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PERE LA CHAISE;

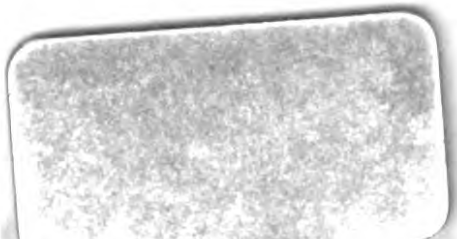
OR,

THE CONFESSOR.



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L O N D O N :
GILBERT AND RIVINGTON, PRINTERS,
ST. JOHN'S SQUARE.

PERE LA CHAISE;

OR,

THE CONFESSOR:

A TALE OF THE TIMES.



EDITED BY

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AUTHOR OF

"THE INTRODUCTION TO THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND QUARTERLY
REVIEW," AND SUBSEQUENT ARTICLES.

"At the sight of a cross, or crucifix, I can dispense with my hat, but scarce with the thought or memory of my Saviour; I cannot laugh at, but rather pity, the fruitless journeys of pilgrims, or contemn the miserable condition of friars, for though misplaced in circumstances, there is something in it of devotion. I could never hear the Ave Maria bell without an elevation, or think it a sufficient warrant, because they erred in one circumstance, for me to err in all, that is, in silence and dumb contempt; whilst therefore they direct their devotions to her, I offered mine to God, and rectify the errors of their prayers by rightly ordering mine own."—SIR THOMAS BROWN.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

LONDON:

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1840.

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PREFACE.

THE reader who shall honour "PERE LA CHAISE" with a perusal, will perceive how applicable is "*A Tale of the Times*," for the designation of a Narrative, which aims, by an induction of interesting particulars, to illustrate the genius and characteristics of Papal tyranny.

It is impossible, in our days, for any reflecting man not to be startled when he witnesses the alarming progress which the tenets of the Romish Church are making in every quarter. The restoration of the Jesuits, the virulent opposition to the toleration established in many continental states, the energetic letter of the present Pope Gregory XVI., in which his holiness declares the

liberty of thought, of worship, and of the press, *a cursed pestilence*, which all Bishops are called upon to oppose, and if possible to banish from the face of the earth; the interference of Rome with the internal administration of Prussia and other countries, her incitement to the Rhenish provinces to rebel, her arrogant pretensions as respects the question of mixed marriages, her refusal of the rites of the Church to whosoever would not submit that *all* his or her children should be brought up in the faith,—all furnish the proof that she is zealous as ever to extend her borders, to usurp over every land the supremacy first conceded by an earthly potentate; and all give decisive evidence of a determination to maintain the ancient system with inflexible rigour. The consciences of the adherents of Popery are still instructed in the indispensable duty of demanding the interference of the magistrate in the suppression and punishment of heresy. We must be ignorant as dirt, we must persist in closing our eyes to all that is going on in the world, not to be aware of this.

But were events dumb, instead of speaking with an emphasis that cannot but enforce attention, we might still be sure that the persecuting maxims of Popery are unrevoked. Such a change would be an *impossibility* in a religion founded on the assumption of a supernatural exemption from error; an assumption, which obviously admits of no degree or modification. None of the claims of Rome, however absurd, intolerant, or impious, can ever be suffered to slumber and gradually die out, until Popery renounces its precise and rigid definition of the infallibility of the Church.

It is hoped, that the following pages are written in a charitable and Christian spirit. The heroine, who is a Roman Catholic, will be admitted to be a favourite of the writer; all the traits of her interesting disposition are described *con amore*; and if in the progress of her story, the Protestant shall discover what he conceives to be a speck on the ermine perfection of Clotilde's character, the Roman Catholic reader will doubtless regard it as the "one star sparkling through it like an eye," the

crowning glory that hallows the picture, the keynote to the harmony of the piece.

Be it delusion, or be it the height of human virtue, Lady Trevillion suffers her obedience to her church to destroy her peace of mind, to compromise her honour, and to be the means of involving all she holds dear in her own wretchedness and ruin. Step by step, darkling, and in anguish of heart, is she driven on by a machinery no faithful Romanist could resist, any more than in olden times the victims of inexorable Fate could avert their inevitable doom,

“ Though will and conscience sat in the wind against her *.”

Nor let the reader hug himself in the belief, that in our liberal and enlightened times, such prostration of the will, such sufferings of the heart as those offered at the shrine of religious duty by this devoted woman, can never be required, that such a tragedy as the scenes of Père la Chaise disclose cannot be enacted. This is so far from

* Gertrude and Beatrice ; a Tragedy.

being the case, that the trials of Lady Trevillion might be paralleled in a thousand instances; though of course the accident of her having married a *heretic* husband must be taken into account, and the exquisite sensibility of her nature may be supposed to give peculiar point to her distresses.

Trusting in the assumed advances of the human intellect, there is a prevailing disposition to contemplate the doctrines of popery with less disgust, and to witness their progress with less alarm than has ever been known since the Reformation. In this fancied enlightenment we place our security against the recurrence of the enormous cruelties of the papal system, and under the same mask we shelter our indifference to religious truth. According to the vain and shallow reasoning so much in vogue, it were a libel to apprehend that the "form of godliness" combined with a total denial of its power could ever again be generally professed in enlightened England. It is out of the question, now that information is so general—so runs the argument of these superficial people—that a heap

of unmeaning ceremonies adapted to engage the senses, that implicit faith in human authority combined with an utter neglect of divine teaching, that ignorance the most profound joined to dogmatism the most presumptuous, an exclusion of biblical knowledge, together with an extinction of free inquiry, should be submitted to by the well-informed and accomplished subjects of Queen Victoria. It is idle, they say, for people who are basking in the sunshine of rational knowledge, and who observe on all sides the prevalence of vital Christianity, to dread having to contemplate the spectacle of religion lying in gorgeous state, and surrounded by the silent pomp of death. What ! would it be possible in the age of penny-magazines, for the votaries of the papal see to administer, as they did formerly in this country, the affairs of their *established* church on the corruptest principles of worldly policy, to give to superstition the semblance and sanction of religion, to enslave the mental faculties to human authority ? *Risum teneatis ?* But it will be found in the end that it is

no laughing matter. That such a consummation is not only possible, but highly probable under certain circumstances, which God in mercy avert ! may be gathered from the fact, that in these (so called) intelligent and enlightened times, notwithstanding that we meet with nothing partaking of the nature of a solid concession from Rome, though we find no steps retraced, no errors revoked, no pretensions disclaimed, no protest opposed to the persecuting maxims of former ages ; yet we take for granted that intolerance is expunged from the papal creed, and view “trifles light as air,”—professions of liberality issuing from the lips of unaccredited agents ; the courtesy, urbanity, and address of un-official individuals—we look on these as “confirmation strong as proofs of holy writ.”

Could any one discern in this pitiable infatuation a token of the maturity of our understanding ? Edward and his counsellors were more alive to the dreadful fascination of this false Florizel. Mary and her counsellors exemplified the tender mercies of a church *that cannot change*, when armed with

authority. Elizabeth and her counsellors kept watch and ward throughout the whole of a long reign, glorious because she never relaxed from her vigilance. The same may be affirmed of her immediate successor. Oh! it will be rejoined, the Church of Rome may be unchangeable; but we, the people of England, have our wits about us, we are stronger-minded than were our forefathers; there is no danger of the renewal of the horrors of Smithfield!

It is to be prayed—although the members of the Romish community are at this moment indulging the most sanguine hopes, suggested by the credulous temper of the times—that popery will never be permitted again to darken and overspread the land; but, if such a calamity should consist with the inscrutable counsels of Heaven, it is certain that conscientious Romanists would rekindle the fires of Smithfield, because persecution unto death is an unrepealed mandate of their church, an “act of faith,” of imperative duty; and what is more, would evince, according to their creed, the height of

Christian charity. But, waving this point, and laying no stress upon the circumstance of the strong-mindedness in which we trust having actually accelerated the doom of Latimer and Ridley, and the other martyrs, it may be as well to inquire whether this alleged superiority of understanding be not in point of fact a misconception, a mere chimera—the veriest bubble that ever floated in the sunbeams? We know, that from the accession of Edward the Sixth to the Protectorate of Cromwell, “there were giants in the land,” compared with whom, Englishmen of the present day are indeed a pigmy race.

In those days suffered the martyrs for the Reformed faith. In those days there were divines in England such as the world never saw before nor since; and congregations flocked to hear them, fitted by natural understanding, if not by education, to imbibe religious truth from the lips of such teachers. In those days Bacon showed himself, the miner and sapper of philosophy, the pioneer of nature, the priest of her mysteries. He wrote, and

those principles, which afterwards were imbibed by a Locke, a Boyle, and a Newton, were admired and pondered on by his contemporaries. In those days Milton “fulminated over” England, and senates—with which to compare our present House of Commons would be such uncivil irony as to amount to a breach of privilege—ruminated on his lofty thoughts, and deferred to his authority. In those days there cannot be pretended that there was no thinking public, for the “Eikon Basilike” passed through fifty editions in a twelvemonth. IN THOSE DAYS SHAKESPEARE APPEARED. In those days there flourished a marvellous array of dramatic poets; men who have left behind them, in a species of composition the most difficult of all others, and the most trying to the human intellect, such grand and startling specimens of inventive genius as cannot be paralleled in the literature of any other age or country. These wonderful productions, that were represented to crowded, applauding, and appreciating audiences, would be in our times utterly “caviare to the general,” are quite beyond the

mental reach of the play-goers of the nineteenth century, who cannot enlarge their puny capacities to the reception of any thing more sublime and poetical than the *niaiseries* of the "Sea Captain," or "Jack Sheppard."

And yet in the remarkable intellectual era referred to there was one impending danger, *that of Popery*, of which the mighty mind of England stood constantly in awe, and against which it would have felt the necessity of being on its guard, even if the conflagrations of Mary, the Spanish Armada, and the Gunpowder Plot, had not demonstrated what terrible cause there was for apprehension.

Then, is it not little short of madness for us of this degenerate generation to look on with apathy while the members of the papal community are active and enterprising, and popery is making rapid strides, and new popish chapels are rising on every side of us? That the ascendancy of such a church in Great Britain infers the destruction of the domestic peace of the empire will be readily acknowledged after a perusal of the following simple tale; such a

catastrophe being a necessary consequence of popish inquisition and *surveillance*, and one on which the Roman Catholic priesthood calculate.

May their trust be overruled by a gracious Providence ! or else the dilaceration of the spirit which, with a holy violence against her ingenuous nature, Clotilde kept concealed from her husband and her sister—a dilaceration which might almost remind the reader of the scenic tortures of the “*Calantha*” of Ford *—will be the lot of many an English matron and many an English maiden, in the once happy and inviolable homes of old England.

* The noblest but (perhaps with the exception of Webster’s “*Duchess of Malfy*”) the most heart-rending exhibition of female fortitude in the whole range of the drama.

PERE LA CHAISE.

CHAPTER I.

IT was on a bright and cloudless morning in the month of June, 18—, that, having disengaged myself from a party of friends, I proceeded alone to visit the cemetery of Père la Chaise,—rather prepossessed against a people who could prepare gorgeous palaces for the reception of the dead, and divert the poignancy of grief by decking a charnel-house with flowers.

At the gates of the cemetery I met with a young group, whose happy looks and innocent playful-

ness had attracted my attention the previous day. There were three girls, the eldest not more than sixteen, two boys, much her juniors, and a baby in the arms of its nurse. Our first meeting had been in a shady quarter of the Champs Elysées, where, busily gathering some flowers, they wreathed them into a chaplet to crown one of the boys.

I had watched them upon that occasion for nearly an hour, while dancing, singing, and apparently the happiest little people in the world, they pursued their guileless pastime, with a *gaieté de cœur* perfectly natural and unrestrained. Nothing could exceed the grace of their movements, the sweetness of their infantile voices, or the affection with which they severally caressed the little laughing cherub, who, with his arch eyes and clustering curls, might, by the aid of imagination, have passed in the midst of such a group for a Cupid sporting with the Graces.

They were of that grade wherein custom hath denied females the privilege of wearing hats ; but no head-dress could be more tasteful or becoming

than the kerchief of divers hues bound round their polished brows,—no decorum more perfect than that practised by these hereditary artisans. On thus again encountering them, they were in the act of purchasing one of those crowns, formed of everlasting, with which affection loves to decorate the grave of a departed friend. They would gladly have added a bouquet of sweet flowers, but for the want of a few sous. I took advantage of their necessity, and secured to myself the thanks and the acquaintance of these interesting children for a single franc.

“We go,” said the elder, as she modestly accepted my gift, “to adorn, with an humble tribute of gratitude, the tomb of a benefactress, beloved as she is blessed. Monsieur renders us rich by his generosity. He deserves to assist in the pious office of performing a gratifying task.” So saying, she presented me, with the air of a duchess and the simplicity of a child, her little *couronne* of immortals, and we proceeded together through the beautiful alleys of Père la Chaise.

How mistaken were the ideas I had previously formed of this "paradise of tombs," of the feelings with which we wander amongst "the dwellings of the dead," and mingle with our earthly regrets and attachments the chastening influence of such associations.

Thousands and tens of thousands visit this consecrated spot. They see around them the resting-places of brethren, of parents, of friends. They have met,—they have parted,—they shall meet in this world no more. But, have they parted for eternity? Do not the souls of all those whose ashes are collected in this vast and crowded burial-place yet live to bliss or misery? And shall we not, ere long, partake of their mysterious fate? Can there be danger to man,—attracted as he is by a powerful instinct to life,—in familiarising himself with dissolution? Or, does the silent beauty of such classic architecture lose aught of its impressiveness by approximation with dust? Can we forget the garden of Gethsemane, or the tomb of Emanuel; the type, the promise, the

security that all these splendid monuments and lowly urns will equally be called upon to give back their resuscitated ashes, and in one terrible or gracious moment restore to everlasting life, or chain in everlasting wretchedness, their now decaying relicks.

During our progress we encountered many groups; not one of which betrayed the slightest token of levity, or of irreverence. And few, I should hope,—let them enter Père la Chaise with what feelings they may,—but must receive some benefit from a short meditation amongst its sacred depositories.

My young companions walked silently on: their features were composed and serious. Even the Bonne forgot her smiles and her *coquetric*. But it was the expressive countenance of my fair conductress which chiefly engaged my attention. She wore an air of such touching serenity, so pure and so sublime, that I could almost at the moment have imagined her my guide to the regions of assembled saints. “The young and the old, Monsieur,” she

observed, pointing to some children, who, wrapped in deep mourning, were strewing fresh flowers over a newly-tenanted grave, "The young and the old go hand in hand to people this world and the next. Last evening, as you saw, we celebrated the birthday of our petit François. To-day I have attained my sixteenth year. We devote an anniversary, of which Providence permits the enjoyment, to gratitude and the memory of a benefactress. Matilde remembers, without ceasing, the generosity of Madame de la Caselle."

"And in what way," I enquired, "was Madame so fortunate as to benefit the amiable Matilde?"

"I am, Monsieur, the only surviving child of my parents. They were unfortunate. My father is an artist. He lost his right arm at the same time that death deprived me of my mother. Madame de la Caselle found us out in our distress: she settled an annuity on my father, and defrayed the expenses of my education. We live with a good aunt. She loves me as she does these children: they are hers. She is a lace-mender: I assist her.

She venerates the memory of our benefactress, and allows me to come here upon my birth-day."

"Your abode, if I mistake not, must be at some distance; I saw you yesterday near to the Barrière of Neuilly?"

"We often go thither on a visit to our grandmother; but reside near to the Barrière de l'Enfer. 'Tis a long walk; still, if Monsieur should come that way, my aunt would deem it an honour to see him in her humble apartments. Our greatest treasure is a portrait of Madame; but we likewise possess some copies taken at the Louvre by my father, previous to his accident. Ah! here is the spot where Matilde forgets every thing but her gratitude!" Saying thus, she bounded forward, and, reaching a simple but elegant tomb, bent her knees to the earth, and her head over the marble. Nor could I help saying to myself, while thus a witness of her devoted act, "Let this young person's profession of faith be whatever it may, the petition now proffered is one of piety,—the spirit thus prostrated is a spirit of sincere devotion."

When she arose, her eyes were full of tears. We placed upon this modest shrine its emblematic crown. The children then approached, and, having been permitted to kiss the inscription which perpetuated a name so much beloved, they severally embraced Matilde ; and then altogether busied themselves in clearing away every weed that had sprung up since their last visit, and in dressing a few flowers that decorated the little enclosure.

It was pleasing to observe with what reverence and decorum these young creatures prosecuted their pious task, which, ere it drew to a close, was interrupted by the approach of an elderly priest, whose notice they awaited with silent respect. Matilde crossed herself, and knelt upon the ground. He stretched out his hands over her head, and over the heads of her companions, fervently pronouncing the expected blessing. Seldom had I seen a figure more truly ecclesiastic, or one that impressed me with greater reverence : intuitively I uncovered. He acknowledged the action by a placid smile, laying his right hand on his breast, and bending

his venerable head, while saying to the little group, who stood silently waiting his further recognition :
“ My children, emulate, without ceasing, the virtues you are here to honour ; and merit, by acts of piety, according to your means, the same reward that is inherited by her for whom we intercede !”
He then passed on ; the children gazing respectfully upon his departing steps, nor resuming their occupation until they could no longer discern him.

As soon as the weeds were cleared away, and that there was nothing more to detain us, I ventured to ask Matilde if she could point out to me the tomb of Mareschal Ney? She smiled. “ Certainly ; Monsieur is an Englishman,—perhaps a soldier. The sentiments he cherishes carry him to the monument of a distinguished general. Monsieur shall be satisfied. It is a simple column, and excites curiosity because for a time forbidden to be visited : we shall find it on our return. But yonder is a building, embellished by the gratitude of kings as a fit residence for their exemplary con-

fessor, Père la Chaise. And, close to that building, Monsieur shall see another,—the tomb of fidelity,—the burial-place of Descloseaux, ancient advocate of Parliament, chevalier of the order of St. Michel, and, above all, proprietor of the Cimetière de la Magdeleine. 'Tis here that true patriotism and loyalty are commemorated. These virtues bloomed in the bosom of that respected citizen. His ashes are more honoured than those which repose in the splendid monuments of heroes !”

Led by the enthusiastic girl, we reached a square, low pedestal, surmounted by an urn, simple in its construction, but sanctified by an inscription bearing the name of Descloseaux ; a name rendered noble by that sublime courage which exists without hope, and perseveres without reward. Ney fought for his emperor boldly, bravely, and successfully, while success gave to that emperor—who knew so well when and where to reward—the power of dispensing favours ; but Descloseaux, owing nothing to the unfortunate Louis, expecting nothing from his wretched orphans, constituted

himself the guardian of a fearful secret,—in which to participate, during the dreadful reign of terror, was, if discovered, to earn certain death !

“ From the roof of his house,” continued Matilde, “ he witnessed with horror the awful perpetration of a national crime. He saw the mutilated remains of outraged royalty thrust into a coffin, and consumed in quick-lime ! He saw those remains consigned, with other headless trunks, to a loathsome receptacle, where the murdered and the murderer, the noblest and the most unworthy, were condemned by their ruthless executioners to one common grave !

“ Attached to a contaminated dwelling, on account of its neighbourhood to so heart-rending a scene,—only because there were entombed the reliques of his murdered sovereign,—he kept hourly watch ; and, when the despoilers of an anointed king had paid that debt which justice seldom fails to exact,—when the revolutionary tornado had in part swept by,—did this faithful warden, this voluntary defender of a sacred trust, descend from his

place of observation, and secure the prize near which a pious resolution could alone have detained him for so many dreary months !

“ Unsupported, except by his own devoted feelings, unassisted, save by his own children,—at the risk of fortune, liberty, and life,—he penetrated a corrupted sink, and, in silence and in tears, effected the long-meditated purpose ; conveyed the mutilated corpses of Louis and his unhappy queen to the adjoining cemetery de la Magdeleine, where, in the same secret and lowly grave, they were henceforth to be concealed. Over this cemetery, which he had purchased at an immense expense, he kept unwearied watch and ward for sixteen years ; sending to the Dauphiness, at much hazard to himself, an annual token of some few lilies, the unpretending ornaments of her parents’ sanctuary. And when, at last, this royal lady returned to the city of her ancestors, it was the high privilege of that noble old man to restore the most sacred and the most precious of her recovered treasures to the legitimate daughter of France.”

I thanked the fair panegyrist for having led me to a spot where reflections so grateful to the self-love of human nature serve to redeem the frail character of man ; and, after a pause, enquired if such a hallowed scene was not often visited by the adherents of the present dynasty, by returned emigrants, and loyalists of every class ?

“ If,” she replied, “ Monsieur means by loyalists, those who, like the excellent Descloseaux, are faithful to a sacred cause,—defenders of justice, guardians of ancient rights,—he will meet many such in this consecrated spot. Here children are taught a moral lesson in the history which passes before their eyes. Here age assembles to moralize upon the sanguinary era in which so many lives were lost, and to deprecate the consequences of anarchy and ambition.”

I was surprised at the turn of Matilde’s discourse, and enquired where she had learnt her politics ?

“ The sentiments I speak were those of my excellent protectress,” replied the intelligent girl.

“ She read, she encouraged conversation. But, if Monsieur considers me presuming ——”

“ O no !—I am delighted. It is so novel, so interesting, that a young and beautiful girl should converse with so much enthusiasm, and that her feelings should be the result of reflection. Pray go on ! I can see that you are a loyalist. Did Madame la Dauphine ever visit this cemetery ?”

“ Madame had a sensitive memory : perhaps too sensitive. But she is generous, grateful, and devout. Had Monsieur been here some time ago, when, as a child, it was my good fortune to be present, he would have received no ordinary gratification. Madame la Dauphine brought hither in her hand the infant Duc de Bourdeaux. Their attendants remained at some distance. The children of an assassinated father, with their august relative, entered this honoured enclosure. The descendants of Henri the Fourth stood uncovered beside the tomb of an humble citizen ! We had retreated almost out of hearing ; but it was impossible to mistake the nature of Madame’s emotions—to for-

get by how bloody a sacrifice she had been made an orphan. The grief impressed upon her features, the tenderness with which she contemplated her youthful hearers, the absorbed attention with which they hung upon her words, all proved that she was impressing on their minds a lesson of mental courage. The eyes of Prince Henri sparkled with intelligence, while those of his sister were flooded with tears. We ventured to draw nearer. We saw a spirit of emulation endue the countenance of the noble boy with a look of manliness far beyond his years, while he was told by the illustrious daughter of kings, that it is not birth which ennobles, but virtue; not prosperity, but adversity, which is the touchstone and trial of love; and that, as his infant hands place upon the pedestal of Descloseaux a trophy of eternal gratitude for fidelity like his, so early does he learn to crown desert, and to be generous as just!

“Turning from the grave of a loyalist, the august party are reverently saluted by an old soldier of Napoleon’s. That soldier, Monsieur, is my

grandfather. His right hand having been amputated, he leant with his left upon a crutch.

“ ‘ Poor old man ! ’ said the Duke, regarding him with tenderness. ‘ You have been in battle ? ’

“ ‘ I have served France, Monseigneur, for fifty years ; and have received as many wounds. But it was not until I became a sharer in the glories of Austerlitz that I was prevented from carrying arms ! ’

“ ‘ My child, ’ observed the Duchess, ‘ this brave soldier has assisted in achieving for our great nation some of her most memorable triumphs ! and has devoted the vigour of life to the noble profession of arms. You, Henri, must learn to deserve such adherents ; and to recompence, in the name of France, her gallant defenders ! ’

“ ‘ I was recompensed upon the spot, Madame ! ’ replied my grandfather, while, shifting his staff, and placing it beneath his stump, he drew with the left hand from within the folds of his waistcoat, the small white cross so much prized by Napoleon’s

veterans. ‘ This was bestowed by his own hand : it was a reward beyond my deserts ! The Emperor was generous,—and a soldier is not insensible of generosity. But I am also the debtor of a benevolent King, who supplies my wants, and who suffers me to creep about amongst the monuments which shelter my illustrious commanders ! I look back to the time when they furnished me with a glorious example, and forward to the hour of my rejoining them ; and thus, between regret and expectation, my own life glides away.’

“ ‘ Henri,’ remarked the Duchess, ‘ whatever the chances of thine after-life, let not such words be forgotten ! If gratitude be honourable for the lowly, how much lustre must the indulgence of such a sentiment shed upon their protectors !’

“ So saying, she placed a piece of gold in the hands of the Prince, which he instantly transferred to that of my grandfather ; while Mademoiselle, having nothing else to offer, presented him with a bunch of fresh violets.

“ He bowed low, and placed the gift next his

heart. Ah, Monsieur !” artlessly subjoined the fair narratress; “ that little gift, so innocently bestowed, was even more valued than Madame’s gold !”

“ No doubt of it, Matilde. If for no other cause, yet that that same token, in its day, claimed all the interest of mystery. Are any of those emblems, once so prized, to be obtained at present in Paris ?”

“ I know not; but should we possess one, Monsieur shall be most welcome. Do I assume too much in enquiring, if you have not heard the song, whether you would like me to sing it for you now ?”

“ The song !—What song ? A song amongst the tombs of Père la Chaise !”

“ And why not, Monsieur ? No person besides ourselves is near. But perhaps you are already acquainted with it ?”

“ In truth I am not; and should like beyond any thing to hear it sung by the charming Matilde. But suppose we wait till I visit you in the Rue des Postes ?”

“ Alas !” rejoined my young philosopher, “ we are never sure of a day ! However,” she added, with assumed indifference, “ as Monsieur prefers.”

It was obvious that she wished that I should hear how well she sang ; and though, according to our tacit understanding, the performance was to be postponed to a fitter opportunity, she could not resist warbling a few notes of the prohibited air. Changing the object of her enthusiasm from the grave of the royalist Descloseaux, in order, as it seemed, to win a new species of admiration by her vocal taste and pathos, she imparted an additional interest to the exile’s well-known, “ *Pourquoi me pense ?*”

To meet in Paris with a party of *belles-esprits* is a very different matter from conversing *tête-à-tête* with a well-educated French woman. The concentrated volubility, the brilliant repartee, the wit of the many, fatigue even as they overpower. The attraction of the latter seldom fails in its effect, and neither wearies nor flags. Remembering much of what she reads, and all she hears, her discourse is generally

embellished by reflections and sentiments which, if not often original, are sure to be *à propos*. Whether the tone she chooses to adopt be gay or sentimental, time flies swiftly in the society of a companion who, possessing the talent of adaptation, and invariably solicitous to please, makes the graces of conversation so successful a study.

Matilde was the niece of an humble lace-mender. She was also the daughter of an artist ; and, while traversing with her the alleys of Père la Chaise, I entirely forgot, in the refinement of my fair companion's manners, and in my continual surprise at her information, that she walked in the garish eye of day unbonneted ; or that were I, while thus accompanied, to encounter any of my acquaintance, my position must appear at least ridiculous, if not equivocal : but the dear girl's tongue ran on, and I drank in every syllable ; and I verily believe she would have led me from the gates of the cemetery to the Barrière de l'Enfer, if, as we turned abruptly into the next alley, my eyes had not lighted upon a figure of all others the most interesting in their

sight. I had been separated for two years from Mary Trevillion, and had made every effort, but in vain, to banish her from my mind. Now, in one moment, at the extreme point of a long avenue, I recognized her. Her dignified but modest carriage, her graceful, inartificial movements, her costume so elegant, yet so perfectly simple, the serene chastity of her appearance:—oh, I could not be mistaken! To no other country than England could she belong: and that Englishwoman was Mary Trevillion!

“Adieu, Matilde! You have rendered the past hour delightful. I shall not omit to renew our intercourse in the Rue des Postes. Adieu!” And, springing forward, I next instant found myself by the side of Miss Trevillion, hat in hand, enquiring for her brother. As I gazed with renewed admiration upon the soft blue eyes and transparent complexion of my lovely countrywoman, the bloom of her cheek heightened—at least so I flattered myself. She gracefully returned my salutation; and, though her voice was not at the moment particularly

articulate, though so lately fascinated by the unhesitating eloquence of the sparkling Matilde, never before did pure English sound so refreshing in my ears! She told me that she had been only a week in Paris, and that this was her second visit to Père la Chaise.

“On Thursday,” she said, “I came hither with some acquaintance: to-day I wished to be alone.”

I felt rather piqued at this intimation, and enquired if she desired that I should leave her?

“No!” replied Mary; and methought she blushed deeper as she spoke. “The company of one friend can be no interruption to my pursuits. Those who yesterday composed my party are comparatively strangers. They are not cognizant of our family history; nor are they aware of my brother’s unhappy position. HER name, which I cannot mention without a pang, is too sacred—it lies too deep in the fond heart—to be breathed in the hearing of indifferent persons! But from you there can be no withholding of confidence. The remem-

brance of Clotilde is dear to me as ever; and my anxiety to penetrate the mystery involving both her existence and her reputation is as intense as when last we communicated on this unhappy subject. Even in this beautiful cemetery, this unique burial-ground, I should be as dead to all around as the bones they consecrate! I should feel no interest anywhere, except for the hope which attends me in every place—the almost forlorn hope of one day finding some clue by which to ascertain the fate of my unfortunate sister!”

“Then you still maintain the same opinions?” I replied. “Ah! how few, so ungratefully requited, would persevere in the defence of so erring a friend,—if, indeed, she might be called so,—who, once so happy as to possess your affection, could possibly resign or forfeit it!”

“If I could bring myself to imagine her guilty,” said my companion, while tears involuntarily started to her eyes, “my perseverance might abate; but our friendship was formed at that early age when there are no reserves; when every impulse and

feeling of her unsophisticated heart was known to me: and never, never can I believe that Clotilde erred intentionally!"

"You are very generous, Miss Trevillion! But pardon me, if I say that generosity may be carried to a romantic length; and that the recollections thus cherished of Lady Trevillion, which encroach upon your peace, are an implication on your understanding! I, for one, cannot comprehend upon what grounds we assume that person to be innocent, whose actions proclaim the reverse! Has not the party in question forsaken the protection of an exemplary husband?—Has she not thrown herself upon that of a miscreant? Forgive me, Miss Trevillion; but it is painful to see a judgment such as yours so completely blinded by the mists of partiality!"

"We view the subject differently," returned my companion, coldly. "Still, as it may better become me to account for than vindicate my seeming perverseness, I will, if you please, place in your hands a little history of the circumstances con-

nected with my friendship for Clotilde. It has been committed to paper, while recollection served, for the purpose of doing what justice I may to one of the least deceitful, but the most deluded of human beings. Should the narrative not go the length of an acquittal, it will, at all events, give her the benefit of a doubt; and my object, in this case, will be in part answered. Besides, I feel that there is something due to the opinions of friends; so I would gladly exculpate myself from the stigma of obstinacy."

"And is it possible," I exclaimed, in a transport of joy, "that, for the sake of my humble opinion, Miss Trevillion can have taken so much trouble, and imposed upon herself so painful a task! Oh, what would I not endeavour to believe, in return for such goodness!"

Immediately resuming her reserve, my gentle friend replied, with studied coldness, "I am far from desiring Major Melville to credit any thing, *malgré lui*, out of compliment to me. The little history I have referred to is merely a statement of

facts: neither adding to, nor extenuating in any way, the presumed guilt or innocence of either party."

"If," I cried, "the mystery attached to Lady Trevillion can be cleared up,—if you can prove that she did not voluntarily forsake an indulgent husband, and afterwards rob him of his child,—I shall indeed rejoice!"

"Alas!" returned Miss Trevillion, with a bitter sigh, "I can only hope: I dare not affirm! Appearances, I admit, are strongly against my friend; and that last act of taking from us our darling boy—let the motive for the abduction be what it might—was one of unprovoked, and inexplicable cruelty! To receive Clotilde again—to learn that she is innocent—would gratify the dearest wishes of my heart; but to look once more upon the infantine loveliness of my beloved William, to hear his voice, to recognize his joyous laugh—the only laugh that met my ears for two most miserable months—would wipe away all tears!"

And, as she thus delivered herself, tears—which

I detested myself for having caused—ran fast over her melancholy face.

“To speak of him,” she continued, as if in reply to my self-accusation, “is no aggravation of my grief; for I cannot think of him without anguish, and I think of him incessantly. But, *allons!*” she added, with a start. “I have a strange fancy, you must know, for visiting burial-grounds; though it is not very probable that the grave of a wretched outcast should be distinguished by the name of my lost friend.”

We now proceeded: and, as we walked along, I endeavoured to divert her thoughts by drawing her attention to the most remarkable of the monuments, and repeating as much of their history as had interested me in the relation of Matilde.

CHAPTER II.

BENDING over a tomb, near which stood a young family, who, dressed in deep mourning, evidently belonged to the aristocracy of France, I recognized the same venerable priest with whose benediction of my late juvenile companions I had been so affected and pleased. His back was turned towards us; but he arose from his recumbent posture as we approached, and spread out his hands to exercise the same hallowed privilege in this second instance. I pointed him out to Miss Trevillion, and murmured an expression of respect.

“The spectacle is an imposing one,” she observed; “but ’tis nothing more.”

“ Then you conceive that so pious a ceremony is only performed for the sake of exhibition, and to excite the admiration of lookers on ? ”

“ I believe, that it is done to be seen of men,” returned Mary; “ and that it is not without more substantial remuneration than public approval. These young persons are, probably, the near relatives of the deceased, whose soul, though absolved, through the medium or instrumentality of a confessor, from all mortal sin before death, is supposed to suffer in purgatory until relieved by a definite number of masses, paid for according to the pecuniary circumstances of surviving friends. No prayer is here offered up for the sanctifying of their afflictions unto the living ; yonder priest intercedes only for the dead : for those whom we believe to have entered into judgment, but whom he teaches are in an intermediate state of trial or of punishment, which gold, and prayers bought by gold, can mitigate or shorten. Oh, Major Melville ! how dreadful that the minister of any religion should so deceive ! ”

“ I should hope, in charity,” I made answer, after some hesitation, “ that he is himself deceived.”

“ I would be charitable also,” she rejoined, “ if the Book that he closes to his hearers was not open to himself; if I did not know that, while he reads, they only listen—listen to *ex parte* statements, and to garbled extracts; and that every thing tending to encourage free investigation, or to militate against the dark policy of Roman Catholic tyranny, is carefully held back! I have studied that sacred book, deeply, seriously, and, I trust, impartially: I cannot find one line in all its pages which authorises the remotest hope for those who die in their sins; and I therefore consider the holding out of such a hope as the most dreadful and dangerous of all deceptions—the most tremendous of Roman impositions! Worse than preaching the merits of penances, or the mediations of saints; much worse than the blasphemous processions which we meet with in the streets!”

“ Those processions are losing their effect,” I

said : " they fall off every day. A few old women and college-boys alone compose them now."

" Because there is more free-will than formerly. Because many persons begin to think for themselves."

" Yes; but may not free-will lead to infidelity? Does not this thinking for themselves produce schism?"

" In some cases such, I own, are the lamentable results. But changes are never brought about without casual desecration; for when 'Pride walks with her head as high as it can reach, the first step toward reaction is a fall,' and changes are working. Even in this Roman Catholic country there are reformed hearts, and minds awaking to the truth, and yearning to throw off the yoke of bondage."

" Which may be accounted for," I replied, " by the increasing mixture of Protestants in Roman Catholic society, and by intermarriages amongst the two persuasions."

" I would not trust much to the religious influence of any Protestant who can marry a Roman

Catholic," said my companion; "for religion must be a very secondary principle with such. Affliction and experience have rendered me observant. In such marriages I see nothing but laxity of practice, or division of interests; and their effects upon the rising generation are even more lamentable. Here there are no French Protestant churches: I mean, none with a form of worship. There is no ritual—no restraint. An Englishwoman, for instance, unites herself to a foreigner: she has been educated in the episcopal faith; she follows the same system in educating her children. When they become men and women there is no episcopal service for them. They are thrown amongst sects—amongst schisms. They are tossed about with every wind of doctrine; and, probably, their end is unbelief in all."

"Better," I observed, "to abide by a religion which has its restraints; which, to quote from a popular writer, 'though shackled by error, is a safer rest than infidelity, and which, with all its deformities, furnishes many bright examples of

faith and practice.' I am come from the grave of Descloseaux: I am reading the *Génie du Christianisme*."

"And I," returned Mary, "am not blind to the merits of those whom you admire. Chateaubriand, so refined, so amiable, with a heart so warm, and a courage so undaunted, deserves the love and admiration of every human being. But I cannot let admiration run away with judgment, or place a religion of sentiment in comparison with a religion of vitality—a religion of truth! I go further:—I tremble for such a religion!"

"For Chateaubriand!" I exclaimed. "For him whose every word and work breathe throughout a spirit of devotion, of trust, of faith unfeigned, unwavering; for him who (to follow from the writer you have just cited) 'acknowledges, with humble Christian gratitude, the great benefits of the atonement, — whose doctrine is, love to God, charity to man, and the subjugation of the human passions; who speaks of the sacrifice of Easter as perpetuating the recollection of our prime-

val fall, of our redemption, and acceptance with God?"

"Even so. But does he not say, in reference to the holy communion, by which that atonement is perpetuated, that 'the guilty dare not approach it;' that 'human beings must be rendered pure to partake of it;' that 'the innocence earned by repentance, penance, oracular confession, and consequent of absolution, must accompany the penitent to the altar?' He expressly uses the term 'innocence.'"

"And do you believe that a man so enlightened, so highly intellectual, as Chateaubriand, can, in reality, cast his burden elsewhere than upon the cross which he exalts, and rely on an intercessor less perfect than the Redeemer whom he adores?"

"God forbid," replied Mary, "that I should presume to read the hearts of my fellow-sinners, or to set any bounds to the illimitable mercies of the Most Merciful! We can only hope that any religion capable of producing the bright examples you quote—the sublime, disinterested Chateaubriand,

the faithful Descloseaux—may in such hearts be purified, simplified, divested of its saints and sacrifices, its tinkling bells and empty symbols, its purgatories and confessionals. It were almost impossible to imagine men like those we have instanced giving full credence to the efficacy of holy water, supposititious reliques, miracles, and the intercessions of a fellow-sinner, to save their souls. Oh, no ! the lights which burn in such hearts cannot thus emanate from darkness !”

“ It would be dreadful to think that they did !” I said ; “ dreadful to conclude that the great majority whose tombs adorn this crowded cemetery should die in error : that for them there should be no security !”

“ We should lay hold on the worst and most unchristian error of Romanism, did we not believe that there is mercy in Heaven for every repentant sinner,” returned Miss Trevillion ; “ even while we tremble for the fate of those who rest upon any other name—rely upon any other intercessor than Him by whom, the Gospel assures us, ‘ we can

alone be saved.' It is not for the ignorant, the blinded, the deceived, I tremble ; but for those who deceive, who countenance and encourage ignorance, and who, by so doing, preserve intact their own authority—for those shepherds who have power to guide, and wilfully lead astray !”

Such was, in part, the conversation held on the occasion I have commemorated, amidst the calm repose of Père la Chaise ; when, surrounded by shrubs and flowers, inhaling air pure as the first breathings of spring, we looked upon death, not as a repulsive, but an impressive companion ; when encouraging thoughts, invigorating though sad, familiarized the idea of that awful hour which is too frequently driven, “ like a loathsome weed,” from the mind of man ; and we remembered that, to meet the close of our mortal pilgrimage without despair, we must accustom ourselves to think of it without shrinking.

Nor could I, while thus engaged, forbear yielding many a preconceived opinion to the truths which flowed from the lips of my fair countrywoman.

Hers was indeed a holy and a chastening influence, the renewal of which, at such a period, and after two years' separation, came like the interposition of a guardian spirit.

We had already prolonged our walk most unconscionably, and were thinking of bringing our interesting tête-à-tête to a close, when the venerable priest, whom I introduced to the reader a few pages back, again appeared in sight. He was creeping leisurely along, with all the heaviness of a man fatigued, and leant on the arm of another ecclesiastic. This other, although more erect, and consequently presenting a more youthful appearance than his reverend brother, also looked either weary, or as if suffering from ill health. He was much muffled up, and held a handkerchief to his face, probably to ward off the visitations of the breeze.

We happened at the moment to be near an intersecting alley, which winded beautifully beneath the shades, and, as the conversation of those approaching seemed of an interesting nature, we withdrew a few steps, in order to let them pass without interruption.

Just as they came up, Miss Trevillion pressed my arm with a convulsive grasp, emphatically exclaiming—"It is he ! it is Austin !" and instantly bounding forward, she almost threw herself upon the shoulder of the younger priest. I followed—I came to her support. The party attacked shrunk away, apparently anxious to evade detention. In a voice of agonized entreaty I heard her inquire for Clotilde, implore the priest to relieve her unsupportable suspense, by restoring her friend—her lost, unhappy sister.

Never before had I seen the placid face of Mary Trevillion with an expression of such wild impatience ; never before had I heard her gentle voice assume an accent so impetuous and passionate. But he, the ecclesiastic, so abruptly and—I may say—rudely accosted ? Cool, calm, collected,—he affected not to recognise the agitated pleader.

"You know me, Mr. Austin," she continued, after a momentary pause in order to fetch breath, "you cannot have forgotten me :—I am Mary Trevillion, the sister of Clotilde—of Lady Trevillion. Tell

me, where she is concealed, or conceals herself, or give me but the slightest clue, by which we may trace and find her, and you may reckon upon my everlasting gratitude."

The olive complexion of the priest waxed a few shades more dingy, and his eye dropped beneath her searching glance. From his manner, I could easily see that he would have persevered in his assumed ignorance, if a party of young men had not advanced in our direction. On perceiving that we were likely to be overheard, he changed his whole behaviour, took the trembling hand of Mary in his, and repeating her name in a tone of deep feeling, apologized for not having recollected her at once.

"But, indeed you are altered! much altered," he added; "affliction, my young friend, has left its sad traces on your features. Would to heaven, I could answer your questions! Alas! it is out of my power. Nor think, dear Miss Trevillion, that because I obtained no tidings of the fugitive, that nothing has been attempted—that I have been

idle in your cause, or indifferent, or uninterested in your melancholy search. This, however, is no place for explanation; you seem very much exhausted—and to say truth, I am, myself, far from calm. We shall presently attract observation, which it were more prudent to avoid. Tell me then where I can wait upon you, and though, as I said, I have nothing satisfactory to communicate, though I am as ignorant on one unhappy subject as yourself, I feel it due to my own character, that you should be certified of my integrity. Where, and at what hour, may I be permitted to see you?”

“I cannot lose sight of you so soon. I dare not let you leave me,” cried the excited girl. “Let us seek a more retired path. Major Melville is my relative, my friend—I wish him to be present at our conference.”

“I can only repeat,” replied the priest, “that I have nothing to tell you, that I am not aware of Lady Trevillion’s movements. Grieved to the heart, full of pity for her misfortunes, I assure you I have prosecuted my inquiries with unflagging

zeal. I have used my ecclesiastical influence, and my opportunities, so far as I lawfully might, to penetrate the mystery in which her destiny is involved, but all without success. I am, in my own mind, convinced, she has all along acted a voluntary part, incited probably by scruples of the most conscientious nature.

“You know me, Miss Trevillion, and therefore will do me the justice to acknowledge that I never was ascetic—never rigid over-much. Indeed, I may say, that I am the last person in the world to urge undue severity. In common justice I beg of you **not** to attribute your bereavement to any exactions of mine.”

“I do not know you,” rejoined Mary with emphatic earnestness; “at one time certainly I imagined that I did; but my presumption has been punished. I fear I never knew you,—but I am well read in the bosom of Clotilde; and am consequently aware, whatever her reserves with her husband and her sister, that her confessor was as familiar as Heaven with her soul. She dared not

have taken a single step without your intervention and advice, or in contradiction to your mandates. She believed that you had the power to render her happy or wretched—to relieve her conscience of every weight—or to load it even to madness.

“ You could have undeceived her as to the incendiary O’Donahoe; and I accuse you, if not of abetting her flight—at least, of bringing on the crisis; by your spiritual or rather bigoted influence, and by encouraging fears, from which my poor sister had not the courage to emancipate herself. I moreover accuse you, Mr. Austin, of leaguings with interested and cruel persons, to malign Sir Charles Trevillion, and thereby induce her to forsake his lawful and marital protection. I believe too, that you could forthwith restore her to her husband’s tender care, if such a course accorded with your interests.”

“ Miss Trevillion,” replied her reverend interlocutor, assuming a look of the most dignified resignation, “ it does not surprise me, the member of an adverse creed, to be cruelly and

unjustly maligned. But it pains me—it doubly distresses me—that the aspersion on my character should come from a lady, who, albeit of a different persuasion, was wont in happier times to honour me with her confidence, and not seldom to agree with me on some points of doctrine; a lady to whom I ascribed that excellent gift of charity, the very bond of peace, and of all righteousness. Alas! that sorrow and disappointment should so warp a nature once so gentle and benevolent. What can be that religion, Miss Trevillion, which inclines you to harsh and unchristian suspicions?

“But ’tis not in the competence of human beings to judge each other. Pardon me, my dear young lady, and accept my prayers for your conversion. If our heavenly Father hath pleased to chastise, I humbly intercede that the rod may be changed into the balm, and that your softened feelings may speedily induce a less uncharitable spirit. I supplicate on your behalf.”

“O cease, Mr. Austin,” cried Mary. “I require no intercessions on your part. Spare me,

at least, your compassion. I know that the hapless victim of a specious but tyrannic yoke implored your compassion ; and that it was denied her. She begged with the most humble supplications for permission to be sincere with the best and most upright of men—the tenderest of husbands; and you hardened your heart to her entreaties. Through your cruel obduracy her character is blighted, Sir Charles Trevillion’s feelings wounded—the happiness of all the family destroyed. I demand as the least reparation you can make us, that you will even yet allow her to explain and exonerate herself from the suspicions which bear hardly on her fair fame. Acquaint us with the motives which induced her to forsake her home and nearest kindred. You cannot be ignorant where O’Donahoe has hid himself; or why Doughty in disguise accompanied us to France. If there be no guilt attached to these mysteries, wherefore Sir, should they not be explained ?”—

“ All that I can glean from your incoherence, is a mystery to me,” returned the priest. “ Miss

Trevillion gives, while she pretends to seek information."

"Oh, no! it cannot be any mystery; I wrote to you at the time—so did my brother,—you replied to our communication."

Austin looked rather embarrassed; but while he hesitated for a moment what to say in reply, his reverend compatriot relieved him.

"My daughter," he interposed, "you trespass too much on the forbearance of our friend; who, however, inclined to be indulgent, has no right, as a servant of our immaculate Church to suffer insult from heretic lips. I, as his superior, forbid him to answer accusations so irreverend,—or to prolong a discourse in my presence, which it might be my duty to notice elsewhere. In pity to thy affliction, which seems to be sincere, I forgive thy unhallowed importunity. Go, child—go in peace,—we condemn not those who err in ignorance, and willingly cast a veil over thy fault."

But Mary was not to be persuaded, or frightened, from her purpose, by the plausibility of

Austin, or his venerable friend ; and she still ventured to brave the anathemas of mother Church.

“ I cannot,” she said, “ forego an opportunity which Providence has, perhaps, thrown in my way. I cannot let Mr. Austin leave me, without appealing to his justice for a vindication of a once spotless character. No insult can attach to my inquiries, if he is able to convince me of his innocence ; if he can sincerely, and without evasion, assist in the restoration of my sister.”

Father Austin pondered for a few seconds, ere he made answer. “ Should Lady Trevillion have voluntarily devoted herself to religious seclusion,” he said, “ the power of my superiors could not compel her to return to a world she has renounced.”

“ We have no desire to coerce her will in any way ; but we are anxious beyond measure to ascertain that she is safe, to be sure that she is well—that she willingly consigns herself to seclusion. We would have the cause of her mysterious elopement explained. We could almost forgive the loss

of our domestic peace—the abduction of our cherub William—were we enabled to repair her once unspotted reputation.”

I was astonished at the courage and perseverance exhibited by my companion. I had never seen her but as the most gentle and yielding of her sex; and I rightly conjectured that only a sense of the deepest injury practised against those she most loved could have roused so new a spirit: but, at the same time, I saw that it was not a spirit to sustain her much longer; for the failing voice, the tears which trembled on her eyelids, betrayed that she was on the point of giving way. Interfering for the first time, I proposed calling on Mr. Austin myself, and hearing all he had to say upon so distressing a subject.

Without any hesitation, he acceded to this proposition. Immediately taking out his tablets, he wrote down his address, and appointed one o'clock the following day for my visit; then, bowing low to my trembling companion, he turned with his superior into the adjacent walk, which led direct to the gates.

Mary hung in silence on my arm, and watched attentively their parting steps. Her mind misgave her as to the appointment we had just made.

“He will evade you,” she murmured, “if we lose sight of him now; it is very unlikely we shall ever see him again!”

“Miss Trevillion,” I replied, “I will place you in your carriage, and then follow him at a distance, if you wish?”

“Oh, do not delay! I can find my own way to the carriage. Mark well whither he goes; for falsehood is in his steps! He would lead you astray.”

“But I have his address.”

“Ah! can we be sure of its truth?” she made answer; then, after a pause, she added, “You think me suspicious—perhaps unjust. But you will read the little history I have prepared. Until you do so, you will have no data to form a true conclusion.”

I kissed her hand, in token of my faith and my obedience, and then following in the track of the

two ecclesiastics, I kept them, though at a distance, in sight.

Through devious ways I progressed in my honourable avocation of a spy. Those whom I tracked soon parted company; the more aged of the two turning into a narrow street, while the other, known to me as Mr. Austin, gathering up his skirts, proceeded at a quick and not very dignified pace. I, of course, was necessitated to accelerate mine; and so rapidly did he move, and so short were his turnings, that it was only by running the hazard of detection that I was enabled, with difficulty, to keep him in view. It almost seemed to me that he walked for a wager; or as if, conscious that I pursued him at the top of my speed, he was determined to tire me out. Sometimes he escaped me for a moment, when again the skirts of his dress, as he whisked through some short passage, served, like an ignis fatuus, to tempt me onward. Having led me breathless for more than two hours, he contrived, at length, to vanish alto-

gether, disappearing, like a phantom, through no visible aperture.

In vain did I hurry after the wearer of every clerical cloak, to ascertain if the figure enveloped in its folds bore any resemblance to this same mysterious priest, until the closing-in of daylight put an end to my watchings; and sent me back to my hotel, with no better resource than to bear my disappointment with what patience I might. I experienced the double mortification of having failed to serve Mary Trevillion, and the necessity of confessing my discomfiture to her.

