and spread too deep roots, to be torn rudely from the bosom of the Prince. The slightest circumstance might restore it to all its former vigour; a truth which convinced the Italian that the blow which he was about to strike, must either fail or prove fatal. The ground which the minister had lost in the Prince's affections, was perhaps compensated by the degree of respect and awe acquired in its place, with which he held both his mind and councils in control; - a control arising out of his political skill and fidelity, not easily shaken off. Dear as he had once been to his master as a friend, he was now equally powerful as a minister.

By what means the Italian actually succeeded in his object, remains a secret with the few who aided him in directing and in striking the blow. It was reported that he had detected a secret correspondence of a treacherous nature, carried on by the minister with a neighbouring Court; but whether his proposals had been listened to or rejected, remained matter of doubt. Whatever degree of truth

there might be in the accusation, it fully answered the end proposed. The Prince viewed G—— in the light of one of the most ungrateful and treacherous of mankind, whose delinquencies were fully proved, and only awaited their due punishment. This was arranged secretly between the new favourite and his master ; G—— was unconscious of the gathering storm, and continued wrapt in this fatal security, until the last startling and terrific moment, which precipitated him from the summit of princely honours—the envy and the gaze of all eyes—into the lowest depths of obloquy and contempt.

On the appointed day, G—— appeared as usual upon the parade, no longer an ensign, as he had commenced not many years before, but as an officer of distinguished rank. Even this was only meant as a modest veil for the exercise of his political power, which, in fact, placed him above the foremost of the land. The parade was his favourite place of indulging all the pride of patronage, of receiving the obsequious attentions of his creatures, and thus rewarding himself for the laborious exertions of the day. His chief dependents, all men of rank, were seen gathering round him, eager to offer their obeisance, yet evidently anxious as to the kind of reception they might meet with. The Prince himself, as he passed by, beheld his chief minister with a relenting eye ; he felt how much more dangerous it

would be to dispense with the services of such a man, than with the friendship of his rival. Yet this was the spot where he was flattered, and almost adored like a god, which had just been cruelly selected for the revolting scene of his disgrace ; but the Prince rejoined the Italian, and the affair was suffered to proceed. G—— mingled carelessly in the well-known circle, quite as unsuspecting of the bursting storm as their honoured patron, offering their distant and most flattering respects, and awaiting his commands. Shortly appeared Martinenzo, accompanied by some state officers, no longer the same meek, cringing, smiling courtling ; the presumption and insolence of a lacquey suddenly elevated into a master, were visible in his quick, haughty step and his fiery eye. He marched straight up to the prime-minister, and confronted him, with his hat on, for some moments, without uttering a word ; then, in the Prince's name he required his sword. This was handed to him with a look of silent, terrific emotion ; and, thrusting the naked point into the ground, he split it into shivers with his foot ; the fragments lay at G——'s feet. At this signal, the two adjutants likewise seized him ; one strove to tear the order of the cross from his breast ; the other pulled off the shoulder knots, the facings of his uniform, and even the plume of feathers from his hat. During this cruel and un-

manly proceeding, which passed almost in an instant, not a single voice was raised ; a breathless silence reigned throughout the immense throng. Yet more than five hundred persons of rank were present ; but all, with pale cheek and beating heart, stood motionless around him : the most painful expression of surprize visible in every quivering lip, and every muscle of their face. At this trying juncture, while thus bereaving him of his honours, G—— presented a singular, but no despicable picture to the eye ; he laughed, but with difficulty could conquer his surprize : it was a laugh, such as can only be heard at the gallows tree, in spite of nature and of death. Thousands in his place would have sunk powerless to the earth ; his firmer nerves, his unflinching spirit, bore him through, and supported him, while he drained the cup of poison to the dregs.

When this procedure ended, he was conducted, through rows of numberless spectators, to the very extremity of the parade, where a covered carriage was in waiting for him. He was motioned to ascend ; an escort of hussars being ready mounted to attend him. Meanwhile, the report of this transaction was spread on all sides : windows were opened, the streets were filled with throngs of curious people pursuing the carriage, and whose mingled cries of triumph, of scorn, or of indignation, at what had

passed, were echoed far and wide—all connected with his name.

At length, however, he escaped the hideous din, though a no less fearful trial now awaited him. The carriage turned out of the high road into a narrow, unfrequented bye-way, towards the place of judgment, whither, by command of the Prince, he is borne along at a slow pace. Here, after he had suffered all the torture of anticipated execution, tenfold embittered by its manner, the carriage turned off into a more public path. Exposed to the sultry summer-heat, without hearing any accusation, without attendance or consolation, he passed seven heavy and afflicting hours, before he arrived at his place of destination. Late in the evening the carriage stopped; when, deprived of all consciousness, his gigantic strength having at length yielded to twelve hours fast and consuming thirst, G—— was dragged like a felon from his seat. On again returning to life, he found himself consigned to a subterranean dungeon, dimly lighted by the rising moon, which cast its sickly rays from a height of nineteen fathoms, through a few grated openings, admitting also the cold air from above. Near him he finds a portion of coarse bread, with a vessel of water, and a heap of straw for his couch. He endured this situation without any interruption, until noon the

ensuing day, when he heard a sash of one of the iron windows in the centre of the tower drawn aside; two hands were visible, lowering down a basket, like that which he found containing his food the day before. For the first time since the frightful revolution of his affairs, he felt some inclination to inquire into the cause, and into the nature of his future destiny. But he received no answer from above; the hands disappeared; and the sash was closed. Thus, without beholding the face, or hearing the voice of a fellow-creature; without the least light thrown upon his destiny; left in utter ignorance both as to the future and the past; never feeling the warmth of the sun nor the freshness of the air; remote from human aid and human compassion; he numbered in this frightful abode four hundred and ninety long and heavy days, sustained upon a small allowance of coarse bread. The last, too, was provided with that sorrowful monotony on the noon of each day, which, while it sustains life, only renders it more sensible of its utter wretchedness. Yet this was not enough. He one day made a discovery which filled up the measure of his calamity. He recognized the place; it was the same which, in his rage of vengeance against a worthy officer, who had had the misfortune to displease him, he himself ordered to be constructed only a few months before, and had even suggested the manner in which it

might be rendered more revolting and terrific. He had likewise visited the place only shortly before, in order to witness its completion. What added the last bitter sting to his punishment was, that the same officer who had been destined to occupy it, an aged and meritorious colonel, had just succeeded the late commander of the fortress, and, by a sort of retributive justice, was made the master of his enemy's destiny. He was deprived, as it were, of the last poor comfort, the right of compassionating himself. He knew he did not deserve it; he was to himself an object of disgust and the bitterest self-contempt—a feeling of all others the hardest to support by a haughty mind—to depend wholly upon the magnanimity of a foe to whom he had shown none.

His gaoler was, fortunately for him, a man of noble feelings, who scorned to take a mean revenge. He felt sorry at the idea of fulfilling the part assigned him; yet, as a faithful subject and an old soldier, he did not think himself justified in departing from the usual rules; and he feared to swerve from his instructions. Still he pitied him, and pointed him out to a benevolent assistant, the preacher of the prison, who, having been able to ascertain nothing beyond mere report against the prisoner, resolved, as far as possible, to mitigate his sufferings. This excellent man, whose name I un-

willingly suppress, believed he could in no way better fulfil his pious charge, than by bestowing his spiritual support and consolations upon a being deprived of all other hopes of mercy.

As he could not obtain permission from the commandant himself to visit the prisoner, he cheerfully proceeded to the capital, in order to solicit personally the Prince's consent. He fell at his feet, appealing for some mitigation of the poor captive's sufferings; destitute of the aids of religion, never denied to the worst of felons; pining in solitude, and perhaps on the brink of madness or despair. With perfect confidence and sincerity, he then insisted, in the name of his pious calling, on free admittance to the prisoner, whom he claimed as a penitent, and for whose soul he was responsible. His subject made him eloquent; and he already began to make some impression upon the Prince, who at first had refused his request. Nor did the pious man relinquish his efforts until he had extorted full permission to visit the wretched prisoner, and administer to his spiritual wants.

The first human face G—— saw, after a lapse of sixteen months, was that of his new benefactor. He was eloquent in his gratitude, for he was the only friend he had in the world: in all his prosperity he had never boasted one. The good pastor's was like an angel's visit: it would be impossible to describe

his feelings ; but from this day forth his tears flowed more freely ; he had found a being who sympathized with and compassionated him.

The pastor was filled with horror and astonishment on entering the frightful vault. His eyes sought a human form, and beheld, creeping towards him from one corner, a white and wild-looking living skeleton, his couch resembling rather the den of a beast of prey than a human resting-place. All vital signs seemed fled from his countenance ; grief and despair had traced deep furrows there ; his beard and nails were grown to a frightful length ; his raiment had fallen from about him in tatters ; and, for want of water and all means of cleanliness, the air was contaminated around. In this state he found the favourite of fortune ; his iron frame had stood proof against the severity of his trial. Almost terrified at the sight, the pastor soon hastened back to the governor, in order to solicit a second alleviation of his sufferings, without which the first would prove of little avail.

This, however, being in opposition to the strict letter of the governor's instructions, the noble-minded being resolved on a second journey to the capital, in the hope of obtaining some further concessions from the Prince. He declares that he cannot, without violating the sacred character of the sacrament, administer it to a wretch who has been

deprived of the exterior resemblance of a human being. In this object, too, the good man succeeded; and, from that day forth, for the first time, the prisoner might be said to receive a new existence.

Many years, however, subsequent, G—— was condemned to languish in captivity, though of a less revolting character than what he had previously suffered; more especially after the short summer of the new favourite's reign was passed, and others succeeded in his place, who either possessed more humanity, or had no motive for revenge. Yet ten years expired before the hour of his delivery approached, without any judicial investigation, or any formal acquittal. He was presented with his freedom as a sort of princely gift; being, at the same time, requested to banish himself for ever from his native country. But here the oral traditions, which I have been able to collect respecting his history, begin to fail; and I find myself compelled to omit an intervening period of about twenty years. During the interval, he entered upon his military career afresh, in foreign service; which at last brought him, by combined industry and skill, to a pitch of greatness equal to what he had formerly attained in his native land. Time, likewise, finally a friend to the unfortunate, which ever makes slow

but sure approaches to decrees of justice, took some retributive acts upon itself. The Prince's days of passion and of pleasure were over; humanity gradually resumed its sway over him, and, when his hair became blanched and he trembled over the brink of the grave, the friend of his early youth appeared to him, and constantly haunted his rest. In order to repair, as far as he yet could, the injuries which he had heaped upon him, the Prince, with friendly expressions, invited the banished man to revisit his native land, which, for some time past, he had eagerly longed to do. The meeting was extremely trying, though apparently warm and cordial, as if they had only separated a few days before. The Prince looked earnestly, as if trying to recall features so well known, and yet so strange to him; he appeared as if numbering the deep furrows which he had himself so cruelly traced there. But no where, in that aged grief-worn countenance, could he recognize the features of his early companion and friend. The welcome, and the look of mutual confidence, were evidently forced on both sides; mutual shame and dread had virtually separated their hearts—to meet no more. A single look, which brought back to the Prince's soul the full sense of his guilty precipitancy and violence, hurt the Prince; while G—— felt that he could no

longer entertain any regard for the author of his misfortunes.

Yet, in a short time, G—— was reinstated in all his ancient honours and authority, the Prince attempting to salve his conscience by vanquishing his dislike, and showering upon him the most splendid favours, as some remuneration for what had passed. Never, however, could he win back the sincere good-will and attachment which had once distinguished him ; his heart was closed to all the enjoyments of life. Could he restore him the years of hope and happiness of which he had deprived him, or bestow the shadow of pleasure on old age, which only seemed to mock the real energies and delights of life, which he had formerly extinguished?

G—— continued in possession of this clear, unruffled evening of his days during nineteen years : neither had fate nor time quenched the fire of passion, nor wholly obscured the lively humour and spirit of his character. In his seventieth year, he was still in pursuit of the shadow of a blessing which he really possessed when he was only twenty. He at length died, being then Governor of a fortress for the confinement of state prisoners. One would have naturally expected that he would have conducted himself with humanity, the value of

which he had so sensibly experienced, towards his unfortunate fellow creatures. Nothing of the kind! he treated them with harshness and ill-temper; so much so, that in his eightieth year, a sudden fit of passion, into which he threw himself, against one of his prisoners, deprived him of his existence.



THE CRIMINAL, OR MARTYR TO LOST
HONOUR.

A TRUE STORY.

IN the whole history of man there is no chapter, perhaps, more fraught with instruction, both for his heart and his intellect, than the annals of his errors and excesses. On the commission of every grave offence, a proportionally strong power is brought into action. Inasmuch as the secret play of ambition, and all self aspirations, are checked only by the feebler light of common feeling, they, in fact, become more powerful and vigorous, more gigantic, and louder in their demands. An exact observer, who has calculated how far the usual power of free-will may really be relied upon, and how far it may be correct to decide by analogy, will acquire much experience in the province of psychology, which might be applied with advantage to the rules of moral life.

There is something at once so uniform, and yet so compounded, in the human heart ! One simple habit, or desire, may display itself in such a variety of forms and directions ; produce so many opposite phe-

nomena ; and disguise itself under so many characters ; while so many dissimilar actions and characters may spring out of the same bias of mind, even when the being, who is the subject of it, suspects nothing of such connection between them.

Grant us only a Linnæus for the classification of the impulses and passions of man, as in the other kingdoms of nature, and what would be our surprize to find many, whose criminal career is confined to the narrow sphere of a little town, hedged in by local laws, connected with the monster Borgia in one and the same order?

Viewed in this light, there is much objection to the usual method of treating history ; and here too, I conjecture, lies the difficulty in regard to turning its perusal to advantage, among the class of commoners, and other general readers, in social and moral life. There exists so direct a contrast between the mental exercise of the man of business, and the quiet position of the reader ; so wide a space may be said to intervene, that it is difficult, if not impossible, for the latter to detect, or even to conjecture, any connection. There remains a chasm, as it were, between the historical subject and the reader, which no effort of comparison or application can fill up ; and its perusal, in place of inspiring a wholesome alarm, which might put the proud and confident upon their guard, merely excites a feeling of strangeness and

indifference. We view the unhappy culprit as a being of foreign species, no less in the commission, than during the punishment of his crime: one whose blood circulates differently, whose will is obedient to other rules and impulses. Though human like ourselves, his fate excites little emotion; for sympathy is founded upon a vague sense of similar danger, and we are very far from indulging any idea of common danger, any degree of resemblance between ourselves and him. The instruction passes with the event away, and history, instead of becoming a school of education, must rest satisfied with the praise of having gratified our curiosity. To attain higher objects, and produce better results, it must necessarily make choice between two methods; either the reader ought to be animated like the hero, or the hero appear cold as the reader.

I am aware that among the best histories of ancient and modern times, a number are restricted to the first method, and appeal to the reader's heart by attractive pictures, and incidents of the same kind. Such a style, however, is an encroachment upon the province of other writers, and injurious to the republican freedom of the reading classes, whose place it is to sit in judgment; while it, moreover, exceeds the due limits assigned to that species of composition; intruding more especially, as it does, upon the characteristics of the orator and the

poet. The latter method, alone then, remains open to the writer of history.

The hero must become cold, like his reader, or what amounts to as much, we must grow familiar before he proceeds to action ; we must not merely pursue him through his whole career, but we ought to feel gratified in doing this. What he thinks is of still more importance to us than what he does ; and the sources of his thoughts and actions, than the results of these actions themselves. The earth of Mount Vesuvius has been analyzed, in order to ascertain the source of its fires ; and why should more attentive observation be bestowed upon a physical than upon a moral phenomenon ? Why should we not equally inquire into the qualities and situation of things which surround such a character, even till we detect the concentrated embers which first awoke the internal fire that slumbered ? To the dreamer who loves the wonderful, all that is strange and adventurous in such an appearance will have charms, while the friend of truth seeks to find a mother for these deserted children. He seeks her in the unalterable structure of the human soul, and in the changeable conditions to which it is outwardly subject, in both of which he finds them invariably true. no longer surprized to discover in the same soil where once only wholesome herbs appeared, the poisonous hemlock spread its baneful leaves ;

wisdom and folly, vice and virtue, nourished, as it were, in the same cradle.