When I called on Sir Charles Trevillion in the evening, his welcome was marked by the gentlemanly urbanity natural to him; but he manifested little pleasure at my visit. We had never known much of each other. I had had no opportunity in happier days of cultivating his friendship; and the reminiscences of this heart-stricken man were not of an agreeable description. He might apprehend a renewal of my influence with his sister, and it

was natural that a being so cruelly bereaved should dread to lose the last remaining object upon whom his heart reposed.

Mary was more silent and apparently abstracted than in the morning. Perhaps she penetrated her brother's feelings; if so, the reserve—however dispiriting to myself—was kind to him, and I forgave it. She was also visibly nervous; but made no allusion to our adventure at Père la Chaise in presence of Sir Charles: neither did I. Before I took my departure, however, he happened to leave us a few minutes alone, when she eagerly inquired if I had found out the residence of Mr. Austin?

“We must trust,” said I, after communicating my failure, “to his keeping our appointment.”

“I am certain that he will not fulfil his engagement!” she cried. “He gave his address, doubtless a false one, in order to rid himself of my importunity; but we have lost sight of him for ever!”

“No, not for ever,” I replied. “That old ecclesiastic who bore him company is known to

some young acquaintances of mine. I heard them mention his name : we have, therefore, still a clue to Mr. Austin. If he disappoints me to-morrow, I do not despair of finding him out."

This hope, however slight, appeared to reassure Miss Trevillion ; thanking me, with a smile inexpressibly sweet, she committed to my care the promised packet, with which I shortly afterwards flew, rather than walked, to my hotel.

Jostled, pushed about, and at the risk of being knocked down every second, perfectly unconscious of everybody and of all that I encountered, I threaded the narrow streets of Paris, meditating—not on the lights that illuminated my path, but upon one bright particular star that for two revolving years had ruled the ascendant in my horoscope of good or evil fortune ; which to forget was annihilation, to remember presumption, but to meet with again the concentration of every hope and every fear that had cheered or embittered existence for that clouded period.

Conceive a miser grasping at the treasure which

he had long despaired of possessing—a traveller fainting from thirst amid the burning sands of Syria, and stretching forth his hand to snatch a draught from some life-reviving spring; conceive yourself, my gentle reader, receiving the long-desired boon which in this world you most covet, and you will still fall short of estimating the delirium of reverie and sensation wherein my soul was wrapped while I quietly inducted myself in my apartment in the Rue St. Honoré. I locked my door, and threw myself into a chair, with the heart of Mary Trevillion, as it were, in my hand.

A history, she had said, of her feelings for the unhappy Clotilde. It was long, very long, since I had permission to take part in and sympathize with those feelings. We had once been all in all to each other. I was on the point of calling her my own, when a severe domestic calamity recalled her from a visit she was making in Scotland to her brother's residence in Cornwall, and ultimately tore us asunder. Since that abrupt separation we had not met. Time rendered my

disappointment less acute ; but her secret influence, which never ceased, required only the slightest impulse of her presence to become strong as in the moment that I won the treasure of her young, her guileless, and, I believe, her first affections.

CHAPTER III.

[FROM MARY TREVILLION TO MAJOR MELVILLE,
began at Tours, Feb. 1829.]

EXCEPT the unlooked-for misfortune which caused our separation, there is nothing belonging to that unhappy period remembered with more pain than the obligation which deterred me from giving you a full and candid explanation of my conduct.

Two years have nearly elapsed since necessity compelled the relinquishment of our engagement. The necessity is binding as ever, but I hope that time may have softened the resentment which you naturally felt on an occasion so trying to us both. I cannot but believe that a communication which

delicacy to my brother and his unfortunate wife so long withheld, will be received in the same friendly spirit that I make it. Charles speaks of leaving Europe for some years, and I wish to place in your hands a faithful statement of scenes and circumstances by which the child of two unhappy parents—should William exist—may be one day able to form some judgment of that verdict which condemns the one, and of those mysterious appearances which (if unexplained) might attach to the other an imputation of severity.

You will, I am sure, pardon a recurrence to my school-room days, as with that period is associated the rise and progress of my friendship for Clotilde de Montmorency and all its unhappy consequences; but I promise to be brief, and shall merely say, that left an orphan when only ten years old, under the guardianship of two brothers several years my seniors, I was placed at a seminary in London. Cut off from every kindred tie at that sensitive period of life, when the young affections seek and require return, thrown upon the caprici-

ous kindness of strangers—sometimes caressed, as often repulsed; my thoughts ever turned towards the home of my infancy, and hovered over the graves of my parents.

Until Clotilde made one of Mrs. Murray's establishment, I was the only orphan. As none understood my feelings, how could any one sympathise in my distress? But, when that charming foreigner became my friend, I was no longer isolated—no longer thrown upon self. The inanity of my life was over. I had acquired a sister. She remembered her departed parents as I remembered mine. The blank caused by their loss was not yet filled up. Her heart, like my own, still sought a more visible resting-place than the Heaven, where in idea we contemplated our dearest relatives—something less solemn and less solitary than their tombs. We found in each other this resting-place. She supplied to me, and I to her, the best and only substitute for all that we had lost—a love as perfectly disinterested, as it was for a while exclusive.

Gifted with beauty, feeling, and genius, with

a heart full of the most generous sentiments—capable of attaining excellence in all she undertook, and energetic in her undertakings, no wonder if she were an object of emulation amongst a little circle of competitors; or of admiration and love to such a one as myself, who might be said, like the solitary chrysalis, to exist, but to have no consciousness of existence until warmed into feeling by the sunshine of her presence.

The father of my friend, an Irishman and a soldier, had fought against Napoleon, and was taken prisoner; but his hours of incarceration were not without their solace. A Frenchman of good family, equally obnoxious to the Emperor, shared in his captivity; and was visited by an only daughter. De Montmorency married her. Clotilde, born in a prison, breathed, during the first four years of infancy, no freer air. Death, in that short period, deprived her both of father and grandfather, when Madame de Montmorency removed to a convent in Paris, and devoted her brief and exemplary life to the education of her only child. At

thirteen the latter became an orphan ; but the amiable superior of the convent performed toward her a mother's duty, until General de Montmency, an uncle of her late father, who had just returned from India to Europe, sought out and discovered his interesting niece. Having withdrawn her from conventual seclusion, he soon after brought her with him to England, and placed her under the care of Mrs. Murray.

Never can I forget the first impression made upon us all by this lovely girl. Not that she was critically beautiful. You would scarcely have chosen her features as the model of a cast. It was their expression that was so very attractive ; and whether grave or gay—serious, or full of vivacity, the fascination never ceased.

Perfectly conversant with the literature of France, mistress of the Italian and German languages, her ambition was to become an English scholar, and her progress was in proportion to the energies of a mind which aimed at attaining excellence. She and I became every day more in-

separable. Our tête-à-têtes were occupied in the study of my native tongue ; and thus engaged, the joyous time flew swift as happily, uninterrupted by a single care, except that in its progress she had one or two illnesses. Being allowed the privilege of nursing my friend when my hours of study were over, I uniformly spent my leisure hours in her chamber.

These little attentions were received by the dear object of them with the liveliest gratitude, which she expressed with all the ardour of her natal land. From that period I date the rapid growth of an attachment, which upon my part can cease only with life.

It was when I had attained my eighteenth birth-day that accounts reached London, announcing my eldest brother's death at Florence ; and, in three months afterwards, General de Montmorency having been appointed to a government in one of our British islands, he invited his niece to accompany him thither—extending the invitation by her desire to myself. To leave school, visit other

countries, owe a delightful home to the affection of my dearest friend, consoled me for the loss of my brother; and not doubting but that Mrs. Murray would participate in my joy, I flew to her, to communicate my tidings. A few minutes convinced me how much I had miscalculated. Kindly, but steadily, she refused her consent, giving me at the same time such unanswerable reasons as set argument at rest. My brother Charles, now the representative of my family, being in Bengal, Mrs. Murray felt herself, until his return, solely responsible for my safety.

Since there was no help for it, no option but to obey, all remonstrance upon my part was of course out of the question. Clotilde, however, had a choice and a will of her own, and she resolved on remaining with me. In vain I sought to change her generous purpose—in vain urged the advantages she relinquished, the pleasures she must forego, or the danger of offending so affectionate an uncle: she was steady. Giving up, for my sake, all that her heart had long anticipated and fixed

itself upon, she preferred submitting, for an indefinite time, to school-room restraints, rather than separate from her friend.

I am thus particular, in order to prove the disinterestedness of a heart which would have sacrificed every thing but religion on the shrine of affection and gratitude. Yes, Clotilde was the most perfectly unselfish of human beings. The cheerfulness of her sacrifice, the alacrity with which she resumed her studies, the uncomplaining readiness with which she submitted to rule, at a time when pleasure and liberty were within her reach, can never be obliterated from my mind, especially as by declining her uncle's invitation, she relinquished her only apparent prospect of release.

I, on the contrary, had to look forward to a brother's return from India, and, before the end of that year, Charles wrote from Falmouth, to announce his arrival. But the pleasure of our anticipated meeting was not without its fears; for the impression on my mind when, eight years be-

fore, he placed me at school, was that of his being severe. William, on the contrary—a man of the world—easy, careless, and good-natured, I could have met with unmixed gratification; not that he would have incurred the responsibilities of Charles, carried me to London, or interested himself, like the latter, in my education; but, when he did visit me at school, I always felt indebted to his indulgence, and found myself treated as an equal; while Charles, though he would have forfeited his commission and his passage to India, rather than quit Europe, without seeing me under the most eligible protection, never seemed to forget the difference of our ages, nor speak to me without an air of superiority. His conversation was made up of advice. Even his subsequent correspondence had invariably the same chilling tendency. It held me at a distance and in tutelage; yet his feelings were strong; his heart was kind, and capable of being filled with the most devoted love. But he was too much of a disciplinarian to encourage confidence in those younger than himself, and cherished

the mistaken notion, that to be reckoned wise, he must not be too familiar—that to be respected, he must be mindful not to betray the affections of his heart, the softness of his nature. In writing from Falmouth, he expressed no anxiety for our meeting, but spoke of paying his duty to the Horse-Guards, as a matter of necessity, that would, ere it was long, bring him to town. He trusted, he said, in conclusion, to find me improved in every requisite and particular.

Oh, how much of apprehensiveness did that significant common place excite! I lay awake at nights until my failing heart had drunk all trace of colour from my cheeks, endeavouring to form some idea of how far his expectations might reach. I retouched my drawings until they were spoilt; and practised my singing lessons until perfectly hoarse. While every knock at the street-door set the foolish inmate of my breast into a fit of aguish throbbing.

Clotilde shared my thoughts, though she partook not of my apprehensions. She cherished, by inheritance, an admiration of military characters,

and associated the brother of her friend with every thing noble, generous, and kind.

At length, the wished-for, fearful hour came. Sir Charles arrived in London, sent a few lines to notify his intention of calling next morning, and at the appointed time I received him alone. But all my anxieties were put to flight in a moment, when clasping me in his arms, he wiped the tears from my eyes, and turned towards the window to conceal his own. Yet, why conceal? Why be ashamed of a tenderness that did him honour? Dear Charles, had you given way to nature—had you let yourself be known for what you really were, there might not have existed a happier or a more deserving man. But I must not anticipate. Suffice to say, that my pleasure upon that occasion far surpassed my hopes, and that, although my brother thought it right, as a guardian, to put some questions concerning my improvement, they were preferred, without any of the austerity I apprehended. In short, he seemed half-willing to recollect that I was no longer a child; and could he have divested

himself of a certain air of superiority, I should have forgotten that he was so much my senior, or that a long time ago I had thought him severe. As soon as he was gone I flew to Clotilde, and shed those tears upon her bosom which now fell in torrents without restraint; for, though tears of joy, they did not flow quite so freely in the presence of my brother. She participated in my happiness, and wept and smiled by turns, while believing, that a brother who called forth so much emotion, must be the most deserving of men.

My young companions were all anxious to get a peep at the military stranger; but Clotilde alone contrived to gratify her wishes; and his noble air, tall, and finely formed figure, did not disappoint her. I insisted that he looked weather-beaten and sun-burnt, but she would not allow me to be a judge.

Charles visited me occasionally, but it never occurred to him, as it used to William, that I should like some indulgence, or wish even for the simple recreation of a walk. At length, Mrs. Richard-

son, the wife of an East India Director, called at Mrs. Murray's, and invited me to meet him at dinner. It was my first introduction to this lady; she was good-tempered and obliging; but the party being large, she could not attend exclusively to one; and as most of the company had spent much time in India, the conversation was local, and upon subjects with which, having no previous acquaintance, I took little interest.

Restrained, silent, and out of place, I certainly did not shine; and Charles, who added to my awkwardness, by his anxious observation, was obviously disappointed. On our way home he threw out some hints upon the necessity of cultivating the mind, and enlarged with no little causticity upon the general deficiency of female conversation. He questioned me as to how many hours of the day I devoted to music, and spoke of misspent time. He forgot how little I mixed in society, and how difficult it is to maintain, even small talk, unless familiar with the topics of the day.

Upon such topics (were it my fault, or felicity,

it is hard to say) I was a perfect tyro. I esteemed myself well read, and so I was, if poor Mrs. Murray's catalogue of authors was a criterion. But, alas! had the alphabet never been taught me, I could not have felt more ignorant of *letters* than when listening to the literary discussions of my new acquaintance and her *coterie*. It seemed as if this luckless dinner threw me back ten years—not only in my own self-estimation, but, what was worse, in the opinion of my brother.

One day, Mrs. Richardson proposed a visit to the British Gallery. Encouraged by her ease of manner, and feeling mortified that as yet the arrival of my brother had contributed nothing to the pleasures of my friend, I requested that Clotilde might accompany us. The request was promptly complied with; and full of expectation, she prepared for the party. No one could look more lovely; her eyes sparkled with animation; her whole countenance was radiant with delight. I longed for the moment of her introduction to Charles, who joined us at Somerset-house, and, guarded as were

his general manners, I could not but see that he was struck.

Expecting to meet an insignificant school-girl like myself, he beheld in Clotilde the most attractive and intelligent of women; one who expressed herself with perfect ease, yet with the most winning modesty, and who commanded attention without even seeming to seek it. I observed that he lost not a word; and when she ceased to speak, he renewed the subject, in order to hear her again. They conversed principally in French, for her English was rather defective; nor was Charles her only auditor. Crowds followed in the train of the fascinating foreigner. When she stopped before a picture, they stopped also; when she moved, they moved after her. Neither abashed nor elated by such marked attention, a love of painting engrossed her wholly; and the wish to please—to be amiable, arising from the sweetness of her nature, were feelings totally distinct from any inclination to be admired.

A perfect historian—an exact chronicler—an

enthusiastic lover of the fine arts—she had seen and made acquaintance with the rich treasures of the Louvre, when the Louvre was a receptacle for collected spoils. And to Charles, whose knowledge of artists and their works was chiefly derived from reading, hers seemed no less marvellous than unerring.

Mrs. Richardson detained us for dinner, and Clotilde made the attraction of the day. Charles, despite himself, threw off his reserve, and was the most animated of the party. My friend thought him, as she said to me, on our return home, *charmant spirituel*;—and he felt that in her was realized his *beau idéal* of female perfection. Even I acquired some importance in his eyes from possessing such a friend; and was requested to take her for my model—to imitate her manners. But I knew that neither man, nor woman, ever improved themselves by imitation: moreover such manners were not to be imitated, and I avoided to make myself ridiculous.

Mrs. Richardson, but lately an inhabitant of

London, had not as yet secured a very general acquaintance. She was, however, the proprietress of a fine house—the mistress of a variety of equipages, with the disposition to share her possessions. Clotilde and myself soon became favourites, and often encroached upon the indulgence of Mrs. Murray; but Charles was ever at hand to intercede in our behalf—and to solicit her patience. The summer vacation drew on. Mrs. Richardson established herself at Brighton, and we received an invitation to her house. My brother volunteered his services as an escort, and her hospitality was accepted with delight.

Six weeks of pleasurable idleness soon passed away; during which time, I should scarcely have recognized Charles, who, transformed from a grave and rather strict disciplinarian into a gay and gallant cavalier, promoted our enjoyments, and became young again in the service of youth.

Instead of scrutinizing with a critic's eye, or measuring with too much exactness, the merits or demerits of his fellow-creatures, every object

and every scene were endued with the spirit of universal love, and with the power of dispensing happiness. Amusements of the simplest nature sufficed for his enjoyment. He no longer thought it dignified to restrain his sensibilities, or to be less cheerful than his companions: in short he was incited by a wish to please; he had the gratification of another to consult.

Superior in understanding to most men, richer in his intellectual endowments, all that he required to render him beloved was, that those excellent qualities might appear; that the ice in which they were encrusted and preserved might be suffered to thaw, and a genial warmth to expand them.

It was the bright sunshine of Clotilde's presence which effected this change. It was owing to her benign influence that his prejudices gave way, and that the fine qualities of his mind became all at once apparent.

It may be supposed that the cause, no less than the effect, was a subject of rejoicing with me; but

such was not the case. Either with a presentiment of future events, inherited from my highland mother, or with an insight into character far beyond my years, I felt that Charles and Clotilde were not formed to constitute the happiness of each other. And yet their tastes, their sentiments, their predilections on every subject were the same;—except that sacred subject upon which husband and wife should have the one heart and the one belief.

Carried away by passion, Charles paused not to think upon this vital point; and without taking it into consideration, he won her affections, and engaged her for his own.

I knew that it was impossible to feel a deeper veneration for the purest of all creeds, and its most enlightened expositors, than did this amiable and grateful French girl for the specious religion which she professed, or for those, who, while instructing, blinded her to its faults. None of its formalities would be given up—none of its impo-

sitions resisted; upon the most interesting of all topics she must have her reserves. And would not Charles have his jealousies? He, who could not endure the slightest species of disguise—who, with the affections, and the hand, would claim the whole heart of his wife—how was he to endure being supplanted by her confessor? The sabbath, that blessed day of family repose and family reunion, would it not separate them in person, as in mind? Alas! I had felt this already. For six days in the week Clotilde and myself had (so to speak) but the one heart between us—upon the sabbath we were disunited. She was present, in conformity with Mrs. Murray's rules, at school-room prayers on week days, and read, and got off book, some portion of the Scriptures. But on the Sundays she went in charge of a Roman Catholic lady—her only acquaintance in London—to attend mass in her own place of worship; and while we Protestants listened to the biblical expositions of our governess, she retired and studied her own

ritual. On such occasions I felt that we were alienated—that I was excluded from sharing in the most sacred of her contemplations.

Mrs. Murray had, at first, objected to receive this fascinating Roman Catholic. But General de Montmorency's distress at her refusal, and his anxiety to place Clotilde under the care of a person of whom he had some previous knowledge, overruled her. She, however, stipulated that his niece should attend morning and evening prayer, and never converse on the subject of religion except with herself.

In part these conditions were complied with—Clotilde did attend prayers; but having received instruction from her priest, she abstracted her attention, and heard nothing. Also, in obedience to the same orders, she forfeited her promise, and made some attempts for my conversion. But, guarded against all sophistries in religion by the sound instruction of my conscientious governess, and puzzled by the incomprehensible doctrines that were broached by my friend, almost afraid to

trust myself with eloquence, which though false was dazzling, I could only answer by a few simple truths, and request that she might respect the conditions upon which our intercourse was permitted. She did so, for when not influenced against the dictates of her own pure conscience, no one could be more honourable, more conscientious; and from that hour we purposely avoided all reference to sacred subjects.

Poor Clotilde! although strictly religious, her religion was made up of feeling. She had been instructed in love; and the veneration with which she spoke of her *prêtre*, of her sainted mother, of the superior of her convent, amounted almost to idolatry; gratitude to her teachers attached a heart so affectionate to the creeds that they taught; and until she could forget these early friends, which with her was impossible, their lessons were indelible. O, why is not sacred instruction always conveyed in such a spirit? Why are not such precious lessons impressed upon the plastic mind of youth with such an undying influence?

Charles, on the contrary, was entirely devoid of enthusiasm, and rested his belief on truth alone. He had been taught, he had examined, and was convinced, both from education and reason, that his was the religion of that church of which our Redeemer was the founder, and his disciples the builders.

Firmly a Protestant, his practice was upright as his creed was pure; and fully trusting to the efficacy of adhering to that creed—satisfied that it was from the beginning, and must endure unto the end—that none other could prevail,—he sought not to elevate, by a comparison with one less primitive, the original standard under which he was enlisted himself. He, therefore, knew too little of Romanism to be upon his guard against its wiles, against the gloss of its deceptions, or the snares that might be set in his path.

While making use of terms apparently harsh, I am far from alluding to Clotilde. I speak only of the religion itself—of the fallacies by which it is

supported; not of the devout and pious believers, who are its victims and its slaves.

Charles had listened to the most exquisite moral reflections from the most beautiful lips. He had walked with Clotilde upon the moon-lit cliffs of Brighton, when not a breath of air ruffled the broad expanse of waters, nor a cloud obscured the starry sky. He had seen her place one fair hand upon her bosom, while with the other raised to heaven, she described each movement of the celestial bodies, leading, as she spoke, the thoughts of all who heard her from the earth on which they trod, to the glories to which she pointed; expatiating on the happiness of those, who, devoting their short lives in this vain world to the studies which fit them for another, enjoy even here,—“*seul avec Dieu*,”—the blessedness of spiritual communion.

Could he apprehend, while thus excited by love and admiration, that a heart from which emanated sentiments so sublime, was a heart of which he read not the whole?

CHAPTER IV.

BETWEEN Clotilde and myself there were not many reserves; and knowing that I always spoke to her with perfect sincerity, she urged me to describe my feelings upon the subject of her approaching marriage.

I did so without disguise; but she smiled at my fears, embraced me affectionately, and asked me if I believed that she could love me one degree better if I were a Catholic? Then, after instancing the happy union of her parents under circumstances similar with her own, she added, "that Charles and herself had talked over the interesting subject of religion, and entered into a mutual agree-

ment, that each should be to the other conscience free—that it never should interfere with their domestic peace.”

“ Meaning peace in this life, dearest Clotilde. But how can either of you answer even for this life? And, honourable as are your intentions, strictly as you may abide by them, still the happiness to which they refer is for this life only. Let us for a moment look to its termination—to its bitter partings—to the only solace of the Christian heart in those never-to-be-averted trials. Does not your faith teach, that there is no hope of salvation for any but the professors of that faith?”

“ Marie, my father was a Protestant, my mother a Roman Catholic; and though she sorrowed for him with the affection of a devoted wife, yet she sorrowed not as one without hope. We know not the blessed moment that a true faith may enter the soul. We are assured, that he who came to seek and to save that which was lost, rejoiceth not in the death of a sinner.”

“ Then despite those mutual promises of non-

interference, your hope of eternal happiness for Charles, of a reunion after death, rests upon the chance of his conversion, even on a death-bed; upon his becoming, at the latest hour, an apostate to his faith. If such are your views, how is it possible that you can adhere to the light promises already passed? How, indeed, can you feel justified—believing that the Romish creed is alone equal to salvation—in leaving to the possibility of a chance *that*, which by your endeavours might be secured? Or how is it, dearest Clotilde, that with so little self-sufficiency, such gentleness of character, you do not, on the other hand, feel some alarm for yourself? Can you, without hesitation, subject your own principles to the influence of a husband, calculated, as my brother is, to win the entire love and devoted confidence of a grateful and candid heart?"

"How," returned Clotilde, "do many young women, Protestants, trust their happiness and their principles into the keeping of a husband devoid of any religion at all?"

“ They must be very presumptuous,” said I, “ and confident of their own strength, or very careless. But such an argument is not like my friend; neither do such persons offer a case in point. I speak of those who are are not presumptuous or irreligious—of yourself, dearest Clotilde, who, however blessed by earthly happiness, rest not your happiness on earthly things.”

“ I perceive that you, Marie, imagine, like others of your persuasion, that all Catholics consider all Protestants as outcasts from the hope of heaven—from the extension of that mercy which gave us a Redeemer. You must not encourage this opinion. *We* believe in the same God; we rejoice in the same Saviour. I was educated by Christian teachers, and taught that charity is the first of Christian virtues.”

“ Pardon me, dear friend, but till now *I* thought that all Roman Catholics were of the same belief; that there were no schisms in your church.”

“ None, Marie, in material points. We have one head, one foundation; we none of us secede

from the walls of our establishment. A little division there must sometimes be, even within these walls—a little more or a little less of toleration; but, on fundamental points, the true church is one of perfect unity.”

“My dear Clotilde,” I replied, “I am convinced that *you* believe so; but allow me to put one question; it is so vital to the peace of husband and wife that I am most anxious to have it answered. Suffer me, therefore, to inquire of you, a well-informed Romanist, what occasioned the massacre of St. Bartholomew? Or why, if the enlightened of your church do not believe the soul of a Protestant to be valueless,—if such a belief is not an article of their creed,—why is Christian burial denied to Protestants in many Romish provinces? Or how comes it that Protestants are frequently persecuted to death? What is your apology for the *auto-da-fé* of Spain?—the severities practised against the unoffending Vaudois?”

“I can only answer you,” she replied, “by saying, that zeal in any cause too frequently amounts

to intolerance. Catholics, as well as Protestants, have, in less enlightened times, been persecuted unto death. But recrimination is not religion. All sects, all parties, are now secure. It is not to be imputed as a fault to any church, if individuals within its pale be unchristian, uncharitable, or jealous of each other.

“ I, the weaker, the more dependent,—a helpless woman, a stranger, a foreigner,—I cast myself into the sanctuary of your brother’s heart. I rest my temporal, my eternal happiness, my whole security, upon the rectitude and tenderness of a Protestant. Can you imagine that I trust entirely to such subordinate securities, or place no reliance on the influence of God in his soul ?”

I could make no reply; for the sweet enthusiast threw herself into my arms, and burst into tears. I could, indeed, say no more, but to breathe a prayer that the divine light of truth might shed its awakening influence upon one so full of Christian hope and charity; nor leave a human creature to the blind guidance of her fellow-sinners.

The Sunday after this conversation—we were then returned to town—Charles called to walk with me to church, and proposed that we should go to hear the Roman Catholic service at Warwick-street. But Mrs. Murray had, upon a former occasion, prohibited my accompanying Clotilde; alleging, as her reason, that, as instruction could not be the object, she did not approve of my attending any place of worship from curiosity. I therefore declined his proposition, and begged to substitute the Chapel Royal at St. James's, where the music was almost equally good. But he was not to be dissuaded, and my governess coming in at the moment, she was immediately appealed to.

“There can be no great objection,” she said, “to your accompanying Sir Charles for once. It would have been a different matter my suffering any Protestant under my care to attend such a place with a blind guide like Miss De Montmorency. Your brother will not become a convert to Latin canticles, gorgeous dresses, idols, pictures, and performances mocking the simplicity of our

Saviour's institutions. Go, therefore, my dear child; a peep at such things, especially in enlightened company, is not without its use. They teach us to draw comparisons; and without comparison, the finest structures in the world might lose their value in the eye of man."

Charles changed colour while Mrs. Murray spoke, but he did not change his purpose; we therefore proceeded to Warwick-street. Clotilde had gone earlier with her friend. Nothing could be finer than the music, or more imposing upon credulity than the spectacle of the service, aided by the mystifying stupor of overpowering incense; but the tinkling of little bells, the busy, fussy theatrical exhibition at the altar, the dressing and undressing, annoyed my dear brother seriously. I could see the frown of disapprobation compress his brow, and the averted look betray his unwillingness to observe. Then came the sermon, or rather the invocation; for, from beginning to end, every sentence either commenced or concluded by invoking the Virgin—the Mother of Mercies—the

Queen of Heaven. Her intercession was implored, her assistance supplicated; she, "all grace, was entreated to bestow grace." Every attribute of God the Father, and of the one and only Mediator, was ascribed to her; and, in the thousand and one times that her name was repeated, every Roman Catholic in the assembly bent his head with reverential worship, as he raised his eyes to a gorgeously apparelled representation of the humble Mary. There was, indeed, an occasional reference to moral duties. We were cautioned not to oppress the poor; to exact nothing; to be bountiful, contributing to the necessities of the saints; to fast and pray; to abstain from theft, vain curiosity, and such like. But the inconsistency of the whole discourse with Gospel revelation and Scripture truth was too apparent not to strike a person of any observation, especially one so peculiarly interested as Charles. It was delivered in French, by a native of that country, and the text taken from the 11th chapter of St. Luke, verse 29, viz., "Blessed is the womb that

bare thee, and the paps which thou hast sucked!" But it went no further : we heard nothing of the answer.

At a little distance, but in a position rather elevated, sat Clotilde, her fine countenance glowing with approbation, and her whole attention given to the eloquent preacher; until, towards the close, she turned her eyes, lit up by joyful surprise, upon us. But Charles returned no token of recognition—his were bent to the ground; nor did he raise them again until the service had concluded. Then hastening from the chapel, although she immediately left her seat with the intention of joining us, he pressed on in silence, and led me hastily out.

"We will refresh ourselves after the suffocating heat," he said, "by a few turns in one of the parks. There will be time enough for evening prayer before your dinner-hour."

"Oh yes, quite time. Should you like to attend three o'clock service at Westminster Abbey?"

"No, Mary; I have had enough of music for

one day. Not that I dislike cathedral music—it is very fine, and very elevating; but there may be too much, even of music. We will seek some quiet little sanctuary, and humble ourselves for the presumption of this morning.”

A walk in the most retired quarter of Hyde Park, though pursued silently, did much to restore Charles to himself; and, by the hour of evening prayer, we found ourselves in a quiet little church, such as he sought. Striking, indeed, was the contrast between such a service and such a celebration as that we had witnessed in the morning. Instead of a gay parterre, decked out with all the flowers of the creation, with a theatrical orchestra, we had here a lowly congregation, and a simple service. But the prayers were read with reverential devotion, and the sermon was impressively delivered. Nor was the contrast less remarkable from the coincidence of the text; as that which we heard at Warwick-street was now followed up by the next ensuing verse of the same chapter, containing our Saviour's reply to the salutation of the woman,

viz., “ Yea, rather blessed are they who hear the word of God and keep it.”

A clearer exposition of the exact light in which Christ desires we should regard his mother—a sounder, or more truly Gospel statement of the duty incumbent on “those who hear the word”—could not be given. The preacher was a practised theologian, perfectly dispassionate, but argumentative and clear. His was a sermon to arrest the attention of men, to confirm the faith of his Protestant hearers, to strengthen the convinced, to convince the wavering, and to instruct those who, not sufficiently aware of the vital distinctiveness of the two creeds, were open to the designs of an enemy ever on the watch, ever seeking whom he may devour; and it was so far useful—although no Romanist might be present to have his unwilling mind bound down to conviction—that it not only induced a spirit of inquiry by which reason might satisfy herself, but instructed some, perhaps not taught before, what dangerous fallacies were afloat, and how much it behoved the

sincerely minded to search for themselves, and diligently inquire of the Scriptures.

The psalms of David, sung by a few children, whose sweet voices were raised in Hallelujahs to the throne of God, reminded us of the lambs clothed in white raiment, and absolutely brought tears into my eyes—the blessed and holy effect of a simple and unadulterated religion, which sheds its calm upon the troubled mind, and sends the humble suppliant to his sabbath home, ejaculating, in the true spirit of contrition, “God be merciful to me a sinner !”

CHAPTER V.

WHEN we reached York place Charles took leave at the door ; the family had just sat down to dinner, and Clotilde looked at me with a delighted expression of countenance. Soon as Mrs. Murray arose from table, and that we could make our escape, the former lost no time in offering her congratulations on my having gone to Warwick-street at last, and upon the magnificent service that I had heard.

“The best performers were there,” she added ; “how fortunate !—and the preacher !—is he not beyond all praise ? such language !—such piety ! Ah ! the Père Montcalm said no more than was just, when praising him so highly : was it not kind

of Sir Charles to use his influence with your governess? I trust, now that you have once ventured, that you will often enjoy such a treat."

In the course of the evening the same exclamations of delight were reiterated by the zealous Romanist, nor did her spirits become less excited during the following day, although evidently on the watch for a visit from Charles. But when Tuesday passed over, and Wednesday also without our seeing him, an expression of uneasiness and disappointment pervaded her face. Rather uneasy myself, I sent him in the evening a few lines of inquiry, and on Thursday his well known step was heard upon the stairs. Clotilde and I were seated at the pianoforte for the ostensible purpose of practising a duet; but more in reality to obtain an undisturbed *tête-à-tête*, and quiet possession of the drawing room. He entered with an air of melancholy, looking not only sad but embarrassed; like a person who having something disagreeable to communicate, cannot muster courage to speak out; nor did we by our welcome put him at ease. There

was, amongst us all, a general restraint ; and after some unavailing attempts upon his part, which only betrayed his want of self-command, he begged not to interrupt us, and asked for music. I excused myself by pleading hoarseness, which was in point of fact no mere excuse, for at that moment I could not have trusted my voice ; while Clotilde, though pale as death, sustained his change of manner with a dignity the most feminine and becoming. He brought her guitar, which she took from him in silence ; and throwing the broad blue ribbon over her graceful shoulders, she commenced a French air that he had not yet heard ; one which, sweetly plaintive, suited the sadness of her tones, every stanza ending with these words—

“Clotilde c'est orpheline.”

Unable to resist the attraction of such a singer and of such a song, he drew his chair closer to hers, gazed tenderly upon her lovely face with an expression of the deepest thought, and sighed profoundly. The soft voice of Clotilde sunk to its

lowest pitch. The words of her song were warbled rather than pronounced. In a few minutes they ceased to be articulate. He addressed her in accents of the most interested inquiry—she burst into tears—and, feeling myself *de trop*, I stole out of the room.

Until the bell rang for dinner, their conference was not interrupted ; while I waited with no small anxiety in the ante-room. As soon as Charles passed through, which he did without speaking, I heard the tremulous voice of Clotilde gently calling me by name ; and the blushing, happy, but agitated girl, throwing her arms around me said, that she had promised to be the wife of my brother in a month.

“So much,” thought I, returning her caress, “for the stability of a lover’s resolution ! So much for the impressions of last Sunday !”

“It is very soon, is it not ?” she resumed. “But our position here is so awkward, and I have no other home.”

“’Tis something like the way in which such

matters are settled in France," I quietly observed, "where one description of leading string is only exchanged for another."

"Ah, far, surely far happier, my dearest Marie! the leading strings in this case being matters of choice."

From that moment the subject of religion was not mentioned between us. Mrs. Richardson undertook all the trouble, or all the pleasure of arranging the *troupeau*. A legal friend of General de Montmorency residing in London did what was necessary in more material affairs. We removed with the Richardsons to Brighton, and in little more than four weeks the lovely and fascinating French girl took upon herself the sacred duties of a British matron.

No sooner was the ceremony over, than Charles carried away his bride. They proceeded to Paris, leaving me behind—an arrangement that disappointed both Clotilde and myself. I had set my heart on accompanying them, and she had much to show me in her native country. Her *prêtre*

and her *gouvernante* to introduce me to; and I feared that she might think her husband unkind. But unkindness was not in his nature. He was only uncomplying; and in such a case as this, it was natural enough that a third person should be considered in the way.

Meanwhile, frequent letters from my new sister were a source of the highest gratification. Ardent as observant, she imbibed a deep impression of every thing admirable or curious. Her descriptions were living images, bringing all the scenes in which she was herself engaged, like animated pictures, before the eyes of others. I crossed with her, in imagination, from Brighton to Havre; made acquaintance with the companions of her voyage, and pursued, as if actually by her side, the picturesque windings of the Seine. I visited the antiquities of Rouen, shared her delight when entering the *Barrière* of Neuilly, recognized familiar faces in the *Champs Elysées*, and witnessed that meeting with her beloved *gouvernante*, from which so much gratification was anticipated.

If I wanted proof to convince me that Clotilde's early impressions were never to be effaced, that proof was furnished in her correspondence. She expressed in every letter the liveliest pleasure, that neither animate nor inanimate objects in the convent had undergone the slightest change; that, added to the joy of finding Madame la Mère exactly as she had left her, every thing in the dear old apartments retained their former places; that the books, the furniture, the ornaments, were neither added to nor diminished. Even the faded foot-stool, which she had worked when quite a child, was there unrenewed. "I would not new dress it for worlds," she continued. "Every little incident which occurred while I was taking my first lesson in embroidery is brought back to my mind. Every stitch I then set is now remembered with a thousand associations, that for worlds I would not forget. I have placed this little foot-stool by the chair of Madame. I have, in the same spot, and in the same humble position, repeated some of her invaluable exercises. I have

sung some of our favourite hymns. I have proved to my kind old friend, that neither time nor distance have rendered me indifferent to those pious instructions to which I owe so much. I have also, dearest sister, enjoyed the supreme benefit of renewed communion with Père Montcalm—have had the heavenly consolation of recounting my sins to that holy man, in the same sacred confessional where he has so often absolved them; and I look forward with the blessed hope of performing the same Christian rite before the same pious saint, ere our return to England. Your brother is now impatient to prosecute our tour; and we consequently shall, to-morrow, leave this scene of renewed associations and precious recollections.”

These renewed associations and precious recollections—this pious saint, and his sacred confessional—I doubted not might easily account for my brother’s impatience to proceed. Nor was I sorry that Clotilde’s visit should be thus abridged, or her next letter dated from Brussels.

They contemplated making Venice their farthest

point—to return by Geneva—see as much of Switzerland as possible, and proceed by Lyons to Paris again; but, at Lyons, Charles altered the plan of their journey, and crossing the country from thence to Tours, proposed, after a short survey of the still primitive Brittany, to embark for England from some Norman port; but while they lingered at Tours winter set in, the weather became prematurely unfavourable, and some East India friends of my brother, who had fixed themselves in that almost English city, persuaded him to remain till the spring.

My disappointment, indeed, was severe. Mrs. Richardson made me pass the Christmas at Brighton; but not all the gaiety of that gay place could in any way compensate for the prolonged absence of my dearest friends. Time, however, progressed. I returned in February to York Place, and ere the beginning of April I saw announced the arrival of Sir Charles and Lady Trevillion at Brighton. A hastily written letter from the latter soon confirmed this pleasing intelligence, which was rendered more

gratifying by her assurances, that we should not separate again ; and by a postscript in my brother's hand, desiring that I should prepare for an immediate removal to Cornwall.

CHAPTER VI.

FEMALE friendship, it is said, seldom survives marriage. But however true this adage in a general sense, Clotilde, at least, formed one amiable exception. Our reunion after her return, was like the reunion of one heart on which separation had inflicted a deep but casual wound, but which again uniting, was cemented more firmly than ever by the strong ligaments of love.

Pendyffryn, the dear old home of my infancy, though situated on a retired part of the Cornish coast, being very richly wooded, and close to the beach, wears a cheerful aspect at all seasons of the year. When we arrived there, the first week in May, every production of nature teemed with

the promise of abundance. No climate could be more delicious, no fields more fragrant. The shrubs, the flowers, all kinds of vegetation were much more forward than in the neighbourhood of London. A glowing heat was tempered by a fresh sea breeze, and the sparkling radiance of the glistening wave was most gratefully relieved by the beautiful green of the vegetable world.

The house itself—a venerable pile erected in the reign of Elizabeth, commanding a fine view of the extensive park, the curving shore, and of some romantic cliffs which jutting far out into the water present a bold feature in the landscape—is approached through a magnificent avenue of elms; and though its interior was, at the time when Clotilde first saw it, neither very spacious nor very light, that style of architecture which still ornaments the west of England, and of which so many venerable specimens are extant there, endued the whole with an air of ancient respectability, that even in the eyes of a foreigner compensated for modern improvement. The entrance hall espe-

cially, running the whole depth of the building, wainscoted with oak, and hung with various trophies both of war and of the chase, called forth her admiration. Charmed with the first view of her new territory, its happy mistress rested not "till she ran over the whole;" nor were Charles and myself more eager to recognize old friends than was Clotilde to make new acquaintance. Like children appropriating some novel toy, we rivalled each other in our expressions of delight. While my brother, at once the possessor of a fine ancestral residence, and of a lovely wife, free from every care, and surrounded by blessings, expressed himself the happiest of men.

But it is not permitted that butter and honey should always fill the cup of mortals. Man—a free agent—mixes for himself, and often choosing the evil while he rejects the good, many a bitter drop is mingled with his portion.

Our little circle at Pendyffryn was not exempted from what is common to all; nor was our portion, blessed, though it seemed, without its drop of

bitterness. Having lived abroad before his marriage, and gone to France immediately afterwards, Charles was unfamiliar with the sabbath homes of England. But returning to the domestic scenes of boyhood, they were brought back to his mind with a keen and vivid recollection of those pious observances which had cemented the former relations of life—all that remained of his parents, and which could no more be separated from their memories than the inheritance to which he was heir. And English feelings—feelings so perfectly indigenous, that however scorched between the tropics, or frozen at the pole, they scarcely fail to bud afresh when restored to the healthful atmosphere of home—resumed their former influence, and induced a wish to revive in his own newly created circle those early practices, which, having reverently attended to in the nursery, he had not totally forgotten in the camp.

“I remember as if it were but yesterday,” he said, when speaking on this subject to Clotilde and myself, “how beautifully regular was every

arrangement of my mother's. How dignified, yet how kind were her manners ! How much method there was in her household, how much prosperity every where ; and what a respectable community surrounded my father ! We can do no better than follow an example which led to such happy results. My parents were virtuously attached to their home. There was a pure moral patriotism blended with religious feeling in all that they did. It is certainly a high, but I hope not a very peculiar privilege, in England, to feel no less the heir of an uncontaminated ancestry than of a splendid estate. How doubly responsible therefore is the individual whose parents have left him a name !”

Clotilde, delighted with any subject which had the power of awakening enthusiasm in her husband, encouraged him to talk of his parents : she especially loved to hear of his mother, and requested to be told of her favourite pursuits, to be made acquainted with her favourite haunts, her favourite poor. Amongst these last there had been no favouritism, and she promised to follow so just a precedent in

all things. Alas ! there was one material point in which she could not follow that unerring precedent ; the blending of religious consolations and religious example with deeds of charity : and if the unfailing attendance of a former Lady Trevillion at her parish church induced the wives and daughters of a numerous peasantry to show the same reverence to the same sacred structure, it was to be lamented that the steps of her successor should lead a different way.

I had always apprehended that the intervention of the sabbath—especially when we should be stationary at home—would prove to all of us a painful recurrence ; nor were such apprehensions without their fulfilment. There being few Roman Catholic inhabitants in that part of the country, and no Roman Catholic place of worship within many hours drive, Clotilde, poor soul ! when every other member of the family walked to the house of God as friends, remained at home a solitary alien ; and then it was, that Charles tasted that bitter drop already hinted at—then it was that the

first shadows appeared on our horizon of domestic peace.

The church was situated within Pendyffryn Park ; and as he and I proceeded thither on foot, the first Sunday after our arrival at home, we saw that every path leading to the same point was thronged with country people in their best attire, while the principal farmers waited with their families in the church-yard, eager to congratulate the bridegroom, and to have a first peep of the bride.

By some I was taken for Lady Trevillion, and respectful salutations greeted my approach ; but, by others, the little girl lost sight of nine years before was soon brought to mind, and inquiries for the health of "my lady," with hopes that illness did not keep her at home, placed Charles in an awkward predicament. He could only say, that he hoped they should see her ere long ; and, in consequence, gave an entertainment to his tenantry before the end of that week, when their new lady was introduced to them with every advantage of hospitality and kindness.

The beauty and affable manners of Clotilde were calculated to render her popular; but a whisper had gone round, and curiosity, if not distrust, was mingled with the admiration she received. Formed, however, to do away with prejudice, and to win every heart, a feeling so unworthy of her merits could not long predominate; and those who most loved and respected her predecessor were the first to make a transfer of respect and affection to herself. Generosity is always a popular virtue, and she, who was generous in the extreme, possessed the rare tact of conferring a favour without seeming to bestow a benevolence. It was impossible for the poorest creature, relieved by her charity, not to think more highly of the donor than of her gifts; and long deprived of the kindly influence attached to female protection, the dependents and tenantry of Pendyffryn soon learned to appreciate its value, and to forget that their young benefactress fell short, in any respect, of her they had lost.

To see the wife so beloved thus making her own way, thus respected and esteemed, was a

source of the highest gratification to her husband ; and I am sure that their only drawback—the difference of religious opinions—was felt by him, more for her sake than his own. A Romish church, with all those pomps and ceremonies which render its services so imposing, was now, for the first time, missed by Clotilde ; and we observed her to be affected by those occasional fits of chagrin to which all French women, be they ever so lively, are subject at times. Accustomed to excitement in the performance of her devotions, the solitary retirement of closet-prayer was by no means sufficiently elevating for her habits ; and Charles, apprehensive (from seeing her sometimes depressed) that she might conceive herself neglected, gave up his afternoon attendance at church to walk out with and amuse her ; for the same reason I sometimes declined Doctor Bentley's request to remain between the services, and encourage, by my assistance, the progress of the Sunday Schools.

This excellent minister, whose moral and religious example had been a blessing in the parish for

above twenty years, was formerly in the habit of spending his Sunday evenings with our family; and, on returning home, Charles sought to revive a practice so beneficial, but Doctor Bentley—not able immediately to reconcile his feelings to a Roman Catholic wife for his friend—declined the invitation, and kept ceremoniously aloof. To say the truth, he had reason to be offended with my brother, who, anticipating his disapprobation, had failed to consult him; but charity prevailed, and after some persuasions he yielded to our wishes. Clotilde's amiable manners, the respect with which she treated him, and the thousand good qualities which were ever discoverable in her disposition and temper, soon put an end to restraint. Indeed, it was impossible, with her habitual reverence for religion, and veneration for its ministers, that she could withhold her esteem from one so worthy, or fail, with such feelings, to conciliate his.

A former practice in the family was by this means revived; that of the Doctor giving us a short exposition of the lessons and psalms for the

day, adding a petition for God's blessing on the sacred duties of the Sabbath. This he did in a manner perfectly simple and clear, suited to the comprehension of every servant in the house; and it was a subject of sincere gratification to us all, that Clotilde voluntarily joined the little community of hearers.

Mild, unpretending, and dignified, our venerable pastor united the profound learning of a scholar with the unfailing attributes of a gentleman; and his conversation, instructive upon every occasion, took, when opportunity offered, a tone so highly spiritual, that it was impossible to hear him without being impressed.

In his hands controversy became more instructive than argumentative. It was never sought or pursued, but in the most charitable spirit; for, though a firm defender of the holiest of all causes, when that cause required defence, he did not make it a point of duty to live for ever in the field of battle, or sound his trumpet to collect the army of Emmanuel, except in days of peril; but rather, like

one set apart by God himself, to train celestial spirits for the vineyard of peace, he led others to search; and the results of his labour were conviction, truth, the spirit of a tolerating charity, with hope.

Whether reproving the proud, warning the secure, rebuking the obdurate, or encouraging the broken-hearted sinner, he felt himself an humble instrument in the hands of an Almighty Master, accountable for every soul within the sphere of his delegated authority, and totally dependent himself, for every power he possessed, upon the Spirit imparted from above.

“ Marie,” observed Clotilde one day, after he had sat with us for an hour; “ I exceedingly like Doctor Bentley. How happy you must feel in possessing such a religious instructor and friend !”

“ He is indeed a most benevolent and enlightened Christian,” I replied. “ It may be said with truth, in reference to him, that ‘ darkness flies away at his approach, for he lives in the light of revelation,’ and that ‘ his lamp shines forth un-

ceasingly.' I am so glad, my dear Clotilde, that you appreciate his merits as they deserve."

"I feel indebted to his indulgence, Marie. He knows that I am of a different persuasion, and, giving me credit for sincerity, for a belief as firmly established as his own, he abstains from vain attempts to pervert—I should, perhaps, say convert me. Doctor Bentley, I see, is no vain theologian, more skilled in points of doctrine than in practice; he does not rest his everlasting hopes on vain distinctions, nor denounce all those who differ from himself. In short, the pious Doctor is a Christian."

"And a very uncompromising Christian too," I said. "His belief is founded on firm conviction, incontrovertible proof, and deep research: all the fires that Smithfield ever saw would fail to shake it. I have heard other preachers; but not one whose arguments are fixed upon a firmer basis, whose powers of conviction are so perfectly clear, or who is gifted with an eloquence more sublime."

"I shall never hear him in the pulpit," she

replied ; “ but it is easy to perceive, from his general conversation, that he has a gift of eloquence which, when excited by the noblest of all themes, may reach to the highest touches of sublimity.”

“ Doctor Bentley does not suffer himself to be excited : he trusts to solidity more than to ornament ; he prescribes tonics rather than effervescent medicines. We bear away in our hearts all that he inculcates : we know that he thinks more of his hearers than of himself, that his natural eloquence is kept within bounds, that he is not overpowering one moment, and forgotten the next. There are no rapturous expressions of sublime ! beautiful ! heavenly ! after hearing his discourses ; but there is a salutary examining of self, an awful comparing of our practice with his precepts, and a sincere desire, in every awakened mind, to follow the example which illustrates those precepts. He neither wafts you to Elysium, nor condemns you to the rack ; but he places before you, in all its beautiful simplicity, its order, its justice, and its mercies, the pure Gospel of Christ.”

“He is, no doubt, all that you describe,” replied Clotilde; “and, could I envy you any good, it would be that of possessing such a guide—who, perhaps, may even be useful to me; for, as Christian forbearance seems to pervade his opinions, I can suffer no fears that, while trusting my moral duties to his direction, he will attempt to interfere in those that are more spiritual.

“I know little of English habits, particularly the habits of the poor: I wish exceedingly to do good; to convince those who look up to my husband as their protector and friend, that the wife whom he has chosen, though her religious opinions are not similar to his, equally desires their welfare, and wishes to follow, so far as is in her power, the footsteps of his much honoured mother. Doctor Bentley tells me that he was her coadjutor, and his experience can, therefore, point out the way: I feel perfectly secure in trusting myself with so well qualified and so safe an instructor.”

Rejoicing in her good resolutions, in her approbation of our excellent friend, in her fancied

security—believing it impossible that she could associate in works of mercy with one whose practice so much adorned his precepts, yet not benefit by the light that ever emanated from his conversation—I augured the happiest results, and communicated my hopes to Charles; who, even more sanguine than myself, felt as if the only cloud was soon to pass away which dulled the brightness of his noon-day joys.