Even if I should here illustrate none of the advantages to be derived from a knowledge of motives, in such a mode of treating history, the attempt will at least serve to soften that cruel mockery, and that proud security, with which, in general, untempted virtue is apt to look down upon the fallen; while it may serve to promote the gentler spirit of toleration, without which no wanderer can be brought back—the law find no reconciliation with an offender—no smitten member of society saved from the general conflagration.

Whether the offender, of whom I prepare to treat, still reserved a right to appeal to the tolerant spirit above-mentioned; or whether he were only a worthless limb cast off from the body of society,—I shall not here presume to anticipate for the reader. Our compassion can no longer avail him; he died by the fiat of the law; but perhaps a dissection of the criminal body may afford some instruction to humanity, and possibly also to the course of justice.

Christian Wolf was the son of a publican in the district of —— (the name, for reasons which will be explained in the sequel, being suppressed,) who, after his father's death, assisted his mother in the affairs of the hostelry until he reached his 20th year. There was not much business, and Wolf had many leisure

hours: even from school he brought back with him the character of a wilful lad. Grown up maidens were known to make complaints against his pertness, while the youngsters all paid homage, throughout the village, to his inventive spirit. Nature had denied him the fair proportions bestowed on the rest of her children: he was short and plain, had thick curly hair of an ugly blackness; his nose appeared indented, as if flattened upon his face; his upper lip jutted out, which the kick of a horse had served farther to displace; altogether giving to his visage a revolting appearance, which held the women at a distance, and afforded an object of merriment to his rivals, or the stouter companions of his sports.

He determined to obtain by perseverance what was thus refused him; as he found too feelingly that he could never hope to please and appear amiable. The girl whom he selected treated him vilely enough, to be sure; though it was only animal impulse which he felt: he knew nothing of love. He had good grounds for suspecting that his rivals were more fortunate than himself; yet the girl was poor. A heart that remained proof against his attentions, might, perhaps, he thought, become softened by his presents; but penury stared him too, in the face, and the rash effort he made to better his condition, deprived him, on the contrary, of the little which he

had saved from his services. Too indolent and inexperienced to increase the business of his inn, too proud, and at the same time too effeminate to exchange the free life he had hitherto led for that of a labouring boor, he saw only one career lying open to him; one which thousands before, and thousands after him, have trod with better fortune—that of genteel and spirited thieving. It so happened that his native place bordered upon the preserved woods of a neighbouring lord, and he became a deer-stealer. His quarry, of course, passed faithfully into the hands of the lady of his choice.

Among the lovers of Johanna was a young huntsman of the forest, named Robert. He soon observed the advantage which the free life of his rival Wolf had acquired over him, and with jealous suspicion he began to inquire into the change. He showed himself more frequently at the Sun—such was the sign of the hostelry;—his keen eye, sharpened by jealousy, in a short time discovered the source of the newly acquired wealth. Not long before, a severe edict had been published against poachers, which condemned the offender to punishment, a pretty long discipline in the house of correction. Robert became eager and persevering in watching the secret motions of his enemy, and at length he succeeded, even in surprizing the unsuspecting culprit in the act. Wolf was secured, and it was only by

expending the whole of his little remaining property, that he was enabled to escape the punishment prepared for him.

Robert triumphed; his rival was driven from the field; Johanna dismissed him, for he was a beggar. Wolf knew his enemy, and that enemy was now the happy undisputed possessor of his lady's favours. A deep sense of poverty, united to injured pride, desertion and jealousy, all took possession of his soul: necessity drove him forth into the wide world, but revenge and passion seemed to rivet him to the spot. A second time he betook himself to deer stealing; a second time Robert redoubled his vigilance and activity, and betrayed him into the hands of justice. He now experienced the full severity of the law; had no more to give, and in a few weeks he was delivered up to the work-master, in the house of discipline.

A year of severe hardship followed, at the end of which his evil passions had increased, and his pride remained unsubdued under the pressure of his fate. The moment he became free, he resumed his way to his native place, to appear before his Johanna, who had grown up into a fine woman. He approached, but all shunned him. This he had not anticipated; he shed tears; cruel want stared him in the face, and his pride was broken. He besought the great land owner of the place to per-

mit him to toil daily for his pittance of bread ; but the steward shrugged up his shoulders, and stouter competitors soon deprived him of all chance of success, and thrust him off the scene. He made a last effort ; it was to obtain the poor vacant post of village herdsman ; the only honest occupation remaining for him : but the steward declared that he would entrust the service to no such good-for-nothing fellow. Deceived in all his hopes, all his honest proposals rejected, he was at length compelled a third time to become a poacher, and was again unlucky enough to fall into the hands of his more powerful enemy.

This repeated backsliding greatly aggravated his offence in the eyes of the judge, who consulted only the tenor of the statute, not any of the mitigating circumstances under which it had been violated. The law called for a solemn and exemplary punishment, and Wolf was condemned to be branded with the sign of the gallows upon the back, and to three years' hard labour in prison.

This term also expired ; Wolf survived it, and was set at liberty ; but he was a different being ; it seemed like a new epoch of his life. Let us hear how he himself explains his internal feelings, as appeared upon one of his trials. " I entered its walls only a misguided being, but I left them a complete villain. I had before something in the world which

was dear to me, and my pride was broken under a sense of shame. When brought into the fortress, I was placed among three-and-twenty other prisoners, of whom three were murderers, and the rest some of the most abandoned and inveterate robbers and thieves. They mocked if I uttered the name of the Deity ; and invited me, by their example, to pronounce the most terrific blasphemies against our Redeemer. They sang the most vile and licentious songs, which, abandoned as I was, I could not hear without a feeling of disgust. Yet this was nothing compared with what I saw transacted, which carried my feelings of shame and abhorrence to a still higher pitch. No day passed without some repetition of such scenes, some piece of villany or statagem worse than the last. At first I shunned their society, and stopped my ears as much as possible at the horrid sounds I heard ; but I stood in need of some living being, and the cruelty of my keepers had destroyed even my dog. The labour was hard, and inflicted tyrannically ; I was ill,—I wanted support ; and when I openly declared how much I stood in need of compassion, I was compelled to purchase it at the price of my last remaining scruples of conscience. It was thus I gradually accustomed myself to the most revolting deeds, and by the last quarter of the year I had actually outstripped my instructor.

“ From this period I sighed for the day of free-

dom ; for I was burning for vengeance. All mankind had injured me, because all were better and happier than I—I, who viewed myself as a martyr to natural right, an innocent victim of the law. Gnashing my teeth, I cursed my chains as I saw the sun rising from behind the mountain beyond our prison ; for a distant prospect is double purgatory to a close prisoner. The free wind, as it whistled through the air-holes, and the swallow which flew from the iron trellice of my grating, seemed to mock my captivity, and rendered its contrast with the idea of freedom still more afflicting. Then it was I vowed hatred, deep and irreconcilable hatred, against every thing which bore the human form, and, horrid as it was, this fatal vow I fulfilled.

“Again, the first thought which struck me on my recovered liberty, was to revisit my native place. In proportion as there was little to promise myself in the view of subsistence, my hunger for revenge seemed to increase. My heart throbbed wildly as I first caught a glimpse of the church steeple, which rose above the woods. It no longer sprung from a feeling of satisfaction, as on my first return. The recollection of my ruined affairs, with all their fatal consequences, rushed fresh upon my soul : I woke as out of the sleep of death ; my wounds bled anew ; and I hastened my steps in order to confront and alarm my enemies with my sudden appearance ;

for I felt that I now rather coveted farther degradation, instead of trembling at the prospect as before.

“The hour tolled to vespers just as I reached the middle of the market-place. The crowd was going thence towards the church. I was quickly recognized, and every one I met drew back. Hitherto I had ever been kind and friendly to the children; and a little urchin whom I saw playing near, skipped towards me, and entreated me to bestow on him a farthing's worth. He took it; then looked at me a moment in the face, and flung it back again. Had my blood been calmer I might have recalled to mind that I wore an enormous beard, which I brought from prison, and which gave me a very frightful appearance; but the wickedness of my heart had begun to obscure my reason, and I shed tears of rage, such as I had never shed before.

“The boy knew neither who I was nor whence I came; yet I cried, half audibly, ‘What, does he shun me as if I were worse than a wild beast? Do I every where bear a mark upon my forehead, or is it my lot to bear only some resemblance to man, feeling, as I do, that I can never love a human being more?’—The contempt of a young boy cut me deeper than three years' labour at the galleys, for I had done him a favour, and was guilty of no personal hatred, at least against him.

“I threw myself upon a piece of timber that lay

opposite the church: I knew not exactly what it was I wished; but I well knew, and felt it bitterly, that none of the passers by, many of them my former acquaintance, would once greet me—no, not a single one! I was at length unwillingly compelled to leave my station in order to seek a night's lodging; and as I was turning the corner of a street, I all at once fell in with the girl who had deserted me—with my Johanna. 'My young host,' she exclaimed, and was going to fling her arms round me. 'Are you here again, my dear Host of the Sun? Heaven be praised you are come back!' Hunger and disease were visible in her whole dress and appearance; from her countenance she was evidently labouring under a loathsome disease; a single glance betrayed what a vile abandoned creature she was become.

"I speedily conjectured what had happened. A party of the Prince's dragoons, which I had just met in the streets, convinced me that there was a garrison in the place. 'Soldier's trull!' I cried, as I turned my back upon her, and felt gratified that there was yet a creature lower than myself in the scale of being: in fact I had never loved her.

"I found my mother was dead. With the remnants of my little property our creditors had paid themselves during my absence. I had no one, and nothing left me. The world cast me off like a poi-

sonous weed, but I had now learned how to despise shame. Formerly I had wished to avoid the face of man, for contempt was intolerable to me ; now I was eager to confront, and rejoiced to alarm them. It was so far well with me, that I had nothing more to lose, nothing to preserve. I was no longer in need of any good quality, because no one gave me credit, no one employment.

“ The world lay before me, and in foreign parts I might, perhaps, have acquired some respectability, but I had lost even the courage to affect, much more to attempt it. Punishment and despair had deprived me of this temper of mind. It was the last lesson to learn to dispense with honour, as I no longer ventured to boast any title to it. Had I had sufficient vanity and pride to make me quite sensible of my degradation, I should have delivered myself by self-destruction.

“ In fact, I was myself still a stranger to the resolution which I had actually adopted. I wished to do evil, although it yet appeared in dark and uncertain shapes before me. I wished to deserve the destiny to which I had been consigned. I believed that laws were so many blessings to the world, and for this reason longed to violate them. I had formerly fallen into crime from error and misfortune ; now it appeared more matter of free choice, for my own satisfaction.

“ With unsubdued obstinacy, my first resolve was again to turn poacher. The habit had become a passion in me ; and I was, moreover, compelled to subsist. Still more than this, I took pleasure in deriding the Prince’s edict, and injuring the property of our great land-owner in every way I could. I no longer trembled at the idea of being apprehended, for I had a bullet ready to discharge at my informant, and I was confident in the certainty of my aim. I dropped every deer at which I fired ; though I turned very little to account, leaving by far the largest share to rot upon the ground. I lived economically, only for the purpose of laying out my savings in powder and shot. My devastations upon the large game made much noise ; but my existence was wholly forgotten ; no suspicion attached to me.

“ This mode of life I continued during several months. Early one morning I had, as usual, penetrated through the furthest woods in search of a deer, whose traces I had got ; two hours I had pursued in vain, and was just giving it up for lost, when I again espied it at a distance. I was about to fire, when, only a few steps from me, I perceived a hat lying upon the ground. Looking more sharply round me, I recognized the huntsman Robert concealed behind an oak, in the act of firing at the same deer. A death-like chill ran through my veins at the sight of him. There stood the being, whom

of all living creatures upon the wide earth, I most utterly detested; and that being was within reach of my fire. At that instant it appeared as if the fate of the whole world depended upon the goodness of my flint; the deep concentrated hatred of a whole life was felt at my finger-ends, which were preparing to level the murderous weapon. A dread invisible hand appeared hovering over me; the time-piece of my destiny pointed irrevocably to this dark and terrific minute. My hand trembled as it obeyed the fearful impulse; my teeth rattled, as if in an ague-fit; and my breath stopped, and laboured at my breast.

“ During a full minute my aim wavered between the man and the deer; but the next, and the next, revenge and conscience were at bitter strife, doubtful long—till sudden passion fired my soul, and the huntsman lay dying upon the ground!

“ The fatal instrument fell from my hand.— ‘ Murderer!’ I stammered out. The woods were still as a church-yard, and I heard myself plainly pronounce that word. As I drew nigh, the huntsman gave a last gasp. I saw him die. I stood speechless over his body for some time; and then suddenly burst into a loud, loud laugh—‘ Will you keep a clean tongue now, good friend, and cease accusing your neighbours?’—and I then stepped boldly up to him, and turned the face of the dead

less until noon ; the rapidity of my flight dissipated my thoughts, though the pangs of conscience returned with double force in proportion as my strength deserted me. Dreadful shapes seemed to swim before my eyes, and threatened and struck at me, while I seemed to feel sharp knives in my breast. There was only a fearful choice left me, and choose I must—between a life of restless agony, or laying violent hands upon myself. For this last, however, I had not the necessary courage, and soon adopted the fixed resolution of remaining where I was. Hemmed in between the certain sufferings of life, and the nameless dread of eternity, equally unfit to live as to die, I had now continued my flight during six hours, the last full of agonizing pain, such as no living being can describe.

“ Buried in my own thoughts, with my hat involuntarily slouched over my countenance, as if to conceal myself from the eye of surrounding nature, I slowly wound my way up a narrow footpath, leading through the darkest part of the thicket. Suddenly I heard a hoarse, commanding voice, that cried out, ‘ Halt !’ It was close to me ; my slouched hat and confusion having prevented me from looking around me. I looked up, and beheld a man of a wild aspect hastening towards me. He held a large, knotty club in his hand ; his figure

approached, or appeared, in my eyes, to approach the gigantic: his skin was of a yellowish black, which, contrasted with the large white of his oblique eye, gave him a truly horrible appearance. Instead of a girdle, he wore a thick rope doubled round a green woollen coat, to which hung a large butcher's knife and a pistol. The call was repeated, and the next moment I felt the grasp of a strong arm. The voice of a man had thrown me into alarm, but the sight of a villain reassured me. In my condition, I had cause to tremble in the presence of an honest man—not in that of a robber.

“ ‘Who goes there?’ he said, as he grasped me fast. ‘One like thyself,’ was my reply, ‘if thou be truly what thou seemest to be!’

“ ‘There was no way for thee here. What art seeking?’ ‘What need of the question here?’ I replied ironically.

“ The man measured me twice earnestly, from head to foot, as if he were comparing my figure with his, and my answer with my appearance.

“ ‘Thou speakest as boldly as a beggar,’ he added. ‘That may be; a beggar I was but yesterday.’ The man laughed: ‘One would swear,’ he cried, ‘that thou wouldst not pass for aught better now!’ ‘For something worse, I hope then,’ continued I. ‘Softly, friend! why are you in such haste? have you no time to spare?’

“ I considered a moment : I know not how the words escaped my lips : ‘ Life is short,’ said I earnestly, ‘ and hell endures for ever.’ ”

He looked at me amazed : ‘ May I be d——d,’ cried he, at length, ‘ but I think that thou art very nearly related to the family of the Gallows.’ ‘ Not very far wide, perhaps ; so welcome, brother !’ ‘ Done, comrade,’ he added, as he took my hand, and then pulled out a tin flask from his large game-pocket, drained it pretty deeply, and then gave it to me. My flight and my terrors had nearly exhausted my strength : during the whole of this wretched day, I had never once broken my fast. I was afraid of dying a lingering death in the desert ; for the space of three miles round no refreshment was to be found. Imagine how eagerly I snatched at the proffered cup, and drank my comrade’s health. Fresh strength inspired me ; I felt reviving courage at my heart ; hope and love of life glowed warmly in my breast, and I began to think I was not altogether so wretched ; such was the efficacy of a single draught. I confess, on the contrary, that my situation seemed to border on the happy ; for at last, after a thousand disappointments, I had met with a being who resembled me. In the lost condition in which I found myself, I should have claimed companionship and drank with

the evil spirit, in order to have some one in whom to confide.