Clotilde would soon become a mother, and he had more reasons than most men for anxiously desiring a son—it being part of the marriage-contract that their boys should be brought up as Protestants, the girls in the faith of their mother; an arrangement hastily concluded in an hour of passion, and apparently in justice to Clotilde, but certainly with strange inconsideration on both sides. Believing in their own profession of faith, and in the saving efficacy of none other, they should not have forgotten those yet unborn, but accountable beings, whose souls would be required at a parent's hand. Sir Charles had, therefore, more than ever,

the conversion of a wife to hope for, through the benign influence of Doctor Bentley. Owing to that influence, a daughter might be welcomed to her father's heart, without that father feeling the dreadful responsibility of having forfeited parental confidence, of having flung the brand of discord into his domestic treasury.

With all the zeal of an inexperienced and generous mind, Clotilde commenced operations in a wide field of active benevolence, Doctor Bentley guiding and turning those exertions to the best account. Long time a constant labourer himself, he had done as much as it was possible for one individual to effect; but it remained for my brother to do more, and in pecuniary disbursements his wife was unrestrained.

Amongst other acts of benevolence, Clotilde established near the house, and immediately under her own inspection, a school for the female children of the poorer labourers and small tenants of Pencyffryn; intending hereafter to have them taught a simple manufacture of lace, in order by such

means to better their finances. These children were clothed at her expence, a comfortable dinner provided ; and, if a little difficulty attended the undertaking, that difficulty enhanced the value of success.

“I will teach them what I can,” said the benevolent foundress, “they seem deplorably ignorant, but with their religious amelioration I must have nothing to do. That privilege, my dear Marie, must belong to yourself.”

She adhered to her promise ; we divided the labours of tuition between us, aided by a young person of Doctor Bentley’s recommendation, and it was delightful to witness the improvement of these hitherto untutored creatures, who from being rude, riotous, and idle, became every day more tractable and industrious, feeling themselves on a footing with the more civilized ; no longer miserable and neglected, but objects of interest to their fellow Christians, and consequently assuming a responsible place in society.

Charmed with her success, the zeal of Lady

Trevillion daily increased ; and, if her power had but equalled her will, poverty or care would have been soon unknown in the neighbourhood ; for though married to a man fifteen years her senior, she never felt the slightest restraint. He entered into all her views, granted all her wishes, and suffered her to enjoy, in their fullest extent, the new delights of liberty and power.

Pendyffryn, I have said, is remotely situated ; but the beauty of the country, the gardens, our rides and drives, the interest of the school, with various other occupations, our evening rambles on the shore—a scene quite new to all of us—while Charles or Doctor Bentley improved our knowledge of astronomy, left us nothing to regret on the score of society—no wish to extend the circle of our enjoyment.

But such happiness was too perfect ; we looked not to its interruption ; we forgot the cup of bitterness. Alas ! it was tasted too soon.

CHAPTER VII.

WITHIN a mile of the house, immediately beyond the park paling, and defended from the west wind by a rocky promontory already noticed, there are scattered a few small houses, inhabited chiefly by fishermen. The site of this little hamlet is romantic, the air salubrious, and, beneath the shelter of the projecting rocks are some recluse commodious spots whence the waves never entirely recede, and where bathing may be enjoyed at any hour, quite independent of their influx.

But fashion has not found out, or set a value on the retiring beauties of this healthful retreat, and few places in this age of improvement owe so little

to artificial aid. Consequently the village of Pendyffryn has hitherto escaped the patronage of pleasure hunters, the influx of visitors. Its inhabitants are poor, their houses mean, and destitute of comforts. Even the postmaster's domicile presents a forbidding aspect; but he keeps a shop of all sorts, and advertises "two rooms to let." Which two rooms, albeit the only lodgings in the place, are very seldom tenanted.

But about the first week in July—three months after our arrival—two strangers came to the village; and, taking up their quarters with the postmaster, created no trifling sensation. They had crossed the country from Ilfracombe, were clergymen, and one, professing himself to be an invalid, in search of pure sea air and perfect quiet, engaged the "two rooms" for a month, his companion almost immediately proceeding elsewhere. A report soon found its way to Clotilde, purporting that the stranger was a Roman Catholic priest; and she eagerly implored Charles to ascertain its truth; confessing, with tears in her eyes, that being de-

barred religious exercises was the only drawback to her happiness, and that, should the person in question prove to be a minister of the Church, she would feel that his arrival in the neighbourhood was an especial favour from Heaven to herself.

The truth was ascertained without delay—for the postmaster's inmate, an Irish Roman Catholic priest, as reported, made no secret of his profession—and the pious heart of Clotilde was filled with gratitude. She expressed her satisfaction in the warmest terms, and entreated her husband to call on their valuable acquisition, and to request the favour of his company at the Park.

“Such a domicile as the post-office,” she added, “must be wretchedness itself. Assure him, dear Charles, that he will be perfectly quiet here, and that everything shall be done to render him comfortable.”

But Charles, not being quite so zealous on the subject, nor quite so sure that their new neighbour must prove a valuable acquisition, rather checked the exuberance of her hospitality, by suggesting

that it might be as wise only to receive him in his professional capacity at first, and not rush into an intimacy, until they had some opportunity of knowing with whom.

“ We are so small a society,” he continued, “ so perfectly united and confidential. Doctor Bentley is so much one of ourselves, that I own myself fearful of additions. You can write to-morrow or next day, requesting to see this person at some given hour. Meanwhile, I shall speak to Doughty, the postmaster, and learn something more of his inmate.”

Clotilde, but little used to have a request denied, looked, as she felt, disappointed; but urged the point no further, and wrote her note, desiring to see the Roman Catholic clergyman at his convenience.

Such a desire, coming from such a quarter, was sure to be complied with. He named twelve o'clock the following day; and, punctual to the hour, Mr. Mac Cardwell was announced.

Charles had ordered his horses, and rode out;

but Clotilde, desiring I should remain, and assist in receiving her visitor, awaited him in the library.

Entering the room with modest mien, head bent down, grave aspect, and languid step, he silently took possession of the chair assigned him ; for a prolonged fit of coughing interfered with his articulation. But as soon as the cough subsided, he reverted to his health, which, being injured by severe parochial duty in Ireland, rendered change of air and relaxation in a warmer climate necessary to his recovery. Such, at least, was the history he made out for himself ; but never was personal appearance more at variance with a statement of the kind. I would that I could describe him as he impressed me upon this our first interview, but it would require the pencil of an Hogarth to do the portrait justice. Suffice it to say, that vulgar effrontery was inadequately veiled, or rather that it was rendered more conspicuous by affected modesty ; that, while aiming at the semblance of long-suffering and sanctity, a totally different effect was produced—an effect almost amounting to the

ludicrous. His athletic person and expansive chest were no more in character with the frequent cough and oppressive breathing of which he complained, than was his youth,—for he could scarcely have numbered thirty years,—his undignified manner and florid colour, with the age, self-denial, and venerable appearance which one attaches to the sacred calling of a father-confessor. In short, the whole was equivocal, the manner false: it gave the idea of a jester acting the Pharisee, or a boon-companion adopting the character of a devotee. His eyes, as if he were afraid to trust them with performing their allotted part, were cautiously bent to the ground; yet I once or twice caught them fixed on us, with what appeared vulgar curiosity, but which I afterwards knew to be inquisitorial examination.

After some attempts at general conversation, Clotilde reverted to the subject nearest her heart; lamenting the loss she felt of religious consolations, and her anxiety to seize upon the opportunity thus providentially presented. But he avoided to en-

large on the topic, perhaps owing to the restraint imposed by my presence, and, changing it for another, soon took his leave, fixing an earlier hour on the following day for the performance of a rite so anxiously desired.

Previous to her residence in London, she had had no other male instructor or confessor than the Père Montcalm. That "beloved prêtre," as she called him, had afterwards placed her under the religious guidance of a reverend brother in London, especially chosen by himself; and I had always understood that, in accordance with the advice of this early friend, (strengthened by the dying wishes of her mother,) she abstained from the benefits of the confessional, except such benefit could be enjoyed with the sanction and under the direction of the same revered prêtre, to whose authority, as well as to the wishes of her mother, she had, until now, been scrupulously obedient: but, in her present state of health, there was no chance of a visit to London, and, as the time of her confinement drew near, fears of death, and of

dying unabsolved, weighed heavily upon her mind. She wrote to the Père Montcalm, she unburdened her conscience to him ; but auricular confession was needful for her soul's repose, she could not resist the opportunity now offered of removing that weight, of being cleansed from all sin—forgiven—justified.

Next day Mac Cardwell was punctual to the hour, and on this occasion my sister received him alone. They retired to her *boudoir*, and there she performed that secret ceremonial of the Romish Church, which I hoped would have satisfied her conscience, and absolved us from further intercourse with the confessor, at least for some time.

But who may hope—when domination is the object—any remission from its advances? Once admitted as conscience keeper to Lady Trevillion, Mac Cardwell was not slow in assuming the authority with which his Church invests her ministers. And though concealing such authority under the semblance of respect and fatherly consideration, under zeal for her spiritual welfare, the love of

power and of encroachment were visible through all—while she, imperceptibly to herself, but apparently to me, yielded her opinions to his, and was drawn on to an intercourse, which, if her own judgment had been allowed its free exercise, she would rather have avoided than encouraged. Though not invited to the house, or noticed by its master, for Clotilde did not for the present urge that point with her husband, the Confessor stood upon no ceremony in making use of the grounds, merely assigning as a reason for haunting our walks, that the bleakness of the shore disagreed with his lungs, and that in the sheltered enclosures of Pendyffryn park, he could enjoy the benefit of milder air without running the hazard of cold. A milder climate was not, however, the real object of the assumed invalid. Had it been so, there were remote spots in the extensive park much more sheltered than those near the house, where he might have wandered at pleasure, without obtruding upon our privacy, or taking so great a liberty with a person as yet so little known to him as Sir Charles.

But happily for the wishes of the interloper, Charles (at this time very much engaged in the improvement of his estates) seldom joined us in our walks, or interfered with our morning avocations, and when we met in the evenings was so full of draining, fencing, and planting, that every thing else yielded to the interest of these new and engrossing pursuits. Even the novel acquisition of an Irish priest in the neighbourhood might have been forgotten, but that Clotilde, with the candour for which she was conspicuous, sometimes reverted to that providential interposition in her favour, nor attempted to conceal the frequent encroachments to which we were in consequence subjected.

The time was not come when jesuitical instruction enforced a necessity for conjugal reserves. Charles as yet suffered no uneasiness, but he was not of a disposition to tolerate vulgar impertinence, or to encourage the violation of our privacy; we were therefore requested to keep Mr. Mac Cardwell at a distance, and to infer by our reserve, that his intrusion was considered as a trespass.

Clotilde, disposed to obedience, made some courageous efforts; but daily the same trespass was committed, daily the same meetings took place; for habitual respect for the ministers of her religion restricted her efforts to such silent hints as were not understood, or else designedly unnoticed; while my broader rebuffs were treated with perfect indifference. He continued as usual to cross our path, and, though we passed him with no more than a common-place salutation, though we sometimes refrained from necessary exercise, still, like the centre of a vortex, which when once swept into its current it is impossible to shun, we seemed impelled towards his influence despite every effort to escape it.

Meanwhile my position was far from agreeable. Seeing through Mac Cardwell, and consequently disliking him, I felt it my duty to repress the familiar intercourse he seemed solicitous to establish with Clotilde, and this I could not otherwise effect than by adhering closely to her side—except indeed when on pretence of religious communica-

tion he desired a private interview, thus affording him as few opportunities as possible for conversing apart ; and though conscious of incurring his jealousy, and subjecting myself to his vengeance, I pertinaciously maintained my resolution.

It may seem presumptuous in me to say that I saw through the Confessor. But however well disposed to be jesuitical, he had neither the self-denial, nor the temper, indispensable for consistently sustaining such a character. Avarice was the besetting sin of Mac Cardwell, and the golden opportunity afforded by Clotilde was a temptation not to be resisted. Love of power was also a ruling passion, and instead of feeling his way like a less intemperate politician, the overbearing character of the man betrayed the course he had adopted. It therefore required no great stretch of discernment to discover the evil propensities of his nature—to be convinced that he was sordid, tyrannical, and acting a part.

It does not always follow that a mutual and instinctive understanding should depend upon con-

geniality of mind. I flatter myself that there was little sympathy between us; yet our feelings towards each other were certainly reciprocal. He knew that I disliked him, and I was aware that he disliked me in return. I could descry suspicion and hatred in his most guarded manner, in his forced and unnatural civilities, in the scowl of his eye—that eye of evil omen, which, though bold and prominent, was never fully displayed except on one fearful occasion. And then, though distended by violence, its expression was not to me so terrific as when veiled by the half-closed lid that strove to hide, but could not, its innate ferocity.

The months of August and September passed away. Clotilde approached to the most interesting event of her life. Alas! we knew not then how much the dangers of that coming event were exaggerated—how much her fears were excited—how all was made subject to the influence of a selfish alarmist, who, working on her nerves, enforced the necessity of religious, or rather of fanatical rites, making her condition an excuse for superstitious perform-

ances, which while they robbed her of her strength, considerably added to the coffers of the confessor.

That event, so anxiously anticipated, at length took place, and the young mother was blessed in the birth of a son. Her deep, deep joy, when first she heard his cry, her expressions of gratitude, I never can forget; her fervent prayers!—they sprung from a heart devoted to her God, her husband, and to maternal love. O, my Clotilde! however you may have been deceived, coerced, or led by mistaken zeal, beyond the bounds of female caution; that heart, and those feelings, if not exempt from human error, are assuredly free from intentional guilt. However you may suffer, it is for the evil deeds of others, not for any evil perpetrated designedly by yourself!

Sir Charles was anxious that his son should be publicly and immediately baptized; therefore, soon as the collective wisdom of the nursery decreed that it was safe for so precious an infant to brave the open air, that ceremony was performed in the parish church.

On the same day, his mother went through the ordinances of her religion, under the auspices of the Roman Catholic priest; and, when I saw her after they were over, there was so calm, so beatified an expression on her countenance, evidently the result of religious security and peace, that tears rushed to my eyes as I reflected, how fatal might be that security, how false that peace. How could I look, without pity, on a creature so piously inclined, and of so excellent a judgment, yielding that judgment to one so infinitely her inferior in understanding, and resting her eternal hopes upon the erring faith of a superstitious bigot! It was the blind leading the blind; the deluded led by the deluder; the humble worshipper by the self-righteous Pharisee; by one, who, if he were not grossly ignorant, must most wilfully deceive—who, though the machine by which he worked was kept out of sight, exhibited a too visible product. Clotilde, a slave in the hands of a tyrant, was daily and hourly prostrating her mind on the altar of intolerance, and incited to self-immolation by an avaricious

zealot, who had his own purposes in view, she grew regardless of those ties which bound her to her honourable protector, and equally reckless of her happiness and reputation.

I saw all this. Doctor Bentley saw it also; but what could we do? Convinced that domestic peace and social obligation weigh not a feather in the political scales, by which heartless expediency doles out her measures, and aims at the subjugation of her victims—convinced also, that there was no hope of escaping the evil except by flying the contagion, we mutually agreed, that, as soon as the health of Clotilde should be re-established, and that no risk from a journey could be apprehended for the child, the Doctor should state sincerely what he thought to my brother.

CHAPTER VIII.

I HAD imagined, that the clergy of the Romish persuasion, with the advantages of foreign travel, and a learned education, must be in the general accomplished, or at least gentlemanly companions. I was not then aware, how low and derogatory are, in many cases, the early habits of that priesthood, or how difficult, even with some advantages of education, it is to eradicate such habits, especially with men who never lose sight of their old associations, and who make their way, and secure their popularity, as much by a jovial familiar manner in private society, as by their observances of superstitious rites, and the enforcing of slavish obedience in all matters connected with religion.

Mr. Mac Cardwell could speak French so as to make himself understood, though not like a person who had been in the habit of conversing with Frenchmen. He also knew something of music, and could sing; but these made the sum total of his accomplishments. He had no learning, exclusive of his theological dogmata; no liberality of mind. The word, indeed, was often on his lips, but the feeling and the practice were to him unknown. There was discernible in every sentiment an inherent low propensity to be jealous of his superiors. His overbearing love of contradiction, even in his most servile attempts at conciliation, was ever breaking forth, and betraying how little he had been accustomed to the restraints of society. Charles, at the first glance, condemned him as unfit to take a place in our domestic circle; and though the politeness of my brother forbade any indication of repulsiveness, that politeness went no farther than a very brief recognition when they accidentally met, until the day when little William was baptized. That day, for the first time, Mac

Cardwell was invited to dinner. Charles made this effort in compliment to his wife; who, however, did not yet join us at table. Doctor Bentley and our family physician made up the party; and I never saw the Confessor so much upon his guard. It was the first step, and he trod it with caution; but it was a step never retraced. It was attaining the *entrée*, and opening the door. Alas! where was the power that might close it in future.

Shortly after the marriage of my brother, and very soon after our return to Cornwall, when Clotilde's religion was known to be Roman Catholic, a few poor families professing the same creed, mostly the wives and children of fishermen, laid claim to her protection, and were of course benefited by her bounty. The mothers of a few little girls petitioned that their daughters might be admitted to our private school, and though admittance was restricted to the families of poor labourers employed on the estate, an exception was made in their favour. We found them in a state of the utmost neglect, uncouth, refractory, idle; but

when classed with the better informed of their own ages, comfortably clad, and sufficiently fed, these poor things soon evidenced, like their precursors, the harmonizing effects of protection, of regular and pious instruction, of order, of subordination. They learned the same scripture lessons, and answered the simple questions adapted to their years; and, in common with their Protestant companions, were soon equally emulous of improvement; their grateful parents never meeting us without blessing the humanity and tenderness which had wrought such a change in their offspring, whom they represented as becoming dutiful, peaceable, and industrious. But the Confessor had not long been a resident in our neighbourhood, when his influence was directed to the disturbance of that equanimity which heretofore regulated our proceedings, and was so productive of Christian charity amongst our little flock. He began by visiting these Romish children in their own homes, as duty prompted; but was duty the actuating motive with Father Mac Cardwell? was it not

rather desire of appropriation? Was it Christianity toward his own, or prejudice against others, which prompted interference with our simple mode of instruction? which urged his cavilling with the first lessons we put into their hands, and thereby raising doubts in their unsuspecting minds? Was it a sincere wish to do good, or a spirit of encroachment, that led him from the cottage to the school, as a spy and a restraint on our actions? He had every opportunity in the homes of these children of putting to them what questions he pleased, of ascertaining if there was undue tampering with their religion; and if he disapproved, his authority was sufficient to prevent their attendance again. But no, such a way of proceeding would have been too sincere for Mac Cardwell.

Neither did he dare deprive them of the loaves and fishes which were so acceptable to their parents, and which they shared in common with their school fellows. He only objected to Christian instruction and religious improvement from Protestant donors. Food, raiment, and money, they were welcome to

receive. The body we might comfort, but the soul and the spirit we must leave naked and hungry. The pious disposition, the kindly feeling, the moral principle, based on religion, we were to neglect.

It was about a fortnight previous to the birth of little William, that Mac Cardwell asked leave to visit the school, which, he said, deserved his warmest approbation. A few alterations were, however, suggested as to books, with which Clotilde was obliged to comply, and which, by separating the little Romanists from those children with whom they were previously classed, took their every day lessons out of my hands. My sister, as long as she was able, invariably taught them herself. But the hour arrived when she could no longer attend, and from that time the Confessor thought himself authorized to fill the vacant place—at least upon the Saturdays, when religious instruction was more peculiarly the occupation of the morning. Nor was the extreme unpleasantness of such an associate in my labours without still

more serious consequences. It induced amongst the young a feeling of my insufficiency, which he took care to infer. Doubts were inculcated, confidence shaken, respect, in some cases, at an end. And though I had not to complain of actual disobedience, a refractory spirit evinced itself. Resistance engendered self-will, an incipient party-spirit began to prevail. Young creatures, hitherto friends, looked upon each other with distrust. Mac Cardwell had his partizans: had I pleased, I might have headed a majority. All this to me was pain and grief, yet I had at the time no alternative. Complaint might be made to my brother, and from him I should be sure of redress, for he would have put a stop to the mischief by dismissing the Roman Catholic children at once; but, in Clotilde's delicate state, I dared not risk any measure that might cause disquiet to her; and I even refrained from communication with Doctor Bentley on the subject, lest he should consider it his duty to relieve me. The Doctor had so much already to get through, such incessant parochial occupation,

such constant attendance at schools, that we had declined all assistance from him, except in the first formation of our plans. It was, therefore, doubly an annoyance that the Romish priest should interfere, and thus put an end to the pleasure, as well as to the privacy of our labours; changing a voluntary benevolence into an irksome task.

Soon as Clotilde recovered, and that I could speak without risk of excitement, my grievances were undisguisedly told, when she did what I had attempted in vain—forbid the attendance of the Roman Catholic children on the Saturdays, not being able—as she nursed her little boy—to give up the morning to their instruction. By this means, I was partly relieved from the presence of a disagreeable interloper; but not altogether, for he occasionally looked in, though never for good; and my anticipation of those visits were nearly as painful as the reality. Alas! they were the beginning of sorrows; they were part of a system from which he never relaxed!

Our dear old home, as I have before remarked,

presented many facilities for improvement, both within doors and without. There were a number of rooms neither very spacious nor light: partitions were taken down, and ceilings raised; windows new sashed; in short, by the time that Clotilde was able to move, without risk to herself and her baby, there was scarcely a habitable room in the house; which state of discomfort, with the noise of workmen, enforced the necessity of a journey elsewhere; and Brighton holding out the inducement of our old friends, the Richardsons, obtained the preference for a temporary sojourn.

In projecting his alterations, Charles had given to Clotilde and myself our choice of a morning apartment, and she immediately fixed upon one which, detached from the others, and opening by a glass door into a flower-garden, was formerly used as our school-room.

At first it was proposed to ornament this little retired garden with a fountain: then it occurred to Clotilde that no place could be better suited for a bath; and her husband, always munificent, pre-

sented her with a *carte blanche* on his banker, at the same time intimating that she should consult her own taste.

The bath was put in progress, the fountain bespoken, and the room itself fitted up as a temporary retreat from the disturbance occasioned by workmen: she carried thither some books, her drawing materials, and writing-desk, inviting me to do the same. There we read our favourite authors, wrote, painted, and occasionally cultivated the garden: in short, this secluded chamber was a childish fancy with us both; and, though so completely environed by an impervious wall of evergreens as to deserve the name we gave it of our *souterrain*, yet many were the cheerful hours we spent there together, while Charles was elsewhere engaged.

Before leaving home, the bath was erected, the *jet-d'eau* almost in play, and a beautiful gothic window, answering also the purpose of a door, only waited our absence to replace its heavy predecessor. Divers articles of furniture were ordered

from London, and all was to be completed before our return.

I pass over the Christmas spent at Brighton, where, according to appointment, we once more met Mrs. Richardson, and where, no longer obnoxious to the baneful presence of Mac Cardwell, we were permitted to be at peace. There Clotilde received letters from the Père Montcalm and her French *gouvernante*, which always added to her happiness. There Charles saw his lovely wife the "observed of all observers," an object of admiration in every circle, yet devoted to him alone. He saw her domestic, retiring, the most attentive and tenderest of mothers; more endearing, and, if possible, more attractive than when, one year before, she had pledged him her faith at the altar.

Early in March we returned to Cornwall, and found the house in a tolerably comfortable state, requiring only some ornamental finishing. All the alterations were done in excellent taste: a spacious suite of light and cheerful apartments, still pre-

servicing the character of the building, had replaced those which were formerly sombre.

Charles, pleased with what he saw of the interior, hastened his more interesting survey of the improvements without.

Curious as to the progress of the *boudoir*, I was hastily proceeding in that direction, when Clotilde eagerly recalled me, saying it was not yet ready for inspection ; adding, that she had in some measure altered her plans, which, although she was sure they must meet with approval, yet, as the furniture was not quite arranged, she must interdict any indulgence of curiosity on the part of Charles and myself, until she should give her permission.

I was in hopes, upon our removal from home, that Mac Cardwell would have lost his interest in the country, and that we should have been relieved of his presence ; but, alas ! he retained not only his place, but his influence, and, during our absence, had been busy enough—acting as the almoner of the charitable Clotilde, and as a sort

of missionary employed in the service of his church. Some scattered members of that church, who formerly pitched their tents where they could find occasional employment in the mines, were now forming, at Pentyffryn, a congregation for the priest; tempted to establish themselves in his neighbourhood, perhaps quite as much in consequence of his reported authority over the purse of Lady Trevillion as for the sake of spiritual communion with himself.

This little history I heard with grief of heart; not because a few poor Christians of a different persuasion were thus supplied with a pastor, but because I had sufficient experience of that pastor already, to be aware of his selfish propensities, and to be conscious that personal aggrandisement was more the object of his solicitude than care for the souls of those whom he collected around him.

The furniture and decorations of the *boudoir* had arrived in a vessel from London, the unloading of which was inspected by Mac Cardwell. Neither

Charles nor myself were suffered to take any part in the arrangement ; and Clotilde accounted for the mystery of her proceedings by promises of an agreeable surprise.

But, limited as is my experience, I have always remarked that people in general like to be consulted, rather than surprised ; and so it proved in the instance I am about to relate, Clotilde's expectations of pleasing, like ours of being pleased, unfortunately producing disappointment.

When all was at length ready, and the mysteries of the apartment about to be unfolded, she came full of excitement, and her face beaming with pleasure, to conduct us to an inspection of its beauties—to prove to Charles, as she said, how well his generous gift was applied. But never shall I forget the first opening of that door, his sudden change of countenance, or the painful surprise expressed on every feature, as, recoiling at the threshold, he cast a glance of inquiry into the most complete and elegantly fitted up Roman Catholic chapel that it is possible to conceive.

The painted glass, newly inserted into the gothic window frame,—the altar piece with its images, pictures, and candlesticks,—the miniature, but highly ornamented organ;—above all, the deep recess dubiously darkened, and partly concealed by a rich curtain of crimson velvet, which half drawn back discovered an arm chair of the same costly materials—a footstool—a crucifix—in short a perfect confessional. One glance sufficed to reveal them all: he had not apprehended, nor could he endure the sight.

Clotilde, too much absorbed in the expectation of creating an agreeable surprise, was blind to his dismay, while, eager to produce the entire effect, she hastened to the organ, seated herself, and began to chant a portion of the evening vespers. I, meantime, to give him the opportunity of recovering his self-possession, flew to her side, and commenced blowing assiduously. But all was in vain, his presence of mind was not to be recovered; and, fearful of betraying his feelings unkindly, he hastily rushed from the spot.

Such abruptness was to be lamented; it deeply wounded the unintentional offender; but, as he afterwards assured me, his eyes, when he would have fixed them on his wife, were attracted to the deep recess—the half drawn curtain—the luxurious arm-chair. He pictured Mac Cardwell its occupant—Clotilde upon her knees before him. He saw only the vulgar, the assuming, the influential confessor—the refined, the delicate penitent—and he thought that his senses must have forsaken him.

Placed in a most distressing position, angry with Charles, full of pity for the mistaken wife, yet afraid of wounding her sensibility by betraying that pity, I had no other resource than to entreat she would continue her chant, and resume my own labours at the bellows. But her voice failed: she tried in vain to command it. The disappointment was too severe, and tears fell thick upon her small white fingers, as she tremulously pressed them on the keys.

I arose, to relieve her from my observation: and

proceeding to examine the pictures, expressed my admiration of their excellence. There were ten copies from Lenar's, representing so many passages in the life of St. Bruno,—one of St. Louis, expiring on his bed of ashes—three different St. Catherines—two very terrific representations of penance, much too terrific to look upon—and an exquisite painting of the Virgin and Child.

“This last,” observed Clotilde, who had left the organ and followed me, “is a present from the Père Montcalm, just forwarded from Paris. He wished to contribute what he calls his mite: I only received it yesterday.”

I did not ask through whose hands it had passed, for I guessed that Mac Cardwell was the medium; but, wishing to aid the efforts she was making to suppress a severe disappointment, I continued to admire the paintings, and lead her to a discussion of their merits.

“What a pity to represent St. Louis in an unpleasing position,” I said. “Why should they place him on a bed of cinders?”

“ Why should they not ?” she returned. “ Can the contrition of one, even so exemplary as St. Louis, be too humbly expressed ?”

“ Contrition, dearest Clotilde, is of the heart ; and penance is not repentance. If Louis was inflicting corporeal punishment on himself as an atonement for his sins, and if such self-inflicted punishment could wipe away those sins, where would be the necessity for that ‘ one oblation once offered for the sins of the whole world,’ without which, we are told by God himself, ‘ the world were lost.’ Besides, are we not expressly forbidden to make a display of our humiliation ? are we not told to anoint our heads, and wash our faces, that we appear not unto men to fast ?”

“ We will speak on this subject another time,” she replied, “ perhaps in the presence of my Confessor ; he is authorized to explain, and I doubt if it be right for me to discuss it with you ? At all events, my spirits are unequal to argument just now.”

“ And at another time,” I resumed, hoping to

soothe her, "Charles will admire those paintings as their beauty deserves—he was overcome at first sight by surprise."

"And by displeasure," she added, in a melancholy tone. "But let us make a visit to William in his nursery."

In the nursery she found her husband. He was caressing his son, and all traces of vexation had disappeared. Placing the child in its mother's arms, with a look as if supplicating her pardon, he endeavoured for the remainder of that evening to atone for the disappointment she had sustained, while all of us, by common consent, avoided the subject of the Confessional.

CHAPTER IX.

SPRING passed away, summer progressed, and with it the influence of the Roman Catholic priest. Clotilde gave more time than formerly to religious seclusion in her chapel, where Mac Cardwell often joined her, and where I, of course, could no longer interrupt their *tête-à-têtes*. She frequently confessed to him, and no doubt received, not only absolution for every thought which he could distort into a sin, but approbation for her increasing devoutness, and for the pious uses to which, under his guidance, she appropriated the rich gifts of her husband. I have seen her, after these secret exercises, these extorted confessions, these

satisfying absolutions, sometimes in extreme trepidation of nerves, sometimes with a calm beatified expression, which evidenced how much of heavenly consolation even a religion so garbled had the power of communicating to her. How anxiously did I wish, while making these observations, that a heart so naturally devout, and so thoroughly sincere, could be suffered to plead its own cause before the mercy seat of God, unshackled by human interference, and to receive its own answers from the exhaustless compassion of Omnipotence. How truly did I desire, that Doctor Bentley could be her spiritual instructor, that he could engage her in biblical topics, and explain those holy mysteries, of which she was kept purposely ignorant. With such a desire at heart, however improbable its attainment, I often made him the subject of discourse; until one day, when dwelling particularly on the mild, unpretending gentleness of his manners, his active benevolence, and various other virtues, she interrupted me with a smile, saying good-humouredly,—“Marie, I see that you are

drawing comparisons, that you imagine I cannot discern between the refinement of Doctor Bentley, his very pleasing exterior, and the rather contrary appearance of my confessor. Believe me, I am not insensible to the difference that exists. It is not necessary, therefore, that you should point it out; but I allow for the disadvantages of the one, compared with the advantages of the other. Doctor Bentley has had a refined as well as a learned education. He has lived in polished circles, and is of gentle blood."

"Then you really do acknowledge that Mr. Mac Cardwell is an inferior person; that he is unaccustomed to such associations as would qualify him for polished society; that he is deficient in all those attributes which distinguish our parish minister?"

"You take too much for granted!" she replied, with a little warmth of manner. "Much more than I intended—much more than is just. We can appreciate the merits of Doctor Bentley, because we are intimately acquainted with him; but is it fair,

on the other hand, to condemn, where the condemned has no opportunity of defence? My confessor is treated as an inferior, disliked by you, repulsed by my husband; he sees the minister of another religion preferred, sought, bidden continually here, while he himself is almost driven from the door, or merely tolerated on my account. Do we speak with justice then, in pronouncing him unworthy of society into which he is never admitted? As my spiritual guide, I find him competent to instruct; and our church enjoins respect to her representatives: that he is wanting in many qualifications which distinguished the highly gifted father who formerly filled his place, is my misfortune, rather than his fault; that he is capable of directing me, of setting me right, I am bound to believe. As also, that he is competent to the explanation of those mysteries that are above my understanding, and authorized to administer the sacraments of the church. If all your clergy do not equal Doctor Bentley, I have never seen one of mine that bore any comparison with the Père Montcalm; but this

is no reason why I am to despise whatever means may fall in my way. Besides, we judge, as I have said, without knowledge or trial. Were the confessor gifted with a thousand talents, do we give him an opportunity of exhibiting one?"

"Dearest Clotilde, why not express your feelings before? Charles, I am certain, has no suspicion that you wish him to cultivate the acquaintance of Mr. Mac Cardwell."

"If the sacred profession of my confessor claims no respect," she replied, "I should be sorry that your brother put any constraint on his inclinations merely to gratify me."

I was sorry to perceive that she felt hurt; but had nothing to say on a subject so painful to both, except what might insult rather than soothe her. All that remained was my consulting with Sir Charles when opportunity should offer.

Though, on the first arrival of Mac Cardwell in our neighbourhood, my brother was very much engrossed by favourite projects of his own, and consequently not very observant of what went on

amongst others ; though, at a later period, he sought to close his eyes, unwilling to admit disagreeable objects ; though he strove to argue himself into good humour with the chapel, and to conquer his horror of confessionals, experience only proved that blindness was impracticable ; that the more perseveringly he sought not to look, the more provocatives were forced on his sight ; and the time had now arrived when his feelings could no longer be controlled—when the volcano in his heart only required a slight additional impetus to explode—when his tenderness, deep as it was sensitive, felt the smartings of a wound : but the very depth of that tenderness, and this extreme sensibility, prevented complaint. I had no suspicion, from its effect upon his manner, displayed only by a little reserve, of the bitterness which rankled at his heart. But when it became my duty to let him know what had fallen from Clotilde, and to tell him that her feelings were hurt—to represent how much advantage we were giving to the confessor, by not sometimes contrasting him with Dr. Bentley ; and by

treating him so as to merit, on our parts, the stigma of injustice—when I begged of him to remove the cause of complaint, by showing some more consideration for Mac Cardwell,—he could no longer hide his emotion beneath the darkness of reserve, or preserve the secret of his sufferings.

“What, Mary!” he exclaimed, looking full in my face—“You intercede for the priest! you desire me to encourage his advances; to subject myself to his impertinence! Methinks we have enough of him already, despite the contempt of which your sister complains. Does he not haunt you wherever you move? How many days in the week does he abstain from violating the leisure of your solitude? I have not hitherto noticed these intrusions, though it was my duty to do so; and, far from treating him repulsively, feel that I have granted too much—that we already run a risk, by tolerating his presence at all. Were I to open my door, he would fasten on my hearth—were I to offer him a seat at my table, he would shove himself into my chair.”

“ There is some truth,” I replied. “ in all that you allege, but may there not be a little misconception? ’Tis better, surely, to err on the side of charitable credulity than to be over suspicious of evil.”

“ I agree with you in the sentiment,” he said; “ but we must not suffer charity to lead us astray, or be blinded by credulity, with the power to open our eyes. We must not, my dear Mary, lose the benefit of experience; and I only ask if this person, whose cause you now espouse, has not already interfered with our peace—divided our house? I ask you if Clotilde is the same open, candid being as she was?—if she is not forbidden to join us in our domestic worship, lest the voice of inspiration should penetrate her ear, lest she should gain a spark of light from the truths of the Gospel? Is it not to him, to his undue influence, that we owe the chapel smuggled into our house—the confessional—that mystic apartment from which the husband is excluded, but where the wife pours forth all her confidence, and unbosoms the sacred emo-

tions of her heart, even its very imaginings, at command—for aught we know—of a licentious parasite, whose whole life is a lie, and whose religion imposes hatred and distrust on all who are otherwise minded. I forbear—oh, you cannot imagine the cost of my forbearance!—when I see her thus enslaved, and when, were I not rendered imbecile by my affection for his victim, I would turn her tyrant from my door, and treat the usurper of my rights as I have warrant and power to do, by every law human and divine.”

“ Oh, hush, my dear Charles !” I cried, eagerly laying hold of the first opportunity to interpose a word; for he waxed loud and warm as he spoke. “ Recollect your marriage-compact with Clotilde; recollect that she has your promise of perfect liberty in all her religious concerns; that she trusts to this promise; and that, with her heart and her happiness, she also gave her conscience to your keeping.”

“ Would that her happiness was in my keeping !” fervently exclaimed my brother. “ Alas !

it is not. Nor let any Protestant husband flatter himself that the happiness of a Roman Catholic wife is in his keeping. No; like her conscience, it is in the custody of her priest—her confessor. I dreamed not, when we married, of confessors, of separate interests, of interference. I certainly lamented that on all points we did not think alike; that occasionally our different creeds should lead us different ways. But I was ignorant then of what is now too well known to me by experience. I made no conscientious inquiries; I conceived not that the separation would prove so vital. I hoped that, worshipping the same God, trusting alike in the merits of an alone atoning Saviour, bearing the same cross, we should, save in a few external ceremonies, have but the one heart and the one mind between us. I dreamed not of the serious, soul-dividing barriers that really exist, of the evils that separation on points of faith must inevitably entail, even upon hearts so closely united.

“Mary,” he continued, and his voice absolutely faltered with the excess of his agitation, “Mary,

my love, I am getting very wretched. Religion, the most precious gift of heaven, the choicest cement of connubial love, instead of securing my peace, and leading me to eternal bliss, is the bane of my joys in this life : it renders me suspicious, uncharitable, jealous of my fellow creatures ; it consumes me here, and will, if a miracle do not intervene, consume me everlastingly !”

“ Alas, my brother, how you shock and grieve me ! It must be a miserable influence indeed which can so warp your generous nature. Clotilde is no less sincere, no less devoted to yourself than when you first won her love ; neither is she more a Roman Catholic. Oracular confession is but one form of a religion that is made up of forms. She subscribes to it, as she does to abstaining from certain meats upon certain days, not trusting in the merits or demerits of fish or flesh, but merely as a matter of obedience.

“ We should judge too harshly of Roman Catholics in general by taking Mr. Mac Cardwell as an example. We are acquainted with hearts very

differently regulated. I have read many letters from the Père Montcalm: they abound in Christian feeling. Let us not suffer ourselves to believe that such an individual as the object of our present discussion represents the Roman Catholic clergy."

"It matters little," persevered Charles, "whether he be a representative or not, so long as he is permitted to use the authority of his Church, and, under cover of her sacred cloak, to encroach, insinuate, coil himself like a snake, into the sanctuary of Clotilde's heart, warp her understanding, mislead her steps, seduce her from her duty, and rob her of her peace. I am not prejudiced, I am not anti-catholic; my marriage proves the contrary. And were it not for this artful confessor, I should have remained blind; but he has removed the film from my eyes, and they are opened to the designs of a Church where the tables of the money-changers are still suffered to exist, where traffic is publicly encouraged, where there are buying and selling of pardons, where the possession of gold permits the perpetration of crime, and where minis-

ters—the authorized venders of deceit—impose fasting, sackcloth, and ashes on their ignorant dupes, yet arrogate to themselves the privileges of the Almighty. Men who, with liberty in their mouths but intolerance in their hearts, pursue, even unto death, the grand object of their lives, that of sacrificing to an inordinate ambition every order but their own.”

Though perfectly coinciding in opinion with Charles, I did not therefore give up my point, but assured him that his fears were exaggerated, and that the confessor, unless rendered an object of commiseration by our severity, was not quite so influential as he thought. I represented to what height martyrdom elevates its object, metamorphosing the complainant into the hero, and how much every generous mind sympathises with martyrdom. I implored him not to place so dangerous an object on so imposing an altitude, nor leave it in the power of that object to persuade one generous mind that he suffers unjustly for the conscientious discharge of his duty.

“Martyrdom! — heroism! — injustice!” reiterated Charles with scornful emphasis, “really, my sister, the schoolmaster is abroad, and the flowers of his oratory are not lost upon you; but like every flower that is plucked from a hot bed, they lose their glowing tints when brought forth to the light, and examined in a temperate atmosphere. However, to meet you in metaphor, let us turn from the stove to the ocean, and liken yonder tide to a modern complainant—a martyr if you will—or (as Mr. Mac Cardwell would say) an hereditary bondsman, because, since the creation, its limits are prescribed; and because, moreover, within those limits it rages and swells; but think you, child, were those limits extended by way of abating the swell, that an inundation would not be the consequence? Step by step we might retreat, but the evil would pursue. In vain we might forbid—in vain repair the breach. The influx would not cease ‘till the destruction were complete.’ We should soon see an analogous catastrophe wrought by this Confessor; his influence is around and

about us already ; it is by far too incursive for our safety ; it is even manifest in the change wrought in you, who now defend and plead for what you so lately condemned. Ah, who may rush into contagion, and escape without risk to their health !”

Despite the fears and the figures of my brother, I would not abandon the cause I had undertaken. I persisted for the sake of his wife. I contended, that by throwing the Confessor so much on the charity of Clotilde, we augmented his claims on the goodness of her heart ; that we should, on the contrary, leave her nothing to advocate ; and I argued, that if we wished her to see him in a true point of view, we should afford her the opportunity of contrast.

“ Place him,” I continued, “ beside Doctor Bentley ; encourage him to give his opinions ; let the natural liberality of your own generous heart be displayed ; convince Clotilde that we do not act from prejudice ; and doubt not, her discrimination must lead to a conviction of the truth. Oh ! that

the whole truth, like the light of revelation, might burst upon her view!—that Doctor Bentley could be induced to bring forward such topics—to encounter the priest in her presence!”

“And if he could be induced, what do you imagine would ensue? What should we see? The triumph of jesuitical subtlety over Christian sincerity. The vain-glorious triumph of imaginary conquest. For, let the success of the Protestant divine be ever so evident to us, the Roman Catholic polemic would never admit it. And rest assured, Marie, that despite complaint and discontent expressed by the latter, his secret thoughts, could we read them, are not those of despair; nor, when so far afield, will he halt in his progress. When a wife is once taught to believe her husband unjust, when she can breathe such a belief even to his sister, is not the day of confidence past—is not affection on the wane, and the success of the incendiary certain? I grieve from my soul that I ever gave him an inch—I grieve more to seem

harsh where my gentle Clotilde is concerned. I suffer torture in refusing the slightest of her wishes, but we must find a less selfish instructor, ourselves a less dangerous associate. He does not, I hope, and as you charitably believe, represent the whole body of Romanists."

Such being the sentiments of Sir Charles, which, had I not hoped to remove a prejudice from the mind of Clotilde, would also have been mine, it required both courage and perseverance to contend with them. But by seizing upon casual opportunities, and availing myself of the tenderness which he could not help discovering for his mistaken wife, by reiterating arguments much too prolix for repetition here, I at length gained my point. Like many other sensible persons, he yielded to importunity what was refused to conviction; and instead of repulsing—as Clotilde expressed it—her spiritual guide from the door, he admitted and politely welcomed him. Warning me, however, that as I had incurred a serious re-

sponsibility, it would only be wise to prepare for disappointment."

"I anticipate none other than the happiest results," was my weak and presumptuous reply. "The Confessor, when we cease to treat him as an inferior, must lose by being placed so much out of his sphere. Clotilde can no longer imagine him injured; and she may, I hope, have opportunities of hearing the most vital subjects discussed in her presence, without restraint and without bitterness—for Doctor Bentley will not refuse to aid our efforts, and he is forbearance itself. Competition will have fair play; and can we doubt for a moment who will bear away the prize?"

"I very much doubt," said Charles in a mournful tone at the close of our conference, "the wisdom of removing the embankment."

Elated with such a conquest over the *prejudices* of a sensible man, (for so, in my zeal to conciliate, and, as I hoped, to serve Clotilde, the *principles* of my brother were misnamed,) hours seemed years until the Roman Catholic priest and the Protestant

pastor were brought into contact; but when this desired introduction took place, it produced no more important results than the opportunity of comparison between a party well-bred and well-informed, modest withal, though imbued with the ease and *manière d'être* of a gentleman, and another who was ignorance, vulgarity, and restraint personified. The Confessor, watchful of the sentiments of others, but keeping a strict guard over his own, thought proper, as on a former occasion, to assume an awkward reserve; and my brother too polite, Doctor Bentley too moderate, to urge on or discuss any subject that might appear to point at our guest, confined themselves to common-place conversation: such as roads, turnpikes, poor-rates, and other hackneyed resources of country society. I indeed made an effort to bring about the object of the meeting by reverting to Ireland, and inquiring if he could solve the mystery of her misfortunes. When not being able to evade a reply, he attributed her poverty, and the ill success of every scheme proposed for her amelioration, to the fault

of absenteeism, and to the universal practice amongst her lower orders, of assuaging their sorrows by aid of the national drug. Then adroitly passing over to France, he extolled the sobriety of Frenchmen, their temperance and moderation; thus paying a compliment to the birth-place of Lady Trevillion, which of course the company present were ready to acknowledge. At the same time the inference was obvious, that the Roman Catholic religion had nothing whatever to do with the evils of his own native land.

On the subject of England, her oppressions and injustice to the finest people in the world, he maintained, at that time, a self-denying silence, and the evening passed away without any other result than a general impression of its stupidity.

But the incipient blaze of a smouldering fire may not be kept under for ever. Unless totally extinguished, it must one day break forth, stronger perhaps for a temporary restraint; nor was it long until the forced quietude of the Confessor began to change its aspect, and to emit coruscations of the

most portentous nature. Towards Charles, indeed, he maintained the semblance of respect, and treated Doctor Bentley with a sort of servile deference, from which the latter shrunk back in disgust; but in these two instances alone was his natural spirit of domination put to the penance of disguise; and while Clotilde's chains were drawn closer, I also felt my free-will abridged; but having urged the conciliatory system with my brother, it would have been highly inconsistent to complain, especially as I had been patient upon former occasions in consideration of his wife.

We are willing to endure small inroads for peace sake, as we pass over trifling deviations without deeming them worth the trouble of reform. The first amounts to usurpation; the second to crime; and yet, until they reach extremes, they are too often left to take their course. It was so with my patient endurance of the Confessor, and, like every thing connected with that dangerous character, the mistake was not discovered till too late.

CHAPTER X.

I PASS over many preliminary steps, by which Mac Cardwell, once admitted to the house, established himself there on a sort of equality, and refrain from touching upon aught of painful interest that evened, until a circumstance occurred which led to those discussions in the presence of Clotilde, which I vainly expected must convert the most sincere, disenthral the most enslaved, and enlighten the most stone-blind of Roman Catholics.

This circumstance was connected with our school—a school meant to be exclusive—established by permission of Charles, and, in point of fact, supported at his expense. On my entrance one morn-

ing, unaccompanied by my sister, who frequently deputed me her deputy, I found every thing in a state of unexampled confusion, and learned, on inquiry, that the Confessor, who was just gone, had been there to anathematize an unfortunate child, one of his flock, whom he had detected in reading the Bible, instigated to the crime by an intelligent girl, her favourite Protestant friend. This girl, instructed that children to be good and happy must know the will of God, and keep his commandments, was naturally anxious that her friend should be good and happy, as well as herself—at least, that she should have the means of learning the way, and therefore not only shared the use of her Bible in school hours, but lent it for private study at home.

This misdeed coming to the ears of the priest, he severely reprov'd both offenders, threatening them with his resentment if they should ever again transgress in the like manner. The offence was repeated—the resentment was dared. That morning, the culprit having been caught in the fact,

expulsion was the consequence—expulsion from the school—expulsion from the mass—anathemas of the most frightful nature, uttered with awful solemnity; and the poor trembling child was threatened with the vengeance of an offended church against herself, against her parents, against her brothers and sisters, if ever she was so contumacious as to exchange another word with her heretic seducer.

A score of terrified, but indignant voices, reiterated this dreadful story, and attested its truth, while the few poor slavish creatures, calling themselves members of the holy Catholic Church, as they listened to the repetition of priestly denunciations, almost deafened me by their cries; nor was it without extreme difficulty, that during a stay of two hours, any sort of order could be restored.

On my return homewards, I met the Confessor walking with Clotilde. Having failed, in the commencement of our acquaintance, to conciliate me by his flatteries, he had latterly changed his manner, and laying aside all marks of former distinction, assumed in their stead a sort of satirical

superiority, as if I were a froward child, whose assumption of sense or of knowledge merited ridicule alone.

His address, as we now met, was peculiarly supercilious; and peeping into my hand—for I was taken by surprise, while looking into a small Testament, to see if there were any authority therein for the infliction of penances—he observed, with a sneer, that I seemed to be deeply engaged—that my studies were serious, that he feared the intrusion was unwelcome. “And yet,” he added, “if sacred studies are pursued in public places, at the corners of streets, or in frequented promenades, what can be looked for, what can be the object but interruptions?”

“It is not my practice to pursue sacred studies in open walks,” I replied, “nor should you have detected me, even in this sequestered place, with an open Bible in my hand, but that I am compelled by the occurrences of this morning to search amongst its inspired pages for the foundation upon which a minister of your church, or of any church, rests

his authority for inflicting punishments, penances, &c. &c., upon the members of his flock, should any of them happen to read, or to converse upon religious subjects with those of a different persuasion."

"You are alluding to Hester Fitzmaurice of course," he said, colouring; "and if she is punished for disobedience, who, may I ask, has a better right to regulate that punishment than the ministers of her church? Is it not out of kindness and pure love that we would afflict the body to do good to the soul? and are we not taught in the book in your hand, that youth requires discipline, viz. "He that spareth the rod spoileth the child, but he that loveth him chasteneth him betimes?" Again, "The rod and reproof are for wisdom?"

"I allow, Sir, that such are the words of Solomon. But does he say that wisdom is only to be learnt by the rod?—Does he not add—"The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom; and the knowledge of the holy is understanding?" Again, "Them that seek me early shall find me, for whoso findeth

me findeth life?" And to refer to a greater than Solomon, permit me, in all reverence, to quote the words of our Saviour himself, who says, "Suffer little children to come unto me, and forbid them not." How, Mr. Mac Cardwell, are children to come to Christ but by a knowledge of his word? Where is the wisdom of which Solomon speaks? Is it not found in the Bible—in the book for reading in which you punish a knowledge-seeking child—in the book which you close on her understanding?"