“The man threw himself carelessly upon the grass, and I did the same.

“‘Your liquor has done me good,’ I observed; ‘we must become better acquainted.’

“He now struck fire, in order to light his pipe.

“‘Have you driven this trade long?’ inquired I.

“He gave me a keen look;—‘What do you mean by that?’

“‘Has this often been bloody?’ I continued, as I chucked the knife at his girdle.

“‘What are you?’ he cried, rather alarmed, and laid down his pipe.

“‘A murderer, like yourself, only I am but a beginner.’

“The man glanced wildly at me for a moment, and then resumed his pipe.

“‘You do not live near here?’ he observed.

“‘Three miles hence, mine Host of the Sun. Should you happen to have heard of me?’

“The man sprang to his feet like one possessed. —‘What! the deer-stealer, Wolf!’ he cried, eagerly.

“‘The same.’

“‘Welcome, comrade! thrice welcome!’ and he shook me heartily by the hand. ‘Have I at last got you with me, mine Host of the Sun? I have

long bethought me, both by day and night, to have a catch at you. I know you well;—yes, I know all; and I have for some time counted upon you.’

“ ‘ Counted upon me! in what way, comrade?’

“ ‘ Why, the whole country rings with thy name. Thou hast enemies; a placeman has trampled thee in the dust. Wolf! their deeds against thee cried unto Heaven for justice—for revenge.’

“ The robber grew warm:—‘ Because you shot a deer, or a swine or two, which the Prince feeds upon the acorns of our fields, they consigned thee for years to the work-house, to the fortress, the galleys; they deprived thee of house and credit, and made thee a beggar. Is it indeed come to this—that a man is to be reckoned no higher than a deer, no better than the beasts of the fields,—and a lad of thy spirit could put up with this?’

“ ‘ Could I help it?’

“ ‘ That we will look to now. But say, whence come you, and what are your designs?’

“ I directly related my whole history. The robber, before I had completed it, sprung from the ground impatiently, and drew me after him. ‘ Come, brother,—comrade,—brave Host of the Sun,—now thou art ripe for action; now thou art come in time for what I wanted thee. I will show thee the road to honour; trust me, I will; and follow me.’

“ ‘ Whither wend you, then?’

“ ‘Inquire no more. Follow.’ And he pulled me forcibly along.

“ We had proceeded about a quarter of a mile, when the wood became deeper and darker. There was no longer any path ; its aspect was wild and dreary ; neither of us spoke a word ; until at last my guide’s whistle roused me from my reflections.

“ I looked up—we stood on the rugged edge of a rocky eminence, which opened as we proceeded lower into a deep cavern. A second whistle replied to the former, from the interior ; and a ladder rose slowly, as if of its own accord, from the cave below us. My guide first descended, bidding me to wait there until he should return. ‘ I must first chain our great dog,’ he observed ; ‘ thou art strange, and the beast would tear thee.’ He then crept down. It simply required a bold heart to have drawn the ladder up, and become again free. My flight was secure. I confess that this struck me. I looked down into the cavern, that seemed yawning to receive me ; something reminded me of the bottomless pit, whence there is no deliverance more. I shuddered at the career I was about to tread, and sudden flight alone could redeem me. I resolved to fly. My hand was already on the ladder ; when all at once there thundered in my ears, and it seemed to resound like the mocking laughter of hell—‘ What has a murderer to lose ?’ and my arm

fell palsied by my side. My reckoning was made ; the hour of remorse was concluded ; my murder lay behind me, like a tower of rock, and severed my return for ever.

“ My guide, likewise, returned, and informed me that I might go down. There no longer remained any choice : I crept into the yawning abyss. We had proceeded only a few steps below the wall of rock, when the entrance grew wider, and a number of heads became visible. Middle way between, a round green plat opened upon us, where we found from eighteen to twenty men thrown carelessly round a large fire. ‘ Here, my brave boys,’ cried my conductor, thrusting me into the midst of them ; ‘ here is mine Host of the Sun ! and bid him welcome !’

“ ‘ Mine Host of the Sun !’ cried each and every one, as he sprang up, and gathered round me, while the women followed their example. Shall I confess it ! the joy was loud and boundless ; confidence and esteem were pictured in every face : one pressed my hands, another took me by my garment, and my whole reception was like that of a man who meets an old friend of known worth and hearty feelings. My arrival interrupted the carousal which had already begun ; but it was speedily revived : a cup was handed me, and I drank a welcome to my new friends. Wild fowl and game of every kind

formed our feast ; and the cups went speedily round. Good cheer and harmony seemed to reign over the whole assembly, and all seemed to vie with each other in displaying their delight in celebrating the day of my arrival.

“ I was placed between two women, at the head of the table as a mark of honour. I anticipated the reproach of all the rest of their sex ; but how pleasingly was I surprized at their kind treatment. Under the rude weeds they wore, I recognized a female form, lovely as I had ever beheld it.

“ Margaret, the oldest and the most beautiful of the two, went by the name of maiden, and was not more than five-and-twenty years of age. Her language was very bold, and her features expressed more than she said. Maria, the younger, had been married, but had absconded from her husband, on account of his ill treatment of her. She had a lighter figure, but looked pale and sickly ; and she failed to excite the glow of pleasure inspired by her brighter neighbour. Both, however, became rivals for my notice ; the beautiful Margaret tried to vanquish my diffidence by her bare-faced jokes ; but the whole woman revolted me, and my heart became a prey to the more coy Maria.

“ ‘ You see, my good Host of the Sun,’ cried my conductor, ‘ how we live together, and every day resembles the foregoing. Is it true, comrades ?

‘ Every day like the last !’ echoed the whole circle. ‘ Now if our mode of life be to your fancy, Host—and why should it not ?—say the word boldly, and thou shalt be our chief. As yet I am he ; but I will resign in thy favour : so rejoice with us, comrade !’

“ A willing *yes* burst from the whole circle. My brain was on fire ; wine and ambition tingled in my veins. The world had cast me out, like an infected thing : here I found the reception of a brother, good cheer and honour. Whatever choice I made, death still awaited me : here, at least, I might sell my life for the highest and brightest prize it was worth. Sensuality was my besetting sin ; the sex had hitherto treated me only with contempt ; all favour, and boundless indulgence here invited my embrace. ‘ I remain with you, comrades,’ I cried out with loud decision, and stepped into the midst of the band : ‘ Yes, I remain with you, if ye will yield me my fair neighbour for a mate !’—All assented, not a single murmur met my ear : I became the undisputed master of a courtesan, and the captain of a banditti.”

The subsequent portion of this history I omit : the horrible and the revolting can have no claim—can afford no instruction to the reader.

An unhappy wretch, sunk into so deep an abyss, must commit every thing permitted to human na-

ture : yet that no second murder ever stained his hands, formed part of his confession at the rack.

The robber Wolf's reputation speedily spread throughout the whole district. The highways became unsafe : nightly excursions alarmed the citizens ; the name of the Host of the Sun was the terror of the peasantry ; justice long pursued him, and a price was set upon his head. He was always lucky enough to escape the snares, and he soon availed himself of the superstition of the people to add to his security. His connections might well spread, they said, when he had entered into a bond with the devil, and could bewitch whom he pleased. The district in which he played his part, then belonged, even less than now, to the more intelligent portion of Germany : the peasantry gave full credit to the report, and his person was safe. No one showed any inclination to meddle with a wretch employed in the service of the devil.

He had already continued this lamentable career during a whole year, when it so happened, that he began to find it insupportable. The band, at whose head he was placed, deceived his expectations. A seductive appearance had, in the first instance, inflamed his imagination, heated as it was with wine ; but now he saw, with alarm, that hunger and privations of all kind succeeded to abundance, and his life not unfrequently depended on a single meal.

He was hourly in dread of perishing of want ; while under such pressure, fraternal harmony disappeared ; envy, suspicion, and hatred, began to work the ruin of the abandoned crew.

Justice held out a reward to any person who would deliver him alive into its hands ; even though he were an accomplice, his pardon would be granted. The wretched Wolf was aware of his danger: the honour of those who had betrayed both God and man was small security for him.

His sleep forsook him : incessant deadly terror and anxiety banished all rest ; the dreadful spectre of suspicion dogged his footsteps ; pursued him in his dreams, and tortured his waking hours. His conscience, too, under these fears and privations, began to make itself heard, while the slumbering embers of remorse were roused into flames by the gathering storm. His former abhorrence of mankind changed its object, and fixed deadlier fangs upon himself. He cast his eye over all animated nature, and found nothing deserving his bitter curse—except himself.

Vice had exhausted the whole of its bitter lessons upon him : his natural strong sense vanquished the lamentable delusion, under which he had so long laboured. He now felt to what a depth he had fallen ; and the most cutting grief occupied the place of callous indifference and despair. He wept for the

recovery of past days, for he felt too keenly to what different purposes he would apply them. He at length began to hope that he might recover some degree of uprightness, while he longed so much to do so. At the highest pitch of his iniquities, he was in fact nearer attached to virtue, than he had perhaps been previous to his first offence.

About this period, the seven years' war had broken out, and the levy made of soldiers was very great. This unhappy being hoped to take advantage of such a circumstance, and addressed a letter to his former native Prince, from which I extract what follows:—

“ Should your princely patronage not refuse to stoop so low as a wretch of my character—should afford compassion to the most unhappy of mankind, Oh, most gracious lord, give ear unto my prayer! Assassin and robber, as I am; proscribed by law, and pursued by justice on all sides, I pray for strength to deliver myself into its hands: at the same time I offer up a particular prayer; a suppliant at your throne. I abhor my life, and fear death no more; but it is dreadful to me to think of dying without having deserved to live. Surely I might be allowed to repair some portion of my past life; to expiate my crimes, and reconcile myself by serving the State which I have injured. If my destruction would afford an example to the world, it

would make no reparation for my deeds. I now abhor vice, and long most ardently to follow in the paths of virtue and integrity. Bold deeds have I done: exploits that terrified my native land; yet bolder let me achieve in the eye of my prince and country, in a cause that may confer benefit.

“It is true that I here intreat something very unusual. My life is forfeited, and Justice will not listen to my voice. Still I am not a bondsman, not a convicted captive; I am free, and fear has the least part in the prayer I am addressing to you.

“It is an act of grace which I seek for. My claims of justice, were I to enforce them, would avail me nothing. Yet I would remind my judges of one thing:—the hand of law first impelled me into my present career, it deprived me of respect and honour for ever. If I had then been treated with more reason, justice, lenity, I should not now have been in the act of soliciting your royal mercy.

“Permit grace, instead of justice, for once, my noble Prince, to have its course. If it, indeed, be in your princely power to soften the harshness of the law, oh! grant me the boon of life. It shall be devoted heart and soul to your service. May this be:—so permit me to receive the notification of your gracious pleasure in an open letter, and upon your royal word I will instantly repair to fulfil my duty in the city. Should it, alas! be

decided against me, justice that will run its stern career, must permit me to run mine."

There was no answer returned to this prayer, nor to a second and third, in which the wretched suppliant solicited for the post of common trooper in the Prince's service. His hopes of pardon being thus extinguished, he determined to abandon his native state, in order to enter the King of Prussia's service, and die like a brave soldier.

He withdrew secretly from his band, and began his journey. His way lay through a small country town, where he intended to pass the night. Shortly before strict mandates had been issued for the examination of all travellers, the Prince having taken part in the war. The governor of this little city happened to be employed in giving directions when mine Host of the Sun rode up to the place. His appearance was something of a courier, with the addition of rather a wild and revolting aspect. The hungry-looking animal he rode, with the burlesque cut of his attire, in which the time of its service was more conspicuous than its taste, was strangely contrasted with a countenance on which were impressed all the ferocious traces of passion perceptible in that of a soldier lying dead upon the field. The gate-clerk actually started at the sight of his features, though he had grown grey in his office, which, during a period of forty years, had

brought him acquainted with all the vagabonds in the surrounding district.

The keen eye of the gate inquisitor could not easily be deceived. He closed the bar behind Wolf, and inquired for his pass as he laid his hand upon his horse's rein. Wolf, however, was prepared: he handed him his pass, one of which he had plundered a poor merchant. Still the man hesitated; a single paper was not enough to satisfy our forty years' toll-keeper, and he referred the matter to the governor. This last gave more credit to his eyes than to Wolf's passport, and begged he would follow him to the Town-house.

There the head of the police examined the pass, and declared it to be correct. He was an avowed admirer of novelty, and was fond of chatting the latest news over his bottle. The pass informed him that the party had just left the scene of action where the war had broken out. Here the man in office hoped to glean some private intelligence, and despatched his secretary to invite the traveller to come and take a glass of wine with him. Meanwhile our Host of the Sun was standing opposite the Town-house: his odd appearance had collected the rabble around him. A murmur reached his ears: doubts and guesses were hazarded as to the character both of the rider and his steed, and the insolence of the wretches at length broke out into open

tumult. Unluckily for Wolf, the horse which every body seemed to be pointing at, had been stolen ; and he now imagined that it was recognized as such. The unexpected invitation of the police officer seemed to confirm his suspicions. He now held it certain that his false pass had been detected, and that the whole was a feint to betray him alive and defenceless into their hands. A bad conscience betrayed him into an error : he gave his horse the spur, and rode off without returning any answer.

This sudden flight became the signal for a riot : “ A thief ! a thief ! ” they all cried with one accord, and hastened after him. It was for life or death, and Wolf kept the advantage. He is on the point of rescue, but an invisible hand is over him ; the hour of destiny had arrived—the Nemesis ;—justice was only to be propitiated with the blood of her debtor. The last street he turned into to effect his escape, had no thoroughfare ; he was compelled to turn round and face his pursuers. The report of this occurrence threw the whole place into an uproar ; crowd collects upon crowd ; all the streets are stopped up, and an army of enemies cut off his retreat. He draws a pistol from his holster ; the throng recoils, and he attempts to cut his way through.

“ The first man,” he cried, “ who dares me, dies ! ” He proceeds ; there is a long pause ; till

at length, an old gaoler approaching him behind, seized him by the arm, and wrested the pistol from his hand, just as he was in the act of firing. It fell to the ground, and the wretched man is next torn from his horse, and borne in brutal triumph back into the Town-house.

“Who are you?” inquired the magistrate, in the same brutal tone, as if triumphing in his woes.

“One who is resolved to answer no questions, until he be tried more civilly!”

“Who are you, I say?”

“Who should I be, but the man I have already represented myself? I have travelled far and wide, and traversed all Germany without once meeting with such an insulting reception as this!”

“Your sudden flight, however, looks very ugly; very suspicious indeed. Wherefore did you make off?”

“I was weary of the mockery and insults of your rabble!”

“But you threatened to fire, Sir!”

“True, but my pistol was only powder. They tried the weapon, and there was no ball.”

“Then why did you carry arms at all?”

“Because I have articles of value with me, and because I was informed of a certain robber, who infested these parts, named Host of the Sun.”

“Your answers at least prove your courage, but

your innocence is another affair. I give you time, from this until to-morrow, to recollect and discover the truth."

"I shall return the same answers; no others."

"Gaoler! take your prisoner to the tower!"

"To the tower! How, my Lord! justice is banished, then, from your state? I shall require satisfaction, Sir."

"You shall have it, when you have fully cleared yourself."

On the following morning, it was suggested by the head of the police that, perhaps, being innocent, a harsh examination was not calculated to conquer the prisoner's obstinacy; that it might be more politic to treat him with civility and moderation. A sworn jury was assembled, and the prisoner conducted into their presence.

"You must excuse the somewhat harsh style in which we began to examine you yesterday, Sir."

"Certainly, when you please to apprehend me aright."

"Our laws are severe, and your affair made much noise. I cannot venture to discharge you without a violation of my duty: appearances are against you. I am anxious that you should state something which may remove this impression."