"Understanding indeed!" reiterated the priest with a sneer. "What has a girl like Hester Fitzmaurice to do with an understanding, unless it is to read before she can spell? or to be left, forsooth, to her own judgment when it is the Church from which she should seek? I feed my pupils on milk, Miss Trevillion; you, yours, on strong meats. I teach reverence by mystery. I conceal what I adore; you expose, you render familiar—you teach reading before the alphabet. No wonder then if children set up to enlighten, or if infants pretend to understanding."

“ We endeavour in teaching,” I said, “ to follow gospel rules—to take for our guide the words of our Saviour himself, who says, ‘ I am the way, the truth, and the life ; no one cometh to the Father but by me ;’ and, ‘ Search the Scriptures, for in them you think that you have eternal life, and they are they which testify of me.’ And Timothy was commended by St. Paul, ‘ because he from a child knew the holy Scriptures, which were able to make wise unto salvation, through faith, which is in Jesus.’ Religion is with us no mystery ; a child may learn her duty from its unerring precepts, and understand them perfectly. Open, undisguised, and simplified, it invites examination. You accuse us of teaching too soon. I ask, why you teach not at all?—Why, for instance, as Lady Trevillion is no longer a catechumen, as her reason is matured, as she may be allowed to have an understanding, why is she debarred of light ? Or, if she seek it, why undergo the penalties of the uninitiated ? I hope, Sir, that you will answer me sincerely.”

“ To be sure I will answer you, and very sin-

cerely too, if you really wish to be informed on that, or any other particular connected wth our holy religion. In the first place, as to Lady Trevillion's *reason*, it has nothing to do with her faith, for we do not allow one to be necessary to the other—far from it. St. Augustine says, this is the praise of faith, if that which is believed is not seen. Lady Trevillion, as an orthodox member of the true Church, is content with ecclesiastical faith. She takes her knowledge of divine things from the infallible interpreters of the word—the doctors of the Church—and wisely abstains from hammering out a religion for herself, by reading that which our holy Apostles pronounced ‘hard to be understood, and which the ignorant and unlearned wrest to their own destruction.’ ”

I said that I thought, as faith was an assent of the mind to divine revelation, and as our salvation depended on true faith, that it was necessary the mind should be informed from the source; also, that though we do value the ministry of the word through preaching, we should not take it altogether

on the report of man. "Surely," I added, "the person who can read his Bible, and believes that it is God's word, will be more likely not to stagger at the promises of God through unbelief, than he who receives it only from a fellow creature. In the passage you have quoted, I must observe, that it is the 'ignorant and unlearned' who do wrest the Scriptures. And our object in teaching to children the knowledge of the Bible, is that they need not be ignorant nor unlearned; and when we see Timothy commended by St. Paul for his knowledge of Scripture from a child—when it is said that the Bereans were more 'honourable than those of Thessalonica, in that they searched the Scriptures daily'—we conceive we are following the example of the Apostles, in leading people to do the thing which they commended."

"You speak, madam," returned the Confessor, "as if we prohibited the *knowledge* of the Scriptures altogether, which is a sore exaggeration. We do not prohibit, we only follow the wisdom of the church, which decrees, that none of her children

read the Scriptures, except by the express permission of the pastors, seeing the evils which arise from a free exercise of private judgment in matters which it has taken the united wisdom of the fathers, aided by the Holy Spirit, to fathom. The church farther enjoins, that we allow those only to read, of whose discretion we are sure. Now, as Lady Trevillion has not received the necessary sanction, and as, under existing circumstances, it is unlikely she will, since it is better she should not—if her ladyship were to violate the discipline of her church, or be led to do so in any instance, it is the duty of her spiritual director to enjoin such penance as may satisfy for the offence, so that the parts of penance may be fulfilled, and she admitted to the holy sacrament. ‘Do penance for thy wickedness,’ must be familiar to any one so well *versed* as Miss Trevillion. Especially, a lady who, thus *versed*, must be willing to allow that Scripture is good for reproof, for correction, as well as for doctrine and instruction in justice.”

“Most willingly, sir, do I admit the divine

authority from which you quote; but pardon me, if I cannot apply it in the same sense; or if I presume to correct your quotation; for, is not repentance more accordant with the spirit of the gospel than 'do penance?' An outward humiliation, indeed; but one, for which our Saviour himself rebuked the Scribes and Pharisees, when he said, 'They make clean the outside of the cup and platter, while their inward parts are full of ravening and wickedness!' Then again, as to separating reason from religion, it is a doctrine incomprehensible to me; for surely an unerring faith, established on conviction and reason, can alone be creative of that 'perfect peace which passeth understanding!' And, as it would be deemed in common life a blameable indifference not to investigate the motives by which we act; is it not doubly shameful in a Christian to profess ignorance of that very ground-work upon which he rests his voluntary hopes?"

"Like most young controversialists," observed the Confessor, addressing my sister rather than me,

“this lady takes up an argument piecemeal, and replies to it wholesale: asks for explanation, and anticipates that explanation by advancing opinions of her own. It would doubtless tend much to my edification were I to enter the lists with one of those *nechlaces** of the church—those proselyting young females—who, in the usual ‘textuary style,’ remember such biblical sentences as serve their own purpose, but forget whatever militates against it. Before we proceed, allow me to inquire if you have studied the Fathers? If you are acquainted with the Council of Trent? If, like some others of your age and experience, Hebrew has made part of your education and theology?”

“Oh sir!” I cried, interrupting him, “do not, I pray you, call me a Controversialist or a Theologian. I am equally undeserving of the praise or the blame. Few young persons, brought up by Christian teachers, but know as much or more than I do.

* We must refer our readers to the high authority of “an Irish gentleman in search of a religion,” for an explanation of the phrase “necklace” of the church.—*Editor*.

And though in accordance with gospel admonition, no modest female should take upon herself to argue in public companies, assuredly it would be denying Christ, if amongst a small society of friends, or in the domestic circle, she were called upon for her opinion, and should hesitate to acknowledge from whence her salvation is derived. You punish an ignorant child, because she would seek for knowledge at the fountain-head—I ask you why? The school-room is my sphere—these children my charge. With such views of the atonement as I entertain, relying solely as I do on its all-sufficient efficacy, looking to God alone for pardon—if, hearing you substitute penance for repentance, and enforce the system which places fallible man in the position of Omnipotence—if, in such a case, I abstain from speech, and tacitly consent to such a doctrine, should I not deny my Saviour in my silence?"

"Madam," returned the priest, "to argue with the prejudiced is to 'cast pearls before swine;' therefore I refer you to the sixteenth chapter of St. Matthew; and will only add, as respects your

term 'fallible man,' that the Council of Trent hath decreed on the tenth canon concerning penance, that 'priests under mortal sin themselves have, through the power of the keys, authority to absolve from mortal sin;' and the same canon further declares, 'that by the *merits of the Son we can satisfy the Father, by pains which we take, or voluntarily endure, to revenge our sins on ourselves,*' or by pains inflicted at the discretion of the priest, by such meritorious works as self-denials, fastings, prayers, and alms-givings. Respecting these, I am not surprised, that a disciple of the easy code brought on by what is called the Reformation, should know nothing; for fasting and self-denial, by which the penitent redeems his sins, accords as little with the apostacies of the Reformers, as does almsgiving, by which, to quote from the writings of a late learned prelate, 'we purchase up our sins.' " *

This was worse than I had hitherto thought of the Roman Catholic religion, and I could not help

* Doctor Doyle, J. K. L., late R. C. Bishop of Kildare and Leighlin.

exclaiming, "Purchase up sin!—oh, what an expression! If man can purchase up his sins, why did our Saviour die?—why did he give his precious blood to ransom guilt, if the rich of this world can ransom themselves? For, from the beginning to the end of the sacred volume, there is not, I will venture to affirm, one word to authorize so fatal a supposition. Oh, that my dear sister might read for herself! She would then, if permitted, bear me out in what I say."

"And make her own interpretations as you do," he hastily added. "No, Miss Trevillion; I read to my Lady myself, and impress on her mind those truths and those commentaries which the wisest and best of men, the holy saints and martyrs of our Church, admit to be the only interpretation. Neither yourself nor Lady Trevillion need, therefore, be surprised if I restrict a hitherto obedient servant of the faith from listening to strange doctrines delivered by an inexperienced caviller, or forbid the indulgence of a vain curiosity by scrutinizing matters unconnected with that faith."

“ If your creed shuns scrutiny,” I said, “ if it shrinks from investigation, must there not be something to hide? Or, if there is danger of its crumbling to pieces beneath the touchstone of inquiry, on what sort of foundation can it stand?”

“ On what sort of a foundation, did you say?” reiterated Mac Cardwell, colouring, and looking at me with fierce indignation—“ why, on the Rock of Ages to be sure. On that which the gates of hell shall not prevail against, nor sword, nor persecution, nor Protestant ascendancy ! Shun scrutiny, indeed ! shrink from investigation ! Don’t say such things, Miss Trevillion ; don’t make such accusations. They are false, begging your pardon, false facts, every one. *We*, on the contrary, invite scrutiny ; *we* seek investigation ; and, if you understood such things, if you were a learned doctor of your Church, read in the ancient languages, and armed at all points, I would not be slow to answer every question you might put—ay, and to confound you too. But argument with ladies is taking an unfair advantage ; there-

fore I leave it with you. We have had enough, and Lady Trevillion has heard more than enough to convince her how the old ancient faith is reviled, what heretical arts are resorted to in aid of disputation, what stuff proselyting Protestants are made of, and what misrepresentations follow the faith of the primitive church."

"Pardon me, sir, I am far from reviling any church, or any faith. I only defend my own, and ask an explanation of some things which seem to me inexplicable. You refuse such explanations, on the plea of my incapacity to understand; but say that you are ready to reply, if asked by one as learned as yourself. The opportunity occurs sooner than I expected. Doctor Bentley is in sight, you cannot withdraw: neither can you object to Lady Trevillion remaining in company; for, if your creed, as you affirm, does not shun scrutiny, if it will bear investigation, why should she not have the same privilege of hearing it upheld as my spiritual teachers allow me?"

He was taken by surprise, and there was no time to frame any excuse whereby he might escape the ordeal he had inadvertently and rashly risked.

CHAPTER XI.

WE had scarcely noticed Doctor Bentley's approach before he joined us, and, fearful that he meant only to pass on, I lost not a moment in alluding to our preceding discourse.

"Mr. Mac Cardwell has been holding a very interesting conversation with us," I said.

"And he who runs may read," replied the Doctor, good-humouredly, pointing to the Bible which I held in my hand.

"Not with the Confessor's permission," I rejoined, in the same lively tone; "for he has just inflicted a penance on one of our school-children for reading the Scriptures. I have been requiring

his biblical authority for such an infliction, and presumed also to question his right of terrifying a fellow-creature by uttering anathemas—those dreadful imprecations and threats, emanating from the seven hills, and wafted by the breath of idolatry!”

“ Oh, Mary, forbear !” exclaimed Clotilde, in a low, frightened voice of expostulation, at the same time laying her cold hand on my arm.

“ Yes, dearest Clotilde ! I will forbear, since you are so dreadfully alarmed ; and, leaving anathemas to speak for themselves, pass on to penance. Mr. Mac Cardwell declines to inform me why he adopts the word ‘ penance,’ where we have ‘ repent,’ or how it comes to pass that our translation and the Rhemish version do not agree. He refuses me these and other explanations, on the plea that I am ignorant of the ancient languages, and, consequently, incapacitated from understanding him.”

“ It would sadly restrict religious knowledge,” said Doctor Bentley, “ if the blessed truths of the Gospel could only be apprehended by the classic

scholar, or if all persons but those skilled in more tongues than our own were condemned to dwell in spiritual darkness, as if they were incapable of discerning Gospel light. Our translation is correct; it follows the original Greek, and has the word repent, literally signifying a change of heart, while that of Rome translates from the Latin *vulgate*, professing to be corrected from the Greek, and has it, 'do penance:' except in the case of Judas, where the latter rendering could not be adopted with any show of sense; so they here admit it, and say, 'Judas repented.' Now, as Christ has made repentance, or renovation of the heart, a necessary condition of the new covenant*, so no term in Scripture should be more thoroughly understood. He gives repentance. We never hear of his in-

* "To that species of repentance, which in Scripture goes by the term *μεταμέλεια*, signifying sorrow for something done, and heartily wishing it undone, forgiveness is no where promised. Remission of sins and salvation are only to be expected from a thorough change of the heart and soul—of the life and actions. This is the only repentance (*μετανοια*) which is effectual to conversion, and therefore available unto eternal life."—*Voice of the Pulpit*.

flicting penance. On the contrary, we see the Pharisees rebuked for their dependence on outward forms and formal services, while puffed up with spiritual pride. We all know that the Greek has the original word 'repent;' nor would it be departed from by Romish translators, but to answer some particular purpose, inconsistent with the preaching of our Saviour and his apostles, by whom peace is promised to the broken and contrite sinner, who casts himself entirely on his God, and looks alone in humble hope to the great propitiatory sacrifice, not to the merits of works, to pains and penalties, or to the unscriptural doctrine, that he can, by any act or deed, or punishment inflicted on himself, make restitution to offended justice."

"Law, as well as gospel," returned Mac Cardwell, "imposes punishment for sin, or penance, as well as satisfaction—painful satisfaction; a doctrine, as the Council of Trent has it, in all times most recommended by the holy fathers. Is it not the fear of punishment, the pain of penance, that keeps many a backslider from sin? And when

the poor sinner does see the evil of his ways, when he has committed offences, which we all know 'will come,' is not it a comfort to his laden soul, that it can pour itself out at the foot of the cross, presented by the priest in the temple; and be assured, from the lips of that priest, that his prayer is accepted—that his sin is absolved—that he needs not to despair? That the words, 'thy sins are forgiven,' are applied to his case, when uttered by those who are delegated to pronounce them? Well may it be said, that the Reformed church is a novelty, when doctrine so perfectly taught by the ancient fathers, is rejected by those who call themselves of the Reformed church. They who were competent to understand the Scriptures, grounded their doctrine on those oracles of the Lord. Although I am not bound, indeed hardly permitted 'to gild refined gold, or paint the lily,' I will just instance one example out of many. When Christ says, 'the men of Nineveh shall rise in judgment with this generation, and shall condemn it; because they did penance at the preaching of

Jonas,' in what did that repentance, as you choose to term it, consist? In doing penance in sackcloth and ashes, in fasting for three days, in not suffering even their cattle to eat anything during that period. And what says the Rhemish note, on the 3d chapter of St. Matthew, 2d verse, as regards the rendering, do penance? Does not it say, 'so is the Latin word; and it is a very usual speech in the New Testament, to signify perfect repentance, which hath, not only confession and amendment, but contrition or sorrow for offence, with painful satisfaction; such as St. Cyprian speaketh of in his epistles?'"

"Allow me," interposed Doctor Bentley, "to answer your quotation in the words of Fulk, from his Rhemish notes, viz.: 'when you understand by penance, satisfaction for sins, 'do penance' is not English, at least it is not a correct English translation of the Latin *agite penitentiam*, either in word or sense* ; and your own translation of

* I see no difficulty in the Latin: it is the best translation that that language will admit of the word *μετανοειν*. The error seems to

the same Greek word in Mark, 1st chapter, 15th verse, shows this plainly. As for the painful satisfaction of which St. Cyprian speaks, it means a satisfaction to the church for apostacy—not satisfaction to God's justice for sin, which could alone be rendered by Christ. By this means the primitive church required inward sorrow of heart for apostacy, caused by fear and persecution.' Such is the answer of Fulk—such must be the opinion of every Christian who is taught to value the gracious invitation of our blessed Lord to cast their burden upon him alone. He says expressly, 'rend your hearts, and not your garments, and turn to the Lord your God.' How then can it be pretended, that doctrine, such as this, emanating from the Saviour himself, is novel. No, sir, it is not. The Reformed church separated from that of Rome,

have arisen from the verb *agere*. An action is at the first blush implied, which, after a moment's consideration, will be found not to exist. We all know that *agere otium* signifies to be at leisure, *agere vitam* to live, so *agere pœnitentiam* should be rendered to repent.—*Editor.*

on account of novelties introduced by the latter, especially as regards idolatry. Look to St. Paul's epistle to the apostolic church, in the first century of the Christian era; and you will see how the church of the present day has departed from the faith once delivered to the saints. St. Paul foretells this falling off, when he says to Timothy, 'that in latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving ear to seducing spirits, forbidding to marry, and commanding to abstain from meats, which God hath created to be received with thankfulness.' Can we read these words, and deny in our hearts that the church of Rome hath departed? hath introduced novel doctrines? And this brings me back to penance, which is indeed a novelty."

"No, sir," interrupted the priest, his eyes flashing fire, "penance is not a novelty. Neither has the ancient church departed. Neither can she depart. Has not the Great Head of that church declared, in his own words, 'that he would be with it always, even unto the end,' to protect it from error? And, after this, can you deny that

it is unchangeable?—that it is a pillar and ground of truth, against which the gates of hell shall not prevail? We do not say that none of her ministers have departed; far from it; but we all acknowledge that infallibility is attached to the body as a whole; that it rests with the pastors connected with their head: and if I am asked, how can this be?—how a body of sinful men can give infallible decisions? I answer, ‘By the power of God.’ As God breathed into Adam’s nostrils the breath of life, and he became a living soul, so Christ hath breathed on his disciples, and said, ‘Receive ye the Holy Ghost.’ The spirit thus communicated to man is retained in the church; and man, however fallible, may, and shall to the end of the world, guided by this infallible Paraclete, give an infallible interpretation of the truth. Man may err, popes may err, councils may contradict councils, but the promise to the church is sure. ‘I shall be with you always;’ and in the body of the pastors that promise is fixed—so sure as the word is Christ’s.”

To this assumption of infallibility Doctor Bentley replied by quoting the words of St. Paul, where he said to the ancient church of Rome, "Be not high minded, but fear; for if God spared not the natural branches, take heed that he spare not thee." That is, if you continue not in the faith, you shall be cut off: "a salutary warning," he added, "to the high pretensions of the Romish church—pretensions grounded alone on the supposition that our Saviour's words applied exclusively to Peter, who might have answered as spokesman for the other Apostles, or have been answered in the same sense. Or otherwise these pretensions assume that Rome was the see where he established his theological chair. So that the whole fabric of the Romish supremacy rests on the doubtful question, 'whether it was on Peter's person or his faith the church was built.' St. Hilary, St. Augustine, and Bede, all, and in several places, affirm that it was his faith. These ancient fathers decide for this rock of confession; and surely the doubt such direct testimonies cast upon the Romish doctrine is

enough. I would establish that doubt in order that the sinner might be led to Christ, the Rock of ages—that thus induced he might open the page of inspiration, and let escape that blaze of light which can alone dispel his darkness. I would disprove, from the Epistles of St. Paul, which were written from the year 54 to 66, and from the Acts of the Apostles, that Peter was, for the thirty-seven first years of the Apostolic church, spoken of as Bishop of Rome. And I would ask how unlikely, or rather I would demonstrate how impossible, it was for him to fix his chair in that city, where St. Paul (however copious in his mention of numerous Christians dwelling there) never notices him in six of his epistles, written from thence to other churches and people. Neither does he recognize him in the Epistle to the Romans as head of that church, nor in any way connected with it; but rather condemns him as alienated, when he says, in writing to the Galatians, ‘that he withstood Peter to the face, because he was to be blamed for unfaithful conformity to the Jews, when he walked not accord-

ing to the truth of the Gospel.' Let us only suppose a bishop of the present day writing from Rome, or writing to the church at Rome, on the whole range of doctrine and practice of the Christian church, and never noticing the Pope as in any way connected with such vital interests. Surely such a supposition would be most absurd! And yet on the prelacy of Peter the Romish church builds her supremacy—a position more frail, surely, than the foundation-stone of such a building ought to rest upon. And, O! what an awful consideration, to have immortal souls clinging to points of history so very debatable, nay so utterly untenable, upon which so many of the learned disagree, and for which there is no warrant in the written word of God!"

The Priest grew impatient. It was probable that he repented having allowed Clotilde to remain. Endeavouring to cut Doctor Bentley short, he corrected him for wandering from the point; adding, rather rudely, "declamation is very easy, and no doubt very fine, but it does not establish a position."

“I would wish to establish my position, and to disprove the infallibility of your church, simply on those doubts I have thrown out this moment, and am satisfied to rest my argument on the caution of St. Paul already noticed, coupled with the fact, that the churches of Jerusalem, Antioch, and Alexandria have erred; and to infer that it is therefore possible for the church of Rome to err. These were members of the church universal; so was Rome: they have erred, by departing from the faith; so may any local church. Therefore all who build on a local church, and not on the faith as in Christ, may be in error. I ask no more than the doubts contained in this possibility to show, that those souls are indeed in an awful predicament, which rest upon the infallibility of the Romish church. And, as I remarked before, I would establish that doubt in order that the sinner might be led to understand the mighty truth, that ‘there is no other name under heaven given amongst men whereby he may be saved than Christ alone.’”

“And do we say that there is any other?”

demanded Mac Cardwell sharply. “Do I teach that Christ is not the chief corner-stone which God laid in Sion? When we maintain that Christ has delegated his authority to Peter, and the successors of Peter, and thus contend for the integrity of his decrees, do we deny his faith? No, sir; Protestants are ever libelling us by assuming that we build our church on the sand;—a church that has stood the shock of ages—against which the floods have burst, and the storms have raged, but which still stands a proud monument of durability—of unity—of universality.

“Protestants also assert that we dishonour the faith of the Gospel, when we interpret Christ’s words as referring to Peter, and not to the faith he professed—we, who if there is faith on earth possess it—we, who take up our cross daily, denying ungodliness and fleshly lusts—who are poor and despised, clothed in sackcloth and ashes, and treated by the Church of England, as she designates herself, like aliens and outlaws; while the same phantom of Christianity, calling itself

elect, but bloated and luxurious, carrying bigotry and blood in its infuriated aspect, rides rough-shod over the necks of a degraded multitude, an enslaved majority, which it is the object either to render apostate, or to exterminate."

"Declamation is not argument, as you, Mr. Mac Cardwell, observed but a few minutes since; neither is it quite fair to make broad assertions without corresponding proofs, although it may be a permitted novelty of the present day. We will, if you please, wave declamation or accusation, and try to convince the reason rather than to confuse the sense. Above all, we will adhere to facts."

"Meaning by facts, a few distorted texts of Scripture purposely extracted," interposed the Priest impatiently. "These, Doctor Bentley, will never convince me; neither will the reasoning of an apostate from the ancient faith shake my attachment to that church, which is from the beginning, and shall last unto the end, despite that bloodthirsty tyrant and ghostly reformer, Henry the Eighth of England, with his obsequious

tools, the recanting Cranmer, and the subtle Latimer. Say what you will, the historic assertions of Protestants, that the Reformation was begun before Henry's quarrel with the head of his church, is not founded upon fact—they being mere assertions without proof.

“Hume dates the Reformation from that quarrel. Hume makes that tyrant, as the same tyrant did himself, the founder of the Protestant church, as established by law in England, with lust and rapine for its inauspicious parents. It is only surprising to me that English people—except that they love a convenient creed—have not yet learned to judge of a stream by the well from which it issues.”

“If the people of England,” resumed Doctor Bentley, “have not learned to identify their religion with the life and character of Henry, they have at least sagacity enough to develop the weakness of an opposite cause, which has recourse to this false, though popular objection. Henry was a rough instrument in the hands of an all-wise Provi-

dence for breaking the long-riveted chain of papal supremacy and domination; but he was not the founder of the Protestant faith. A slight reference to historical data will suffice to defend the Reformed church from a stigma, which Roman Catholics, in lieu of better founded reproaches, cast upon it.

“It suffices to refer to the melancholy fate of Lord Cobham, and to the burning of William Sautre, Rector of St. Osith’s, in London, consequent upon their adhesion to the preaching of Wickliff, in the very commencement of the fifteenth century, to prove that long previous to the quarrel of Henry with the Pope, Englishmen’s minds had revolted from the domination and the idolatries of a corrupted church. Henry the Eighth!—he was not the founder of reform, or even a partaker in the reformed faith. He lived and died a Roman Catholic, though not, I am ready to admit, in the *political* meaning of the word, a Papist*. He sent

* The execution of the Prior and several of the brethren of the Carthusian monastery, for denying the King’s supremacy, was amongst the most barbarous transactions of this period.

many a martyr to the stake for denying the real presence. He left money in his will to pay for masses for his soul. No, the Reformation was in other hands, whose sincerity of profession and belief was sealed with a crown of martyrdom. And, as in apostolic times, the word of God grew and multiplied, despite regal authority and worldly ambition ; so while Henry and the Pope were pushing their separate ends, and over-reaching each other in earthly objects, a superior Power was directing the progress of the spiritual kingdom, by the instrumentality of sinful man. Read the history of these times by the free-thinking Hume, a writer just quoted by yourself, who denies both creeds, and you must recognize the wonderful workings of Providence in carrying on the Reformation under trials and persecutions of the most formidable kind. The King of England and the Romish Pontiff were alike stirred up by a higher power to consummate the downfall of papal domination, through the instrumentality of their own selfish and personal interests. The Popedom was in danger from a

simoniacal transaction with the Cardinal Colono, at the time of his election; which, combined with the desire of restoring to his family the dominion of Florence, induced him to sacrifice his promises, and risk all the interests of the Roman Catholic church. These schemes, hurrying on the destruction of monastic establishments and papal exactions, exhibit the mysterious power of Him who says, that 'he will make the wrath of man to praise himself.' The subsequent calm under Edward, to settle as it were the incipient Reformation, the violent persecutions by Mary, to try, 'to purge and make white,' followed by the long reign of Elizabeth to establish a Reformed church, all these secondary causes are instructively similar to those of the first ages of Christianity, when kings and high priests worked the will of Jehovah by persecution and death. The church having rest throughout all countries, being edified, and having the comfort of the Holy Ghost, was multiplied, enduring perilous days of martyrdom under Nero and others, until at last Constantine became its

nursing-father, as our Elizabeth was its nursing-mother. This similarity makes the reproaches thrown upon the one no less applicable to the other, and altogether suggests a conclusion to which a Roman Catholic defender might not like to come."

"Very ingenious indeed!" retorted the Priest, "and a parallel, which, on first sight, may seem to suit the purpose; but while drawing it, you please to forget that the principal feature of this all-boasted Reformation, and its propelling cause, was avarice; nothing appearing so conspicuous during that disastrous era as the unholy zeal of rapacious reformers, to criminate the innocent possessors of coveted lands and ecclesiastical benefices; seeking every pretext to render their holders obnoxious, in order to furnish an excuse for spoliation. The kingdom of this world, the attainment of power, the appropriation of riches, and not the kingdom of heaven, being indubitably their object and their pursuit."

"The pursuit of Henry's courtiers," interposed

Doctor Bentley, "not of the framers and builders of the Reformation. Houses and lands were little sought, and could have been scarcely coveted by men who risked, and finally sacrificed their lives for the faith which they professed. In the primitive church there were, we know, those who clave for lucre's sake. Judas held the bag, and finally sold his Master; but he was not a propagator of the Gospel. Amongst the martyrs, during Mary's short but dismal reign, will be found the major part of the original Reformers; and these men, with pardon in one hand, and the faggot in the other, deserved not the character of worldly-mindedness."

"It is hard to say how such zealots were minded," returned Mac Cardwell; "and, as they lighted the brand, what wonder if it scorched them? The pride of party, the idle, wicked boast of founding a new faith, will carry certain temperaments very far. At all events, as Hume gives his opinion, these were motives sufficient to induce the pains of martyrdom."

“ I am quite ready to admit,” returned the Doctor, “ that Hume may be good historical authority. He may also be cited as a reference for historical facts. But I should not expect to have his opinions adopted by a professing minister of a Christian church. Such a sentiment as that you have instanced, might equally apply to Paul or Peter—a length which, I trust, you would not like to go. We will, therefore, allow those whose sincerity was sealed in blood, the credit of honest conviction ; and unto those who honestly follow their opinions, though not yet called upon to give the same proof of faith, the charitable construction of thinking no evil. But we have diverged from our first question. You have not given us Scripture proof of your authority for denying to your flock the free use of Scripture reading.”

“ All in good time,” replied Mac Cardwell evasively. “ Your charitable construction comes in most opportunely ; it puts me in mind of the poor creatures, Protestants as well as Catholics, who are waiting for her Ladyship’s bounty ; and

who may put no such construction on my delay. If they do, it is much more than I deserve, for wasting time in talk, that should be given to works—however reformers, and such like, may despise the same, or call such works ‘self-righteousness.’ Her Ladyship is blessed with the means, she knows how to apply them, she understands their efficacy, she has true charity, she is aware that it is acceptable—that it lays up a store in heaven against a day of wrath—‘that it covereth a multitude of sins—that there are faith hope, charity, these three, but that the greatest of these is charity.’”

“I trust that her Ladyship is also aware that charity is tried, long suffering, and humble. That it thinketh no evil—vaunteth not itself—is not puffed up. I trust that she understands the difference between spiritual charity, and the mere acts, however salutary, of alms-giving.”

“The tree is known by its fruits, Doctor, and I must no longer neglect to dispense those fruits. Good morning, Sir; good morning, Miss Trevillion. There is something still to be settled, my

Lady, between your Ladyship and me concerning this same charity; will you proceed, or return to the house?"

Clotilde, who had appeared extremely interested in the discussion, and who evidently was disappointed at its being brought to so abrupt a termination, durst not however betray her wishes. She took the hint, and was returning toward the house, when I ventured to accuse the Confessor of evasion. I told him that he had given us no explanation whatever of penance, its origin, obligations, or uses; and that as to satisfaction, meaning the righteousness which justifies, he had not touched upon the subject. And I ended my expostulation by saying, "Surely, sir, there can be no objection to your enlightening me on these points, even in the presence of my sister."

"I can have no wish," he replied, "to prevent Lady Trevillion hearing a repetition of those truths, as set forth by her church; or even subjecting her to the same penance as I have endured this last half hour; I mean that of listening while my

church was so unjustly attacked, without attempting to refute what I could have refuted word for word, only that it is our system to let the adversary expose his own weakness, wherein is our strength. Since, however, you desire information on some peculiar points of our doctrine, information you shall have. Let us take the righteousness which justifies, which is a divine spiritual quality, making the soul amiable and gracious in the sight of God, and therefore termed grace. This same purifieth all the stains of sin; and by it, through the merits of Christ, we are delivered both from sin and eternal death. This grace is supplied by infusion, is capable of increase, which increase is merited by good works; the first receipt whereof is the first justification, the increase whereof is the second justification. As grace may be increased by the merits of good works, so it may be diminished by the demerits of venial sins, or it may be lost by mortal sin. If I am asked how you are to repair in one sense, and recover in another, I answer, you repair by the sprinkling of holy water, by using the

sign of the cross, by saying Ave Marias, and such like. Those who have lost it by mortal sin, may recover it by the sacrament of penance ; which sacrament has the power to confer grace anew, though that power is not so great at first as it was originally, for it only cleanseth out the stain of sin committed, and changeth its eternal punishment, if time serve—if not, it must be endured hereafter ; except it be lightened by masses, works of charity, pilgrimages, fastings ; or else abridged by pardon for term ; or else, by plenary pardon, quite removed*. And this, Miss Trevillion, is the way in which our church teaches that man may be saved. I leave you to compare it with the ‘ Lord save me, I perish,’ of reformers, who boast of casting all their care upon Christ, yet bear none of the burden themselves ; who talk fast enough of the ‘ thief on the cross,’ but forget the parable of the fig-tree.”

* See Hooker on Justification. The History of the Council of Trent on Justification and Penance ; and Bishop Burnet on the XIth Article.

Saying thus, he was on the point of moving away, but Doctor Bentley interposed.

“Nay, sir,” he cried, “you must not thus easily think to escape. You must allow me, before we part, to reply in a few words to the doctrine just promulged, lest silence be construed into assent to tenets totally opposed to those of St. Paul. Whether you speak of the first or the second justification, you make it a righteousness which is in us. Now the righteousness wherein we must be found, in order to be justified, is not our own. It is not in us; for the apostle Paul, in the Epistle to the Philippians, third chapter, eighth and ninth verses, says, ‘he counted all things loss, and counted them to be dung, that he might win Christ, and be found in him; not having his own righteousness, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith.’

“Christ has merited righteousness for as many as are found in him. In him, God finds us, if we be faithful; for by faith we are incorporated into

Christ. Then, though in ourselves we are altogether sinful and unworthy; yet being found in Christ, through faith, and repenting of our sins, God puts away our sins, by not imputing them to us, (as the Gospel shows in the fifth chapter of Romans,) and counts us righteous as he counted Abraham, viz.: ‘Abraham believed God, and it was counted to him for righteousness.’ As much so, as if he had been in an entire course of obedience*.

“God made Christ ‘to be sin for us, who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.’ You see here, sir, that your church, by teaching justification by inherent grace, teaches otherwise than the apostles taught. Examine the whole of St. Paul’s arguments in the Epistles to the Romans and Galatians, and you will see, that there is no foundation whatever for the Romish doctrine of inherent righteousness for justification. But I deny not that the righteousness of sanctification is inherent. Unless we work we have it not.

* See Burnet.

I distinguish it as a thing, in its nature, different from the righteousness of justification. We have this latter if we have the faith of Abraham. As in Romans, 4th chapter, 6th verse, 'to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth, faith is counted for righteousness.' We have the former if we work righteousness, as in 1st John iii. 7, 'he is righteous who worketh righteousness.' St. Paul proves that we have the one by faith without works, from the example of Abraham. St. James shows that we have the other by works, from Abraham also.

"Be assured, sir, that there is no man's case so dangerous as that of him, whom Satan has persuaded, that his own merits shall place him pure and blameless in the sight of God. Could we even say that we were unconscious of guilt, should we therefore plead 'not guilty' before God, who sees further into our hearts than we ourselves can see? If our hands have not offered violence to our neighbours, a revengeful thought, in the eyes of God, condemns us as murderers; in his sight

a lustful look is adultery; the eye of cupidity is theft. If we did not commit the positive sins, which daily and hourly in thought, word, or deed we are answerable for, yet in our good things, how many defects are intermingled! God respects the mind and intentions; if then we abstract all those things which man does to please man, to cater to his own instinctive love of approbation or self-interest, to satisfy his own desires—those things which we do with an aim, and for respect, not piously, sincerely, and purely for the love of God; what a small portion shall we have to set down as meritorious acts! What iniquity lurks in our holiest offerings! We are never better affected than when we pray; yet, even in those moments how are our affections many times distracted!—how little reverence do we show in the presence of an all-seeing God!—how little remorse for sin!—how little do we, in reality, draw near to God, and taste of the influence of his tender mercies!—how unwilling are we to begin!—how full of the leavings of Satan are our supplications!—

how glad are we to end! Yet God condemns those who 'draw near unto him with the lips only, while the heart is far off.'

"Oh, sir! could you or I this day presume to call Him to account, or demand our pardons in virtue of our works, and our deservings? No; in our holy thoughts there is iniquity, when compared with the requirements of God's holy law: viewed by the same touchstone there are misdoings in every act of our lives. Let the self-justifying Romanist, or the worldly-minded Protestant, call my opinions what they may, I am content to stand by the offers of the Gospel, and depend on being justified freely by God's grace, through the redemption which is in Christ."

"We will moot this point on a more favourable opportunity," said the priest. "I am perfectly willing to enter the lists, either with yourself or Miss Trevillion; so brush up your learning, young lady, for I promise you it shall be put to the test: albeit it is not in my recollection that the females, who were admonished to keep silence, or to adorn

themselves in shamefacedness, the poor widow who cast all she had into the treasury, or she that anointed our Saviour's head with oil, and wiped his feet with her hair, were any of them accepted for their learning."

"They sought instruction, however, as Miss Trevillion does," interposed my kind friend; "and they honoured their Lord in their humility. She knows that the perfection of the Christian character consists in an earnest desire and steady pursuit of progressive improvement; and she says, with the Ethiopian, 'How can I understand, unless some man will teach me?'"

Mac Cardwell made no answer, but, bowing to the Doctor, and asking Clotilde if she were ready, attended her to the house.

"The Confessor fears," said my companion, as he also moved away, "that if Lady Trevillion were to remain with us now, I should take advantage of his absence, and protest against the monstrous absurdities of, what he calls his expositions; but in this he is mistaken. If she be per-

mitted to hear us together, it is full as much as I desire, and more than, I am afraid, we can calculate upon."

Doctor Bentley pursued his walk, and I returned home, where, Clotilde soon joining me, I could not help making some comments on what had passed, and expressed my satisfaction that she had heard the conversation.

Clotilde preserved silence for a few seconds, and then, somewhat coldly, remarked, "The Confessor is peculiarly indulgent."

"And why peculiarly?" I rejoined. "Why," I proceeded, "should there not be unlimited indulgence in such matters? Is it that your spiritual teacher is afraid of his pupil?—or does he think the reasoning of Doctor Bentley so clear, his theory so well grounded, that there is danger of your becoming a convert? Why should it not be permitted the Roman Catholic laity to exercise private judgment? If the arguments of Protestants are not based upon truth, the more they are sifted the less dangerous they must become."

“ Marie, I have heard enough for to-day ; more than I have heard at any former period of my life. Let us not fritter away the impression by unnecessary criticism. At any time I would rather think over than talk over what particularly interests me : at least, such has hitherto been my practice, such the advice of those to whom my religious instruction was confided ; so good bye until dinner-time. What we have heard needs no comment from us.

CHAPTER XII.

THE most accomplished writer of the present century, he who, perhaps, of all our contemporaries best understood the human character, and best knew how to paint it, has remarked, that "there were none, let their acquirements be great or small, from whom something might not be learned;" and I felt, as the sincere and humble-minded Clotilde read me her short lesson, that much might be gained even from a Roman Catholic.

How silly to suppose that my approbation could render Doctor Bentley more interesting—my commentaries or repetitions enforce what came from him! When Clotilde heard an instructive dis-

course she retired to her closet, and communed with her own heart: she did not talk away the impression, or criticise where she approved; her's was indeed a yearning after knowledge, a spiritual thirst. The more I saw of her, the more I became acquainted with her truly feminine and pious mind, so much the more did I desire that mind's liberation, the removal of those prejudices which enslaved her understanding, and separated her from Heaven.

These expressions may seem harsh—some will say unchristian; but who that is denied a free participation in the knowledge which leads to life eternal—who, that is not suffered to go to their heavenly Father, to entreat of him, to receive his bounties without human interference, but is separated in spirit? Who, that ever felt the blessing of direct communion with their God, but must lament the cruel policy which would withhold so great a privilege? Who, knowing Clotilde as she was known to me, but must feel assured, that had she not been warped and blindfolded, and led

astray; had she not been taught an adulterate Christianity; had she not imbibed her draughts of religion at a defiled stream, she never would have erred—at least intentionally—nor fallen from the place which was so honourably occupied.

I have marked her deep interest in Doctor Bentley's conversation; her look of keen inquiry when that conversation turned upon religious subjects. I have seen her bosom heave, her eye intuitively raised, her smile beaming approval, when the Protestant pastor, following up some pious train of thought, breathed a sentiment of purity and peace, or flung forth some bright gleam of soul-fraught eloquence, in a moment of inspiration: and I have likewise witnessed Mac Cardwell frown, and his victim quail beneath it,—

Seen his appalling look, inscrutable
Yet scrutinizing all, citing to judgment
Each passing thought, each word, each wish.

Poor Clotilde! She was indeed a slave, and if not at this hour released by the all-pitying hand of

Heaven, is still a miserable slave, loathing, perhaps, her chains, torn by remorse, pining for liberty, and yet laden so heavily that it is impossible to move.

For the day or two following the discussion which I have attempted to sketch, she appeared unusually thoughtful; and I was not without hope, that, convincing as every argument of Doctor Bentley's seemed to me, they could scarcely fail of producing the same effect upon her. But in this I erred; for, instead of inducing inquiry, they rather frightened inquiry away—instead of drawing her to seek the truth at the fountain head, they turned her from its source. A large old family Bible with black cover and silver clasps, which, despite the occupation of my dear mother's dressing room by a Roman Catholic successor, had hitherto retained its place, was now condemned to banishment, and the French Encyclopædia substituted in its room.

I also remarked, that since that morning's conference she underwent a penance, which from its

nature, and from a previous knowledge of her sentiments upon the subject, I guessed to be self-inflicted; for without cherishing the erroneous notion that by voluntary suffering she could merit mercy, the opinion, that by voluntary suffering she could avert wrath, was a favourite error of her's, and when, having acted in any way contrary to the strict ordinances of her church, she felt that she had done wrong, it was then by a sort of reaction that those ordinances usurped their greatest sway. Believing that good works done for the love of God must be available for pardon, she laboured, with self-reproach resting on her mind, by self-inflicted penances to work out remission of sins; always choosing that penance which was most antipathous to her gentle disposition, most mortifying to her own feelings; so much so, that she would oblige herself to assume an obstinacy of character perfectly foreign to her nature. Previous to her marriage I recollect an instance of this. She had committed some venial offence, either in thought or in deed; an acknowledg-

ment of which was extorted from her in the Confessional. Extorted I say—for, poor soul ! she had no suspicion of her guiltiness, until some probing questions of the priest discovered a thorn in the flesh.

He read the inmost soul, would pluck the thought
She dar'd not speak from its dark sanctuary
I' the heart, and cast it down before her eyes,
Till her soul shudder'd at its own corruption.

For satisfying of the offence I spoke of, she was made to give an alms, and also desired to learn, and repeat off book, certain verses of the penitential Psalms—no task to her who was already acquainted with the whole. But the conscience of the penitent was not to be appeased by a mock expiation ; she wrote to her Confessor explaining the circumstances, and begging he would alter the penance. Her sincerity was commended, and the choice left to herself. We were going that evening to a concert—the entertainment, of all others, in which she most delighted, and which, being for

the benefit of our singing mistress, was an interesting event in itself. When the hour drew near she declined to accompany us ; and no entreaties could alter her resolution, neither would she assign a reason for the apparent inconsistency ; but I suspected her motive, and next morning contrived to come at a knowledge of the truth. Self-denial—self-inflicted mortification—a belief that without some act of suffering she could not, however sorrowful, deserve or obtain pardon for the offence committed, was the source of her obstinacy, the cause of her resistance. Being thus conscious that such were her sentiments, and aware of her mode of proceeding, I now concluded—music being given up—that Mac Cardwell had represented the attention she gave to Dr. Bentley as a sin ; which, though it was permitted by himself, and perhaps at the time unavoidable, still required expiation. Or, it was probable, that she herself experiencing a dangerous gratification in the indulgence thus allowed, and finding a perilous curiosity pervade her mind, had volunteered a mortification to place at the debit

side of her account, so as she might suffer something, to counteract indulgence, or to entitle her to it.

Abstinence from personal gratifications was no punishment to her, but to abstain from mental enjoyments, especially those which rendered her amiable and pleasing to her husband, was real penance. I perceived how fatal to my hopes of a speedy conversion, must be her perseverance in a self-denial of this nature !

For some days, Charles, who delighted in music, and of all music that of his wife was the most grateful to his ears, applied to her in vain to oblige him. She invariably declined his solicitation, and turning over the leaves of a book, 'The Rival Mothers' of Madame de Genlis, seemed perfectly absorbed in the story. But slowly as she read, the perusal could not be spun out for ever; and when the last page of the last volume came to a close, he renewed his request more urgently.

"Not now," she said, opening her work box.
"Do not ask me to night."

“I was in hopes,” he said, “that anxiety to finish your all-engrossing study was the only reason why we were denied our evening’s entertainment. Are you not well? or is there any anxiety upon your mind?” She had yet to learn that a premeditated falsehood might be expiated by a penance, and therefore answered sincerely—

“I am not ill. It is not any ailment which disinclines me for music; but to play or sing for the present is not in my power. I entreat your indulgence therefore for a few days.”

“Certainly, if not in your power to indulge us; but I should like to hear some reason for the objection.”

“I cannot assign one. I must beg of you to bear with me, for I can only repeat that it is not in my power.”

“So much for Madame de Genlis and French morality,” observed Charles, with more sternness than I had witnessed in his manner since he returned from India. “Mystery the ground-work, evasion and rebellion the results.” Clotilde burst into tears.

“ Oh, Charles ! could you but know the sincerity of my intentions, your opinion would be less unjust.”

“ Say less severe,” he replied. “ There is no epithet more frequently misapplied, more generally perverted, than the epithet unjust. Dearest Clotilde ! I have aimed to no purpose : the words ‘ evasion and rebellion,’ rebound from you, and revert to my bow again. But allow me to ask, if mystery can very well be kept up without leading to evasion ; or if resistance to reasonable authority, non-compliance with duty, is not a species of rebellion ? The entire interest of the Rival Mothers, if I am not very much mistaken, is based upon mystery. Does not the merit of a character, meant by the authoress to be the most amiable in the book, consist in the sacrifices she makes of domestic happiness to the preservation of a secret ? Finished as is the portrait, high as is the colouring, and glossy the varnish, it wants for me the beauty of truth. But I am a very straight-forward matter-of-fact person, a rigid respecter of engage-

ments. I cannot recognise the use of expediencies, or admit of their necessity. I cannot lend myself to any system which absolves equivocation and deceit from dishonour; or franks falsehood, free of reprehension, through the world."

"Dear Charles, what expressions! Do you imagine that I have recourse to deceit? Have you ever known me condescend to expediency?"

"No, my poor Clotilde. You only withhold. It is a nice distinction; and I would warn an ingenuous, unsuspecting mind, that there is more safety in broad, than in nice distinctions." She made no answer, but looked serious, perhaps offended.

"Do not be offended, my dearest love," said the tender husband, alarmed lest he had gone too far. "Not for worlds would I give you one moment's pain, but you have spoiled me; and, used to have my wishes granted, I am, perhaps, impatient under the first refusal. If music be unpleasant, or that you feel fatigued——"

"Ah, no! I do not pretend that music is unpleasant, nor do I make fatigue my excuse. Har-

mony of all kinds is dear to me as ever ; but my motives for declining it at present are insurmountable, and could I explain them you would say so yourself."

" I would say," replied Charles with indignant warmth, but in a most affectionate voice, "that you are a pitiable slave ; that you have no will of your own, to act as a kind heart, a grateful mind, and a good intention, would naturally impel you. I would say, Clotilde, that you are imposed upon—that you are a very dupe. I would put it to your native good sense, to your religious principles, if any priest, any dictator, even the Pope himself, is authorized by God, or by the divine lights left us for our guides, to raise up enmity between man and wife, or bid them withhold that confidence from each other which they repose elsewhere?"

"Only upon their Confessor," murmured Clotilde.

"And upon what scriptural authority," inquired Charles, "do you yield to the claims of a Confessor, or place implicit trust in oral confession?"

“ My dear husband,” she replied, with much earnestness, “ you forget the promise to which I yielded implicit trust. You forget, that when we married, I had your full assurance that my religious opinions were to be freely enjoyed.”

“ By that promise it was meant, that there was to be no restraint imposed upon you in the performance of your religious duties ; that you were not to be restricted in your opportunities of religious exercises ; that I was to employ no authority in bringing you over to my church, nor you any seductions to allure me from mine. But I could never contemplate that the grounds of our Christian belief—the written word of God—was to be a closed book between us. I could not intend that you should form secret alliances, or that, if I were to seek an explanation of any thing apparently mysterious, inquiry was to be evaded. I wish not to interfere in matters of conscience ; I leave you, in this respect, at liberty ; I would, to the utmost of my power, promote your happiness. All that I desire in return is your confidence, for

without this last, how is the former to be secured?"

Poor Clotilde! she could only answer by her tears, which Charles kissed away, and both being completely softened toward each other, we should no doubt have passed a most blissful, or I should say comfortable* evening, even independent of music, had it not been for an unseasonable interruption in the person of the Confessor, who, though he had made himself rather free of the house, seldom ventured to tax the complaisance of its master by intrusions at unwonted times.

For the last hour my brother had been reading aloud; for Clotilde, having observed him in the early part of the evening to be much interested in his book, inquired its subject, and if it were a ladies' book?

"It is a ladies' book," he replied, "if records of the most exalted piety, and the most heroic virtue,

* "Domestic bliss!"

"Or call it comfort, by an humbler name."

may recommend it to their notice. The writer is Gilly: his subject, the sufferings and the history of the Vaudois. Mr. Mac Cardwell might, however, disapprove of your hearing it read."

"Dear Charles, there is but one book which you may not read to me; and I am bound to believe that those who restrict its common use do so in wisdom. There is no other restriction, that I am aware of, except some theological works above the comprehension of a female. My spiritual instructors depend on my discretion, and allow me liberty of choice."

Charles made no remark on such a stretch of priestly indulgence, but, with a look of commiseration, resumed his interesting study; while, as he went on, none of the trio evinced a deeper feeling than his Roman Catholic auditor, whose colour heightened, and whose animated countenance betrayed, as the narrative progressed, emotions of pity, admiration, or horror. Truly did she sympathize with the sufferings of a magnanimous people, raised by persecution to the altitude

of heroism; and many were her tears, while listening to instances of the undying zeal and firm resistance of a few primitive Christians, struggling against the tyrannies of their unrelenting foes. She could not refuse her sympathy to a remnant of the "true vine," which, though cut down by the axe of the destroyer, drowned in blood, or scorched by fire, seemingly exterminated, still takes root in its beloved retreat, still clings to its pristine rock, and there, to this day indigenious, puts forth its branches, and produces fruits—despite the stern ploughshare of intolerance—worthy of Paradise itself.

Nor was it possible for one so ingenuous as Clotilde to help drawing comparisons between the simple, uncomplaining, long-suffering Peyranie, drooping, as Gilly found him, in absolute penury, with the bitterness, the dissatisfaction, the uncharitable temperament of her present spiritual instructor. The first, sharing his knowledge without fee or reward, full of Christian zeal and apostolic devotion, suffering unjustly, and in fear of his life:

the other, possessing all things, perfectly free, relieved of every burden, with means of raising supplies for ever in his hands, with the power of tyrannizing over the consciences of his flock, yet never heard to utter one grateful sentiment, or to acknowledge with one grateful expression, any of the thousand privileges he so abundantly enjoyed.