"True! had I any thing to allege."

"In such case, I shall be compelled to commu-

nicate the affair to government, and await its directions."

"And what then?"

"Then you encounter the risk of having attempted to pass the boundaries, and if you obtain mercy, you will be subject to the levy."

Wolf remained silent during some minutes, as if struggling with some deep internal feeling. Then turning suddenly towards the magistrate, he enquired "May I be permitted a quarter of an hour's audience with you?"

The Jury looked very suspiciously at him; but at a sign from the magistrate, they instantly withdrew.

"Now what is it you wish to say to me?"

"Your deportment towards me, yesterday, my lord, would never have brought me to confession. I laugh at compulsion. The difference, the kindness, of your conduct to-day inspires me with a feeling of confidence and esteem. I believe you to be a worthy man."

"What do you wish to say to me?"

"I find, I say, you are a worthy man. I have long wished to meet with such an one! let me for once shake hands with an honest man."

"What is your object, Sir, in this?"

"Your hair is grown grey with years; you look respectable; you must have seen much of the

world. And you must have known what it is to suffer—is it not true?—and are since grown more humane!”

“ Good Sir, why do you talk thus?”

“ Yes, you are just standing on the brink of eternity: soon you will stand in need of the Almighty’s mercy. Will you deny it to one of his creatures? No, you will not. Do you not yet suspect? Cannot you conjecture with whom you speak?”

“ What is it you mean? you alarm me.”

“ Still don’t you suspect me? Write, Sir, to the Prince; state in what manner I was found, and how I became my own accuser. Impress upon him that God will at the last day so be merciful unto him, as he shall now show mercy unto me! Oh, entreat hard for me, worthy old man! and shed a tear over what you write: for I—— I am the Host of the Sun!”

FRATERNAL MAGNANIMITY.*

DRAMAS and romances present us with the most striking and glowing features of the human heart. They inflame the imagination, but the heart remains cold. The glow of feeling thus produced is seldom more than momentary, and less seldom applied to the purposes of common life. Perhaps at the very moment when the unaffected benevolence of honest Puffs moves us almost to tears, we shall fly into a passion with a poor mendicant for knocking at our door. Who can assure us that this artificial existence in an ideal world does not tend to obliterate the principles of our existence in the real one? We here embrace, as it were, the two extreme points of morality, angelic and diabolical; while the middle, that of humanity, we leave untouched.

The present anecdote, relating to two Germans—I state the name of their country with a feeling of proud delight—may boast, at least, the indisputa-

* The above story, so powerfully sketched by the pen of this celebrated writer, and so beautifully moralized, is merely entitled "A Trait of Generosity, taken from modern history." Published in the *Literary Repertory of Wurtemburgh.*

ble merit of being true. I trust that it will produce a warmer feeling of sympathy and admiration than all the volumes of Grandison and Pamela put together.

Two brothers, Barons Von Wrmb, had both formed an attachment to a distinguished young lady of Wrthr, without a knowledge of each other's passion. It was equally strong in both; for in both it was a first passion. Unconscious of their mutual danger, each gave full rein to his affection, neither being aware of the dreadful truth, that he had a beloved brother for his rival. They made an early declaration of their love; and had even proceeded to make further arrangements before an unexpected occurrence brought the secret to light.

The attachment of both had reached its highest pitch—that state of elevation both of the heart and imagination, which has produced so many fatal consequences, and which renders even any idea of the sacrifice of the object of affection, almost impossible. The lady, deeply sensible of their painful situation, hesitated how to decide: rather than inflict the agony of disappointed passion, and disturb the fraternal harmony subsisting between them, she generously referred the whole affair to themselves.

At length, having achieved an heroic conquest in this doubtful struggle between duty and passion, a conquest so easily decided upon by philosophical

and moral writers in their closet, and so seldom practised in real life, the elder addressed his younger brother as follows:—

“ I am aware of your affection, strong as my own, alas ! for the same lady of our love. I shall observe nothing in regard to priority of age. I wish you to remain here, while I go upon my travels, and do my utmost to forget her. Should I succeed, brother, she will then become thine ; and may Heaven prosper your love ! Should I, however, not succeed in my object, I doubt not you will act as I have done, and try what absence will effect.”

His brother assented ; and, bidding farewell, the elder instantly left Germany for Holland ; but the image of the beloved girl followed him every where. Banished from the paradise of his love, from the only happy and delightful scenes which he had once sought with her, to which his fancy always recurred, and in which only he seemed to breathe and live, the unhappy young man, like a plant torn from its native soil, from the warmer breezes and more invigorating beams of its eastern clime, pined and sickened in the new atmosphere to which he was consigned. He reached Amsterdam, but it was in despair ; a violent fever attacked him, and he was pronounced in danger of his life. Still the picture of his lost love haunted his delirious dreams ; the

only chance he had of recovery was in the possession of the lovely original herself. The physicians despaired of his recovery, until upon its being mentioned that he might yet live to behold her once more, from that moment he was gradually restored to health. Like a walking skeleton, the picture of utter wretchedness, he again appeared in his native place. He tottered across the threshold of his unforgotten girl, and again pressed his brother's hand:—"You see, brother, I am returned. Alas! what my heart foreboded has come to pass; yet, as Heaven is my judge, I could do no more."

He sunk, almost lifeless, into the poor girl's arms.

The younger brother now became no less determined to try the effect of absence, and was ready prepared, within a few weeks, for his tour.

"Brother," said he, "you bore your grief as far as Holland. I will endeavour to banish myself yet farther. Do not, however, lead her to the altar, until you hear from me. I will write. Our fraternal regard will admit of no stronger bond: our word is enough. Should I be more fortunate than you, in God's name, let her be thine! and may he for ever bless your union! Should I, however, return, then Heaven alone may decide between us two. Farewell! but keep this sealed packet: open

it not, until I shall be far away. I am going to Batavia." With these words he sprang into the chaise.

Half distracted, the two beings whom he had left, gazed after him, and were little more to be envied than the banished man; for he had surpassed his brother, whom he had left, in greatness of soul. With equal power did love for the woman, whom he had recovered, and regret for the brother, whom he had lost, appear to strive for mastery in his breast. The noise of the carriage, as it died away in the distance, seemed to cleave his heart in twain. He recovered, however, with the utmost care and attention. The young lady—but no! that will be best shown by the result.

The sealed packet was opened. It contained a full and particular description of the whole of his German possessions, which he made over to his brother, in case he found himself happy at Batavia. This heroic conqueror of himself shortly afterwards set sail in company with some Dutch merchants, and arrived in safety at Batavia. In the course of a few months afterwards, his brother received from him the following lines:—

“ Here, where I perpetually return thanks to the Almighty Giver of all good—here I have found a new country, a new home; and call to mind,

with all the stern pleasure of a martyr, our long and unbroken fraternal love. Fresh scenes, and fate itself, seem to have widened the current of my feelings; God hath granted me strength; yes, strength to offer up the highest sacrifice to our friendship. Thine is alas! here falls a tear—but it is the last I have triumphed!—thine let her be! Brother, I did not wish to take her, when thou wert from us, because I feared she might not be happy in my arms. But should she ever have blessed me with the thought, that we should indeed have been happy together; then, brother, I would impress it upon your soul. Do not forget how dearly she must be won by you, and always treat the dear angel with the same kindness and tenderness, with which you now think of her. Treat her as the fondest, last, best legacy of a dear departed brother, whom thy arms will never more embrace. Do not write to me when you are celebrating your nuptials. My wounds are yet open, and bleeding fresh. Write to me only when you are happy. My act in this will be surety for me, I trust, that God will not desert me in the world whither I have transferred myself.”

After the receipt of this letter, the elder brother married the lady, and enjoyed one happy year of wedded love. The lady, at the end of that short period,

died, and, in dying, she first entrusted to her husband the unhappy secret of her bosom—that she had loved his absent brother best.

Both these brothers are yet alive: the eldest, who is again married, resides upon his estates in Germany; the younger one remained at Batavia, where he is distinguished as a fortunate, and very eminent character. He is said to have made a vow never to marry; and hitherto he has religiously kept it.

A WALK AMONG THE LINDEN TREES.*

Wollmar and Edwin were friends residing together in a pleasant retired situation, for the sake of enjoying the country. They had withdrawn from the tumult of the busy world, in order to examine with philosophical leisure and reflection into the most remarkable incidents of their life and destiny. Edwin, the happiest of the two, gazed upon the world with a glowing eye ; a world, which the more serious Wollmar beheld arrayed in the mourning colour of his own misfortunes. A noble avenue of linden trees was the spot selected with most pleasure, in which to indulge their contemplations. Here one fine May-day they sought the cool shade. I was with them ; and I recollect the following conversation.—

Edwin. What a glorious day! Nature glows in all her strength and loveliness afresh : then why so serious, my Wollmar ?

Wollmar. Leave me alone ! You know it is my custom, a custom that always spoils your good humour.

* Stated in the title page of the original to have been borrowed from the Wurtemburgh Repertory of Literature. T.

Edwin. Is it possible you can thus turn from the cup of joy sparkling, and overflowing as it is?

Wollmar. Yes, when one finds a spider in it: and why not? In your eyes, to be sure, Nature decks herself out like a warm rosy-cheeked maiden on her bridal day. To me, she appears an old withered dowager, with sunken eyes, furrowed cheeks, and artificial ornaments in her hair. How she seems to admire herself in this her Sunday finery! But it is the same worn and ancient garment, put off and on some hundreds of thousands—incalculable numbers of times. Why, she sported the identical old green flowing train she now bears, before the time of Deucalion! just so perfumed up to the eyes, so motley dressed and bepainted. No wonder one is tired of her, when these thousand years past she pays all her reckonings from the revenue of death, prepares her feasts upon the bones of her own children, and nourishes corruption. Young man! are you now aware in whose society you are walking? Do you apprehend that this endless circle here is the gravestone of your own species? that the very breezes which bring the odours of the linden trees, perhaps blow the decayed strength of the great Armenius, his very dust, in our noses; while, in the fresh spring, you quaff the well pounded bones of our mighty Henry! Perhaps the same atom which, in the frame of Plato, created the thought of Divinity, that

which in the heart of Titus trembled at the appeal of pity, again, perhaps, inflamed the beastly appetites of Sardanapalus ; or, in the carcase of some gibbeted wretch, afforded seasoning for the ravens. Now do you think this pleasant, Edwin ?

Edwin. Pardon me. Your views, I think, are comical enough. How ! Do you imagine that our bodies are subject to the same laws as our souls, and wander after they are interred ? Suppose, after death, you were to give the corporeal frame the same office which it had fulfilled in obedience to the soul during life, insomuch that the relics of the deceased were compelled to go through much the same scenes and transactions as they had done here, “ *quæ cura fuit vivis, eadem sequitur tellure repôstos.* ”

Wollmar. It follows, that the ashes of Lycurgus may still be and eternally continue at the bottom of the ocean !

Edwin. Do you hear the note of the sweet nightingale from yonder tree ? Well ! I suppose we are listening to the Urn of Tibullus’s ashes. Yes, and Pindar is still soaring in the distant horizon there, in that towering eagle ; while Anacreon’s atoms are, perhaps, blowing about in some of these sweet-smelling zephyrs. Who can tell whether the bodies of some of their deceased favourites may not still be playing with their mistresses’ locks, fly-

ing about in the shape of powder and pomatum ; whether the remains of some old usurer may not return, in form of a century or two's rust, to be melted down for the purpose of a new issue in the mint ? Yea, whether the bodies of our Polygraphers may not be condemned to be beaten into letters, hot-pressed into paper, remaining eternally groaning under the bondage of the press, still assisting to immortalize the nonsense of their colleagues ? Thus, you see, Wollmar, how I contrive to extract the spirit of good-humour from the same chalice that serves to administer to your gall.

Wollmar. Edwin, Edwin ! Why attempt to turn my serious and philosophical views into mere jest ? Let me proceed : though a good case does not shun scrutiny of any kind.

Edwin.—Scrutinize, Wollmar, when you are happier.

Wollmar.—Stop there ! you are probing one of my deadliest wounds. Wisdom might thus be esteemed a mere gossiping meddler, playing the parasite or the mischief-maker in every house in which she appears ; denying mercy to the offending and unhappy, and fomenting evils among the happy. A sick stomach converts this planet into a hell upon earth, and a good glass of wine can as easily deify these devils. Were our humours a model of our philosophical reflections, I should like you to in-

form me, Edwin, from which of these, abstract truth would flow. I fear, Edwin, you will never become wise, until you become more serious.

Edwin. That I could not be, even to be wise.

Wollmar. You just now mentioned the word happy : how would you become that ? Labour is the bond of life, prudence the means, and happiness, you say, is the price. Innumerable sails are spread over the dangerous deep in search of the happy isle, to secure, if possible, this golden-fleece. But say, thou wise man, how many succeed in finding it. Here I behold a whole fleet, surrounded by rocks and storms, suffering the severest privations, perpetually trying to make the shore, and as often driven back into the ocean. It fails in the outset of the voyage, the vessel coasts fearfully along the shore, often seeking to refit, often taking in provisions, in order to make once more the hoped-for distant port, to meet with renewed disappointment. Many give themselves infinite pain and labour to-day, in order to accustom themselves to it to-morrow ; others are borne away by a torrent of the passions down the eternal abyss, without leaving even their name. There are more who exert their utmost to take advantage of their situation, and turn to account the unavailing labours of their predecessors, and enjoy the fame. Deduct these, and scarcely one poor fourth part remains. Filled with terror and alarm,

away they are borne before the wind, without helm or compass, by the feeble light of the stars; while on the edge of the horizon, like a white cloud, appears the happy coast in sight. Land, land! cries the steersman, and behold!—a wretched rotten plank starts clean away, and the leaky vessel sinks. “*Apparent rari nantes in gurgite vasto.*” The most lucky swimmer, perhaps, arrives fainting on shore: a stranger in the ethereal zone he wanders solitarily about, and looks with full eye towards his desired home in the North. In this way I may deduct one million after another from your full amount, your free system of happiness. Children free themselves from the control of men, and these last lament that they are no longer children. The stream of our consciousness flows back to its source, the evening grows twilight like the morning, Aurora and Hesperus embrace, as it were, in the same night, and the wise man, who would have attempted to burst through the walls of mortality, sinks back into second childhood. Now, Edwin, pass judgment between the pot and the pipkin:—reply, Edwin, if you can.

Edwin. The pipkin is already adjudged, if the pot may be reckoned with it.

Wollmar. Reply, I say.

Edwin. I say that even when the vessel fails to

make that happy shore, the voyage is not therefore lost.

Wollmar. Widen your view, and take in the very picturesque prospects which open to the right and left of you. Do you see them tossed about in cloud and storm, trembling upon the edges of the rocks? No, argue with me no longer! my grief is more reasonable than your joy.

Edwin. And shall I trample the violet under foot, only because I cannot pluck the rose? Or should I lose a fine May-day because a storm may darken its face?—no! I rejoice in the cloudless blue, I pluck the flower though its scent may be flown ere morning. I throw it aside when it fades; and pluck its younger sister on the stem, just bursting into bloom.

Wollmar. Once for all, it is in vain. Where one seed of pleasure springs, you may find a thousand shoots of sorrow and despair. Few are the tears of pleasure, compared with those of sorrow and despair. Here on the very spot where man was late rejoicing, you shall find a heap of worms. While our voice of gladness seems to fill the air, a thousand curses are ready to be launched upon our heads. Yes, life is a cheating lottery, in which a few poor prizes are lost in a crowd of blanks. Each point of time becomes the grave of some pleasure; each wretched mortal, each atom of dust, the grave-stone of some

departed delight. Death hath impressed his seal upon each atom of the eternal universe: upon each atom I read that comfortless word of farewell: *Gone!*

Edwin. But wherefore not have been? May not each tone of that funeral hymn prove a blessing? it is likewise the hymn of omnipresent love: for it was in this spot, Wollmar, under this Linden-tree, where I first kissed my Juliet, where Juliet first returned my kiss.

Wollmar. (Turning hastily away.) Young man, it was under these Linden-trees where I lost my Laura.

END OF VOL. III.

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