“ We must visit this people some day,” said Charles ; “ we must get acquainted with this apostolic remnant, who, while preserving inviolate the faith and practice of the first Christian Church, has produced such defenders as Henry Arnold, such teachers of the Gospel as Peyranie. I do not know what would please me more, than, divested of pomp and circumstance, to traverse, as best we might, the rough and narrow road which leads to this fastness of a pure and undefiled religion. Such a tour might be likened to an epitome of human life, where many difficulties beset the path, but where the end, if patience fail not, must lead to that ‘ peace which passeth understanding.’ ”

“ It would indeed be a delightful and an instruc-

tive tour," replied Clotilde, "did we only, in our progress, learn to estimate the blessings enjoyed by ourselves, while witnessing the poverty and the privations of those contented mountaineers."

"I should hope for higher and happier results," subjoined Charles, addressing himself significantly to me, who, assuming an indifference foreign to my heart, abstained from comment or reply.

It was just at that moment that the Confessor was announced; and, as he entered at one door, my brother vanished by another. Could the latter have witnessed how coldly the intruder was received, could he have seen Clotilde brush away a tear which still softened her eye, and assume that dignified carriage which became her so much, the influence he dreaded would have been justly appreciated and despised.

Mac Cardwell for once felt repulsed, and, addressing himself to me, while my sister, reverting her head, almost turned her back upon him, he attempted to excuse his ill-timed visit, by making an appeal in favour of two or three persons whom

the bailiff had that evening caught in the preserves, but who were represented, in the florid language of their intercessor, as “only presuming to breathe the free air of heaven, in the same noble park, on the same mother earth, where their fathers and grandfathers were born; who, being forced to labour for their bread all day in the mines, and thus debarred the glorious light of the sun, thought it no crime to look at the beautiful moon, and to enjoy the fresh sea-breeze, before retiring to their humble huts.”

Much did he add, in condemnation of such tyrannical injustice on the part of the bailiff; much did he inveigh against the oppressions practised by English lawgivers, and deprecate the consequent demoralization of the English peasantry; grievously did he apprehend the heavy judgments which must, sooner or later, overtake those who delight in breaking the free-born spirit, and in taking from the poor and defenceless their only inheritance—liberty; ringing the changes, on slaves, and bonds, and martyrdom, the unequal distribution of

justice, the horrible consequences of placing power in the hands of those, who, by education or influence, might conceive that they had some right to exercise it.

I had listened to such high-flowing exaggerations before, and been amused; but they had now lost their attraction with their novelty, and were, to me at least, a dull or disgusting repetition, totally at variance with truth.

I knew Charles to be the most indulgent of landlords, and his old and tried bailiff as faithful to his master as he was friendly to the poor. But Clotilde had been taught to think differently: she was prejudiced against Banks; for Mac Cardwell, who durst not insinuate a hint against the humanity or justice of Charles, had made up for this restraint, or for this deference to the high principles of his credulous listener, by laying a double portion to the share of the bailiff; so that, as he now talked in lugubrious strain of galling fetters and lacerated limbs, her pity was greatly excited. She expressed her hopes that these unhappy beings, whose case

was so eloquently described, were not personally injured; or, if so,—though, perhaps, blameable,—that they had not been left without assistance, and, drawing out her ready purse, she presented it to the Confessor.

But this self-constituted champion of the oppressed,—“Though he accepted the gold, knew little of their actual condition.” It was on the broad principle of universal justice, as he expressed himself, not with the vain hope (under the present state of things) of mitigating individual pain, that he declaimed so pathetically; and I know not how long such declamation might have lasted, or what Clotilde might have been led to believe, but that Charles reappeared, and gave us the true version of a story which he had himself investigated but a few hours before. The persons so liberally relieved by Clotilde were, though young men, old offenders, who, instead of working in the mines, and thereby earning an honest independence, lay in bed, or spent their mornings in idleness and debauchery, their nights in committing depredations, and several

respectable farmers and labourers had assisted the bailiff in apprehending them.

Mac Cardwell, though looking rather foolish, contested the point for a while, but having the worst of the argument, soon changed his subject, and after some conversation on the advantages or disadvantages of what is called "the march of intellect," Charles inquired if we had received the last number of Blackwood from town. "I am looking every month in that magazine," he said, for an additional sheet of the "Radicals' Saturday night," or something in the same style. It was an excellent sketch, and if not quite so well written, might well be published in a separate form, and distributed advantageously as a tract."

"But why should the excellence or beauty of the composition be an objection to its circulation as a tract?" I inquired.

"My acquaintance with tracts is not very extensive," replied Charles, "therefore my opinion may be prejudiced or unfair; but it strikes me, that the well-intentioned authors of these little books,

by lowering their style to suit the lowest order of intellect, injure the cause they would serve. Also, that those intended for the benefit of children are unnecessarily babyish. But there may be many of a similar class with the 'Shepherd of Salisbury Plain,' and its companions, calculated for the improvement of the adult, and for the instruction of the young. Mrs. More, however, had few equals. I know none whose writings are so healthful: one rises from their perusal as if invigorated by a mental tonic."

While he spoke Clotilde found the magazine. In drawing it forth from a cabinet, some new music fell upon the floor.

"So you have got the opera we were speaking of," said Charles, picking up the roll. "I hope that it fulfils your expectations?"

Clotilde hesitated, blushed, and acknowledged to not having tried it.

"What a self-denial!" returned her husband, looking rather indignantly at Mac Cardwell. Whether the latter caught the glance and under-

stood its meaning, or whether he merely wished to shorten the term of self-denial, his mollifying expedient was both injudicious and insulting. It began by inquiring how long since she had received the music from town.

“Only a few days.”

“Like her ladyship’s voice,” observed my brother abruptly, “it has been for that time under lock and key.”

“Perhaps her ladyship would favour us with a trial,” said the dictator, approaching where she sat, and adding a few words to her, in an undertone which we did not distinguish.

Clotilde had resisted the wishes of her husband, and good taste suggested the impropriety of complying with the request of another. She therefore persisted in her refusal, saying that the first trial of music was seldom agreeable.

“Well, any of our old friends, my Lady; you can be at no loss;” persisted the Priest, and he held out his hand to lead her to the instrument.

The proffered aid was declined, but she arose

with quiet dignity, put aside her work, which she had taken up as a resource, and crossing the room opened the pianoforte. Her husband's eyes flashed fire; but he compressed his lips, and leaning his head over the table, seemed quite absorbed in the magazine. She ran over a well-known prelude, and began with,

“Clotilde c'est orpheline.”

“Any song but *that*, Lady Trevillion,” exclaimed Charles, in an impatient tone, and without raising his eyes. She tried another, but failed. The Priest had an excellent bass, he threw it in, and encouraged her; she made a second effort, conquered, and sung with effect. Her gentle spirit seemed as if it were aroused, for never did I see her more excited; her voice improved as she proceeded, it swelled to its utmost pitch, it rang like a bell, it filled all space, it thrilled upon the ear, upon the heart. No music could be more affecting, no performer more interesting; and as she sat at the instrument, inspired by her own

seraphic strains, I could only compare her to the original of a St. Cecilia.

Much, however, as she was at that moment an object of admiration, so much the more was she an object of pity. Devotedly attached to her husband, adoring her child, the most exemplary of wives, and the most tender of mothers, beloved in turn by hearts warm as her own, she seemed to me like a victim fated to destruction, whom affection would save, if affection might reach ; but who, placed on the verge of a precipice, and trusting to blind guides, repelled every hand, except that of her leader.

Nor was the husband, as he remained silently apart, his fine open brow contracted by a frown, and sedulously avoiding to look at his wife, less an object of commiseration than the innocent cause of our mutual anxiety. If the poison of jealousy was insinuating itself into his mind, or even a suspicion that his influence was becoming subordinate to that of another, I knew that for him all domestic comfort was over. And, oh ! what a cruel, what a

relentless principle it is, that can sow the baneful seeds of discord amongst the flowers of love, and strengthen a selfish interest by the aids of division. Yet such a principle exists ; such a principle was here perceptible, though it sought concealment in the foldings of a religious cloak.

CHAPTER XIII.

I HAVE never seen a pugilist braced for the combat, I trust I never shall ; but I can imagine a practised one to put forth his strength, and, secure in his own physical powers, to enter the ring, look round on his less athletic opponent, eye him with an air of condescending superiority—perhaps even with contempt—and take his own stand perfectly confident of victory.

It was with such an air, if not in such a spirit, that the Romish champion entered the library at Pendyffryn, when it suited his pleasure to meet Doctor Bentley again, and give us the promised explanation. He shook hands with us all, to prove

his cordiality, and taking up the subject as if thoroughly prepared, drew our attention to a laboured exposition on the Roman Catholic sacrament of penance; saying, his church taught, that, as man has not sufficient gratitude in his nature to preserve constantly the righteousness he received at baptism, God, in his rich mercy, provides a remedy of life for those who deliver themselves up to the slavery of sin and Satan, which remedy is the sacrament of penance, whereby the benefit of the death of Christ is applied to those who have fallen after baptism. "It is in the form of this sacrament," he continued, "that its virtue principally consists. Which form is, in the words of absolution, 'I absolve you.' The acts of the penitent is the matter, and these are called the parts of penance; they are contrition, confession, and satisfaction; and are required to obtain a full and perfect remission of sins committed, with a resolution to sin no more. Confession is of divine right, being instituted by our Lord himself, and necessary to those who fall into sin after baptism.

Our Lord Jesus Christ being ready to ascend up into heaven from the earth, left his priests to be his vicars, as presidents or judges, before whom the faithful ought to bring their mortal sins ; that so, by the power of the keys, which was given them to forgive sins, they may pronounce sentence. Now it is certain that the priest cannot make this judgment unless he knows the case. Neither can he observe the rules of equity in imposing the punishment, if the penitent should only declare his faults in general, and not one by one. Hence it follows, that man should confess every sin, even of thought, though ever so secret, or committed against the two last precepts in the decalogue. All mortal sins must therefore be declared without reserve ; no reserve is allowable either from male or female. Wandering thoughts, or wayward fancies, though struggled against, must be acknowledged, however painfully. For how can a priest, not knowing the disease, absolve ? How can a physician probe a wound unless he be permitted to see it ? We must make a full and free confes-

sion to the physician of the soul, or there can be no remission. An imperfect confession is a mockery of God, and turns the benefit of absolution into a curse."

At this point of the exposition, which was infinitely more prolix than I have ventured to give it, Doctor Bentley interfered, by suggesting the possibility of a man not remembering all his sins, and inquiring what, in such a case, was the remedy supplied by the Roman Catholic church? To which Mac Cardwell answered, rather dropping his confident tone, "that the church provided for such omissions, by comprising those sins which might not be remembered in the same confession with those that were."

An explanation that, by the manner in which it was glossed over, I suspect he would rather not have given, and at which we could not help expressing our surprise.

His next attempt was satisfaction; the arguments in favour of which I shall not repeat, as they were, though more at length, not very much

varied from those on the subject of justification, answered by Doctor Bentley on a former occasion. Suffice to say, that such arguments were calculated in all their bearings to take away the necessity of that one oblation once offered for the sins of the whole world—to neutralize, if I may so express myself, the exuberant mercy of the atonement—to render inutile the death that conquered death—to take the sinner off the rock of ages, and throw him helpless and forlorn on the quicksands of imperfect obedience, and voluntary suffering, and self-righteousness, and all the fatal denials of His alone sufficiency, who made a full, perfect, and ample sacrifice, such as neither man, nor angels, nor any other than the Incarnate God could possibly make for lost mankind.

Again, on the subject of intercession, as understood by Roman Catholics, Mac Cardwell's doctrine went the length of refusing to a contrite and afflicted soul the indescribable comfort of that blessed assurance, "I am the way, the truth, and the life; no man cometh unto the Father but by

me." Or making of none effect this most consoling promise, "whatsoever ye ask the Father in my name, he will give it you." Not, indeed, denying the efficacy of our blessed Lord's intercession, but adding thereto, without reference to the sacred volume, some such expressions extracted from Origen, as these—"I will fall down on my knees, and not presuming, on account of my crimes, to present my prayers unto thee, will invoke the saints to my assistance!" Thus, under the cloak of humility, violating the express commands of God, and vindicating, by *ex parte* selections from the compilations of fallible man, the monstrous presumption of emendations and additions;—as expressly forbidden in Holy Writ, as that blasphemy which naturally follows, *viz.*, adoration of the creature. This also the priest attempted to defend, and brought forward, in his support, the following quotation from St. Athanasius:—"Hear, O daughter of David!—Incline thine ear to our prayers. We raise our cry to thee. Remember us, O Holy Virgin! and for the feeble eulogiums

we are enabled to make, grant us those great gifts from the treasures of thy graces. Thou, that art full of grace! we fly to thy protection. Holy Mother of God! protect and guide us under the wings of thy mercy and kindness:" together with other inventions equally impious. But these were promptly answered by Doctor Bentley, quoting from Epiphanius, where he says, in contradiction to Athanasius; "Let Mary be honoured, but the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost alone adored. Let none adore Mary;" thus throwing the priest (who could produce no gospel testimonies) back upon tradition; and who, once embarked upon that wild and mystic field, set all written authority at defiance.

Next were brought upon the tapis the veneration of relics, and the necessity of believing in miracles effected by means of relics. On which absurd points the priest most solemnly asserted, from the authority of Chrysostom, that "that which neither silver nor gold have power to effect, the relics of martyrs have. For though riches never

dispelled disease, or warded off death, the bones of martyrs did both." Confirming such assertions by some curious instances set forth as facts.

"Facts," Doctor Bentley allowed, "were stubborn things, provided they could be proved. But facts of ancient date, and only supported by tradition, were questionable at the best. He would produce some of very recent date, which had their living witnesses, and which attested the inefficacy of such dead works. One especially, when, during the late visitation of cholera at Rome, an appeal was made to the most sacred relics in the most public manner by priests and cardinals, and people in processions; by prostrations and oblations to stay the terrible disease; but all to no purpose, the disease was neither stayed nor mitigated."

I will not attempt to follow the priest throughout his Jesuitical defence of Transubstantiation, but merely remark upon that awful subject, that he insisted on the necessity of taking Christ's words, "this is my body, this is my blood," in the literal sense; and accused Protestants of affirm-

ing (when they denied the real presence), that Christ did not mean what he said; and strongly reprobated a cause, driven for its support to a denial of such plain expressions of Him who spake as never man spake.

Doctor Bentley replied, that “he gave to those words the same interpretation which was allowed in other places to be correct, namely, a figurative sense. As in the institution, our Lord says, ‘this cup is the new testament in my blood’—when it is evident that the cup represents the blood of Christ. Again, in 1 Cor. x. 4., ‘they drank of that spiritual rock which followed them, and that rock was Christ,’ or prefigured Christ. So the words at the institution of the sacrament, ‘this is my body,’ &c. &c.; ‘this represents my body,’ &c. &c.; and for this mode of interpretation, we have the authority of Tertullian, Origen, Ambrose, Augustine, Jerome, Chrysostom, and many other of the fathers, who styled the sacrament a figure or sign, a symbol, remembrance, &c. &c. The fact is,” proceeded the reverend expositor, “you cannot prove

the doctrine of the real presence from the Scriptures, or from the writings of the ancient fathers, or divines of old councils, or from any example of the primitive church. The figurative mode of speaking used by our Lord was quite familiar to the Jews. It was the habit of the East, which all his parables and discourses evidence. It was the language of the Bible, as in Isaiah xii. 3, 'Ye shall draw water out of the wells of salvation.' 'Ho! every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters,' with many other similar expressions. It was the very language used at the Paschal feast, celebrated by our Lord and his disciples: they were eating the lamb, which was called 'the Lord's Passover,' or the memorial of that event. When our Lord said, 'This is my body,' &c. &c., the disciples were prepared to understand that he meant, 'This represents my body: this is to be taken and eaten as the memorial of my body broken, and blood shed, for the sins of man.' And, 'if,' as in the sixth chapter of John, 'it be eaten in faith, the recipient dwelleth in Christ, and

Christ in him;' and, to show that the whole of that chapter is figurative, when the Jews, like the Roman Catholics, asked, 'Will this man give us his flesh to eat?' our Saviour responded, 'It is the Spirit that quickeneth, the flesh profiteth nothing; the words that I say, they are spirit, and they are life.' However, setting reason aside for a moment, as also the opinion of the ancient fathers, I would determine the fallacy of the doctrine of transubstantiation by this one test:—the doctrine of the Council of Trent is, 'That the body and blood, soul and divinity, of our Lord are substantially in this Holy Sacrament, and that there is a change of the whole substance of the wine into the blood of Jesus Christ. Transubstantiation is a change of the substance, according to the doctrine of the church of Rome.' This we deny; and I demonstrate the truth of my denial thus:—let the wafer for consecration be made with arsenic mixed with the flour, or put into the wine; and, if your doctrine be true, its substance, changed into the body or blood of Christ by consecration, will, conse-

quently, not prove destructive to animal life—would you, after consecration, partake of this in the conviction of a real change? It has already been refused by a priest, under fear that the change was not so complete as to ensure his safety. Here would be a practical proof of the truth or fallacy of your reasoning, of the soul-destroying nature of this dogma.

“Again, you lift up and adore the consecrated host as God; and you teach that, in order to a valid consecration, the priest must intend to do what the church intends should be done. Can it be said that some one priest, when going through the office, has not failed in this attention? and yet he holds it up to be adored. On your own showing, those who do adore it worship the creature, instead of the Creator, and are guilty of idolatry.”

The Confessor attempted a reply: and oh! what a world of sophistries and subtleties had we not to encounter, even in opposition to the ancient fathers themselves, while he sheltered himself behind “*the secret,*” behind mysteries, and silence.

Substituting the superstitions of men for the truth as it is in God, he framed his answers, when asked for Scripture proofs, from the “De Præscripto” of Tertullian, viz., “To the Scriptures no appeal must be made;” or from the “De Corona” of the same writer, when required to furnish written proofs, “None will be found; they spring from tradition, which practice hath confirmed, and obedience ratified.” Thus cutting off all reference to the inspired word, and finally setting a seal on inquiry, he repeated from Chrysostom, “It is a tradition—ask no more.”

Furnished with a thousand subtleties, mutilating the inspired writings of the apostles, translating from which of the fathers best suited his purpose, selecting peculiar passages, easily warped, and so garbled and distorted as to appear contrary to their original meaning, it would be an arduous task to follow the devious windings of this wily man; who, finding it a matter of despair to attempt puzzling the judgment, or subverting the belief, of one so much better instructed than himself, pursued his

expositions, as he called them, not in the vain attempt of converting a sound Protestant divine, but with the object of mystifying still further his own deluded follower; who, already prejudiced by education, was more easily misled.

Various, indeed, were the feelings which seemed to agitate Clotilde, as, bending over her work-table, she lent a curious ear to all that passed. While the able defender of the Reformed faith vindicated his own righteous cause, or exposed that of Rome, a divine intelligence was seen to sparkle in her eye, a deep glow to flush her face; again, when the priest uttered his anathemas against apostasy, vain curiosity, or disobedience, that glow would fade away, and be succeeded by the paleness of fear.

But the point of all others most insisted upon by the Roman Catholic advocate was the infallibility of his church. Upon the establishment of that belief, with her unity, depends the blind obedience which papal power exacts from its dependents, and upon which she shelters the many doctrines opposed to Scripture.

Counting the prelates from the see of St. Peter, and in that order, according to St. Augustine, considering who to whom hath succeeded, he insisted that such was the rock meant by our Saviour, against which the gates of hell should not prevail; setting at nought the more scriptural signification of a spiritual church, and the impossibility of proving that Peter was bishop of Rome; overlooking, also, the rebuke of St. Paul to the Corinthians, for ranging themselves under Cephas or Apollos, when he asks, "Is Christ divided?" passing over the divisions of the Clementines and Urbanists in the fifteenth century, the later sects of Jesuits, Jansenists, the school of Molinus, and the differences which exist between the Council of Trent, St. Augustine, and other fathers, upon the subjects of free-will, grace, predestination, &c. &c.; —he defended the ancient church, as well as that of Rome in the nineteenth century, from any charge of schism: summing up all, by a most pathetic lament for those branches lopped off by the heresies of Henry the Eighth and Martin Luther;

whom he equally condemned as luxurious, sensual, and avaricious; uttering frightful maledictions against all such apostates, and dwelling again upon the mistaken notion, that, until the quarrel of the King of England with the head of his church, that church had been one of universal obedience and harmony; having but one religion, one altar, one doctrine; ever looking with filial reverence to the successors of blessed Peter, the common father of all. Then the Confessor, who had reserved his argument *ad captandum*, which he deemed in his heart his strongest ground, to the climax of his appeal, drew a comparison between the meanness and poverty of the Protestant church, with its familiar unelevating ritual, and the more splendid service of the holy Roman Catholic temple, where the priest is found at the altar performing the sacred mass, in the same sacred language known to blessed Peter and Paul; where the eye rests upon figures of saints and martyrs; where one baptism is admitted, one faith paramount; one head, vicar of Christ on earth, acknowledged as

head of the church's countless members; where unity, faith, prostration, adoration, invocation, every ceremony recorded by tradition are to be found; and where the pious worshipper has an opportunity of joining in the *tundens pectora palmis*, never heard in a Reformed church. Above all, where there is the refreshing sprinkling of holy water.

Much more was said in the same tone both in defending and praising the church of Rome. A thousand times more than I wish to repeat, in condemnation and ridicule of our more primitive belief; until the speaker, working himself up into a sort of paroxysm, was obliged finally to pause for want of breath; first however challenging Doctor Bentley to show any thing in his church like the grandeur, the devotion, the consistency, thus by himself described; and to prove that Protestants, while they accused Romanists of paying reverence to saints and angels, had no favourite idols of their own.

Doctor Bentley, who never so far forgot his

sacred character as to retaliate invective, answered in the Gospel spirit of that religion which was, by him, so consistently upheld; and referring to evangelical writers, quoting from the ancient fathers, and authors of later date, producing witnesses for all he advanced, he proved himself as much the superior of his adversary in depth of research as he was in the finer feelings of the more enlightened Christian. It was indeed with a truly apostolic spirit—the only spirit in which religious opinions should be advanced—that he proved the protest of the first Reformers, against the apostasies of Rome, to be caused by the falling off from the faith by the ancient church; and it was in such a spirit, that he enlarged upon the beauties of our Reformed ritual, and showed, that instead of such ritual being a novelty, it was purified and modified from that of Rome in later times by the most devout Christians and learned prelates of their day.

How truly did I rejoice, while thus listening to our excellent pastor, to observe the deep interest expressed in Clotilde's attentive silence! How

sincerely thankful did I feel, that she was there to hear, while he drew a lively contrast between his own faith and that which, founded on mystery and supported by fallacies, withholds from its numerous followers the light of revelation; while he boldly enforced the free reading of the Scriptures, recommended the Bible as a study that alone defines the bounds of right and wrong, alone furnishes to believers a rule of life, alone teaches the most essential truths—showing man that he is really dependent on the illimitable mercy of God, and is a light shining in darkness, which darkness comprehendeth not!

Nobly did he defend, against a religion of penances, oblations, and almsgivings to purchase up sins, the religion of those who substitute for such acts the rod and staff of God; who resting on one only plea—a Saviour's unwearying, all-redeeming love—feel that there is laid upon them a dutiful necessity of doing good, while a meritorious dignity of well-doing they utterly renounce. He showed from the authority of the ancient fathers, authority

sacred in the eyes of Clotilde, that on the subjects of satisfaction, inherent grace, and absolution, those very fathers wrote against the church of Rome. Recommending his hearers to study on this point St. Ambrose on the 3d chapter of the Romans; as also Origen, St. Jerome, St. Hilary, and St. Augustine; the first, whose words are "God justifies by faith;" the last, who uses this expression, "Only faith in God justifies."

On the subject of infallibility he brought the favourite authorities of the papal power to bear against itself by referring to Pope Adrian, who admitted the lapses of his church; and to Claudius, a writer held in the highest repute, who not only maintained the equality of the Apostles in contradiction to St. Peter, but preached against idolatry, when called upon by Lodovico Pius and other learned abbots to explain the Scriptures: thus exposing the different doctrines promulgated by Rome at different periods—any thing but an evidence of her infallibility—and lastly asking this serious question of the priest, "If he held good the

teaching of Bellarminus for the body of the pastors, which that writer held for the pope, viz. that, if virtue was vice, and vice virtue, was he bound to believe it?"

"Sir," cried Mac Cardwell, evading a direct reply, and looking rather at a loss, "it is clear enough that Protestants read for the sake of cavil, rather than for instruction. Our ministry have at least this excellence, that they never cavil; they look to their church as a pillar of truth, which despite false statements of enemies cannot teach error; but rather dooms to the severest punishment those by whom error is imbibed: and who, listening to *ex-parte* testimonies, admitting heresies, or falling from the faith, shall earn for themselves at the last awful day of judgment, that final sentence of condemnation,—'Away from me, I know you not.'

The reiteration of this dreadful threat was accompanied by looks of so intimidating a nature, directed against the gentle being whose countenance underwent a thousand changes, that our

kind pastor, the sincere advocate of religious liberty, had much difficulty in temporising with his indignation, while condemning, in strong terms, the inquisitorial system practised by the Roman Catholic clergy, which tyrannizes over conscience, stifles the expression of opinion, and proscribes those who dare assume the privilege of thinking for themselves—"all," he continued, "to uphold a church whose boasted unity exists in name alone, or in an enforced ignorance* ; nor would even in name exist, but for the coercive power of a body sufficient, even in these days of vaunted liberality, to silence such points of dispute amongst its own members as formerly caused a schism during the lives of five pontiffs, and the reigns of two kings in France; which forbids, at this moment, to a dissenting son communion with his family; has power to banish him his father's house, to separate him from the wife of his bosom, and teaches the children of his love to turn with horror

* Vide "Index Expurgatorius."

from the heretic; while he—so doomed—unless a charitable Protestant take compassion on his sorrows, is subject to as heart-rending destitution and as certain death, as it was lately in the power of the Inquisition to inflict.”

“Like enough!” exclaimed Mac Cardwell, “while there are busy, meddling Protestants for ever at hand to cram the renegade with Friday’s bacon, and to pay handsomely for the vain-glorious boast of having seduced one backslider from millions of his more faithful brethren.

“In answer, sir, to your mighty pathetic lament for the stigma attached to an apostate, and for the bereavements he is supposed to undergo, I shall refer you, in the instance of his children, to our Saviour’s own words, where he says, ‘whoso loveth father or mother more than me, is not worthy of me;’ and also, in the instance of his wife, as says the prophet Isaiah, ‘for thy Maker is thy husband. The Lord of Hosts is his name, and thy Redeemer the Holy One of Israel.’ Sufficient authority, I should think,” he added, “to decide the conduct of

the fondest wife, who might waver between the indulgence of mortal passion, and duty to her heavenly spouse."

Again the Confessor shot a meaning glance at the trembling object of his last insinuation, who again changed colour, and had recourse to the sign of the cross; while Doctor Bentley remarked, with becoming severity, upon the cruel injustice of misapplying such texts of Scripture as may be wrested to suit peculiar purposes, the heinous sin of such misapplications, and the awful responsibility of some who would thus terrify weak but awakening minds, from yielding obedience to a command so positive as that of "search the Scriptures." "Nor can we," he said, "sufficiently honour those, who, trained up in such a system, coerced when blind, and anathematized when light is given, have assumed the noble courage to throw off their galling yoke, to assert their right of choice, to renounce their errors, and join themselves, for conscience sake, to a purer creed,—despite the sacrifice of family affection, of home, of kindred, early ties, and all the links and

bonds of matured associations. These are the struggles, worse than death-throes, which render the reformed Romanist a real martyr: these are the forsakings meant by our gracious Lord, and which no doubt shall be rewarded an hundredfold: these are they, who 'no longer defiled by their own inventions,' 'forsake, and shall find mercy:' these are they, who, like St. Paul, have persecuted the saints, and thought within themselves that they ought to do many things contrary to the name of Jesus; but who, when a voice from heaven carried conviction to their hearts, determined 'that they would not know anything but Jesus Christ, and him crucified.' Neither is it in secret, or in one state, or in one district only, that these enlightened priests, ceasing to speak in an unknown tongue, having convinced themselves that God is not the author of confusion but of peace, teach to the edification of their hearers, abolish former idolatries, celebrate mass in the vernacular tongues, and distribute the sacred elements separately*.

* At Birr, in Ireland.

“ France, awaking from a long sleep of infidelity, but too shrewd to return to, or endure the superstitious rites of the Roman Catholic church, is embracing in part a Reformed faith; admits, in some places, the free reading of the Scriptures; denounces the celibacy of the clergy as detrimental to good morals; requires auricular confession only from young persons, previous to their first communion; but remits the dreadful exactions of the confessional to persons of maturer age.

“ I do not cavil,” he continued: “ I am no busy, meddling Protestant. I highly esteem the blessings I possess; and, if it were possible, would possess them in peace. But when I see religion made a cloak for interference—when I see the most sacred obligations set aside, the most sacred ties about to be dissolved, distrust and separation imposed on the credulous—then controversy becomes a needful work, and exposure an act of the truest charity. Far from cherishing unchristian feelings to a church calling itself Catholic, I would to God that the church of Christ were Catholic! that

it were composed of individuals of every nation and of every tongue: that there were no longer schisms, or heresies, or idolatries; but that all things needful and holy, and wise unto salvation, were taught by the ministers of the Gospel; and that Catholics, all who assume to themselves a term only attributable to the apostolic church, instead of founding the pretensions of the Roman pontiff upon the words of our Saviour, as addressed to Peter, would more earnestly seek after the blessing so implied! Would to God that, not turning the oracles of God into ambiguity and equivocation, but casting away all deceits, they could open their intellectual sight, and embrace the reality as it is in the Gospel! Would that the universal family of God, worshipping their Creator in the beauty of holiness, may soon meet in a temple of instruction, where the word of life, made free to every creature, declares the glad tidings of salvation, where — however idolatry may be cherished in the heart — none can rise up in judgment and say, that therein was the ‘idol furnished;’ where the ministers of religion, no

longer intolerant, no longer secular, no longer interfering, may confine themselves to spiritual matters, and following many bright examples—even in this our day—freely as they have received freely give, not only alms of their abundance, but all that is refreshing, consoling, and encouraging in the promulgation of the Gospel! Nor is it my hope alone,” continued the Christian advocate, “but the hope of every true believer, that the time will come when all the empires of the earth, strengthened in the true faith of Christ, may be ‘found together in Messiah’s kingdom.’ When separation will be no more, when the churches, the ‘honourable women’ of the Psalmist, fostered by pious potentates, shall be brought unto the King—‘all beautiful without as all glorious within’—‘to celebrate in wedding-garments the second advent of our Lord.’ When the ‘unity of the spirit and bond of peace’ shall supersede those bitter feelings and malignant recriminations, that now disgrace the converse of professing Christians! When ‘pride shall humble herself to seek know-

ledge at the Fountain of life, and seeking, find it.' 'When the wolf shall dwell with the lamb,' and the 'leopard lie down with the kid,' and a little child shall lead them."

"Tithe lambs, no doubt, my good Doctor," exclaimed Mac Cardwell, with a malicious laugh; "ay, ay, the wolf in sheep's clothing will make a rare nursing mother for the lambs. We understand your system of charity quite as well, to say the least, I suspect, better than you do ours. Reformed charity! it begins at home, and ends at home too, lest it should be seen of men. It is a very domestic virtue, and quite as easily practised, as the other virtues belonging to a convenient creed; which eschews self-denial, humiliations, fasting, and mortifications. But perhaps, my good sir, you have had enough for this time; I shall, therefore, waive my right of confuting your arguments, however original and ingenious they doubtless are, and make an end of this unprofitable discussion—it being only a repetition of what we have heard and read of to satiety. Theology has become a thread-

bare subject, which has already exhausted all the learning of the proselyting clergy and new-light laity in the United Kingdom."

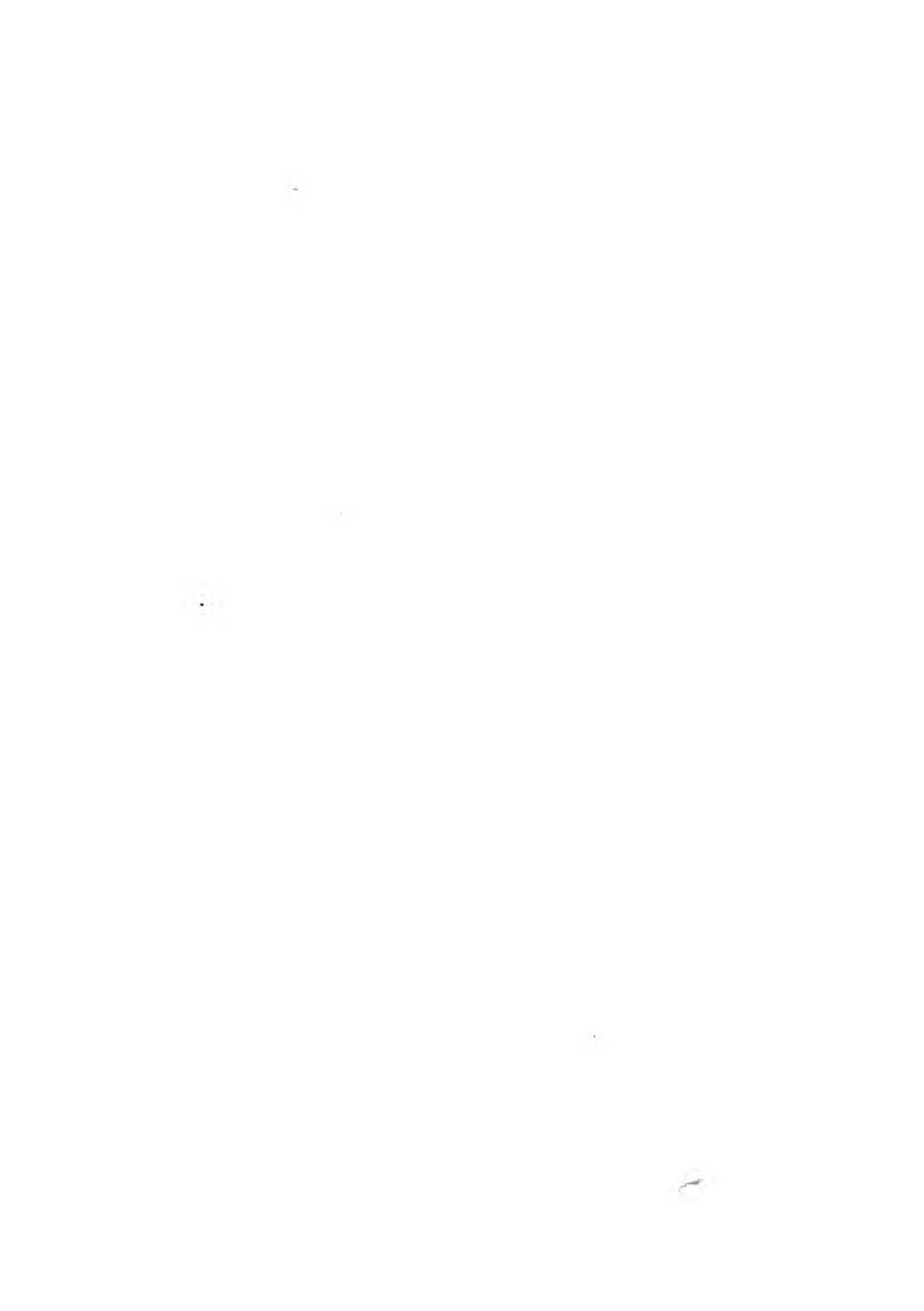
"Nevertheless it leaves a wide field of inquiry open still for those who may wish to search," rejoined Doctor Bentley, "and induces many to think, who thought not till the present time, upon what grounds they found their faith. In short, sir, the progress of what you are pleased to call a threadbare subject, robs indifference of all excuse, for, with the opportunities it offers, blindness becomes wilful, and ignorance is choice."

"With your leave, sir," replied the Priest snappishly, "we may as well for the present rest our choice on silence. As I have just said, I will waive my right of retaliation, since I must now attend to affairs which should long ago have called me hence. I beg permission to withdraw."

His physiognomy, as he pronounced these words, wore an expression of malignity, more marked than I had ever before observed, and which I would rather not have seen. Lady Trevillion happening

to raise her intelligent eyes, half-shuddered as she also looked upon his countenance; and I could almost have believed him to stand reproved. But if reproof were meant, retort unfortunately was in his power. At no future time did Clotilde enjoy the same privileges in virtue of the priest's indulgence, as was that day accorded to her.

END OF VOL. I.



PERE LA CHAISE;

OR,

THE CONFESSOR.

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PERE LA CHAISE;

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A TALE OF THE TIMES.

EDITED BY

GEORGE STEPHENS, Esq.

AUTHOR OF

“THE INTRODUCTION TO THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND QUARTERLY
REVIEW,” AND SUBSEQUENT ARTICLES.

“At the sight of a cross, or crucifix, I can dispense with my hat, but scarce with the thought or memory of my Saviour; I cannot laugh at, but rather pity, the fruitless journeys of pilgrims, or contemn the miserable condition of friars; for though misplaced in circumstances, there is something in it of devotion. I could never hear the Ave Maria bell without an elevation, or think it a sufficient warrant, because they erred in one circumstance, for me to err in all, that is, in silence and dumb contempt; whilst therefore they direct their devotions to her, I offered mine to God, and rectify the errors of their prayers by rightly ordering mine own.”—SIR THOMAS BROWN.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

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PERE LA CHAISE.

CHAPTER XIV.

As the Confessor's health seemed to be perfectly good, and as we had heard nothing for some months of his cough, I was silly enough to cherish the flattering hope, that he might return before autumn to his duties in the sister-island, of whose wrongs, oppressions, and absentees he was always complaining. But, alas! the removal of the malady by no means facilitated the departure of the *malade*, who seemed rather to be established as a fixture, and that not only for the autumn, but for the en-

suing winter. Many comforts, in the way of furniture, &c. &c., were, as we were told, added of late to his lodgings, the outward appearance of which indicated a considerable improvement in the ways and means of their humble proprietor, whose reverend lodger, by familiar intercourse with the lower classes, and the indulgence of *aside* invectives against every existing restraint, but above all by his influence, owing to his control over the charities of Lady Trevillion, was fast founding for himself a popular reputation; while his inhibition (so to speak) of Doctor Bentley, by prohibiting all scriptural allusions and conversation in the hearing of Clotilde, was as practical an infliction of tyranny as any "hereditary slave-driver," to adopt a favourite figure of his own, could possibly enact.

Owing to this inhibition, which caused a very perceptible disappointment to the inquiring mind of Clotilde, and roused all the free-born English woman in my heart, the morning calls and week-day visits of our good pastor were now becoming rare. Nor could we expect any other result from

the subsequent conduct of the priest, who, once permitted to enter the arena of argument with a person so very much his superior, forgetful of his own previous position, thought fit to drop the mask of politeness, and lay aside the humility with which his first advances were made. Rudely declining any further contest, he assumed, except in presence of my brother, the attitude of one who has already conquered. But, though the covert malignity or open impertinence of Mac Cardwell thus drove Doctor Bentley from our private society, though I, myself, became a mark for the satirical scorn of the Confessor, I could not lament what had passed—I could not regret any means by which the seed might be scattered. However sterile the season, however blighting the influence, it might germinate ; and, if so, no matter how late—no matter at what or whose cost—no matter how long it lay in the ground before it showed a blade ; its fruits, if they ripened, must be sure to compensate for all.

Had Charles been less busily engaged at this

time, or had he observed with more interest the politics of our domestic cabinet, this system of intolerance must have had its termination, and the crisis been accelerated to which we were fast drawing on. But the progress of improvement, both within doors and without, by no means accorded with his impatience. Autumn had begun, the long days were over, yet brick, mortar, and paint, were by no means cleared away. Very few of our relations had as yet seen Clotilde; but some who had looked coldly on the marriage, and whom my brother most esteemed, were by this time more cordially disposed; and, having promised to visit us at Christmas, he anxiously anticipated their introduction to his fascinating wife.

But her fascinations were, alas! on the wane. She had lost that playful hilarity of manner which had been so peculiarly tempered by feminine gentleness, while a watchful, uneasy expression, clouded her once happy countenance. The remoteness of the neighbourhood, and the open state of the building, had as yet precluded the reception

of company. As the growing influence of the Confessor, and Clotilde's acquired seriousness, might alike in some respects be attributable to our exclusive habits, my hopes for her restoration to cheerfulness, as well as for his expulsion, depended on some additional society. There were, however, three months before us of seclusion, of vulgar encroachment, and of quotidian annoyance, which, though I united with Clotilde to soften or conceal, was ever on the point of occasioning an outbreak.

Meanwhile, in her most interesting mind, "the genius and the mortal instruments were in council," and her nature, "like to a little kingdom, suffered an insurrection." She frequently betrayed a thirst for inquiry, and there was a very evident internal working of conflicts. But, as if fearful of lapses, she adhered more strictly than ever to forms and ceremonies. Severe penances I knew her to endure, and fasts, such as she really practised in that sense, were often recurred to. These were, however, as much as possible, kept out of

sight. Her husband especially was to know nothing of them ; but Charles, though not very observant in matters of minor importance, could not wholly shut his eyes, and one glaring instance opened them effectually. Clotilde, though peculiarly simple in her habits, and perfectly free from epicurean propensities, possessed a national taste for all kinds of horticultural productions, which habit had rendered essential to her health ; and even though autumn was set in, she persevered in the custom of taking her *goûté* under an old mulberry-tree in the garden, and gathering the fruit which composed it herself. But this harmless indulgence was suddenly abandoned. For some days in the week no *goûté* was eaten ; and on those days, at dessert, if Charles recommended any particularly fine specimen from the new hot-beds or houses, I perceived that it was cut in pieces on her plate, but invariably left there untasted.

The gardens at Pendyffryn are famed for their produce, and the old gardener, grown grey in the

service, was proud as any potentate in Europe of the territory over which he reigned. When any superior result of his government was to be exhibited, if we did not go to him, he always came to us; and one luckless day, when the Confessor unfortunately dined with us, old Jenkins, as the last dinner-bell rang, displayed in the vestibule a new sort of pine-apple, exactly at that moment in perfection. This occurred on the Wednesday, one of poor Clotilde's self-righteous fasts. The pine was produced at dessert.

"I am glad poor old Jenkins has succeeded so well," observed Charles, cutting it up, and addressing Clotilde, "especially as it is your favourite fruit."

"'Tis the finest I ever saw," said our guest, fixing his eyes on the dish, and snuffing up the perfume; "uncommon big, too, and has a mighty delightful smell."

The plate was passed round, the priest helped himself. Clotilde, colouring but resolute, silently put it away.

"Not try the pine!" exclaimed her husband,

PERE LA CHAISE; OR,

with a look of surprise, "not give your opinion of its merits!"

"I would rather not eat any fruit," she said, in rather a hesitating manner.

"Then you cannot be well, love."

"I am quite as well as usual; but not in pineapple taste."

"A little capricious, I fear; is it not?"

He looked annoyed; more so, perhaps, than the occasion required. But it was the manner, not the matter that annoyed him—for Clotilde, perplexed and uncomfortable, felt her own awkwardness; and, dreading inquiry, sought to evade it by affected determination.

After a few minutes of distressing silence, broken only by Mac Cardwell's eager mastication, Charles, thinking of the old gardener and his disappointment, again resumed; "I wish you could make an effort, for the sake of poor Jenkins. He is like a spoiled child, and will be sadly mortified. As to Mary's approval or mine, he values it nothing in comparison with yours."

But this appeal was equally ineffectual as the preceding: she negatived it silently, by again passing on the plate.

A perseverance so ungracious, so unlike herself, filled him with astonishment; but merely ejaculating "I cannot understand it," he ceased to importune.

The priest, meanwhile, stretching across the table, helped himself more abundantly than at first; and, having possibly not eaten any fruit so delicious before, swallowed piece after piece, smacking his lips at every mouthful with epicurean enjoyment.

"Mr. Jenkins may be proud enough, Sir Charles," he said, "for this pine bates Banagher."

"I beg pardon," returned my brother, who was extremely curious as to all horticultural novelties. "The name you have mentioned is a new one; some very fine specimen, I conclude."

"Oh, not at all," cried Mac Cardwell laughing; "sure you didn't think it was fruit I was maning. Banagher, indeed! No fear of pine-apples or any

other sort of apples growing in Banagher, barring apple potatoes. It's just a sort of cant word that we sometimes say to each other when not on our p's and q's, but social together; or when a man happens to boast, and another gives him the lie in a civil kind of way. Here's your health, Sir, and my Lady's and Miss Trevillion's too. The Burgundy equals the pine, and the pine equals any I ever saw at the Duke's."

Poor Clotilde! Her colour came and went. Mortification was expressed on every feature; for the Confessor, having forgot his p's and q's, there was no knowing what might come in their place. The shining red of his face—the self-satisfied expression—the perfect ease and enjoyment of his manners, no longer under restraint—the rich Irish accent—the broad *a-a* restored to favour in all *cra-ated* *cra-atures*—the soft pains-taking “*e*” exploded from teebles and cheers, proved to a demonstration the merits of the Burgundy. And as an unwonted smile passed across my brother's mouth, as the deep blushes of his wife mounted to her forehead,

I thought it best to keep up conversation, and draw his attention from her to our guest.

“Of what Duke do you speak?” I inquired, addressing the latter.

“Of the only Duke we have in Ireland, Miss Trevillion, to be sure. The only one Duke that England allows us. That is the way her misfortunes came across me, thinking of how we are scrimped of our rights. Only one Duke, when it's kings we ought to have! That is what robs me and every patriot of their rest and their pace: thinking of home, and comparing its injuries, its poverty, its privations, the murdering cruelties that's practised against her, with the luxuries, and enjoyments, and wonderful privileges of England. But you are used to the same, and most likely thinks little about them. While abstinence and self-denial are second nature to us; and man, you know, Sir Charles, is the crathure of habit.”

“Yes,” returned Charles, “an Irish man especially; he is ever complaining, yet never in want.”

“Never in want!” exclaimed Mac Cardwell,

almost screaming aloud, "you can't mane what you say; or else, like most English aristocrats, you know nothing of the subject."

"I know so far," replied my brother, "that those who should be best informed, boast of her superiority in no limited terms. That she is called 'a perfect gem,' her people 'the finest in the world,' her soil the most fertile, that the markets of England are loaded with her produce; and that, compared with this country, her taxes are nothing."

"Ask those you refer to," returned Mac Cardwell, "and they will soon prove that her taxes are something. What do you call the bloody impost of tithe?—What do you call the constabulary expenditure?—What do you call the military establishment?—And last, though not laste, what do you call the expinses of a Parliament in England? Are not every one of these paid in Irish money? And is it not wrung from the poor cratures at home? No wonder, Sir Charles, if English markets are loaded, as you say true enough, with Irish produce. For where is the

gold to pay prices in Ireland. But you are not far wrong to call her a gem, for she's the ancient ould place after all; and but for the injustice and hatred of England, there's no spot on the globe would bare any comparison; so we'll drink long life and equal rights to Green Erin, before the ladies take lave of us."

The priest drew his breath to help himself again. Charles stole a glance toward his wife, who, afraid to remain, yet in terror to go, sat the picture of shame and perplexity. The pine was disappearing along with the Burgundy. He ventured another appeal.

"I wish you were not the only abstemious person at table. Do, dear Clotilde, change your mind; unless it be a penance, I cannot comprehend such self-denial."

"Pray say no more," she entreated, in a very low voice, and without raising her eyes, which I feared must betray her, for their lids were surcharged, and it was as much as she could do to restrain the tears from falling.

Mac Cardwell had been so taken up with his own gratification, that I really believe, until the few words last spoken by Clotilde, he was not aware of her abstemiousness, for, seizing the dish and the fruit-knife, he cut the last slice of the pine; divided it on his own plate, and presenting her with half, said, in rather an under tone, "My lady, you will not refuse your Confessor."

The blood rushed to my face; while the eyes of the husband flashed fire. Clotilde, still looking down, comprehending nothing more than that her restriction was over, and afraid to trust her voice, scarcely conscious of what she did, and innocent of the inference that might be drawn from her tardy compliance, accepted the donation, so familiarly offered; and, though unable to swallow a morsel, mechanically used her knife and fork.

Irritated by the effrontery of the Confessor, deeply wounded by the condescension of his wife, forgetting that the same authority which imposed such an abstinence had alone the right of removing it, Charles looked on for one moment with porten-

tous silence, then hastily pushing away a glass of wine, which he had just raised to his lips, started from his chair, and rushed out of the room.

Clotilde arose also, her face pale as death, trembling, and unable to move; when Mac Cardwell, with a look of pity too insulting even for her forbearance, filled out some wine, which he begged she would drink. But, as if indignation supplied her with courage, she haughtily put it aside, and, making another effort, abruptly retreated.

The evening was fast closing in; the Confessor immediately took his departure, and Charles, who had met a groom leading about a young horse, mounted it, and galloped from the house. Like the animal he rode, his spirit required taming by exercise, and the *recipe* was not without its effect. Clotilde joined me in an hour, her features were swollen with weeping. We awaited his return in silence: he came in, and throwing himself on the sofa beside her, asked for some tea, which drinking off at a draught, he placed his burning forehead

on her pale cold cheek, and murmured a petition for forgiveness. She, poor soul! not knowing such a feeling as resentment, generously returned his caress, and the soft tears of reconciliation fell on that burning forehead. Next moment he enquired for his son: I ran to fetch him: wakeful and full of glee, that dear child was never more engaging. We had not spent so happy an evening at Pendyffryn for many weeks.

Next morning, when Clotilde retired to her chapel I went out for a walk, and Charles overtaking, proposed to join me.

“Let us turn into the wood for half an hour,” he said, “I want a confessor to the full as much as my wife. This person, so called, is destroying my peace, perverting my temper, and betraying me into a mean and unworthy jealousy. I love our sweet Clotilde better than life, but cannot answer for my patience if she continues to be influenced as we saw her yesterday! I cannot even answer for my justice. Were it not out of pity to the prejudices with which she has been brought up,

and respect for her feelings, I would tell this incendiary how much I despise him. I would drive him from my door with the scorn he deserves. But in consideration for the credulous being whose conscience he rules, we must adopt a more gentlemanly mode of redress. In short, my sister, we must quit this place; its charm is no more. The home of my fathers is rendered hateful to their offspring. We will go to London—Brighton—I care not whither. Peace we must seek, and other confessors, if needs be. But, from so infatuated a subjugation to one intolerant dictator it becomes my duty to separate my wife; or, in the end, he will sever her from me. You must break it to her, my dear sister, that we are going from home; it may be a weakness not to do so myself. But were she to hesitate, were she to receive the communication as if it pained her, I should probably enact the madman over again.”

I had wished, for some time, that it were possible to leave home, therefore his intention delighted me; and I eagerly answered for my sister's cheerful

compliance ; adding, “ as to confessors, all are, I am certain, perfectly alike to her, provided she enjoys through their means what is termed the consolations of her religion. It will indeed be a relief to pass the time between this and Christmas elsewhere, since poor dear Pendyffryn is become subject to the *surveillance* of a Roman Catholic dictator.”

As I pronounced the last word, we both at the same moment espied that obnoxious character, walking by a back road toward the house. His long stealthy step, the path he had chosen, and the speed with which he moved, seemed to prove that his errand was both important and private.

Charles called loudly on him to stop : adding in a lower tone to me. “ Mary ! this effrontery is not to be borne : yesterday, to day, for ever ! I must open the fellow’s eyes, he must be taught to keep his distance.”

We saw that he hesitated whether or not to notice the call ; but my brother repeated it, and making a virtue of necessity, Father Mac Cardwell

slackened his pace, reluctantly advancing to where we awaited him.

The manner of his approach was at first rather subdued: "I am going to Exeter to-morrow or next day, Sir Charles," he began, "and was coming to see if you have any commands."

"None in the world, sir, but to wish you a good journey. I leave Pendyffryn myself, in a very few days; my family accompany me: therefore your office, as confessor to Lady Trevillion, must necessarily cease. She shall not be without the assistance of a Roman Catholic clergyman; but we must find him elsewhere. I use no disguise; and conclude, upon this understanding, that it will be as agreeable to all parties if you return no more."

Mac Cardwell looked astounded—for a moment subdued; but, immediately rallying, he exclaimed, in real or well feigned surprise, "Is it, not come back? is it, not use my own freedom to live where I like? is it, obey the orders of any man, to my own inconvenience. No, sir, I am none of your slave; and make free to say, that I count the

king's high road, and a lodging in the village here, just as much mine as they are Sir Charles Trevillion's. No ; poor, and despised, and persecuted, as may be, I'm not yet so subservient. And, if it were in the power of Sir Charles Trevillion to outlaw the Roman Catholic priest, he would find his way back from the remotest corner of the earth ; or, if it answered his purpose to land at the door here, or in the very ocean before us, it's not the Lord of Pendyffryn, or any other lordly oppressor, that should chain him to the ship, like a galley-slave !"

" You are free to land in the bottom of the wide Atlantic, if it suits you," replied Charles, warmly ; " but this is idle retort. As to galley-slaves and chains, they are figures of speech. We know nothing of such thraldom in Protestant England : here, from the king to the beggar, every man's house is his castle."

" Except the humble roof," retorted Mac Cardwell, " which shelters a servant of the Holy Catholic church ; and which, if power so wills it, he is

ordered to quit. But power, Sir Charles, shall never frighten me from my duty! I have one life; and am willing to risk it in defence of my holy calling, and in protecting, so far as I have means, the persecuted, despised, and defenceless children of the cross, by guarding them from apostacy, or from coercion to apostacy."

"Your language is unintelligible, Mr. Mac Cardwell; but, that mine may be understood, I take leave to repeat, that the object in view is neither apostacy nor coercion. Lady Trevillion must be released from the disgraceful tyranny to which a bigoted religion and a too compliant temper subjugate her; and, should authority be wanting to effect that release, you may rely on my word, that it shall not be withheld."

The Confessor was enraged, and, forgetting to wear even the slightest mask of moderation, tauntingly enquired of my brother, "What sort of release he was talking of?"

"Release from the tyrannies of superstition and bigotry," replied Charles, "restoration to freedom

of will, and liberty of conscience, privileges enjoyed before your interference ; and which shall again be enjoyed, when that interference is removed.”

“ Which is all as one as saying that you will take charge of her conscience yourself, and, in place of the ancient faith of her forefathers, impose upon her the novelties, the heresies, the contradictions, of your own. But you are mistaken, sir : though in person the slave of a Reformer, she is in spirit the devoted servant of the ancient faith ; and, though persecutions and tribulations may await her, she will neither swerve, nor be forsaken, nor see with the eyes of a Protestant ruler.”

“ Neither with the eyes of a domineering Confessor,” retorted my brother, very much provoked. “ Lady Trevillion is no slave : neither, whatever be the drift of such an assertion, do you believe that she is. But I came not in your way, sir, to tempt a vulgar quarrel, or to engage in disputations which I despise : I came, armed with the authority of a protector, and the zeal of a guardian, to relieve my wife from tribulations and persecu-

tions, from the impositions to which she is subject at your hands; and, in order to render that release the more immediate, I now wish you good morning in her name."

"Merciful Heaven!" exclaimed the priest, crossing his hands on his breast, and casting up his eyes with an expression of horror and grief, "do I hear aright? If this be English liberty, if this be Protestant protection, may the Mother of Mercies, the Virgin Queen, be thy guardian and deliverer, most unhappy lady!"

"Mistake me not, sir," said Charles, turning back, and confronting the sycophant: "Lady Trevillion ever has, and ever shall have, the perfect enjoyment of religious liberty; she shall neither be debarred of a church, nor of a confessor, although Mr. Mac Cardwell do not attend her in person."

"So," resumed the defender of innocence, his countenance changing from affected horror to malicious triumph, "So it's myself, not my church; it's jealousy of the confessor, not disapprobation of confession? it's"——

“ Hold !” interrupted Charles, still maintaining his self-possession, “ I see through your purpose, and am not to be provoked. But you tempt a strong arm, which it would trouble as little to chastise your impertinence, as to——”

“ As it does,” cried the priest in his turn, “ to crush that poor iris beneath your foot; the root of which, however, is deep in the ground, and will cast out fresh blossoms should these be despoiled. No; courageous as is the Lord of Pendyffryn, the doler-out of justice in Protestant England, the hater of a poor Roman Catholic priest, taking offence at his person, and free to accuse the innocent of crime; that same lord dare not raise an arm against a defenceless man, protected only by his sacred vows, though ready, nevertheless, at any risk, to defend Lady Trevillion against unjust suspicion, and to guard her precious conscience against the interference of heresies.”

“ Defend !—guard !” cried my brother, who had borne with the insolent looks and insinuations of the Confessor till he could bear with them no

longer ; “ Whom would you defend ? whom dare to interfere with ? ”

“ I would defend the character and conscience of your unhappy lady from the tender mercies of a husband, whose jealousy would extend to her spiritual guide. Yes, Sir Charles, with my life would I defend her, though bound, by vows of the most sacred nature, never to raise my arm against mortal man ! ”

“ Defend yourself, vile coward ! base incendiary ! ” cried the exasperated husband, at the same moment seizing Mac Cardwell by the collar, and elevating his cane ; “ If you have one spark of courage, one pulse of manhood, in your composition, stand to it, and defend yourself ! ”

“ Sir Charles ! Sir Charles ! ” expostulated the half-affrighted, though cautious boaster, “ I am a stranger—I am defenceless ! Miss Trevillion, you look on—you are a witness. ”

“ Abject wretch ! ” said Charles, throwing off the despicable insulter, “ You are beneath the

notice of a man !—your touch is degradation ! Be-gone !”

“ Oh, fly, Mr. Mac Cardwell !—go, save your-self !” I screamed, twining my arms round my brother ; “ for the love of mercy, fly !”

But there was no need to put myself into an agony, or to entreat him twice. Having tempted his opponent to an assault, and thus gained his object, he had no great desire to feel the weight of such an arm again ; and, recovering his proper balance, he stretched off through the plantation, with his usual long and stealthy stride, not a little quickened on the present occasion.

“ Compose yourself, Mary,” said Charles, as I hung trembling on his arm ; “ The incendiary has had enough for my purpose : he will not dare my chastisement again. Perhaps I should not have forgotten his cloth ; but, at all events, we are rid of him for ever.”

“ Heaven grant it !” I ejaculated ; and, with a heart not the lighter for having witnessed such a scene, I slowly turned away to the house.

CHAPTER XV.

IT was well, in my brother's very sensitive state of feeling, that he had directed me to impart his intentions to his wife, for her objections to leaving home, though perfectly natural, might, under the circumstances, have led to wrong conclusions; but, after speaking with me some time on the subject, she got over her surprise, and perhaps suspected his motives. When we all met again in an hour or two afterwards, she only expressed a few motherly fears, lest the fatigue of the journey might be injurious to her son. These fears were, however, overruled by the father, who promised that we should travel by easy stages, and consult his health throughout.

Plans were formed, Brighton again preferred, and every one seemed pleased, Charles especially, whose good temper was perfectly restored, and who invited us to accompany him on an inspection of his late improvements. He had just finished a new drive, and opened a new approach from the shore. Much had been done, and all in excellent taste. The new drive was perfect. It took in several fine points of view, and opened a portion of the park that had hitherto been closed up, or accessible only to pedestrians. How much did I lament that the owner of so charming a place should feel himself under the obligation of relinquishing its beauties, and the occupation in which he so much delighted. Alas! under the circumstances, there remained for him no choice.

The country, though late in September, never looked more beautiful. Autumn approached us by the gentlest stages. The weather was serene, the evenings sultry; and we prolonged our ramble to the beach, which, composed of hard and level sands, afforded at low water a delightful ride, extending

several miles in a south-easterly direction, while, to the right, immediately adjoining the park, an abrupt projection of low dark rocks, and the precipitous cliffs by which they were surmounted, jutting far out into the water, formed a promontory, at once the refuge or the destruction, according to the setting of the wind, of such adventurous sailors as ignorantly tempted their fate in the treacherous bay of Pendyffryn. These rocks, their grotesque forms, rising variously above the ebbing tide, or broken over by the foaming spray, were picturesque in the highest degree. To pass along the summit of the reef at low water-mark was just practicable for zealous pedestrians like ourselves; and we, this evening, ventured to their extreme termination, reaching it at that radiant hour, when the glorious orb of day departs from our visible hemisphere. Not a cloud obscured the rich lustre of the west, or interfered with the magnificent phenomenon which rewarded our perseverance. This was the appearance of two globular lights, both perfectly distinct; the one slowly pursuing its downward

course in the refulgent heavens; the other holding a parallel track in the bright mirror of the golden sea, until meeting, ere their final exit, they blended into one, the real with the imaginative, and sank together in a blaze of light, as if the fires of a thousand worlds waited to receive them.

It was, indeed, a sight of surpassing loveliness, and none felt it more deeply than Clotilde, who delighted in the study of astronomy, as a reflecting and pious mind delights in all that leads it from terrestrial to celestial contemplations. Nor was Charles, though less enthusiastic, the less sensible of those calm, but elevating impressions, with which, when surrounded only by the silent deep, and far removed from earth's distractions, he had been wont to indulge.

The sea-beach was therefore, with both, a favourite haunt, for both loved the thoughts which it engendered; and during the happy period of the preceding autumn, we had often lingered there until the subdued and mystic gleamings of the starry firmament just served to show the luminous

distinction between sea and land, but left the dark back-ground of both impenetrable. But these sweet evening walks had lately lost their charm, for the spirit of harmony was, alas ! departing from us. On the present occasion that sweet spirit seemed to have returned. Charles, perhaps sorry for his hasty conduct upon the foolish subject of the pine, and vexed, no doubt, at his want of perfect self-command in the rencontre of the morning, expressed a tacit contrition in his manner toward Clotilde; while she, whose spirit was that of conciliation itself, more than met those tokens of renewed affection, on the continuation of which her very life depended.

The evening, as I have said, was sultry. We sat down on a rock to rest, and to wait the bringing to of some small fishing-boats, whose sails still caught the waning light, while a long line of larger vessels, at a greater distance, were passing in bold relief against the illuminated sky, or, moving westward, were descending apparently into the same liquid furnace, which had already entombed their

great precursor. Nor did we leave our attractive resting-place until these stately vessels were no longer to be seen, until the last glories of the horizon faded away, and until the few scattered craft, which still dared the dangers of a lee-shore in the equinoctial season, were heard rather than distinguished in the increasing darkness.

Reluctantly at length we arose, for never did the coming night more incline us to the enjoyment of contemplation. Never was the air so hushed, or more soothing; yet some appearances began presently to manifest themselves toward the north, which denoted a change; and sounds of the returning waves became louder and louder in a point, which indicated to experienced ears that there was no depending on the present calm; while, as we retraced our steps along the slippery reef, many an *avant courier* of tempestuous weather was seen to wing his way toward the protecting cliffs.

These cliffs, abounding in natural cavities, abounded also in the marvellous. Superstition attached to the most inaccessible an interior of no

mean extent, and a tenantry by no means innoxious. It was a fairy land ; and there were voices heard in the dead silence of the night, and cries that out-screamed the storm. Other rocky cells were fraught with legends of death and piracy, which I had often listened to as a child, and which were recollected while the funeral gloom of the fast-closing evening gave to their towering and fantastic roofs, and to their darkened porches, an undefined and awful character.

Having recrossed the rocks, we approached the lowest of those sparry caverns ; and listened at its mysterious entrance to the melancholy murmurings of the wind, which, collecting within, were sufficient to create alarm in minds not accustomed to combat with supernatural terrors.

“ The gale comes on apace,” observed Charles, again pointing to the north ; “ how rapidly the clouds collect, and at what a rate the moon appears to travel. I fear it will prove an angry night ; and unluckily the beacon is gone out of order.”

“ The peasantry,” I remarked, “ are silly enough

to believe that its failure is connected, in some unaccountable way, with the reappearance of those fairy lights, or corpse-candles, which in olden time used kindly to foretel a shipwreck, or some other casualty."

"I do not like the revival of such stories," said Charles; "they were too prevalent in our nursery days, though not without cause, for ships were then lost more frequently than now, being wrecked sometimes even in moderate weather. God grant that our shores remain unvisited by those dreadful catastrophes, which are not always the effect of accident — corpse-candles and wreckers being synonymous terms in my mind."

"How do you account for corpse-candles? What are they?" inquired Clotilde.

"Those with which I have any acquaintance are in reality nothing more than a composition of dry straw, pitch, and rope; of which material my father found a quantity in these caverns, when by his exertions a search was instituted for shipwrecked property. In imagination, corpse-candles are a

mysterious unnatural light, which if seen by one solitary individual, foretels to that individual the approach of evil—perhaps of death. If more than one person is thus warned, corpse-candles presage a public or general calamity. When appearing on such a coast as this they are called wreckers, because they deceive vessels to their destruction. In less civilized times than the present, or rather when the excise, or preventive service was not so rigidly sustained, some savages in the form of men, were suspected of manufacturing such lights, and from thence arises the term wrecker. I am sorry that such disgraceful stories should be revived, and must make inquiry, as my father did, which checked them at the time. Meanwhile, the sultry air is equally deceptive. We have already outstayed our usual dinner hour, and there will be no cloudless moon to guide us through the mazes of the park.”

“ Stay but a few moments,” entreated Clotilde, “ the stars will be out, and as these clouds appear to fly, they must soon leave a clearer track for the moon.”

“ We shall see no stars to night,” said Charles, “ the sky is over-cast, and the clouds collect still faster than the moon escapes them. Come, it is dark already ; we scarcely distinguish between the shore and the sea.”

While he spoke, I observed something to move upon the very summit of the cliffs. It was a human form, rendered just perceptible by a luminous back ground of moon-lit clouds. Next moment it seemed to sink into the earth ; and while I kept my eyes fixed upon the spot, a scream from Clotilde, and a cry of “ corpse-candles,” directed our attention to where she pointed, when from the mouth of the cavern, near the top of the cliff, there certainly did gleam a bright but momentary flame.

“ Your scream has exorcised the evil spirit, my dear Clotilde,” said Charles.

“ No ; it is there again, like a blazing candle in a cottage window. Do you not see it ? Ah ! it has disappeared.”

“ It is more like a dark-lantern,” returned her

husband, "probably carried by some person who is looking for rock birds, or their eggs. Wait you here a moment, I should like to ascertain the fact. You will not fear to wait without my protection for a moment."

"Oh! do not meddle with such things!" she cried, "you know not what that light may be—smugglers, or worse than smugglers may hide in those caverns—indeed, dear Charles, we cannot let you leave us."

It was by this time impossible for him to leave us. One flash of vivid lightning was quickly followed by another; and then we heard a distant roll of thunder. Immediately the sky, the sea, the rocks were all illuminated—the next instant involved in awful darkness; while frequent, and much nearer claps of thunder, reverberating amongst the cliffs, were intermingled with the loud screaming of affrighted birds, and other demonstrations of an increasing storm.

My brother, now placing an arm round each of us, hastened toward home, much disappointed, I am sure, that he was prevented solving the mystery

of the dark-lantern. There was as yet no rain ; but the wind rose frightfully, and swept past us in tremendous gusts ; so much so, that by the time we reached the park, its fury amongst the trees was not only deafening but dangerous. Showers of leaves came rushing into our faces, and some small branches broke upon our heads, threatening a heavier visitation. Happily our fatiguing walk was performed without personal injury ; and soon as we reached home, two of the park keepers were dispatched to see that the life boatmen were at their post, and others sent to try if the beacon could be lighted. These acts of humanity performed, my brother joined us at a late dinner ; when, nearly exhausted with what we had gone through, and dreading what might follow, we thought much of that glorious fleet riding, to all appearance so securely, in the golden light of evening, as well as of the smaller craft that, little dreaming of the threatened danger, careered so lately on the buoyant waves,

“ Regardless of the sweeping whirlwind’s sway,
That, hush’d in grim repose, expects his evening prey.”

It was late before we could bring ourselves to separate; for the wind and the rain, which by that time fell in torrents, continued without abatement: nor had the lightning ceased. Rendered unusually nervous, I listened, with beating heart and shivering frame, to the wild gusts that groaned without; and it was a welcome relief when William's nurse came to entreat that I would allow her to bring the child, and place him in my bed. "For the storm rages so at our side of the house," she added, "that I dread to remain in the nursery."

Most willingly was her request complied with; and, having put the child into bed, I invited her to sit down in the same sheltered corner which served as my retreat. But, though terrified by the storm, she could not refrain from watching it, or from trying to catch a view of the sea, even when the darkness was relieved—if that may be called relief which heightens terror—by vivid flashes of electric fire, darting at intervals from behind a mass of clouds, and lighting up the most terrific features of the night.

A less consoling companion could not have offered than nurse, her fears adding tenfold to the terrors of the tempest; stifled groans, and half-articulate ejaculations, accompanied every fresh gust of wind. It seemed as if the lives of all she most valued were at that moment perilled; and I could overhear her low but fervent prayers, for the preservation of some person, or persons, less safely sheltered than herself.

She was a widow, whose sons resided in the village. They were fishermen; and I inquired if they were out in the storm?

“ Oh, no; not at sea, thank God! And yet, it might be safer than on shore. It's not for them, in the sense you mean, that I'm afraid; it's not for them, Miss Trevillion, that the corpse-lights burnt. No, no; but, sure as we stand here and watch the sea, sure as the lightning comes from heaven, there is a wreck to-night.”

“ Heaven forbid, nurse, that you should prove a faithful prophetess! But why speak so positively? there have been storms before, and yet no wrecks.”

“The corpse-candles, Miss Trevillion! the corpse-candles! They were seen this very evening; always in the same place, always at the mouth of the same cavern, always above that reef of rocks. And when strange mariners, not knowing the treacherous coast, bring their vessels toward shore, then all the power of man, life-boat, nor nothing else can save them.”

“Were there any shipwrecks last winter?” I inquired.

“There has not been a ship of any size driven on the shore these many winters. I mean that no such vessels have been lost since Sir William had the beacon erected: small craft, or coast-boats, with their crews—God help them!—are often sunk. But these things happen by the will of God. There’s no arts practised, no robbery, no murder—Lord protect us! There has not been a wreck of any value since the great West India ship, some months before your noble father’s death, when many persons were punished for taking off her cargo. The corpse-lights burnt then, but

never since : death, in some shape or other, always follows. Depend upon it, there's a wreck to-night ; as sure as that we're here in safety."

Feeling rather curious on the subject of her superstition, I argued the point, in order that she might explain.

" There may be many wrecks in such a storm as this," I said, " without the intervention of supernatural warnings."

" No doubt there may, natural wrecks enough ; but these to-night are wreckers' wrecks, Miss Mary. The sailors call such lights as tempt them to mistake their road, ' the Devil's watch-fires.' Oh, my poor boys ! if they but keep in bed—if they keep free from meddling with the freight, I am content. Oh, what a flash !—the sea's on fire. Yet I would rather that the boat were out, and the poor boys exposed to all the storm, than to the dreadful temptings of the beach. Lord send they're safe in bed !"

In this manner nurse ran on, giving vent to her fears and her feelings, and endeavouring to make

me as miserable as herself. She hinted that there were persons now in the neighbourhood who were doing the people no good, and a great deal too many strangers flocking into the village, especially followers of *one* whom she said it was dangerous to name.

I had observed for some time that the Confessor had made himself obnoxious both to her suspicion and dislike, and that she not only avoided him herself, but always hurried little William away, whenever he happened to call. It was not, therefore, without some reason that I believed him to be the object of her reprehension, and, as fear rendered her familiar, my conjectures were shortly confirmed.

“His coming,” she said, “was in an evil hour; and it is with no good intent that he is so lavish of my lady’s bounty—I mean upon strangers, and persons who have no right to claim it: whilst it is mostly withdrawn from those who enjoyed it before. Making friends for himself, as he is, with adventuring miners and newly-come fishermen,

persons who have no business in the place, except to rob those that have a right in the soil ; or making poor folks thoughtful and discontented, who used to be careless and happy : as if such like had any thing else to mind but earn their daily bread, and lay up, if they can, for a rainy season. There is old Thomas the hawker, instead of being thankful that his fish gets the preference here, is only grudging Sir Charles that with which he is paid ; And there again is John Doughty of the post office, he's not the man he was ; instead of getting up early and minding the farm, he's sitting up late, after the mail comes in, with crowds of idlers who frequent his house, spending their time reading gentlemen's newspapers, and may be their letters too, before delivering in the morning. Jack Doughty had the character of an honest striving man before he got his lodger ; but now he is the most discontented and idle in the place, thinking there's nothing good enough for his deserts, and doing little to help himself in the way of industry, only learning to be a great spokesman, and talking

politics (as they call them), like any lawyer, expecting, I suppose, to be foremost man the next election: but where or when he is to reap his harvest who can tell. Talking, let it be ever so fine, wo'nt sow the corn or plough the ground, Miss Trevillion; and bread is always needful."

"It is so, nurse. But I cannot comprehend what interest Mr. Mac Cardwell, or Doughty either, can have in making poor people discontented, even if it were not sinful; for God has allotted to every human being his station in this life."

"It is not for me, Miss, to fathom their reasons; except it is that these Roman Catholics, who have bought Morvyn hall, intend to oppose Sir Charles at the election."

"My brother has no idea of contesting the county: the present member is his particular friend. He would not thank any person for suggesting such a thing."

"Well, ma'am, people will talk, and if the family who has bought Morvyn hall intend to set up, why should not Sir Charles also?"

“I know nothing of this new family; Roman Catholics, you say?”

“Yes; the new master is brother of this great lawyer who comes our circuits, I forget his name just now, but he is well-liked, being always for the people. It is the same gentleman who got off three miners who were convicted of manslaughter last spring; and two more (who were caught in the fact of burning Farmer Wilkes’s stack yard) expect the like good fortune at his hands. Folks speak of his election as sure: and no wonder that he should have the good will of the people, for if he gets into parliament they will have all their own way. Mr. Mac Cardwell expects to be chaplain, for there is a grand chapel building at the hall, so the candidate is sure of his support any way; but is it not a pity that my lady’s money should be employed against Sir Charles’s interest, and in making friends for a stranger, who has so much power already, that neither judge nor jury dare say him nay? But the end is to come, and we may see the true blue of Pendyffryn at the head of the poll yet, for all their devices.”

These village politics were perfectly new to me ; neither was I aware, until now, that Morvyn hall had had a purchaser. It was an old place, fifteen miles from Pendyffryn, and had been long on sale. But, to return to what more immediately interested ourselves, I learned from nurse that the Confessor was becoming a suspected character amongst the better sort, and much too influential amongst a less creditable party. I discovered also, and it mortified me not a little, that the respectability of Lady Trevillion herself ran some risk of being compromised in such hands ; and that the relation of *father* and *daughter*, as it stands in the Roman Catholic church, with *tête-à-tête* communings in the confessional, not being understood in the neighbourhood, his intimacy and influence with her were variously accounted for.

In this manner we passed the tedious hours. Nurse, poor soul ! every now and then recurring to the anxious subject of her sons, and at every blast of wind putting up a prayer for their preservation from all dangers by land or by sea.

Neither of us went to bed, for the fury of the tempest did not abate until day break ; and then our impatience to learn what might have occurred in the night, entirely banished sleep.

At the first opening of the dawn, Charles with several servants were seen to quit the house, and proceed directly toward the shore ; but before they reached that fatal spot, hundreds of persons of all ages and sexes were pouring thither from every direction within many miles ; impelled, as their conduct lamentably proved, rather by avarice than humanity ; while the scene he witnessed was enough to appal the most insensible.

Stranded amongst those very rocks, over which we had so lately passed in all security, there lay the ruins of a noble vessel. The waves, though retreating, still covered the resistless hulk at intervals with sheets of foam, perfecting their work of annihilation, while fragments of her once compacted strength—masts, planks, and rigging—were tossed about, the sport of that triumphant element which she had so lately and so proudly ruled.

There had been an awful sacrifice of life, and many dead bodies were already washed on land; but the heartless multitude, totally regardless of so sad a spectacle, were eagerly occupied in securing every one his share of the immense cargo, which absolutely strewed the sands; rolling forward casks of wine, carrying huge bales of merchandize, and knocking off the lids of chests, too heavy to be speedily removed. Even carts, with their horses and drivers, were waiting to convey away the spoil, as if appropriation of every thing belonging to the unfortunate ship was a lawful privilege. Nor was it without incurring opposition and insult that Sir Charles, assisted by a few of his own people, could prevent the loading of these carts—men, women, and children, all upholding each other in the process of depredation, without casting one thought toward the uncertainty of possession, or letting the awful scene before them interfere with their cupidity.

A very few of the crew had been saved, and those (in no condition to watch over the scattered

property) were immediately carried to the village, no one being more active in their rescue and preservation than the Roman Catholic priest: who, assisted by his landlord, the post master, was amongst the busy crowd, marshalling, directing, and mingling in the toil of the hour. Indeed, so disinterested and humane was the conduct of both, that Charles forgot the recent insolence of the one, and some evil reports lately afloat of the other, while witnessing their meritorious zeal. But his attention was drawn especially toward a poor woman, who, amid many heartless spectators, was the only person with sufficient feeling to collect what covering she could find, and shield from public gaze some wretched corpses.

He stopped to notice a work of charity so worthy of approval, and to encourage a more general imitation, just at the moment that her son, a bold and active boy, having clambered across the rocks and nearly reached the wreck, came running back with childish exultation, holding a silver watch in one hand and a small leathern purse in the other,

both of which he threw to his mother. But instead of praising his courage, or appropriating the prizes, she flung them back upon the wave, exclaiming in a voice of terror, "Touch them not, Johnny! they are the price of blood."

"Oh, Sir! who would rob the murdered?—Who would do the bidding of the evil one?—Who would 'take of the accursed thing and doom his soul?'"

"You are right, my good woman," observed Charles, elevating his voice. "It is robbery—it is in every sense a direct infringement of the laws to touch one article belonging to a wreck, unless with the intent of restoration. But why speak of murder? Why fling away the property saved by your child, and not deliver it into safe keeping of the officers? These stiffened corpses show no sign of violence, except such bruises as the manner of their death accounts for."

"O! I don't say that it is all on't murder—such murder (your honour) as might happen to any of us here on land! But the wreckers—the devil's

watch fires—they were seen last night, my own eyes saw them, I was waiting up for the boat; and David saw them too. He, blessed be God! knows what they mean of old, and kept the right side of the head. It is useless—quite useless to cope with such a power.”

By this time a number of curious listeners, attracted by the vehemence of the speaker, collected round her. Amongst the rest Mac Cardwell, who, overhearing the last sentence, rebuked her in the overbearing yet familiar manner peculiar to him when addressing his inferiors.

“Hush, woman! Hold your idle raving. Fitter for you to go home and do something for the poor sufferers, whom I have been removing, than to be keening here for the dead that’s past cure. Fitter for you to try and save some of the property, than to fling it back into the sea. Fitter for you, a great deal, to move some of these things scattered about, before the tide comes in and sweeps them all off, than to be standing here doing nothing but distracting people with your

lies about watch-fires, and taking the Devil's name in vain, you sinful fool!"

"Ah, Sir Charles! is that yourself, sir, come at last? We have had a night's work of it in earnest. I, for one, never went to bed, and have worked like a galley-slave for hours." The wet shoes and stockings of the Priest proved that his boast was no idle one. And Charles replied in more civil terms than the tenor of the boast deserved; inquiring at the same time, "if there had been no assistance given by the constables, or by the life-boat men, who were early cautioned to be at their posts?"

"We have saved about a dozen lives," replied the Priest, with much importance. "Leave me alone for stirring up the people to their duty. As to life-boat men, or constables, I was in too great haste and consternation to look out for one of them. Doughty, my landlord, has been stirring, I promise you. It requires to have all one's eyes about, as mine were this morning long before we could see. They were neither more nor

less than monsters in human shape, these Cornish fishermen, and sea-side people. No more mind robbing a wreck than they do plucking a black-berry."

So saying, he again mingled in the crowd. And Charles seeing the poor woman who had received so harsh a rebuke still standing beside him, he inquired her name, and if she were a stranger.

"No, your honour, though you may think so by my talk. I am no stranger, but living in the place these ten years. My children were all born in it. My husband's name is David Dodds, at your Lordship's service, and my two little girls at her Ladyship's school. May she find grace, and may the saints be about her."

"You are, I should think, one of Mr. Mac Cardwell's congregation."

"No offence, I hope," she replied, making a low curtsy. "My husband is a Protestant, and so is Johnny, but the two girls are of my persuasion."

"I hope to know more of yourself and your husband, at a less hurried time," he replied, as he left

her to inquire for the constables, to see that the scattered property which still strewed the shore was conveyed to the lawful depôt, and the necessary duties of humanity extended toward the dead.

About noon he returned to us, accompanied by some neighbouring gentlemen, and we then heard that the cargo, though apparently so large, offered no great temptation for theft, there being no portable articles of value, such as shawls, rich silks, precious stones, or specie,—nothing, in short, washed on shore but large bales of wool, and some casks of wine, which were removing to the station house.

Dr. Bentley, occupied all day in his melancholy duties to the dead, or in affording consolation to the living, called on us at tea time, just as one of the keepers brought, or rather dragged a wretch of a tawny boy into the servant's hall. This half naked object uttering some strange sounds, unintelligible to his hearers, and crouching to the ground, shrank with expressive actions of terror from all who ventured to approach him.

He was a native Indian, and though famishing

with hunger, could not be tempted to eat, until my brother, who spoke a little Hindostanee, succeeded in convincing him that no injury was meant. He then swallowed some food most voraciously, and feeling invigorated by the seasonable refreshment, looked upon us all with less distrust. But nothing could induce him to change his clothes, go to bed, or quit his place of refuge beside Charles, who succeeded at length in comprehending his story, and the principal cause of his terror. Under all the disadvantages of an imperfect translation, that pitiable story filled us with indignation, and multiplied fourfold our interest for the narrator.

He was coming from India in attendance on a French lady, the wife of a merchant at Madras — on her way, poor soul, to visit her friends for a year, and place her little girl at school. There were other domestics of the party, but he knew nothing of their fate. When the ship struck, his lady, in agonies of fear, placed her little daughter in his arms, knowing he could swim, and charged him, let what might befall, never to let go the

child, for whose further security she attached to his waist a silk pocket handkerchief, binding it also round the arm of her infant. To her own neck she fastened a rich casket, containing several articles of value. And no sooner was this done, than another shock precipitated all three into the sea, Juba's skill as a swimmer only preventing their instant annihilation. Thrown first against one rock, then against another, their lives were every moment in danger. And the weight of the child tied so tightly to his waist, proved a serious impediment to the exertions of Juba. Still he continued to keep above water, sustaining his lady, as well as her infant, the tide driving them nearer and nearer to shore. Vivid flashes of lightning at intervals illuminating the reef, they contrived at length to reach it, and to secure, after several efforts, a tenable position, where their only chance of life depended on the reflux of the waters, or of the abating of the storm before they should expire from cold.

Between the reef and the land there ran a tre-

mendous current. Day did not break, but the lightning continued, flashing wildly and vividly over that caldron of destruction. By these flashes they could discern some persons on the wreck, but the darkness came again, and these disappeared. A few lights were next seen to move about on land, and despite the death and desolation of that infuriated scene, hopes of life still sustained them to cling to the chances of preservation.

At length they imagined that the waves were receding, and something like a candle seemed to swim on the water. Presently there appeared the head of a man. And shouting aloud they hailed his approach. He came nearer and nearer: his arms were visible. The lady screamed with joy, and the poor Indian boy, watching the progress of their imagined deliverer, prepared, by untying the handkerchief, to throw him the child, whom it was his first impulse to save. But the wretch, more intent on spoliation than mercy, made a dart at the casket, which, inlaid with gold, shone much too conspicuously in the blaze of his lantern. Its un-

fortunate owner, already paralyzed with cold, and shaken by the violent grasp thus made at her treasure, fell with a cry from her perilous footing, and Juba, who saw her faint struggle with the current, forgetting in his fright that he had loosened the child, threw himself forward in order to save her; but his generous purpose was of no avail, for at that instant a violent blow laid him stunned on the rock. When he recovered, the scene was a blank one. The lady and robber, and his little charge were gone, but he cast himself into the foam of the waves, and paddling about, at length found the body of the infant. It was lifeless, indeed, yet he swam with it to shore, held it to his bosom, and blew his breath on the face. But cold as an icicle, and perfectly stiff, he felt within himself that all was now over, and gladly, most gladly would he have rushed upon death, but that—as he said—the corpse was in his care.

Creeping along to what seemed high head-land, he gained a smooth sandy path immediately beneath, and without being discovered reached an

opening in the cliff, which, upon entering, proved to be a deep cave. Into this he penetrated, bearing his lifeless burden. The tide had by that time receded some way, and a magnificent sunrise was beginning to enlighten the country. There were numbers of persons running to and fro, a still greater number far out on the sands ; for, with the reflux of the tide and the coming on of day, the storm had abated. But Juba could not bear to contemplate so altered a scene. He knew that his lady was engulfed in the waves, and rushing into the deepest recess of his rocky retreat, he placed the dead body of her child on the ground, flung himself over it, and wept without control.

About an hour, according to the best of his calculation, must have passed in this way, when some person carrying a light came into the cave. But who can imagine the terror of the unfortunate boy, when in the ferocious countenance of him who bore it, he recognised the same person that had glared on him from the reef. Fortunately he remained in his corner unseen. The robber, evidently in

search of a hiding place, found one at last. He took from beneath his coat the well-known casket, which he wrapped in a handkerchief, and carefully concealed. Presently a second person cautiously crept into the cavern, and clapping his hand on the shoulder of the first, seemed by his authoritative gestures to claim a right of seeing the booty, which, after some remonstrance on the part of its present owner, was taken down and carefully examined.

The examination appeared equally pleasing to both, although neither could succeed in opening the casket; but the weight of its contents, and the beauty of the outside, brought smiles of exultation upon their two villanous faces. Juba saw this distinctly as the lamp was held up. The countenance of the murderer made, of course, the most frightful impression; but he had a second opportunity of remarking the other, who, in less than an hour afterwards, returned alone, and indulged himself with a much longer survey of the hidden treasure. He even used some exertion to open it; but hear-

ing a noise near the entrance of the cave, hastily extinguished his lantern, and soon after groped his way cautiously out.

Thinking of the drowned lady, and her probable destroyer, the miserable boy again threw himself on the ground, and clasping the dead body of the child, felt that there was nothing left for him, but to lie still and die. Death does not, however, yield relief to its suppliants so easily. The pains of hunger and thirst became excruciatingly severe. His head ached to distraction. His clothes were saturated with wet. His limbs were bruised and stiff. Weary of weeping he raised himself up, and stole softly to the mouth of the cave. It seemed mid-day. There was a bright warm sun which shone on him, while he shivered with cold. The hulk of the vessel lay above water. He yearned to reach her, but was deterred by the fear of discovery; instinct suggesting that in a rencontre with the assaulter of his unhappy lady, there would be no safety for the witness of that inhuman act.

The claims of nature were not, however, to be re-

sisted. And venturing up the breast of the cliffs, he climbed the park palings, in hopes of finding something wherewith to satisfy his hunger. A blackberry bush proved the only supply ; and having eaten all that was eatable of its scarcely ripe fruit, he stretched himself in a thicket, and fell fast asleep. It was in this spot, about twilight, that a setting-dog betrayed him to the keeper.

Such was the painful recital of the poor boy to Sir Charles ; a recital against the effects of which he could not, he would not struggle. He promised at once to take him under his protection, when Juba, throwing himself at my brother's feet, implored leave to revisit the cavern. Charles, understanding his motives, instantly complied ; and sent some men with a litter for the conveyance of the corpse, which was found, as Juba had left it, in an unmolested corner. But though the strictest search was instituted, there were no tidings of the casket. It must have been removed. Nor was there any evidence of spoil to be found, except a fine Trichinopoly chain, which Juba affirmed to have sometime

seen round the neck of his unhappy lady, and which he transferred to the safe keeping of my brother—a silent but too convincing witness of her cruel fate.

The influx of the tide presented a melancholy spectacle, for the sea gave up its dead, and the living looked mournfully on. The body of the merchant's wife was the last washed on shore ; and Charles, with his usual good feeling, had it brought to the house, and placed in the same chamber with her daughter's remains. Nothing could be more touching than the extreme affliction of Juba, who never quitted his agonizing post, until the two bodies were borne to the church-yard, where, throwing himself upon their grave, he rent the air with his lamentations.

The few survivors of the wreck recognized their fellow-voyager, though all disclaimed an interest in his future provision ; and as nothing remained for the poor houseless stranger, but that Pendyffryn should become his asylum, my brother cheerfully accorded him a home.

CHAPTER XVI.

NEITHER hearing nor seeing more of the Confessor for two or three days, we naturally concluded that he was gone, and Charles arrogated no small credit to himself for the summary manner in which he believed that he had got rid of an incubus. Tranquillity was restored, our removal from home not referred to, and Clotilde, who, in consequence of her fatiguing walk in the storm, and all the afflicting results, had suffered, for a few days, from a feverish cold, was recovering both her health and her spirits.

I found her one morning considerably better, although still confined to her dressing-room. She

was opening a packet just brought her from Paris. Alas ! its contents overwhelmed her with sorrow. The superior of her convent, her beloved *gouvernante*, was dead ; and Clotilde, whose feelings were grateful as acute, yielded unresistingly to her sorrow. It would have been in vain to attempt consolation at such a moment, and I was therefore obliged to let grief take its course ; but Charles presently coming in, we persuaded her to lie down, and, after some little time, to swallow an opiate. He sat by her couch most of the day ; and toward evening, being exhausted with crying, she dropped into a tranquillized sleep.

Next morning, when she sent for me, I found her sitting up in bed, looking over some papers which had been forgotten in the agitation of yesterday.

“ Come here, dearest Marie,” she said, as soon as I appeared. “ Come and say that you will try to forgive me. I have been very wrong : I have yielded to unavailing despair, regardless of you or of my husband. Here is a letter from the Père

Montcalm. Oh, Marie! what a letter? How piously does he adjure me to be submissive! How sweetly represent the departure of our friend! To act as a Christian, not to mourn as one without hope, is the advice of this respectable prêtre. Shall the child whom he has instructed disregard his precepts? No: my Confessor departs for Italy this afternoon. He goes on a mission from Ireland. I must arise and receive him. It is now twelve o'clock, and the conveyance by which he travels is to pass our gate. I am weak, Heaven knows! and very unequal to exertion; but he gives me until the last moment to prepare my dispatches; and there is a sacred duty to perform, for which the munificence of my husband furnishes abundant means. We must pray for the soul of the departed. Oh, my dear sister! what a happiness for your Clotilde, that this mission had not taken place, that the Confessor had not gone before to-day. What an opportunity is thus miraculously presented, of forwarding a slight token of her devotion—of her gratitude to Rome!"

“What a golden opportunity,” I thought, “of adding to the stores of the rapacious Mac Cardwell; and most willingly, had gold been at my disposal, would I have furnished a mass for the benefit of Madame la Gouvernante, to speed such a messenger on his way.”

Having dispatched a reply, appointing her Confessor to call, Clotilde arose, and in less than an hour was waiting his arrival in the chapel.

Rejoicing to learn the final destination of our tormentor, and that we should for a long time be freed from his interference, I descended to the library. I was rather in dread that Sir Charles might encounter the Priest, either coming to, or on his egress from the house; for, after his summary expulsion from the premises but three days before, it was very doubtful how this new trespass might be treated. Dreading any fresh *scene* with the Confessor, especially under present circumstances, and desirous, above any thing, that he should depart in peace, I was on the point of seeking Charles, to make known to him the pilgri-

mage to Rome, which was that day to be commenced, when all heated and flurried, he rushed into the library, and inquired if Clotilde was still in her chamber.

“No,” I replied, “she has been busy preparing a packet for Rome. Father Mac Cardwell leaves England for Italy this day, and is to call for it on his way.”

“Is to call!” he repeated with a voice of angry scorn. “I can tell you that he has called; that he is here. Yes, I perceived him stealing through the park at too great a distance to be overtaken, and too deaf to hear. But I had no idea that he would dare to enter my house—the house he was forbidden—covertly, secretly, like a thief in the night, until afterwards meeting with Banks, he told me that he had seen him close by the flower-garden. I followed; he had let himself in—in by the private door. I pushed back the bolt and followed—not in time to arrest this privileged priest, this authorized interloper, but to behold him open the window, and step into the chapel, no doubt

by her appointment, assuredly with her consent. What power arrested my just vengeance at that moment? What principle intervened to prevent his instant chastisement, but pity and consideration for his unfortunate dupe?

“These feelings,” continued my brother, “did, thank Heaven! restrain me even at the moment of exquisite torture. There were persons within hearing; I commanded myself, and departed in silence. But the incendiary shall not escape—shall not go unpunished. Honour compels me to notice the insult—to chastise the insulter. Honour! O Mary! that mine—that Clotilde’s should be so much as named in one breath with this man—this influential, domineering Jesuit. A few hours since, and she could not leave her room. But this priest, this second Hohenloe, revives her by a charmed billet. She rises, as if by magic, and comes down stairs to keep her assignation!”

“Oh! do not use such a term,” I rather indignantly cried, “so unworthy of our innocent Clotilde, who believes every one as undesigning as

herself. Mac Cardwell is on his way out of the country; in an hour he meets the London coach at your gate. His superstitious victim wishes to have masses performed for the soul of her lost friend; and his errand this morning is to receive her commands, with money of course, to effect this pious purpose at Rome. The comfort such an opportunity affords her is astonishing; but it is no less true. She would not have risen from her bed, except to perform what she conceives to be an imperative duty. One hour will rid us of the presence of her priestly adviser, I hope for ever. I beseech you let his departure be in peace. Clotilde tells me that he has some very influential friends on the continent, who are interested in retaining him there; do not, therefore, at this last hour, after having borne so much, insult the feelings of your wife through the medium of her Confessor. She is always obedient—always affectionate—ever grateful to you.”

Charles, after revolving over what I had spoken for a minute, in a softened tone made answer—

“Perhaps so; but is she candid? Am I the depository of her thoughts? Have I her confidence? And what is affection if it have its disguises? Where the sympathy is not perfect, it is not such as I value, as I looked for, and have a right to expect from my wife; as, indeed, I experienced until her acquaintance with this insidious man. Why should she, in concert with a comparative stranger, have reserves on any subject with her dearest friends; as if those friends were not worthy of her confidence? For instance, this mission to Rome; where was the necessity for making it a secret?”

I assured him that Clotilde knew nothing of the mission, until the Confessor wrote to her that morning. He had at times intimated his hopes of being employed, but that as respected his actual appointment, it had only been announced to her a few hours since.

“An appointment, most probably, concocted in the fellow’s fertile brain since my plain speaking to him on Thursday. A mission to Rome is a more honourable sort of exit, than a dismissal from

me ; more profitable too. Banks has had a pencilled note from his lady this morning, requiring the advance of her next half year's pin-money. Poor soul ! I suppose she imagines that those frequent demands on her purse are all essential to the safety of her salvation. How dreadful are the shadows cast over us by this upas creed ! Would to God, that, by asserting my authority, Clotilde might get a glimpse of heaven's sunshine, and I rid myself of its poisonous exhalations !”

He had thrown himself into a chair : he now started up hastily, laying hold of his hat and his cane. I saw that he was painfully excited ; and I dreaded lest the offended husband should rush into the chapel, violate the sanctuary of his wife, justly offend her, draw down upon himself the vengeance of the Roman Catholic church, and the ridicule of the world. Urged by these fears, I ventured to expostulate. His hand was on the lock of the door.

“ Dear Charles,” I entreated, “ have but a few minutes patience. Command yourself only for a very short time. This is the last visit of the Con-

fessor. It must be nearly the conclusion. Let him depart in peace."

"Mary," he replied, leading me back to a chair, while he resumed his agitated walk, "is it possible that you accuse me of impatience? Have I not rather been pusillanimous? Have I not yielded my judgment to yours, broken my resolutions, admitted this Jesuit? Was I not 'fondly overcome,' and against my 'better knowledge' persuaded, that if we released him from his imaginary martyrdom, the influence attached to him must cease? Did I not in consequence place him on an equality with Doctor Bentley, by admitting him to my table as chaplain to Lady Trevillion? And how has he conducted himself since? Insulted my best friend, by interdicting certain subjects in presence of my wife, at least by forbidding her to listen, which is the same in effect. Has he not diverted her charities from their legitimate source, and appropriated her purse to himself? Thus is she imposed upon; while you, who were his advocate, and would shelter him still, are braved

and insulted, even in your efforts to do good. Thus, instead of affording Clotilde opportunities for exercising her discrimination, I have given occasion to jesuitical influence to establish its power. Thus is the benevolence of her character made subservient to a cupidity thoroughly selfish and base. Thus is she sacrificed to a combination of foreign priests, and this their artful emissary."

"We must not include the Père Montcalm in that class to which this Confessor belongs. You have read the letters of the former; are they not full of the most amiable sentiments, fatherly, affectionate, but severely monitory?"

"True, Mary, so far as sentiment goes; but were he here now, and appealed to in the matter of to-day, would he not say that there are cases in which means are allowable to attain the end? —means not over scrupulous? Could he deny that the very essence, the charm of his pseudo-religion consists in its mysteries. Would he not tell my wife, that if I forbid her Confessor coming in openly at the door, she might with propriety admit

him through the window. Would he not regard our connubial ties, the sacredness of our union, her fair fame, even her honour, as tinsel to bullion, in comparison with the least advantage of his church, or with her belief in the efficacy of those forms by which that church subsists, and without which its revenues would dwindle into nothing? No, Mary, it is not because I want patience, but because I have too much, that we suffer as we do; it is because I was weak enough to imagine, that such a one as Mac Cardwell could be other than true to his nature, insolent, intolerant, ungrateful. And now, even now, while I thus deprecate such weakness, is he not robbing me? Am I not by a mean and dastardly cowardice compromising my integrity? suffering him to possess himself of what I most prize—the overflowings of my Clotilde's heart, her confidence, perhaps her preference? Do I not suffer him to enter at the secret door, and steal the fairest jewel of my treasury? But it shall not be. I will yet read him a lesson that he cannot easily forget. I shall give him to

know, before he quits Pendyffryn, that we are neither fools nor cowards."

"Oh, not yet!" I again entreated, as he was in the act of moving to the door. "Wait a little longer: wait, at least, until——"

"Until when, Mary?" interrupted my brother, warmly; "until he escape me?" Then, after a pause, he demanded, more startingly, "Why do you change colour?—of what are you in dread? that I shall penetrate the secret chamber, hey?—the luxurious confessional?—withdraw the mystic curtain?—unveil the prophet? And if I do, what then? Ha! my sister, you look terrified! Tell me, I implore, what is upon your mind, what is it that you fear?"

"Yourself, dearest Charles; or rather the consequences to yourself of compromising your dignity, and that of the innocent Clotilde, by a rash procedure. I dread, too, the malignity of this designing man; his vengeance——"

"Oh, apprehend nothing, my poor girl, upon that score!—he is cowardly as base. Were I to

cane him to-day, he would crouch to me to-morrow. Personal violence no *man* need to fear from this boastful demagogue."

"Alas!" I rejoined, "there are a thousand other ways. Though the coward dares not attack a brave man to the face, or by force of arms, yet his instruments of destruction are various and fatal."

"This day," exclaimed Charles, in a voice calculated to silence further opposition; "this very hour, shall rid us of his destructiveness!—we shall see—we shall hear of him no more."

Scarcely had he spoken, the door a-jar in his hand, when Juba, the dark boy, rushing into the room, seized him by the arm, dragged him to an opposite window, and pointed to a copse-wood without—the very pupils of his eyes distending, and every limb trembling with passionate emotion. The few words he uttered, I, of course, could not understand; but they produced an effect upon my brother as violent as that by which he himself seemed to be overpowered.

The window opened upon the ground, and was on the same side of the house as the chapel. Nor can I ever forget Charles's expression of countenance, as he threw up the sash, and bade me "look to my sister, for that he was in pursuit of a villain."

"Not of her Confessor!" I cried, "not of Mac Cardwell, who is leaving the neighbourhood at this moment. Oh, Charles!" and I clung to him with feverish energy, "have mercy!"

"I must think only of justice!" he exclaimed impatiently, at the same time shaking me off; "I must attend to the accusation of this boy. I must bring to light the blackest hypocrisy, and check, as is my duty, the progress of crime!"

Saying thus, he sprung out of the window, followed by Juba; while an impulse I could not control compelled me to follow. Comprehending every thing in that expression of my irritated brother, I recollected the situation of Clotilde, the delicate position in which she must be placed, if her husband should arrest and prosecute the priest. This afflicting recollection urged on my

speed. I had but one hope—one resource only occurred to me: it was that of delaying Charles, and allowing time for the escape of the criminal. Could I but accomplish my brother's detention, until the coach should pass the gate, all might be well: it wanted only a few minutes of the time when that public conveyance might be expected.

Charles and his guide rushed on at their full speed: they outwalked, they outran me. Still there was no sign of Mac Cardwell, and, despite my failing limbs, I persevered.

The park, though extensive, is throughout thickly wooded, in some parts almost impervious, and, therefore, afforded many places of concealment. Unless the Confessor were soon seen, his escape was quite possible; and, if he feared pursuit, if he had just reason to dread Juba's recognition, if matters stood with him as I apprehended, he would surely take one of the paths which were so likely to facilitate escape.

Charles presently slackened his pace, and looked

anxiously round ; while Juba ran wildly about. Doubling my speed, I came up with the former. He was in no mood to bear interference, and harshly commanded me home. Though nearly speechless with fright, I tried to expostulate ; to urge the misery he might incidentally entail on Clotilde : but this injudicious suggestion added fuel to the fire.

“ Return to the house, girl !” he sternly cried, throwing me from him. “ Meddle no more in what is my concern alone ; and beware, both yourself and your misguided sister, how I see any one bearing the name of Trevillion take measures to screen an impostor !”

At this juncture, to my horror, I espied the long skirts of a clerical cloak : they were fluttering behind a grove of trees which ran parallel to the path whereon we stood. Juba saw them too : he uttered a yell of savage joy which resounded through the woods, and sprang forward, like a young tiger, to pounce upon his prey. Charles also darted on ; but Mac Cardwell, warned by that cry, which he

had too much reason to dread, plunged into the nearest thicket, and, while they beat about in their search, gained at the other side a much shorter path, and endeavoured to effect his object of reaching the gate. With an undefined hope of averting the impending mischief, I still kept my brother in view. Alas ! it was only to witness a scene that I would have given my life to prevent.

The horn of the stage coach sounded from the high road : there was but one quarter of a mile to the place of appointment : in less than five minutes the vehicle must reach the gate : in less than five minutes Mac Cardwell would be off.

To my delight the priest, far ahead of his pursuers, nears the goal : He gains it ! Alas ! the gate was locked—I saw him from where I stood shake it with violence, and then dart toward the park paling. The paling was high, and difficult to climb, his foot slipped and he fell. This misadventure caused a delay, and Charles with one bound was on the spot, and seized him as he arose. I could see that they fiercely struggled, that he

regained his feet, and that Juba springing forward fastened on his cloak. There followed an exclamation of horror: I heard the latter cry for help, but I remember no more: indeed I saw and heard no more; my senses tottered, the ground gave way beneath me, my knees lost their strength, my path was indistinct. Earth, sea, and sky soon commingled in one mass of darkness, and the last thing I can call to mind was a chill sensation stealing over my sight.

No one discovered me, though I lay there for a length of time. When my recollection returned, and that I was able to move, neither Sir Charles, nor the priest, nor any human being was in sight, and with what strength I could command I hurried to the house.

CHAPTER XVII.

IN the solitude of my own chamber I endeavoured to recover the composure with which it was necessary to appear before Clotilde. But, nervous with anxiety, I could not withdraw from the window. Charles, however, did not make his appearance, and whilst in a state of agitation by no means subdued, I was unexpectedly joined by that gentle being whose observation it was so much my wish to avoid, and who, though still pale and languid, wore an expression of countenance so sweet, and so tranquillized, that, as she approached me, tears unbidden rushed to my eyes.

“Why these tears?” she inquired, laying her

hand affectionately on my arm. "I am, alas! the cause of your inquietude. But it shall be so no more: regrets which belong to me alone shall no more interfere with our comforts. I owe much to the blessed advice, the pious councils, of the Père Montcalm; he has led me to the source of never-failing consolation; he points out the benefit as well as the necessity of awaking out of self, and attending to the social duties which love and gratitude enforce. Weep not thus, therefore, dear sister: you are cold and you are trembling. Ah! what have I not to answer for in thus afflicting so kind a heart!"

I could make no other reply than by returning her embrace, and endeavouring to dry my tears. But the effort did not succeed, for her amiable intentions, the soft accents in which they were conveyed, with the terrible disclosure that I knew to be at hand, completely overcame my courage.

"You must lie down presently," resumed my dear sister in soothing accents; "your young heart has been severely touched, and I have forgotten

that the dreadful scenes of the last three days must have been as trying to your feelings as to mine. Yes, you shall take some repose, and I will sit by and watch you till repose does its duty."

As an excuse to avoid conversation, her remedy might have been of some utility, but my uneasiness about Charles rendered it useless, and attributing my nervous condition to the events of the last few days, I preferred joining her in her dressing room. Thither we accordingly repaired, and reclining on a sofa I allowed her to talk on, though I scarcely heard a word she said, or gave any heed to the kind exertions she was making for my amusement. My whole soul was occupied in listening for my brother's return; at length I heard his well known tread in the vestibule, while the voice of Juba, loud and exulting, struck conviction—if conviction were wanting—to my heart.

"That is Charles," observed Clotilde; "shall we join him below, or shall I invite him to come to us here?"

“Let me go,” I cried, arresting her progress, “you are weak : you have not been down stairs for some days. Be careful, I pray.”

“And what are you?” she inquired, with an affectionate pressure of the hand, “all strength and composure ! If he has come from the village with any more heart-rending stories, my spirits are as well able to bear them as yours.”

“O no,” I returned, endeavouring to hide my feverish impatience, “you are by much the most sensitive ; should assistance be wanting, should Charles require to consult with either of us, I am perfectly able to attend.”

“I wish your brother to see that I am less selfish than he has had reason to believe me,” returned Clotilde, still holding me back. But apprehensive of the effects of the first disclosure of that day’s tragedy, dreading any abruptness in the manner of my sister’s hearing it, I broke away almost rudely from her gentle detention, and hastened to Sir Charles’s study, where I found him with saddened brow and in deep meditation.

“Mary,” he said, in an almost solemn voice, as soon as I had closed the door, “Mary, I have this day performed a most painful duty, which, had I not been compelled by justice, I should have rejoiced to escape. I have likewise been under a mistake, the consequences of which annoy me exceedingly: you, perhaps, penetrate my meaning?”

“I do, I do. Oh, how shall we inform Clotilde?”

He coloured. “You believe that she will feel it severely, that she will disapprove of my conduct. But were you a witness of all? Did you see the arrest?”

“I saw enough, my dear brother. I saw that the pursuit was successful; that you seized upon him, that he resisted,—but I beheld nothing further.”

“Yes: so much for the priest. But we have also arrested another party—the robber—the murderer, I fear, of Juba’s unfortunate lady.”

“How!” I exclaimed, in a rapture of joy, “the Confessor! He is not the monster I took him for?”

“No, my dear sister, the criminal is his landlord, the postmaster. Mac Cardwell is only implicated as being privy to the concealment of the casket; although he deserves, I fear, rather to be committed as an accessory. At first the violent gestures of the poor dark boy, his denunciations of the priest, the great difficulty I found in understanding him, from his state of excitement, led to a dreadful belief, or I should not have spoken so harshly to you, or laid such violent hands on the fugitive.

“Doughty was seated on the top of the coach, inside of which Mac Cardwell had secured himself a place. Juba’s quick glance espied him in an instant; when crying out to me, he sprang over the paling. The cry, and the sudden apparition of the boy, must have alarmed the conscience of the murderer; for his first impulse, on finding himself pointed at, appeared to be to make his escape. But perhaps judging that so sudden a descent might fasten suspicion without ascertaining his safety, he retained his position, and assumed a bold front.

“Juba’s wildly expressive gestures, with a few

words from me, sufficed to explain that Doughty must be detained. Captain Monson, who is fortunately a magistrate, happened to be on the coach-box. We immediately sent for a constable, and committed the postmaster. But how to dispose of Mac Cardwell was a matter of more difficulty. For the present, we have left him in the custody of two officers at his own lodgings. If he cannot find good bail for his appearance at the trial of Doughty, we must also commit him to prison. We can bring home to him the concealment, at least, of a most aggravated robbery ; and if Doughty will confess the truth, we shall perhaps find him a partaker of the spoil. He assumed the deportment of an injured man, and rebutted with indignation and violence the charge of Juba, insinuating that, incited by a narrow-minded jealousy, I had concerted the plot in order to drive him from the neighbourhood. He declared, in the most positive terms, that he was not in any cavern on the fatal morning of the wreck. I have sent to Falmouth for an interpreter, to take Juba's depositions correctly, and

more impartially than I might be supposed to translate them. Already Mac Cardwell is exalted into a martyr, and has his defenders and admirers. I can detect this feeling in the horror with which a few persons speak of and fix their eyes on poor Juba. Alas ! detestation of crime, and indignation against the perpetrator, are no longer felt as they were in our once honest country. Robbery, blood-guiltiness, every crime that deserves condign punishment, is palliated from factious motives and prejudices ; and the villany of the delinquent is merged in the radical and non-conforming merits of the partizan. These are the advantages which a peculating demagogue, such as this stranger, proposes to himself when he sets up for a friend of the people, and an advocate of the poor."

"But how did Mac Cardwell account for his flight?" I inquired. "If perfectly conscience-free, why did he fly?"

"His only object in such speed, was to come up with the coach."

"Then why did he take a circuitous path?"

Surely no one can be blinded to the evident facts of such a case. Sincerity cannot be more indubitably displayed than in the expression of poor Juba's feelings, from the first hour of our seeing him, until his recognition of Mac Cardwell. Every circumstance corresponds. In common justice no one can doubt him."

"Not if justice held the scales with even hand," replied Charles; "but instead of this, we have now-a-days to guard against a preponderating influence. A new light, yclept liberality, is creeping in, which allows to the balance no fair equipoise. This Mac Cardwell, in a small way, is the man of the people. Our popular judge aims at the same distinction. And the great orator of our circuit has already attained it. I at least do my duty, and only wish, for the sake of your misguided sister, that her Confessor were not implicated in so disgraceful a transaction."

I remained silent, and my brother proceeded.

"The fact of concealing a robbery is enough, my dear Mary, to prove how far we may trust in

the principles of Mac Cardwell. We do not accuse a Roman Catholic clergyman of actual robbery in person, but liberality herself cannot acquit him of winking at a robbery—or of perhaps receiving his dues.”

Perfectly in keeping with the high moral character of Clotilde was her conduct, when the transactions which we have just detailed were made known to her. However shocked, however sensitive to the disgrace which such an implication must cast on the minister of a religion that made part of herself, she candidly acknowledged that her husband only acted up to his duty. She did not conceive that delicacy toward herself should have interfered with that duty; and never, since the first hour of their married life, did I hear Charles express himself with greater admiration of her character than upon this trying occasion. But notwithstanding the propriety of her own natural impulses, Clotilde was far from adhering to them consistently. The fact was, that she was no free agent; she could not form an unbiassed judg-

ment; so that when she had time to reflect upon the *sacrilege*, to use her own word, of coupling the sacred name of a minister of her church with any act inferring the heinousness of sin, her fears betrayed themselves; and, as the time of the trial drew on, she passed most of her days in the chapel, performing acts of penances and prayer. Instead of commiserating with her accustomed tenderness the desolate stranger cast upon her bounty, she could not disguise her dislike of Juba; and I have sometimes observed her recoil when chance brought him in her way, as she would have done from the sting of a venomous reptile.

From the hour of the arrest, until the day of the trial, there was scarcely anything talked of or thought of in the neighbourhood of Pendyffryn, but the wreck, and its attendant mysterious consequences. A very few country-people, impelled by fear, or urged by prudence, came forward to surrender some trifling articles, which they pretended to have purchased from others who had fled; while one store was discovered in the depth

of a cave, consisting of goods not very portable, and which no one would acknowledge to have seen, or to have heard of before.

But no circumstance connected with the awful catastrophe, not even the apparition of the corpse-candles, caused such a sensation as Juba's accusation of the priest; nor was it possible for any tale to have a greater variety of bearings. The death of the lady, and the disappearance of the rich casket, were reported in a hundred different ways, and the complicated crime softened or exaggerated according to the temper of the narrator. An almost general antipathy was manifested toward the unfortunate but faithful boy, whose noble impulse to bring to justice the perpetrators of a deed of blood was actually talked of as emanating from the revengeful spirit of his nation.

An interpreter from Falmouth had carefully taken down his depositions; and, though throughout there occurred not a single variation; though they agreed word for word with his first agitated statement, people remained incredulous; though

his manner of identifying the priest and the post-master had impressed the coachman, the guard, and all the passengers, as perfectly natural and convincing; though Captain Monson, a most discerning and honourable gentleman, had but one opinion of the case;—there were doubts on many minds as to the clearness of the evidence, and an almost universal expectation prevailed amongst those of his own *caste*, that the post-master would be acquitted. If we did not know in what a violent current the prejudiced sympathy of the lower classes often runs, that general impression, and the silent efforts made in his behalf, would be unaccountable. Previous to the trial every subordinate witness for the prosecution disappeared. Even the wife of David Dodds, who had displayed so much humanity on the morning of the wreck, who had stood beside Sir Charles when Mac Cardwell boasted of “the postmaster’s exertions long before day-light,” stoutly denied having heard a conversation in which she bore her part; and two men, who had declared to Banks, when Doughty

was first arrested, that they had assisted him in his labours by torch-light, on being again questioned, asserted the very reverse, swearing positively that they never saw the postmaster until after the sun had got up, and the tide had gone down; adding, that it was impossible for him or any other human being to reach that part of the reef while the water was high, or at the hour that Juba described. But I must not anticipate: nor was it from these defaults alone that we inferred the interference of party-spirit with the ends of justice, and augured the usual results.

The popular pleader, to whom (as nurse had remarked) neither judge nor jury dare say nay, was retained at an expense far beyond the known resources of the defendant, and appeared in the court as his counsel. So high an opinion was entertained all over the country (especially among his liberal admirers) of this gentleman's professional tact, cleverness, and ability, that from the moment he was known to undertake the cause, its

success remained no longer in their eyes a matter of doubt.

Sir Charles, of course, attended in his place. Banks took charge of Juba, the only difficulty with whom was to moderate his exultation, or keep him at all within bounds. But his loquacious demonstrations of attachment to the dead, and detestation of the criminal, only lasted till he entered the court. Once there, the awful appearance of the judge, his robes, his flowing wig, and all those outward insignia of authority, completely awed him; and when called upon to give evidence, nothing could be more tranquil than his appearance, or more respectful than his demeanor. His statement and answers were clearly interpreted. There was not a discrepance in the whole: and his tears for the death of the child; his struggle to keep down passion, when describing the efforts of the mother to retain possession of the treasure which had cost her her life; and lastly, the manner in which he stood up, and pointing to the priest and

the postmaster, identified them as the parties he had denounced, might have convinced the most sceptical of their guilt, and of the truth of his artless narrative.

Sir Charles and Banks corroborated the evidence of Juba by their account of his discovery in the thickets at Pendyffryn. They proved that his terrified and incoherent recital at the time agreed with that given at subsequent periods, and with his statement in court. They deposed to having accompanied him to the cave, and there discovered the body of the child exactly in the place indicated. They mentioned having found a fine gold chain in the very spot, where he swore to having seen the casket deposited by Doughty, and where afterwards it had been examined by Mac Cardwell. They also witnessed to having found the lifeless corpse of the lady, which was removed to Pendyffryn, and buried with her child in the church-yard. Two French sailors, saved from the wreck, recollected Juba on board. He seemed a great favourite with his mistress, who was

reputed to be wealthy. There were also two female servants of the party, both of whom had perished in the vessel.

These were the only witnesses forthcoming on the part of the prosecution, until lastly Mac Cardwell was called.

With sanctified air, solemn step, and with a look as if he had wound up his mind to suffer martyrdom at the hands of persecution, the Confessor made his way to the table. Habited for effect, and starved into somewhat of a delicate appearance, nothing less than a fortnight's rigid abstinence could have endued him with the resemblance of the character which it was his policy to assume; namely, that of a studious and wakeful night-watcher, a severe self-denying contemner of this world's indulgences.

It had been foretold by his partizans that he would confound both court and council; and, as it turned out, his partizans were not greatly mistaken. For, on the oath being tendered, he positively, though mildly, declined either to take it,

or give evidence; and appealed to the justice of all present, if in his sacred character of Confessor he was not bound by his oaths and his religion, as well as upholding the privileges of those who professed the same faith, to refuse compliance with a custom which could not be compulsory in his case.

“I stand here,” continued Mac Cardwell, “an unfriended stranger, an humble individual from a despised and degraded land, but supported in the presence of earthly superiors by my conviction of responsibility to a higher court. I stand bound by the most solemn engagements to preserve the purity of my church and the secrets of the confessional—that place where the vilest of criminals may repose his repentance without fear, and make restitution for the wrongs he has committed, and which, though he entereth therein with his sins red as scarlet, he shall leave ‘made white as snow.’ That place where slander has been rebuked, property restored, conspiracies averted, life itself saved, all because its secrecy is inviolable; because

there, the confessor, who hearkens to the unburthening of a soul bursting with conscious crimes, that before 'like the ocean's tide was shut up with doors,' and who marks as the waters roar and chafe, things of no moment—the virtues or the lapses of other people—confounded in inward struggle with the penitent's own guiltiness—

Lapides adesos
Stirpesque raptas et pecus et domos
Volventis una. . . .

because there, I say, the deputy of Heaven, who receives these mad out-pourings of the contrite heart, never yet betrayed the sinner whom he shrived, and whom he has absolved.

“What mortal tribunal then,” proudly demanded Mac Cardwell, “may shake or question these inviolate relations? Who shall dare to check the religious confidence of the repentant soul? And how, I ask ye, is this confidence inspired and preserved? How are those out-pourings encouraged? How, but by the pastors of the holy Catholic church asserting their own rights and

maintaining their own dignity. I may be told, and I know it will be said, that in refusing to take this oath, or to answer questions at this bar, I wear the appearance of screening a delinquent, and make myself accessory to guilt; but even so, should I lose reputation in the hostile eye of an ascendant creed, yea, should I incur the stigma of suspicion—those are evils I shall joyfully submit to, rather than forfeit my moral dignity, my religious integrity, my reverence for mine own nature, and my confiding thoughts in Him, and fear of Him, whose cause at this hour, before ye all, I represent—rather than lessen a single scruple, the benefits which piety and penitence ascribe to the consolations of our church. No! the oath you proffer I refuse; the degradation of being cross-questioned and puzzled I never can submit to. The safety of the confessional shall never in my person, please God, be hazarded. These are my sentiments; they are delivered in all respect, but sooner than not act up to them, I would go to the stake.”

One of the counsel for the prosecution here beg-

ged leave to suggest, "that it appeared from the statement made by the reverend gentleman, that Doughty had confessed himself, and that the nature of such confession involving his safety, Mr. Mac Cardwell refused to answer interrogatories upon oath." Another of the counsel followed up this suggestion. They pushed the priest hard. He looked intreatingly round, and asked if any charitable gentleman on the other side would do him the favour to reply?

This appeal, seemingly the thought of the moment, but, as I have since heard, a premeditated plan, met with the anticipated compliance. The counsel whom we have already alluded to, immediately volunteered his services. They were of course thankfully accepted; and the orator, craving indulgence for coming forward unprepared, took up Mac Cardwell's cause, and advocated it with all the Belial eloquence which had obtained him his high legal reputation. Skilled to make the worse appear the better reason, or when the semblance of reason could not be pro-

duced, supplying her place with a coruscation of the most brilliant images—with analogies, illustrations, metaphors, and similes drawn from his highly creative fancy, delighting to dazzle the judgment of his hearers, he was never so successful as when he concealed rather than disclosed what he professed to elucidate. In the instance now under our notice, it was his aim to involve a case, which he described as requiring no rhetorical aid, in the most gorgeous drapery of mystification.

His speech owed quite as much to the voice, the manner, the impressive action of the pleader, as to choice of words or beauty of illustration: but, however unsound his arguments, they were certainly to the purpose; for they placed his client exactly in the position wherein that client desired to be considered—the position of a martyr, subject to all sorts of persecution and evil report, for the sake of his religion.

Encouraged by the hushed plaudits which followed, the witnesses for the defence gave their

evidence in a state of excitement, which, no doubt, was mistaken by many in court for the ebullition of truth. They set up an *alibi* for Doughty, and stoutly swore to circumstances which tended to prove it; thus directly contradicting the honest testimony of poor Juba.

When these had done their part in this preconcerted drama, the orator again held forth; and in the midst of his strenuous eloquence, the credulous foreigner, not insensible to the graces of pantomime, clapped his hands with the rest, in admiration of him whom he believed to be the champion of justice. Even this little accident was turned to account. It was, to use the words of the popular pleader, "a beam of orient light emanating from the demon of darkness."

Sir Charles now saw that the tide was turning against him, and feared that the lukewarm charge which followed would be very insufficient to quell the effervescence caused by the defence.

The jury withdrew; and, after an hour's consultation, came back to say, that eleven of their

number considered the evidence of Juba insufficient; but that the twelfth, Captain Monson, differed in opinion. Captain Monson, however, as he was present at the arrest of the postmaster, was not supposed to be entirely unbiassed; and, having been withdrawn, a verdict was instantly returned for the prisoner, who, according to popular reading, was thereby most honourably acquitted.

Mac Cardwell heard his own name coupled with that of the postmaster in mob exultation and with demoralizing praise; while Juba, notwithstanding the protection of Banks, ran much hazard of being pelted to death. But Doughty, after all, had no great cause to congratulate himself. My brother, Captain Monson, and some learned gentlemen present, protested against the privilege claimed by the Confessor, and demurred to his asserted right of refusing to give evidence, on the plea of preserving inviolate the confidence of the confessional. Doughty was therefore detained, until an appeal should be made elsewhere; and the bail of Mac Cardwell was not released. He was ordered to

hold himself in readiness, should he be called on again.

The popular exultation, which always runs high on the acquittal of a prisoner, was very much checked when it became known that the postmaster was remanded to prison; and my brother, for the first time in his life, was greeted with hostile demonstrations; but in his ears, on such an occasion, these sounds were plaudits of honour. He would have felt himself degraded by any exhibition of popularity, earned by deviation from the strictest principles of justice.

But the opposite party did not show themselves so fastidious, and their cravings were more easily satisfied. Mac Cardwell made a sort of triumphant entry into the village of Pendyffryn; a display got up by a few mining adventurers, then out of employ, some fishermen, whose boats wanted repair, and sundry boys and girls blowing tin trumpets, who acted a burlesque congratulation on what they were pleased to term the acquittal of Doughty. A bonfire would, probably, have been lighted on the

cliffs, but that the design was frustrated by the intervention of some old-fashioned persons, who had yet to learn that the suppression of evidence, the absence of defaulters, and the contumacy of a witness, are sufficient to establish innocence, where guilt might otherwise have been brought home, with

“ confirmations strong
As proofs of Holy Writ.”

CHAPTER XVIII.

IF Clotilde was relieved by the escape from justice of a person whose reputed crime compromised the character of a minister of her church, and in whose condemnation he might have been implicated, she was, on the other hand, not a little distressed by the detention of Mac Cardwell, and felt alarmed at her husband's having been the means of delaying a mission to the holy Catholic city.

Mac Cardwell, it soon appeared, experienced the same fears on his own account that Lady Trevillion did for the safety of her husband ; and, not feeling bound by English law as he was by Romish authority, he forfeited his securities, and proceeded

forthwith on his mission, leaving a letter for Sir Charles, stating that, in his opinion, the important transaction in which he was spiritually engaged absolved him from attendance to secular matters.

“For myself,” continued the writer, “no aristocratic influence, however exerted, shall compel any violation of confessional faith, which is one means of salvation to sinners. Not that you are to infer from what has transpired that the prisoner at the bar would have been compromised by my answers; or that, although a Catholic, he had made any confession of the crime imputed to him. My conduct on the late occasion had no peculiar reference to the postmaster. I was solely influenced in maintaining the dignity of my church, and in preserving inviolate the privileges of my religion. I desired in the most public manner to demonstrate that a Catholic minister has power to withhold his testimony, and that the law of the land cannot reach at any confidence which the contrite sinner, however guilty, may in any place, or on any occasion, pour forth in the ears of his minis-

ter. That act remits him here and hereafter : he is thenceforth, in the sight of Heaven, a justified penitent. But how Sir Charles Trevillion is to be absolved for his persecution of a stranger, whose spiritual duties detained him in his neighbourhood, is best known to himself. It 'may not be discovered here,' 'but will be shown hereafter.' I leave you, sir, with the impression on my mind, that by the strict performance of my duty to my church, I have incurred your dislike, and subjected myself to personal insult at your hands ; but I make no complaint ; I call for no redress : I do not write a line to Lady Trevillion : she suffers enough, poor lady, in every sense, without my making her a party to your suspicion, and involving her in your hatred of her spiritual instructor."

Such was Mac Cardwell's farewell to Pendyffryn, and sincerely did I rejoice at his departure. My brother, however, was disappointed and provoked at his escape, since it necessitated the liberation of Doughty, whose detention did not last beyond the next quarter sessions.

A few weeks' time to reflect, together with the flight of the priest, changed the opinions of many; so that when Doughty came out of prison, he found himself but coldly received; and having lost the post office, he soon followed the example of his old inmate, and turned his back upon Cornwall.

Poor Juba, whose unsophisticated good sense was shocked at the liberation of two such merciless scoundrels, looked doubtingly on every one, and moved about amongst us in apparent fear of his life. Charles, therefore, shortly after inquired for a vessel bound to Madras, and had him taken to Falmouth and placed on board, with recommendatory letters to his master, couched in the warmest terms.

Clotilde, who had been the greatest sufferer in all the late events, after the dispersion of Mac Cardwell, Doughty, and Juba, gradually recovered her serenity. We interested ourselves in our former occupations, and again united our different talents and tastes in furnishing and ornamenting the house. This interesting disposal of our time

was peculiarly suited to Clotilde; she pursued her occupation with spirit, and the results of her chaste and exquisite fancy were truly admirable. It seemed as if the removal of the superstitious tyrant had taken off an embargo from her natural animation, and delight in making herself useful. She was no longer restrained, solitary, and abstracted; harmony was restored to our school, cheerfulness to our domestic circle, and by the time that our long-expected friends arrived at Pencyffryn, its charming mistress was once more the same attractive being, who, before she was subjugated to the influence of intolerance, had diffused universal pleasure, and ensured universal love.

I had been long aware, that some of our friends were coming to see us more out of compliment to Charles as the representative of his family, than in approbation of his marriage; nor could I wonder at the existence of such a feeling; they had never happened to fall in with the more amiable of the Romish persuasion, so that they derived their opinions from the few prominent characters who

do all in their power not only to render that religion obnoxious, but the veracity of its professors doubtful at the best. Moreover, others of our family, in addition to the anti-Roman-Catholic feeling I have spoken of, cherished their old English prejudices against foreign alliances, and had yet to learn that a French woman performs, in many instances, the duties of daughter, wife, and mother, with full as much grace, amiability, and cheerfulness, as are exhibited in the most polished and correct domestic circles of England itself. Amongst those who composed our Christmas party, none came to Pendyffryn so full of prejudice as Mrs. Letitia Trevillion, an unmarried half sister of my father. She assured me, before she had been ten minutes in the house, that in accepting my brother's invitation under present circumstances she did herself the greatest possible violence; indeed, she only submitted to the infliction in order that there should be no public demonstration of her displeasure.

“’Tis but for a few days,” she added, in a tone

meant to be affectionate toward myself, "nor should my stay be even for that time, were it not in respect to the name of Trevillion, and that I do not wish to withdraw the countenance of so near a relation from yourself. The falsettos of French women are utterly detestable to me. And, beautiful as no doubt this new sister of yours is considered, I am the last person in the world to be blinded by appearance."

I did not attempt the task of vindication, which rarely removes (with obstinate tempers) a prejudiced impression; and trusting rather to the resistless influence of the libelled party than to any thing that could be said in her behalf, I left my old English aunt to make her own discoveries, and to arrogate to herself as much merit as she pleased for the sacrifice thus made in honour of our house.

It was however highly amusing to witness the struggle this primitive person endured, and the stately frigid air with which, when ready for dinner, she entered the saloon. Her little figure was

drawn up to its utmost height, her hands were firmly crossed, as if, in defiance of modern freedom, they had entered into a compact never to extend their courtesies beyond each other ; her lips were compressed to the most determined silence ; and the *tout ensemble* was as repulsive as it was possible for human nature to make it.

Charles went forward and offered his arm : declining the courtesy with a formal inclination of the head, she proceeded straight on toward the fire place, where a seat was reserved for her beside Lady Margaret Melville, our very charming cousin. Coming, however, in contact with a footstool, and the strict adhesion of her arms rendering them useless, she suddenly stumbled and fell, happily without receiving any hurt, but sadly disconcerted that the dignity of her carriage should be destroyed by her *mal-adresse*, and mortified to think that the impression she meant it to make, especially on the foreign lady at the head of the house, should be so decided a failure. Charles raised her on the instant, and Clotilde without remark quietly removed both the offending footstool and its com-

panion, so that no impediment remained in the way when it became necessary for Mrs. Letitia again to cross the room, which she preferred to do independently, without aid of an arm: a few words she let drop *sotto voce* in disapprobation of footstools, and other such innovations on the broad expanse of carpets, had the effect of banishing them all out of sight. The amiable hostess soon observing that the eyes of the old lady were rather dull than bright, and yet that it was a failure not willingly acknowledged, took care during the remainder of her stay that her free progress through the rooms should never be impeded. The same considerate kindness suggested that neither she nor I should produce any candle-light needle work, an example which of course was followed by others; so that our only antiquated visitor, though one amongst a party of young persons, was never let to feel the disparity of years, our evening occupations being always of that kind in which she could easily engage.

It was by such amiable, though trifling compliances with the feelings and humours of others,

by such wakeful apprehension of whatever might gratify or wound, that Clotilde exhibited that kindness of heart, that perfect angelic disinterestedness, the germs of which lie hid and uncultivated in many a bosom, and which many well-intentioned persons equally possess, but unfortunately they think good nature beneath their practice. It was by such *petit soins*, so grateful to the receiver, and which costs the donor so little, that my dear sister won the good will and affections of all who came within the sphere of her influence.

Mrs. Letitia softened by degrees. Indeed she must have been formed of adamant itself to resist that sincere desire to please, which, perfectly free from a thirst of admiration, influenced the manners of her hostess; and when the intended period of her visit drew to a close, she was easily persuaded to prolong it, and remain along with our other friends, until after the anniversary of my brother's birthday.

Charles had had the family jewels reset, and Clotilde intended wearing them for the first time on this occasion.

I was sitting in her dressing room overlooking

their arrangement, when a knock at the door was followed by no less a personage than Mrs. Trevillion herself, bearing in her hand a shagreen case, which was immediately presented with a formal speech to my sister, and which contained a pearl necklace of some value, though not a little antique in its form.

The newest and most costly of ornaments could not however have met with a more grateful acceptance; but never can the mortified countenance of the giver be forgotten, as she glanced her eye over the brilliant display on the dressing table, and understood that it was to be worn that evening.

Many a conscientious struggle must our poor aunt have endured, before she wound herself up to the resolution of entrusting a necklace that had descended as a sort of heir-loom through so many generations into the custody of a French woman and a papist. But this foreigner had somehow, by her unobtrusive attentions, by her feminine and matronly deportment, her modest cheerfulness, and devotedness both to husband and child, conciliated her punctilious relation. The new setting of the

family diamonds, and the consequent inferiority of her own less brilliant offering, was, however, near spoiling all.

“Paris taste! I suppose,” she said, looking as yellow as a marigold: “the same setting which our family considered sufficiently elegant for my sister, the late Lady Trevillion, to appear in at court, was not of course sufficiently modern to please her successor.”

“O no! not Paris taste,” replied Clotilde, passing over the last part of the speech. “Sir Charles would not have trusted such precious gems to any other hands than those of his own family jeweller. The credit of their arrangement does not, however, belong to any jeweller. It is entirely his own. I was not consulted, neither was Mary. It was all a delightful surprise.”

“Not being aware that full-dress was the order of the evening,” rejoined Mrs. Letitia, still sore on the subject of her pearls, “I thought by my paltry gift to honour the birth-day of a much-esteemed relative. It is scarcely worth a place in

your Ladyship's cabinet; but my niece, Miss Trevillion, may perhaps find room for it in hers."

"Ah, madam! what have I done?" cried Clotilde. "Why am I to be disappointed of so flattering a gratification? Allow me to profit by your first kind intention: allow me to retain these valuable pearls: invaluable I should say, as belonging to the family of my husband. Marie has a suit of her own. It belonged to the late Lady Trevillion, and has been presented by Sir Charles to his sister. Let me, I entreat, have the pleasure of retaining this in its place."

"I wish it were better worth your Ladyship's acceptance," was our aunt's gracious reply. "Perhaps, if new-set, it might suit some less splendid occasion." With this observation she placed the shagreen case on the table, made one of her formal courtesies, and having replaced her folded hands in their usual repellent position, she was on the point of leaving the room, when Clotilde, obeying the natural bent of her feelings, seized upon one hand, and raising, pressed it to her lips, saying, in

her own animated manner, "Your gift, my dear madam, shall never be altered by me. It would lose half its value in my eyes, if one pearl were reset."

The old lady coloured to her temples; whether with surprise or approbation it would have been difficult to determine, for she left the room on the instant, without uttering a word.

Clotilde had chosen for that day, in contrast to her diamonds, a green velvet dress, which, from the richness of its texture, was peculiarly adapted to her figure. And when she entered the saloon, so lovely, so queen-like, was the appearance she made, that every one arose intuitively to receive her.

But what pleased me most in that engaging exterior was, that she had managed to arrange the old-fashioned necklace in a sort of coronet upon the crown of the head; where, encircling a rich braid of dark glossy hair, the size and colour of the pearls were set off to the greatest advantage.

The judicious appropriation of her present escaped the eyes of Mrs. Letitia, until its arrangement drew a compliment from Lady Margaret

Melville, when such a smile passed across the lips of the donor as, I am certain, had not relaxed them for years. And in leaving the eating parlour, she voluntarily unlocked her hands, placing one at the same time within the arm of the once dreaded foreigner.

French ladies, as every one knows, are proficient at their needle ; and, without noticing Mrs. Letitia's failure of sight, Clotilde produced such a variety of needle-work, knitting, &c. &c., suited to all tastes, and all ages, that our aunt could scarce fail of wishing to make some experiment. In a short time she was actually learning of her foreign niece. We were no longer constrained to forego our evening's favourite employment. Formality was banished from our circle ; every face wore a smile, every voice was harmonious. Doctor Bentley, long before restored to his former place beside the lady of the mansion, and anxious to do away with every injurious impression which the thoughtless marriage of his friend had left on the minds of his relatives, spoke of Clotilde with approbation, and treated her with fatherly regard.

So much, indeed, did his good opinion influence others, especially his old admirer, Mrs. Letitia, that on New-year's-day she actually penetrated into the nursery before descending to breakfast, "for the purpose," as she said, "of wishing both mother and son the compliments of the season in an old-fashioned way, previous to her departure;" and when that hour arrived, which she postponed until every one else had preceded her, we received one and all a most pressing invitation to return her visit at Bath.

"We will accept of her hospitality," said Charles, as we stood watching her carriage drive away from the door. "Not indeed to the extent of sleeping at her house, for that would put the good lady to too great a restraint. But we must go to Bath before long." He paused, and his eyes beamed with the most heartfelt affection, as he added, "Our glorious festival has, in some respects, my dear Clotilde, been barren to you. The next, that of Easter, I hope to redeem my promise, and reward you for the privations of Christmas."

CHAPTER XIX.

I KNOW not which of our party was most pleased with their first impression of Bath, as we approached that "city of hills" on a clear evening, in the commencement of March, and saw it under all the advantages of a glowing sunset. The lofty terraces of the new town rising one above the other, their precipitous sites almost commingling with the clouds, the deep repose of the old city lying in the plain beneath, its time-darkened buildings, venerable abbey, soft flowing river, richly embellished environs, and hanging woods, formed a *coup d'œil*, not to be surpassed elsewhere.

A house had been prepared for us in these en-

virons, situated on one of the beautiful acclivities which flank the south banks of the Avon. As we slowly ascended to our destined rest, Bath was lost sight of for almost twenty minutes; but when at length we reached it, and looked back upon the golden prospect, "far sinking into splendour," nothing could exceed that scene in glory. From sky to earth it seemed as if there were suspended a thousand draperies of dazzling brilliancy, as if the very clouds were wreathed with lamps of fire, as if the Gothic windows of the dark cathedral, and every window in that dense and antique mass of which it forms the centre, were suddenly touched by the enchanter's wand, and blazed "an illumination of all gems." No one, who has not witnessed the gorgeous spectacle, can possibly imagine the magnificent effect of such an appearance, or conceive the unique admiration which attends the closing in of evening, when evening closes in on Bath.

Expectation was no way disappointed upon a nearer survey of what had dazzled us so much at

first; and having satisfied curiosity by climbing the elevations of the new town, and by acquainting ourselves with the antiquities of the old, we next turned our steps toward the country, where the healthful downs invited us to vigorous exercise, the sheltered valleys (and where such valleys?) to explore their varied intersections, their cheerful, but retiring loveliness. The most remote and last discovered being, in our estimation, always the best worth research. Happy and tranquil scenes! “too bright and fair even for remembrance,” gaining so much in contrast with anxieties already gone through, so much more on retrospection with misery since experienced—would that I could forget ye!

But our ostensible reason for a sojourn in Bath being to visit Mrs. Letitia Trevillion, I must not omit to mention how graciously she received us, or how solicitous she was to show off her nephew and his accomplished wife; of whom, despite those drawbacks, her religion and foreign birth, the old lady was not a little vain; and who, had she valued

admiration more than duty, might have had Mrs. Letitia's world at her feet. But the rooms and the parades, the concerts and balls, formed no part of Clotilde's enjoyment, while the season of Lent forbade her participating in such gaieties; and while, added to the gratification of sharing in the excitements of Roman Catholic worship, she had the peculiar pleasure of meeting with a confessor personally known to the Père Montcalm, and introduced to her acquaintance by that reverend prelate.

Mr. Austin, at that time belonging to the establishment at Prior Park, was one of those persons whose first appearance excites in the beholder a remarkable interest. Extreme reserve seemed his peculiar characteristic; yet, while he shrank from rather than invited attention, attention was sure to fix itself upon him. His figure tall, slight, and rather attenuated; his dress, deportment, the very expression of his dark, deep-set, saintly eyes, all were evangelical. It was impossible to look upon him without respect, or to hear him without de-

ference. But it would be as impossible to transfer to the canvass every hue of the changefulameleon, as to read in one sitting, or indeed in one thousand, the character of his mind in his countenance, so much did the latter vary according to the subject on which he spoke, the person whom he addressed, or the situation in which he was placed. Not that such variations were the effects of natural susceptibility, or were beyond his control: I have discovered, upon longer acquaintance, that all were, or could be assumed.

The introductory visits of this accomplished Confessor were short and well-timed. He spoke little himself, gave the lead to my sister or to me; encouraged us to be communicative, said just enough to create a desire that he should say a great deal more; and always contrived to break off at the precise moment when conversation had attained its highest promise of perfection, leaving an interest in his departure like that we feel in the progress of some unfinished painting, which betrays the master's hand, and to which expecta-

tion looks impatiently for touches of still superior beauty.

In short, Mr. Austin appeared as if purposely created to fill up the measure of Clotilde's happiness—to supply her only want; for though abounding in every good, unmolested in her religious privileges, possessing the entire love of a husband to whom she was herself devoted, with the esteem of his relations, and the power of exercising an extensive benevolence, she yearned for something more. Her views of higher things emanating from natural religion, were “seen through a glass darkly.” In the clearness of her fine understanding she knew that all was not right—that mystification surrounded her; and when left alone to the unbiassed use of that understanding, her perplexities increased. She desired a freer means of approach to Him, whose call was so loud, and whom it was so difficult to resist. She felt an earnest wish to pour out the gratitude of her heart at the footstool of the Most Merciful; yet she arose from that footstool with a void in her soul—with feelings

unsatisfied—with a longing for something unpossessed. It was for the blessing of a purer light that she yearned; for unreserved communion, not only with her God, but with her dearest friends. This she knew not how to obtain, nor where, in her isolated state, to apply. Dare she pour out these oppressed feelings on the bosom of her husband, he was certain to afford her his sympathy; and much did she wish, that, without sin, she could receive such sympathy. But fidelity to her religion, the dread of being influenced by mortal love to hazard immortality—of being led away by such dear influence, to reject a faith on which her salvation rested, locked up her heart. No wonder then that she should hail with joy the approach of a guide on whom it was safety to rely—who was chosen for her by the instructor of her youth, and to whom she could refer under all perplexities. Looking upon him as a link between her and her salvation, no wonder if she felt relief from every care when introduced to Mr. Austin.

“ How often have I envied you your Doctor

Bentley," she said to me, when her Confessor had concluded his second visit; "but I shall commit the sin of envy no longer: for now my advantages are equal. Oh, how much is due to the Père Montcalm, for giving me a preceptor so worthy of respect, whom I may, with so much pleasure, present to my husband! Already I perceive that he is exactly suited to Charles, that he blends in his manners the polish of foreign education with the natural gravity of an Englishman: the most fastidious need not fear encroachment from him. What an interposition of Heaven his being here at this time! Is not his appearance altogether saintly? Does he not look as if already canonized?"

"He looks like a very gentlemanly person," I replied; "not in robust health, and therefore the more interesting. But I am not acquainted with him yet; for, though he manages so adroitly to draw us both out, scarcely one sentiment does he utter himself—at least, not one expressive of a feeling."

"Half-a-dozen words, Marie, are equal to a

thousand, according to the person who utters them; and very few from the lips of Mr. Austin are enough to impress his hearers with confidence, veneration, and a certainty of excellence which satisfies the soul. I must write, without delay, and thank the Père Montcalm for his affectionate care of the absent Clotilde."

Mr. Austin was, in truth, so very prepossessing, gentle, and retiring, that I too might have been as enthusiastic as herself, if Clotilde, in addressing him, had not used the appellation "Father;" but the utterance of that sacred name—through which we claim an heritage in heaven, which is our dearest privilege on earth, which implies, either in its moral or spiritual sense, so much of dependence, obligation, and love—dissolved the charm; and when the Confessor admitted the relationship by calling her in turn "my daughter," the film dropped wholly from my eyes, and he was invested with danger and dissimulation. The affected humility of the man was contrasted with the boundless authority of the priest, and the confi-

dence, which so mild an exterior might otherwise have secured, was changed into the pains of suspicion.

I little liked to hear her use a name so hallowed, though, in reference to the Père Montcalm, that venerable instructor of her childhood, it had been softened by a foreign idiom ; but when applied to one with whom she had but a few hours' acquaintance, who, but for a peculiar seriousness of deportment, a slightly attenuated figure, and the pale olive of his complexion, would have looked younger than her husband, it sounded in my ears unbecoming, almost sacrilegious. And this consideration, as I said before, recalling to mind the authority of Mr. Austin's position, with all its dangerous concomitants, changed the pleasure which might have been derived from society so attractive, into apprehension of the consequences.

It was on the occasion of his second visit that Mr. Austin met my brother at the door. They exchanged no more than a bow ; but none knew better than the Confessor how to throw the most

meaning into the most simple of his actions ; and Charles, who merely touched his hat, was impressed by the respectful and dignified acknowledgment which he received in return.

“ Well, dearest !” cried Clotilde, running to meet him as he entered the drawing-room, “ you have seen Mr. Austin ?”

“ I have ; and, if a little more aged, think he would look very apostolic.”

“ Oh, he is the most interesting-looking person in the world !—so dignified, so retiring, yet so very much accomplished. His manners and conversation would delight you.”

“ Perhaps so,” he coldly replied ; “ but I doubt if I should think him the most interesting person in the world. Ladies are, however, privileged to hyperbolize, and to make hasty conclusions ; they are permitted, I presume, to speak of their spiritual favourites in very warm terms. What say you, Mary ?—is your opinion of this stranger as quickly arrived at, and as favourable as that of your sister ?”

The question, though puzzling, required an answer.

“ Mr. Austin appears to me an elegant gentleman. His manner, perhaps, a little too reserved; but we forgive silence in those who listen with interest.”

“ Then it was to Lady Trevillion that his numerous accomplishments were displayed ?”

“ To both ; for I was present during the whole of his visits.”

“ Indeed ! Then I pronounce Clotilde the more liberal judge of the two. You wait for proof: she forms her opinion from the surface, which sometimes is the more polished for the corruption which it covers; but she is ready to take for granted that the intrinsic value must accord with the exterior adorning.”

Few persons like to hear those whom they exclusively love, make another the subject of excessive praise. Nor was Charles quite exempt from human failing in this respect; and Clotilde unfortunately, though possessed of good taste, and not

without tact, let the feelings of the moment throw her off her guard. She spoke, when excited to approbation, like a French-woman, in superlatives. Her English, though correct, was not original; she thought in her own native tongue, and the transcript of her thoughts, or rather their translation, sounded sometimes too florid. Charles was thoroughly English in every feeling, thought, and practice; his expressions, like his actions, were correct and well governed. It was impossible to know her without admiration and love; or him without respect and esteem. Had it not been for the intervention of a third influence, these two opposite characters, each so amiable in its way, and each so sensible of the merits of the other, might, blended together by the softening cement of conjugal affection, have formed a rare union of domestic virtue and of foreign grace. But, alas! that third, that fatal influence!—I must not, however, anticipate.

One morning returning from a walk, and passing through Prior Park, we met Mr. Austin slowly

ascending the hill. His step was languid, and his appearance that of a person who has gone through recent fatigue, both of body and mind; without waiting for permission, Clotilde introduced him to her husband. A few words only passed. She inquired with interest after his health; he merely replied by saying, that his walk had been tiresome; then he recurred to the beauty of the day, the scenery, &c. &c. bowed low, but with a reservation of dignity peculiar to himself, and was the first to move away.

“Mr. Austin has been performing some painful duties I am sure,” remarked Clotilde; “I hear from others that he is indefatigable amongst the poor, but he never boasts of his works, or complains of the weight of his labours.”

“He is certainly, for a stranger, a very attractive person,” returned Charles; “though not, as Clotilde expressed herself, the most interesting person in the world.”

“My sister,” I said, “speaks with equal warmth of all whom she approves: you know, Clotilde, I

laughed the other day when you used the same expression in reference to our old friend Doctor Bentley."

"It would be impossible," she replied, "not to speak of him with approbation—with warm approbation; I cannot learn to deliver myself with cold praise of those whom I so highly esteem."

"If praise were always proportioned to merit," observed Charles, "you could not express yourself too highly of our excellent friend; but there cannot be two persons the most interesting in the world."

From this remark I could see that the exclusiveness of the above unfortunate phrase rested on my brother's mind; and yet the acquaintance thus unpropitiously begun, imperceptibly progressed.

Without advances on one side, or encouragement on the other, there was scarcely a day in which we had not some communication with this fascinating man, for his road into Bath lay past our house. Although such rencontres were momentary, or that only a word or two were interchanged,

he contrived to leave an impression which covered his departure with regret; and was it but a weed in the path, or a bud in the hedge-row, which called forth his passing observation, it lit like a sunbeam upon the object, to invest it with interest, or to render it a vehicle of instruction.

Charles, naturally reserved, and with an intuitive horror of encroachment, seldom encouraged intimacies; and Mr. Austin, keenly observant of character, soon saw into his. He therefore held back, and however desirous of our acquaintance, by his manner rather seemed to repel than invite civility. But the former was attached to botanical pursuits, and our new acquaintance, both a botanist and an horticulturist, possessed the rare talent of making his knowledge known without the slightest appearance of display. Sir Charles arose with the sun, and wandered far in search of specimens. Mr. Austin's habits were the same; cultivating a similar taste in a still higher degree, he possessed a magnificent herbal; which, without the slightest appearance of obtrusiveness, he offered to my

brother. They met in their early researches, and it was natural that, attracted by the same occupation, they should sometimes pursue it together. Mr. Austin was invited, with his herbal, to join our family party when he could; and aware that his society was really wished for, he no longer declined, but rather met the cordiality. Nor did he hide his acquirements under the veil of reserve, but became a delightful as well as instructive companion. The study of the morning furnished conversation for the evening, and I am sure that Clotilde, entering with avidity into whatever drew her husband and the Confessor together, reckoned these evenings amongst the happiest of her life. At once profound and comprehensive in his reading, and full of literary information, it was not difficult for the Confessor to find subjects of various interest, without adverting to any upon which differences might arise. And in politics, though not in religion, he professed the same opinions as his host. If, however, it happened that a point was disputed, and that his superior knowledge upon

that point gained him the advantage, he immediately and adroitly recurred to something else, asked a question, assumed the attitude of a listener, and the air of a person who devotes his whole attention where he knows that there is much to be gained. In short, seeming to receive, while in reality he imparted information, he made his way by the most acceptable species of flattery, under the semblance of the most amiable candour.

A respecter of the laws, a lover of order, his morality was perfect, it was beautiful. Neither Fenelon, nor Blair, nor Priestley, need have been ashamed to profess it, either in language or sentiment. But so carefully for a time was religion kept out of sight, that it might have been the morality of the Jew or of the Turk, rather than of the Christian.

CHAPTER XX.

OUR sojourn at Bath being limited, we made few acquaintances except those in the immediate set of Mrs. Letitia, and when every thing worth seeing was inspected in the city, every walk, within walking distance, explored in the country, a certain number of dinners partaken of, Charles began to tire, and to wish for the occupations of home. There was however but one fortnight till Easter, and Clotilde prevailed upon him to remain for that period.

Mr. Austin continued to visit us, and, under the circumstances, formed a pleasing resource. Living rather out of town, we were consequently

less liable to interruptions, or remarks to which a residence more on the *pavé*, might have subjected us. And, whether owing to this accident, or that the Confessor, being acquainted with the habits of Bath, timed his calls judiciously, it happened, that we were never broken in upon when he made one of our family circle. Thus the increasing intimacy with a Roman Catholic priest, which would have proved highly offensive to Mrs. Letitia and her clique, was a long time without reaching their ears; and Charles, left to the peaceful enjoyment of an intercourse that imperceptibly ripened into friendship, forgot every thing in the prosecution of that intercourse, except his own gratification, and the freedom enjoyed by his wife.

There were now no penances, no unnecessary restrictions. Clotilde went regularly to prayers in the early part of the day, and returned home in cheerful spirits to take part in our occupations or amusements; we heard not a word of confessionals. Religion, as a subject of argument, was never mentioned between us; for Mr. Austin,

cautiously suppressing every indication of zeal, prudently restrained his progress: and resting on preliminary steps, was too good a calculator not to be aware, that one is the first figure of a thousand. Nor did there seem, throughout that dreamy period, so far as appearances were carried on, any other distinction between Protestant and Catholic, than if we were all belonging to the same persuasion, or that Clotilde preferred cathedral service while we resorted to our parish church.

On the Thursday in passion week Mr. Austin at length broke the ice, by first alluding to a Romish practice particularly attended to that week. My sister had looked for a few days rather pale, and, on her leaving the room, the Confessor, who was sitting with us, inquired of me, if I thought her quite so well as usual, adding, "I fear that her self-inflictions, in the way of fasts, are unnecessarily severe. I wish we could persuade her to be more careful of her health. Lady Trevillion is evidently delicate, and in such a case there are

always allowances. I am not one of those who place entire trust upon injurious mortifications. On the contrary, I deprecate the weakening of the mental powers by overstraining the corporeal strength. A calm and collected performance of our sacred duties is, in my mind, more acceptable than either excitement or depression: such a performance requires the full use of the faculties, and it becomes us therefore to preserve their vigour, rather than to risk their defection. Some hardened hearts require bodily mortifications, but I am an enemy to all that enervates. Sir Charles, I hope," he added, "agrees with me in my view of abstinence."

Charles did assuredly agree; and soon as he recovered from the surprise which so much candour was likely to cause, acknowledged his sentiments to be those of the Confessor: the rigid fasts practised by Lady Trevillion had always appeared to him, he said, works of supererogation built on self-righteousness. They gave him much uneasiness; and he thought, in her present state of health they

were calculated to be injurious both mentally and corporeally. He then expressed the pleasure he felt in meeting with a Roman Catholic clergyman whose opinions were so moderate and so candidly stated.

“There are many of our clergy who not only profess but practise moderation,” replied Mr. Austin, “especially amongst the higher orders. Ignorance is usually intolerant, and those who receive a confined education in a local sphere are apt to atone for their own mental deficiencies by undue severity in outward matters. I fear, Sir Charles, that your experience of our body is derived from the last named source; but it is unfair to judge by *ex parte* evidence, or a limited induction of particulars. In every persuasion there will be found that sort of zeal which strains at gnats and swallows camels.”

In this sentiment, too, my brother cordially coincided, and the subject of religious opinions once broached, a lengthened conversation ensued, during the progress of which, had we been Romanists

ourselves, Mr. Austin could not have spoken with more apparent openness, betraying, as he went on, a thorough acquaintance with the inspired writers, and a liberality in his views which augmented the esteem already accorded to his less serious acquirements. When rising to take leave, he thanked us for our indulgence, saying, "that such topics being the most pleasing of any other to himself, he felt the highest gratification in meeting with enlightened and liberal Protestants, by whom he was not shunned as a bigot; and who, instead of closing their hearts to a Catholic brother, shrunk not from discussions so interesting and important to every denomination of Christians."

It is very pleasing, very flattering, to hear oneself called enlightened and liberal. Mr. Mac Cardwell had told me that I was narrow-minded and harsh. Charles knew that he also was thus classed. We were agreeably surprised to find ourselves so much more justly appreciated by so much better a judge; and we appreciated him in return. From that moment, had Mr. Austin been Dr.

Bentley himself, we could scarcely have felt less restraint in his presence. Subjects vitally connected with our happiness were freely discussed. We did not contradict, by suspicion or reserve, the good opinion already formed of us by the Confessor. If previously charmed by the indescribable interest of his general conversation, the versatility of his talents, or variety of his accomplishments, that charm was doubled when thus permitted to analyze his mind ; of which piety seemed to be the all-pervading principle. Chateaubriand himself could not have expressed his sentiments in language more sublime, more beautiful, more poetical, than did Mr. Austin. But, highly as he was informed on every subject, no subject was ever obtruded ; his great art consisted in appearing to withhold ; in exciting curiosity, which he never fully satisfied. There was always some beauty concealed behind a veil, of which the development was anxiously looked to. And there was always a wish, implied if not expressed, of gaining information from us, which went further, perhaps, than any thing else,

in conciliating our favour. He questioned us closely on certain points of faith, not as it would appear for the purpose of confuting them, but really as if he desired information. And, seeing him thus incline a willing ear, thus attentive, thus anxious to learn, sometimes observing that he seemed struck, that a truth pricked, or a text of Scripture silenced him into thoughtfulness, we were actually led to cherish the presumptuous hope, that by conversations such as these, by reasonings such as we could adduce, the Roman Catholic professor might be led into a recantation of his errors.

How have I since blushed for the short-sighted folly which urged on topics of such a nature in presence of so profound a master; for that self-conceit which, presuming to contend with prejudices firm as a rock of adamant, exposed my ignorance to the secret scorn of one, who could not fail to ridicule, while he penetrated the puerile attempt for his conversion. How deeply mortified have I often felt at the recollection of those wasted hours, when the

wily Jesuit, by flattering my vanity, and giving me his attention, led on a simple-minded, unsuspecting female, to wander in the wild fields of controversy, where she must either lose her way, or fall into one of the many traps disguised within its tangled mazes.

Charles was no less enthusiastic on the subject of Mr. Austin's conversion than myself. And the new interest, which robbed Bath of its tediousness, suspended his yearnings for home. How could it be otherwise, when bent on achieving so glorious a conquest he was flattered with hopes of success—with hopes, not only for the Confessor, but for his wife?—our credulity going so far as to believe, that because Clotilde was a silent, she must also be an approving witness of all that was going on. We could think, we could talk of nothing else: but we did not penetrate her real feelings—we did not see that it was the growing influence of Mr. Austin, and our final renunciation of heretical errors, to which her expectations pointed; or that one consequence of such influence afforded her unmixed

gratification, namely, a very softened feeling on the part of her husband—if not to the Romish religion, at least to the ministers of the Romish Church. Certain it was, that he and I equally agreed, that Mac Cardwell, instead of representing that Church, or those ministers, was a very unworthy member of the body.

Hurried on by our desire to “snatch a brand from the burning,” we hunted all the libraries for the most-approved theological works; attended every church where the preacher was likely to make our subject his; took notes of any thing that suited our purpose, and returned home, thus stored and thus instructed, with renewed vigour to the charge. We forgot, all the while, that books as yet unread by us, and arguments to us so novel, had formed the chief study of our opponent—if opponent he might be called. We overlooked the fact, that while our spiritual education had been chiefly derived from Bible truth, his had comprised the whole range of controversial defence; and we were unmindful, that while we sought to gain the

end by a straightforward path, our antagonist was enticing us into a labyrinth, which might entrap us to our ruin.

But a righteous intention, however mistaken, is seldom without some reward; and though severe sorrow, and much mortification, are connected with our reminiscences of Bath, still there is something to reflect on with hope; for Clotilde had opportunities of listening to truths, which, with the blessing of God, may have dwelt upon her mind, and be treasured up there for her comfort and conviction. Can we tell the moment when it may please Him, in His mercy, to turn her sorrows into joy, or when the living seed that was then scattered on the waste, may germinate? You are not to imagine, that the conversations to which I allude assumed a tone of disputation, or even reached to argument; but we “reasoned together;” and instead of repelling, Mr. Austin met reason half way. He listened more than talked, and when he did talk never contradicted—carefully eschewing those absurd points which had been so warmly pressed by

Mac Cardwell, but enlarging on the spirituality of Romanism, he dwelt on the mercies and loving-kindnesses of God. While comparing and expounding ancient prophecies with many of their awful fulfilments, he unrolled, as it were, the map of time, illustrating an abstract of ecclesiastical history by the most sublime allusions. We heard of self-denying practices, not justifying penances; or of holy aspirations and devotion to heavenly things. We had quotations—not from controversial authors, but from the beauties of Massillon, and from other Roman Catholic writers, equally spiritual and sublime. Again we were edified by anecdotes of Charles Borromeo, St. Louis, and other lights of the Church. Whenever he forsook generals and went into particulars, it was hence that he drew his illustrations, till, in admiration of such glorious exemplars, we lost sight for a while of the idolatries, the treacheries, the avarice, the debasing superstitions which yet cling to the system. None knew better than Mr. Austin how to make his selections, how to evade a question when too closely pressed,

to slip out of a dilemma, to decline a discussion when it went against him, or to adorn the rugged path of controversy by strewing it with spiritual flowers.

In short, by shirking some facts, softening others, and invariably opposing to our zeal, when we let it burn too brightly, the most exemplary patience, charity, and forbearance, we were well nigh in danger of coming to a conclusion, that existing differences between the two churches required only the interference of Christian sympathy—the ceding of a few immaterial points—to produce the most harmonious union.

About the time that we arrived at this slippery crisis in the high road of reformation, Mrs. Letitia Trevillion sent me a few lines, desiring I would call upon her at a certain hour.

On my arrival, I could see that the expression of her countenance threatened an awful lecture ; and I sat down with all the fortitude I could collect to endure it.

“ Am I to credit what I hear, Miss Trevillion ? ” she began. “ Am I to believe, that my nephew,

Sir Charles Trevillion, spends most of his time in the society of a Romish priest, a member of the Jesuitical College of Prior Park? Is this true, or is it not? I like direct replies."

"Mr. Austin, madam, is my sister's Confessor. He calls upon her, and we see him of course."

"And why should you see him, of course? Is it not enough that your popish sister should see him? Is it not enough that she should attend the Confessional, without bringing home her Confessor? It is wrong, Miss Trevillion; it is disgraceful; it is a condescension by no means called for on the part of your brother."

"I assure you, madam, that the Confessor is a most accomplished gentleman, perfectly qualified for any society; with very refined manners, unassuming, liberal, and——"

But Mrs. Letitia cut short my injudicious panegyric impatiently.

"So much the worse!" she exclaimed. "So much the more dangerous. There never was a liberal priest; and if this person pretends to libera-

lity, it only proves the more deceit. I assure you, my feelings are wounded most severely. It is quite new for any of our name to make themselves subjects of remark; but they are doing so now. Last night, when I went to Admiral Bower's, to a party made on purpose for my nephew and niece, judge my surprise when told, that not one of you were coming; and my mortification, when I overheard Miss Disney whisper Miss Allen, who was my opponent at whist along with General St. George, that just as she left her own door, Mr. Austin, the handsome priest from Prior Park, whom no correct female in Bath would be known to look at, was let in at Sir Charles Trevillion's. But this was not all. My good friend, the Admiral, not very well pleased with your brother's choice of society, and very much hurt upon my account, told me in confidence, that this same priest had been seen on the Down alone with my nephew, not only once, but several times; that he lent books to the family—I hope you never read them, Mary—and had actually dined at your table.”

I acknowledged all this, for it could not be denied; but, in order to appease her, and bring her round to my side, I confidentially imparted our motives for thus encouraging an intimacy with the Confessor, and made known the very sanguine hopes, which both Charles and myself entertained of eventually removing every prejudice from so dispassionate a mind—in short, of converting him to the Protestant faith.

“I cannot understand why you should take so much trouble, or interest yourselves so unnecessarily in the concerns of this stranger,” was her cold and almost contemptuous rejoinder.

“Surely, madam, you do not put trouble in comparison with the salvation of an immortal soul. You do not think that our time could be better employed than in the service of a fellow-creature, in opening the mind of an immortal being to those divine truths.”

“Do not get into the heroics, my dear,” she said, interrupting me again. “I am not accustomed to them, and must own that I think both

yourself and your brother excessively silly. It is not my way to say uncivil things; but I must tell you, that the idea of your converting a Jesuitical Priest is the most ridiculous piece of self-conceit that ever came to my knowledge. If the fact of such *sottise* were to get into circulation, both yourself and your brother would be the laughing-stocks of Bath. A young girl attempt to convert Mr. Austin! He, whose success with your sex is notorious—I mean in the way of conversion. Of course he begins by pretending to listen, and subscribing to your vanity in his own cunning way. Then his interesting appearance, as they tell me, for I keep out of danger's path, and never get acquainted with such persons, adds not a little to his influence. Fie, Mary! I am ashamed of you. This is no place for wrong-headed people, as yourself and your brother are now proved to be. A few year's experience—pray Heaven it be not dearly bought!—will teach you both better. I own I am sorry for Charles, the last representative of our family. Go home to Doctor Bentley, child!

He knows how to advise. All I shall add is, that if this ridiculous business had not interfered, I meant to have kept you with me. But to get acquainted with a Romish priest! to attempt the conversion of a Jesuit!—I cannot possibly answer for what you may yet have in contemplation.”

I told her, that the next thing I had in contemplation was a visit to my aunt Melville in Scotland. She advised me to set off without delay; and we parted, neither of us the least convinced by the arguments of the other.

Her conversation was repeated word for word to my brother, who was very much amused; and said he expected nothing else, as it was too late to suppose she would march with the times. “But I have written to Doctor Bentley,” he added, “and have urged his joining us here in such terms as he cannot resist. I have placed the benefit of a visit from him at this present juncture in such a point of view as must secure us the benefit of his assistance. Your next call upon Mrs. Letitia must be made in his company; I shall decidedly avoid seeing her until he arrives.”

By return of post, we received the good Doctor's reply. "How prompt!—how like himself!" exclaimed Charles, breaking the seal. Its contents ran thus—(how far they kept pace with our expectations, a short extract will show)—

"Your letter reached me last night. I have read it more than once; and confess that the subject, on mature consideration, both alarms and grieves a cautious old friend, who has long since awoke from his dreams of enthusiasm, and who would rather eschew the path you have rushed upon, than tempt the man-traps and grass-snakes which its luxuriance may hide.

"If Mr. Austin be all that you describe—the most intelligent, the most liberal, the most candid of men, well read in divinity, conversant not only with the Bible, but with the ancient fathers—how comes it that he yet wanders in darkness? If he have, as he avers, studied, *dispassionately*, the works of our great Reformers, how comes it that such lights are unavailing, unless he purposely closes his eyes? And, if this be the case, what can be expected from my feeble lamp?—must it

not fail also? If his sight be closed, and his ears shut, would any commentaries of mine suffice to open them? No: be assured they would not; be assured that his conversion is not dependent on us; that it is neither yours, nor mine, nor any mortal interference, that can effect such an end. Mr. Austin is not unlearned, not ignorant: an influence above our control must accomplish the work, must break the stony heart, enter the strongholds of pride and prejudice, and crumble to pieces, with no human strength, the kingdom of Antichrist to which he is a subject. Leave him, I pray you, to that superior influence. Remove from an attraction so dangerous, and which seems to have bound you as with a spell. Flight, in such a case, is your only resource; the only means by which you may 'keep yourself,' so that the evil one touch you not.

“ I am told that his version of charity is perfectly scriptural, that it does not, like the charity of Mr. Mac Cardwell, inculcate almsgiving; but that he rather preaches longsuffering, forbearance,

brotherly love—the charity which covereth a multitude of sins. This I can believe ; for his object is to silence and subdue. But I would not, in your case, call such charity love : I would rather call it indifference—indifference on the part of a Protestant husband to the salvation of his Roman Catholic wife, which would reconcile him to her errors, send her, without solicitude, to the confessional, encourage that invidious influence over her mind, and the minds of her young family, whose beginning is slavery, whose progress is deception, whose end is alienation, destruction, and death—indifference, which talks of freedom, but intends domination ; which preaches peace, but instigates to war ; which ‘speaks lies in hypocrisy,’ substituting for God ‘the devices of man ;’ which silences truth, and renders inquiry offensive ;—such is, in my mind, the charity of your admired acquaintance, and which obtains for him the character of a liberal Romanist. Neither you nor your sister are instructed in the profundities of Jesuitical artifice ; nor would the remainder of your lives, devoted to

this purpose, and lengthened to threescore years and ten, suffice for such instruction. Quit, therefore, dear friends, the blandishments which you have not skill to detect; maintain your freedom by escaping their toils; disentangle yourselves, before it be too late, from the labyrinth into which you have plunged.

“ The tempter may talk of universal love, he may call you his brothers and sisters, he may laud your liberality, but he cannot think as he speaks; he may offer the kiss of peace, stretch out the hand of fellowship, ask why the hearts of believers should not be united? or why, while worshipping the same God, trusting in the same Redeemer, there should be adverse feeling? But he chooses to forget, that when idolatry was established, when the ‘ Vicar of Christ,’ having usurped authority over kings and people, with the Council of Trent, uttered anathemas against primitive belief and a pure unadulterated religion, that adverse feeling ensued, and that separation was unavoidable.

“ Mac Cardwell I consider a less dangerous

associate than this more accomplished confessor ; his policy might be the same, but his tact in concealing it was not so profound. He soon cast away the cloak of humility, and assumed equal rights ; not as drawing together the faithful in love, but as contending for privileges, and for the aggrandizing of his church ; these were his objects, and he continually betrayed them. Mr. Austin has no other objects, but they are more skilfully disguised. He talks, it is true, of liberty, and of equality in all things concerning religion, yet has ascendancy at heart. ‘Satan talked of equality,’ says an eminent writer, ‘when he tempted Eve to disobedience :’ Satan’s followers tempt her offspring by the same specious discourses ; and shall we not fear that the end may be similar ? Had Eve resisted Satan, she would not have sinned. Beware that the cloven foot is not already fastened on you. Doubt your own strength ; listen not to seducing spirits ; and take heed that the warning of inspiration be not fulfilled, which says, that ‘in later times some shall depart from the faith.’

“ Think less of Mr. Austin, and more of yourselves. The mote, despite all our efforts, will rest in his eye. Come home, my good friend, and pluck the beam out of yours : then you will see that he who speaks in such *charitable* terms of a faith he abjures, who talks of Christian sympathies as bringing about spiritual unity, who endeavours to persuade you that there is little difference between us, desires to throw you off your guard, and at length, like the spider when he has woven a fly in his web, to entangle you beyond extrication.

“ Believe me, on the contrary, that such a gulph as divides the two churches is not to be passed. That until transubstantiation, justification by works, creature worship, the infallibility of the pope, and various other differences are totally given up ; in short, all the idolatries, all the innovations of Rome are abandoned—until popery throws off her scarlet robes, and returns to the simplicity of apostolic worship,—the very mention of a union between the two churches is as deceptive, and the scheme as impracticable, as raising a second

Babel, and reaching heaven by the work of our hands.

“When your sister was attacked by Mr. Mac Cardwell in the sphere of her usefulness, I felt myself called upon to stand forth in her defence, and took up the gauntlet accordingly; glad of an opportunity to speak some words of truth in presence of a Roman Catholic, who never till then heard two sides of a question so vitally connected with her salvation. But the active duties of a parish minister confine my exertions to one narrow circle. I have no time to give elsewhere, or indeed to indulge much in those studies which make the business of conventual life, and which are essential to success in controversial disputation. Mr. Austin makes no open attack, and it would be presumption to suppose that I could, in the course of one or two conversations, counteract the progress of a covert one, especially as the influence you have suffered to take hold on Lady Trevillion—for whose sake alone I would sacrifice one day’s occupation in my parish—renders her reformation

a subject of despair. I see no resource but her removal, and I beseech of you not to delay. Let me see you here again, surrounded by those duties which belong to your station. The works begun by yourself and your fair assistants require to be perfected: though we do not subscribe to the Romish doctrine of justification, God forbid that we should deny the parable of the talents, or say, that a tree is not known by its fruits! Come, therefore, and let your light shine before men,—come and glorify your beneficent Creator, who has dealt so largely by you,—come and take account of your stewardship. Remember, ‘that it is easier for a camel to go into the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of heaven,’ and that ‘from him to whom much is given, much will be required.’ Forgive, I beg, this moral sermonizing. There is nothing new, nothing original in all I have said, but the lessons I inculcate cannot be too often repeated. I entreat you not to reject them for others more novel,” &c.

This letter, though so thoroughly disappointing, was not without effect, for the influence of Doctor Bentley was paramount. We had the self-denial to relinquish our proselyting scheme, and to spend our last day with Mrs. Letitia, who, believing that so immediate a removal was in consequence of her advice, behaved with more kindness than we anticipated; and an invitation from Lady Margaret Melville to meet us at her house in Lancashire so much softened the asperity of the old lady, that she actually desired I should make Bath my resting place whenever I returned from Scotland. We had not, however, the pleasure of her company to Lancashire, whither in the first instance we directed our steps. Charles and Clotilde remained there only one week; at the end of which time I, under the escort of General Melville, proceeded to meet my cousin, Lady Melville, at Carlisle.

Mr. Austin, I have said, was introduced to my sister's notice by the Père Montcalm. But he had other claims, as we afterwards discovered, which

might have excused us, even to Mrs. Letitia Trevillion, for permitting the visits of a Roman Catholic priest. Clotilde was a native of the province of Maine: her mother a St. Aubin. The Confessor claimed his parentage at the paternal side from the same stock, and was born in the same province. There was something very similar in their mutual history,—his mother being a subject of Great Britain, and having married in the early part of the French revolution a refugee from that country. These circumstances not only rendered Mr. Austin more interesting, but formed an apology, had we considered one necessary, for the encouragement of an intimacy so pleasing to all parties. Indeed, our short sojourn at Bath was pregnant with events, which appeared to us shortsighted mortals most propitious for Clotilde. I have omitted to mention in the proper place, that shortly after our arrival, she received tidings from France of an acquisition of fortune, bequeathed to her by a distant relation, Monsieur de St. Aubin, proprietor of fine estates and an old chateau near

La Valière, on the north banks of the Loire : all of which she was to enjoy for her life, and which were to descend to her next child, male or female, who should be born in the said old chateau.

The testator, a modern free-thinker, made no condition as to religion ; and thus Charles had an additional motive for wishing that the infant, whose birth might be expected in October, should prove to be a boy ; while Clotilde, delighted with the magnificent donation, and with the condition annexed, looked forward, as it was natural she should, to the pleasure of spending a winter in France.

“ It is no joy to me to be independent in money matters of my noble-minded husband,” she said ; “ but I am charmed, that his power of conferring benefits should be enlarged through my means. It is also gratifying to visit the ancient domains of my ancestors—to *feel that they are mine*—and to see my native province. I know it is a general custom in France for the heir of the estate to be born under the ancestral roof. I am glad this good old custom should still be kept up, and must

take care to reach the chateau in time, or else my legacy will not descend to my children, but may be litigated by whoever is the male heir of my generous relative. You will therefore return to us, my dear Mary, before the first of September, when our journey to La Valière must take place. I shall like much to show Charles his new possessions with all the advantages of the vintage."

I readily promised to reach Pendyffryn in time, believing that a visit of four months in Scotland would give me enough of that northern climate; and little dreaming that the stern features of Caledonia would wear for me, long before the expiration of that period, an aspect more endearing than the soft smiles of my own native Cornwall.

CHAPTER XXI.

AT Carlisle I was received by Lucy Melville; we had not met since the melancholy period when her mother came from Scotland to watch by the death-bed of mine. And though Charles called Lucy heartless, my impression was far from being his; for when I sustained the greatest loss that can befall a female, she took the orphan to her bosom, and bestowed on me the affection of a parent.

The most acute sense of suffering attendant on then leaving home, was that such removal separated me from Lucy. Nor did I like my brothers the better, that they professed no admiration for her, and that they refused consigning me to the care of my aunt. Especially I felt indignant with Charles,

who said she was an icicle, and would make me as cold and as Scotch as herself. Now as it happened that I loved Scotland for Lucy's sake, and Lucy for her own, my mortification at the time was extreme, in not seeing the country of which she told so much ; and the speech of my brother was a long while afterwards remembered with anger. Besides, young though I was, it had come under my observation, that could Charles have liked his cousin, who was an only child, their marriage would have gratified my mother. Acquainted with her wishes, I had set my heart on their accomplishment. But his opinion was different ; he preferred joining his regiment in India.

The glowing cheeks and glistening eyes of Lucy, as she ran down stairs at our appointed meeting place, did not disappoint me. Nor, as she pressed my hands, and glanced those soft eyes over my altered person, kissing me again and again, did I recognize any of that heartlessness of which I had heard her accused. Still it must be acknowledged, that she was both changed and im-

proved, being that sort of face and figure which looks better at six-and-twenty than at sixteen. She was now a most interesting and pleasing woman. She had been a silent, common-place girl, who could only find courage to speak in a corner; with feelings worth drawing forth, and a heart worth the seeking, but too repellant from shyness to excite an interest in her favour.

Mrs. Melville's residence, some miles beyond the border, answered and did not answer my expectations; for the scenery wanted that boldness which I imagined was every where to be met with in Scotland; while a strong contrast to the south of England, gave to the place and the people every advantage of novelty. And, had not the distant heights of Cumberland, the nearer hills of Nithsdale, and the blue waters of the Solway, which we saw from our windows, been really objects of admiration, the hospitality with which I was welcomed, and the peculiar charm with which perfect contentment endued that blessed spot, would have amply compensated their loss.

Feeling at home in the house of such affectionate relations, there was something in the change from Bath to Heathery Haugh, peculiarly soothing to the then state of my mind. I had come from scenes of excitement, from controversy, from hearing a great deal said about religion, to where, without talk, it was brought into all the scenes and circumstances of daily life—I should perhaps say, without disputation, for that which completely fills the heart, must sometimes escape the lips. But what did escape was so humble, so thankful, so totally removed from comparisons, that while it made the very soul of conversation, it never made a subject of dispute.

I had listened to expositions given in a truly Christian spirit by Doctor Bentley, but, at the same time, to much that was unpleasant on the other side: and until Mrs. Letitia Trevillion's rebuke, and the receipt of the Doctor's salutary, though mortifying letter, I had forgotten, in my zeal for the reformation of another, that there were many things in which I wanted reformation myself; and

that such rash interference, instead of deserving the highest praise, merited the disappointment it met with. But at Heathery Haugh all such heart-burnings were over ; and, happily removed from a continual searching for errors, it was like being wafted

“ To regions mild of calm and serene air,
Above the smoke and stir of this dim spot,
Which men call earth,”

to make one in a circle where controversy was unknown, where domestic harmony was cherished in a society of Christians from motives pure as sublime ; where gladness beamed on every countenance, and contentment reigned in every heart. It was heaven upon earth to be received into a family so blessed in its head as was the household of Mrs. Melville ; who, though not possessed of superfluities, was for ever bestowing favours ; and, like charity, seeking nothing in return. In short, if ever any person was lifted spiritually above the cares and the casualties of life, that person was Mrs. Melville. Sensible and acute, but mild and con-

ciliating, she could advise without offending, and interfere without appearing intrusive: while her experience and knowledge were so tempered by benevolence, that no fellow-creature, however inferior, felt in her presence the pains of inferiority. I never knew a heart so overflowing with gratitude, or heard a voice so attuned to thanksgiving. Yet we are aware, that had she liked complaint more than praise, there would have been no great difficulty in making out a case. Of three lovely children, but one blessed her age; and the sons whom she lost were as much loved as the husband to whose grave she consigned them. But her religion was like a vigorous tree, the tears of affliction gave strength to its roots, and the luxuriance of its fruits was the test of its cultivation.

The advantage of living beneath such a roof may, I trust, be a lasting one; for it was a privilege, indeed, to get acquainted with one heart in this world of ingratitude, so filled with heavenly things as to leave no room for earthly repinings—to witness the confirmation of that promise fulfilled to

those who obtain a spiritual victory, and abide by the command of "casting all their care upon God." But I forget that Mrs. Melville is your relative, that she is better known even to you than to me ; and that thus, while dwelling upon excellences which involuntarily arrest my pen, I yield to a selfish gratification. Yet, kind as I invariably found her, beautiful and beneficial as was her example, indelible as is the impression of her virtues, I cannot choose but linger on so pleasing a theme, or refrain from recurring to that favoured period of my life, which was full, not only of present good, but of future promise. I cannot help acknowledging, that to her example, and her precepts, I owe the strength of mind which enables me to look back upon what I sacrificed—upon our first acquaintance at Heathery Haugh, upon the engagement sanctified by her approbation, and the flattering prospects that then awaited me—not with the bitterness of ill-sustained disappointment, but rather with such sensations as a traveller looks back upon one bright spot in his troubled journey, which

sheds an influence on the remaining way, and outlives the remembrance of its difficulties.

But the drop of bitterness to which I have already alluded—the penalty of mortal error—was still in reserve to dash the cup of pleasure from my lips. Two months had scarcely elapsed since my arrival in Scotland, when some communications from home rendered me uneasy. But this uneasiness I durst not impart, for my brother's letters were its cause, and the subject was sacred. Clotilde had been ill, but was recovered; and there appeared nothing in her correspondence, except a conciseness more than common, which evidenced any alteration, either as to health or to spirits. Kind soul! had she not, in consideration for me, put a restraint on her pen, I should have been aware that the alteration was alarming. But Charles, not so cautious of giving me pain, did not so considerably restrain himself; and intimations not very pleasing became gradually more explicit, and assumed, in course of time, the character of complaint.

Mr. Austin had been appointed Chaplain to the

family at Morvyn Hall. He had preceded his patron to Cornwall, and spent a few days at Pendyffryn, where his Bath friends were alike happy to receive him. But their hospitable pleasure, as it seemed, was not without its drawback; for, however agreeable, amiable, and intelligent, however bland and deferential in his manners to Dr. Bentley, the latter was reserved and chary of approval. And as Charles had set his heart upon bringing them together, he felt his disappointment the more, expressing himself to me a little hurt on the occasion. I regretted this much; but at a distance from the influence to which he was subjected, my judgment was more impartial, and rather than accuse our good old friend of prejudice, I felt myself inclined to give him credit for penetration. A letter which he wrote me shortly after his introduction to Mr. Austin will best depict his sentiments on that occasion, and serve to show in what light he viewed our admired acquaintance.

“ You will expect that I should say something of Lady Trevillion’s newly arrived Confessor; but

to form any decided estimate of this gentleman would puzzle Lavater himself; except that in manners and conduct he is decidedly a gentleman.

“ With her Ladyship’s usual warmth of panegyric, she extols him to the skies, and speaks of him as the most interesting person of her acquaintance. If she means by this, that he excites the most curiosity, I agree. His personal appearance is a letter of credit, and first impressions have their effect. I admit, as every one must, that he is remarkably pleasing, intelligent, and forbearing. I found him extremely well informed, and sufficiently candid; with an exterior peculiarly calm, and an adaptation of manner to those with whom he communicates, which in very superior persons must be the result of benevolence. This was my first and most favourable impression. Before we met again there was time to reflect on his character; and the dazzle having in some degree subsided, to examine it dispassionately. In a second interview I could perceive, that while lying in wait for the sentiments of others to develop themselves, he artfully guarded

his own—that an unpremeditated opinion never escaped him—that he possessed the talent of rendering his own acquirements conspicuous, without the slightest appearance of display—that he understands your brother's character, as if he had known him for years—and, however uncharitable the conclusion, that both his simplicity and his candour were factitious, and overlaid his natural disposition. To you I need not observe that his learning is extensive, and his conversable talents admirable. But I must say, that Lady Trevillion sets too high a value on these things, which, after all, have nothing to do with the principles or the heart; and that she takes for granted, what is by no means a matter of course, that their possessor must be intellectual. I wish she were less intellectual herself, or, to use a homely expression, more matter of fact and common place.”

This extract will suffice to show the sentiments of the writer. And I must confess that, having read it, mine underwent a great modification: I began to suspect the sincerity of such elaborate show,

and to dread a recurrence of the former influence, or rather of an ascendancy infinitely more dangerous than that from which we had suffered so materially before; I knew it could not be long until the eyes of his old friend would direct the observation of Charles, and create a reaction unfavourable to the man who had now got a footing into the house, and a permanent establishment in the neighbourhood. All that I foreboded was verified too soon.

Referring to the two clergymen, in a letter subsequent to that I have just quoted, Charles said, "I miss Dr. Bentley, who has gone to London on business, extremely; for, after all, I begin to think our good pastor is much the superior of our Prior Park star. There is both freshness and truth in all he says and does that bears an original stamp; a probity, a clearness of judgment, which I never saw elsewhere combined with such acumen. The problem which would puzzle others for hours he solves, as it were intuitively, and makes as clear as daylight, by a word. In short, my dear sister, the

longer we know, the more undoubtingly we trust him; for he is one of those whom there is no difficulty in understanding, and on whom we may with safety repose. Mr. Austin is altogether different: I begin to perceive something enigmatical in his character. Perhaps, with my zeal for his conversion, his chief interest subsides; but, let the fault be where it may, I am ill at ease: we do not assimilate in our feelings and pursuits as we seemed to assimilate at Bath. Possibly my home-spun occupations are, in his estimation, objects of contempt; or, it may be, his great perfection, that of being so intellectual, places him, on further acquaintance, above my comprehension. I feel myself, in comparison, a very inferior person, not qualified to be the associate of so accomplished a scholar. But when the purchasers of Morvyn Hall come to reside in the country, their chaplain may not have so much leisure to give to Pendyffryn. At all events, the period for our continental journey draws on, and we shall probably find enough of interest in our possessions upon the banks of the

Loire to detain us there during next winter and spring.”

Such communications as these, with one or two unusually concise and restrained from Clotilde, prepared me for unpleasant explanations. I saw that things went wrong, that an incipient jealousy of Mr. Austin—at least, of his superior attainments—was taking possession of Charles; than which nothing could be more unfortunate, as he was one of those persons who thought too humbly of themselves, and, though never doubting the rectitude or the affection of his wife, he was too sensitive of what he imagined to be his own unsuitableness; a prepossession that realized its own apprehensions, by rendering him thoughtful, gloomy, and constrained. Adding twenty years to his age, it gave him the appearance of coldness, when, in reality, his error was an excess of sensibility; it totally extinguished that lightness of heart which carries its possessor through subordinate trials. More of the hero than the philosopher, he could front, without shrinking, the severest misfor-

tunes ; but he was deficient in equanimity, and in those qualities which rise daily and hourly above petty cares ; and yet this species of courage is more called for in a state of existence where petty cares often make the sum total of our being, than that sterner fortitude which, had Charles been a Cranmer or a Latimer, would have led him to the stake.

I saw him as an accepted happy lover, as a bridegroom, the most cheerful of men ; all the fine qualities of his heart drawn out at the call of affection. I witnessed the development of his generous feelings at Pendyffryn, his indulgence as a husband, his tenderness as a father. I saw the cloud pass over his brow, and renew that apparent austerity of manner which was produced by disappointment, by the dreadful consciousness that there “ where he had garnered up his heart,” the confidence it reposed in was withdrawn. This feeling again subsided with the removal of the cause, and a complete reaction rendered him happier than ever. But it was happiness, as I now feared, of transient duration ; and I pictured him to myself

in a moody frame of mind, silent, reserved, yielding to imaginary rivalry, repelling the affection on which his very being depended, making no effort, and leaving all the "vantage ground" to another; which other, though too refined and Jesuitical to display his authority over the Roman Catholic wife—to blazon, like Mac Cardwell, a vulgar success—might not be slow to place himself in contrast with the seemingly heartless husband, to blend the most delicate commiseration with the deepest respect, and, licensed by his position as a father confessor, to pour consolation into her wounded heart, and maintain an intelligence which, unless thus licensed, she would be the last to permit.

Seriously apprehensive for the peace of persons so dear, I reproached my own heart for its happiness; and much as there was in your preference to gratify a brother, it was not without pain that I made known that preference to Charles.

Approval he could not withhold; but it was, as you know, coupled with a condition of delay. I had no intention of forfeiting my promise to Clo-

tilde; and your considerate arrangement of joining us in France, by obviating all difficulties, rendered me easy. Alas! how little did I apprehend the frustration of our plans! how little foresee, when you left me at Heathery Haugh to make a short sojourn at Melville Lodge, that it was our final separation!

Already prepared by the tenor of my correspondence, I was more distressed than surprised at the reasons alleged by Charles, when urging my immediate return; and anxious to vindicate the injured Clotilde—injured by the unjust suspicions of her husband—I set off without a moment's delay, without waiting to apprise you of my movements. Indeed, my brother wrote in such apparent anxiety of mind, that every hour seemed an age until I found myself upon the road, and, except in one instance, obeying his wishes to the letter. But in that instance I considered disobedience a duty, and though cautioned to say no more than that our removal to France was the cause of my hurry, I took my aunt Melville into confidence, and made

her acquainted with the truth, viz. that domestic unhappiness at Pendyffryn and the absence of Doctor Bentley rendered my presence necessary to Charles—as necessary perhaps to my beloved, unfortunate sister, whom I taught her to commiserate, and to think of as more “sinned against than sinning.” My aunt stood to me in the light of a mother—she was our nearest relation—as much concerned in preserving the family honour as ourselves. It would have been impossible for me to practise the slightest reserve with a friend so truly kind and so worthy of confidence—under engagements too with her nephew I felt doubly accountable; and by whom could my explanations be so properly or so delicately conveyed as by our mutual relative?

You know the rest. She did indeed fulfil the trust—she performed the arduous task of vindicating my conduct without being enabled to explain it. Never shall I forget her kindness and delicacy on that trying occasion; never our parting at

Penrith, whither she and dearest Lucy insisted on escorting me ; nor cease to appreciate the line of duty which her better judgment pointed out, should circumstances require its fulfilment.

CHAPTER XXII.

I PASS over my long journey into Cornwall, which, independent of what I expected to meet at the end, was sad in the extreme. Scarcely stopping to rest, and travelling with impatience, I reached my brother's door even sooner than he expected me: and O! how dreadful it is when the weary traveller arrives at home, to feel the pulse beat fuller, and the heart throb quicker, but not with joy—to have hurried on with burning eagerness, yet within sight tremble to approach.

“Who can express that fear,
“When the heart longs to know, what it is death to hear.”

Such were my sensations when, alighting from

the carriage, I looked in vain for a welcome from Charles or Clotilde. He, however, met me as I passed through the vestibule; and in accents that betrayed how ill composure was assumed, thanked me for my promptitude, and led me to the library, where in a few seconds we were joined by his wife.

Alas! what a change in that once lovely being, who though neither illness nor anxiety could rob her eyes of their colour, nor her face of its delicate proportions, was but the faded wreck of her former self; sorrow and thoughtfulness had settled on her brow, and while she received me with the tenderness of our happier days, the nervous tremor of her hands, and the rush of tears to her eyes, proved there was no gladness at heart.

But the looks of her husband were still more alarming, and, as he sat apart, abstracted and gloomy, making now and then a cold inquiry for our Scottish friends, again relapsing into silence, all the awe and the restraint of my school-girl-days usurped their old place over my feelings.

The familiarity of manner that had grown upon him since his marriage, especially since he became a father—the tenderness of heart which he had latterly taken no pains to conceal, and which rendered him as loveable in appearance as he was in reality—once more entrenched themselves in a fastness of ice; and he was now a severe likeness of the same censor who had chilled my affections when I was yet a child. Clotilde sat beside me, her hand clasped in mine, but she said very little, and that little was unnatural.

No open display of wordy unkindness, but a cold, constrained withdrawal of confidence on his part, a depression, not an annihilation of feeling upon hers, betrayed the misunderstanding between husband and wife, whom I could only compare to the stately forest tree and the once clinging ivy, each exposed to the influence of the same withering blast. The one, though shorn of its foliage still resisting the storm, the other yielding to its terrors and bowed to the earth; but both retaining the germs of an undying adhesion, which, with the

return of a more genial season, must unite them again. Had I arrived one hour sooner their dear boy had been present, and the unconscious liveliness of infancy is the happiest interruption of restraint. But till Charles had unburdened his mind, till Clotilde had poured out her heart, I knew that such restraint must continue; and as separation is better than forced attempts to be at ease, I pleaded fatigue and retired: she accompanied me, and we went into the nursery, where William lay sleeping in his little white bed, a lovely representation of innocence and peace.

While I bent to kiss him the mother stooped over us both, and her tears fell on that innocent face. I turned round to embrace her, and was strained to a heart which beat against its bosom as a bird against the wires of its cage. Restraint was at end—that dreadful restraint, so new to us both, and so agonizing to practise!

“This is cruel, inconsiderate, selfish,” she murmured, endeavouring to dry up her tears. “Ah, my poor Marie, what a welcome to your home!—

'To morrow all shall be explained. But now go to rest, and forget for a moment the most wretched of mortals.'

These few words were no anodyne. But I went to my room, where we parted without speaking, and where, when quite alone, I found my only relief in weeping profusely.

Weary, exhausted, but indisposed for sleep, I opened a window, with the object of allaying my anxiety by looking out upon the lawn, and endeavouring to retrace the long familiar features of the landscape. The moon was at the full, the sky unclouded; and so still, so perfectly still was the night breeze, that the very leaves of the trees seemed to sleep upon their branches. Not a sound of any kind broke on the universal silence. It was an hour of repose, of meditation; and the nocturnal peace of all without, the beautiful serenity of the elements, formed a sad contrast with the sinful indulgence of those human passions which alone prevents us from contemplating such objects with delight, and gratefully encouraging those hallowed

thoughts and holy aspirations, which nights such as I describe were doubtless meant to incite.

While lingering at the window, and watching the countless stars, the deep shadows of the woods, the solemn light upon the lawn, all so inexpressibly calm and wondrously soothing, I would, had it been possible, have persuaded myself, that my anxieties were only dreams—that creatures to whom so much was given did not wilfully debar themselves of good—that Clotilde had nothing to impart but the fulness of her gratitude, and that the ills complained of by my brother were only like the illusions of the hour. But alas! the looks of both, the dreadful alteration since we parted, were no illusive witnesses of ill. The woods, and the sea, the view on which I gazed, lovely as it appeared, teemed with discordant images. There was Mac Cardwell brought before my eyes, scudding through the trees with his long stealthy step, and threatening aspect. There was poor Juba dragged from his retreat, shivering, half-naked, and hungry; afraid of the very hands that were stretched out to

succour him, and weeping by the grave of his murdered lady—her death unavenged, her destroyer at liberty. Then I saw Charles struggling with the priest, and drawing down his wrath on all our heads—that wrath which doubtless now pursued us, and was the disturber of our late repose, the malign and subtle vengeance which reached us from afar.

Such thoughts were not unnatural, such surmises by no means improbable, and while I still yielded to their influence, the clock struck two. As I rose to leave the window, a light glimmering amongst some trees beneath, fastened curiosity to the spot. It appeared and disappeared, but was not entirely removed, and its dubious existence added a feeling of awe to that of surprise. Bending cautiously forward, I ascertained, that what I saw was the reflection of a candle from some window in the basement story; and at the same moment sounds of distant music floated on the air—faint certainly, but sufficiently distinct to prove,

that they were produced by an organ, and that they came in the direction of the chapel.

I now for the first time felt angry with Clotilde. If Mr. Austin was the instigator of such irregular practices, he deserved the strongest reprobation. They were, indeed, enough to account for the austerity of Charles, and to incite feelings of jealousy, so inherent to the nature of man—not personal jealousy of an individual, but of an influence superior to his own; without which susceptibility of painful feeling—as I had heard him say—there could be no real love.

It is impossible to describe the sensations with which, for a few minutes longer, I kept my eyes upon the spot where flashed that flickering light; nor the extreme pain of sometimes fearing, that it was not a reflection, but a reality. That some person, attracted by the organ at that unusual hour, was hovering in the vicinity of the chapel; yet again the stream appeared to issue from a window. Could it be possible, that Clotilde was

so extremely unguarded as to leave the shutters of her window open, especially with candles blazing within, to render the imprudence more glaring? Could it be possible that Charles sanctioned such a risk?

Doubts of her safety—apprehensions, vague but urgent, impelled me to seek her. I had extinguished my lamp in order to enjoy the moonlight; but well known as every passage and staircase was to me, I ventured forth without it, and reached my destination in safety.

Clotilde I found singing to the organ; her voice, subdued to its lowest notes, was plaintive beyond all conception. She started up on my entrance and uttered a scream; but soon perceiving who was the intruder, recovered from her fright, and reproached me for not being in bed.

“And why not there yourself?” I inquired. “My night rambles disturb no one—they interfere only with my rest—you are accountable to others; and I very much fear, that Charles would expect some consideration for his. He is not, you know, a very sound sleeper.”

She coloured, and turning away, said with some confusion, "Then you do not know—he has not told you—he has not complained of me in his letters? You are ignorant that I have moved from my former apartments, that I have fitted up the little room for my own exclusive use which was formerly his study?"

"On the basement story?" I inquired; "that room so remote, so solitary! Oh, Clotilde!"

"I am not solitary," she hastily replied, "Celeste has her couch in the same chamber; besides it is the next apartment to this."

"And your husband! my sister, where is he?"

"Your brother," she replied, "has not been inconvenienced by my removal; his apartments remain as they were."

"And has it come to this? Are you, indeed, separated from Charles?"

"Listen to me, Marie; hear my sad, sad story; sit down, dear love, and let me tell you all."

I obeyed; I had, in truth, no power to stand.

Their actual separation was worse than I had apprehended.

“You know,” she said, holding my hands tight in hers, and trying to speak with self-possession, “you know that he—that my husband was a party to the false accusation of a Roman Catholic priest—that without proof, without authority, he arrested him on suspicion of a robbery; or, what was equally degrading to the sacred character of a priest, on the presumption of his conniving at a robbery. Although he was permitted to be at large on his parole, the stain thus affixed was no less derogatory. Perhaps you do not know, that this insult was consequent to a conspiracy hatched by Banks and some other malevolent persons who suborned the stranger, Juba. You know also, by the intervention of the blessed saints in Heaven, those so unjustly accused were honourably acquitted. But, alas! for my unfortunate husband, the sacrilege remains unatoned. What feeling short of madness could have urged him on, not only to the subsequent arrest, but to the previous act of violence;

an act of which you, my poor dear Mary, were a witness, when his arm was raised against an anointed priest, when his hands—the hands of my husband—were imbrued in the blood of my Confessor ! Mother of mercies, what a crime is here ! and since, as a Protestant, he cannot satisfy, to think that the guilt remains ! But a justly offended hierarchy, in tenderness to me, have forborne to seek such reparation as the laws of England might afford ; while those of Rome, insulted in the person of a faithful servant, decree”—

“ Of Rome !” I exclaimed, interrupting her indignantly ; “ surely no foreign laws, no ecclesiastical junto, have any right or power to interfere with a free-born Englishman. Such jurisdiction does not extend to us, thank Heaven !”

“ Dear Marie, do not look so terrified. Personally, the Church of Rome cannot avenge itself upon your brother. But, alas ! it can hold him guilty of sacrilege ; and, though not within its pale, an interdict may reach him. It has already reached him through me ; the sentence has gone

forth, and we must separate. Oh! my sister! if I disobey, there is a power to compel obedience—to anathematize your miserable Clotilde.”

“But why anathematize the innocent?” I inquired with extreme indignation. “Why not arraign the supposed offender? Why not give him over to his country’s laws, if these laws have been violated; and let him stand or fall by their decrees?”

“Arraign the husband of a Roman Catholic for an assault against the person and character of his wife’s Confessor!” she rejoined. “Oh no. I would die a thousand deaths; I would submit to any tortures, sooner than subject him to such disgrace and danger. For mercy’s sake breathe not that thought again. Marie, my mind is made up. Should the unborn survive, should I outlive its birth, my destiny is fixed. A convent must ensure my safety, and the safety of my too dear Charles. For the penance of an irrevocable parting can alone satisfy my church.”

“And is he apprized of your intentions? Does

he fully understand the motives which influence your present conduct?"

"God knows he does not, nor have I yet obtained permission to inform him. They wish me to be silent while we stay in England. I have, however, written to the Père Montcalm, entreating his intercession. I have implored for leave to be candid with your brother. When every thing is understood, I may not be so wretched."

"And can you expect that I will not explain? That I can possibly conceal my knowledge of your sufferings? That I can witness, without alleviating, the anguish of my brother? or that, for your sake, I will not remove the unjust inference that he or any other person must draw from such mysterious conduct? Let him throw himself upon the laws of his country: let me be his witness. We have nothing to fear from investigation. I was present at what you term a sacrilege. The chastisement which your Confessor tempted, which was only threatened, not enforced, ranks much lower in the scale of offences. It was no assault; and as to

blood—Oh, my poor Clotilde ! how they impose upon you !”

She arose and threw herself at my feet. “ Wait ! wait ! I implore you, until we hear from Paris ! Let us trust to the kindness of the Père Montcalm. He loves me little less than you do : he will advise ; he will assist. Marie, have compassion, you know not what you may draw down upon yourself, upon me, upon us all, by precipitation.”

Her arms clasped my knees ; her head rested on my bosom ; her sobs penetrated my heart ; I embraced her ; I implored her to be calm. Impelled alike by anger and sorrow, I condemned the intolerance of the church—the cruel tyranny of her priests. I urged the renunciation of such galling chains, and, with what eloquence I could command, with every argument I could adduce, reprobated the dastard practice of concealment. I placed in the strongest light, that was in my power, the deceptions practised on her credulity. I exposed the errors of her creed, and dwelt upon the purity of ours. Above all, I insisted upon that freedom

of conscience, which, based upon so many texts of Scripture, Protestants, out of the fervency of their faith, first asserted, and now enjoy.

She retained her humiliating posture while I spoke, and at first resisted my efforts to alter it. Her sobs grew fainter as I proceeded; her tears ceased to flow. Absorbed by my extreme agitation, I perceived not that her heart ceased to beat, and mistook her silence for attention, until relaxing her grasp, she slid gently from my arms, not in a state of actual insensibility, but of torpor, the consequence of long-suffering, and of excessive grief; so thoroughly helpless, that it was with the utmost difficulty I raised her to the sofa. But terror supplied me with strength, and I succeeded, unassisted, in placing her there; when uttering one deep long-drawn sigh, the weight with which she fell upon it so nearly resembled death, that, but for a recurrence of those heart-rending sighs, I should scarcely have hoped that she lived.

And, oh! how sad it was, when kneeling beside that couch, and looking on one so young, so lovely,

and so beloved, to think that a state of insensibility was for her, in comparison, a state of peace; that the resuscitation of her faculties, the recurrence of consciousness, should prove, in the case of one like her, who possessed so many blessings, an awakening to wretchedness alone—an event more to be dreaded than desired!

CHAPTER XXIII.

It was now proved, beyond dispute, that a malice which never sleeps, or vengeance never to be satisfied, had been long and secretly at work to wreak its fury on our devoted heads. That Mac Cardwell, having trodden the verge of danger, braved justice to the face, and escaped by the aid of a *finesse*, was no longer the accused, but the accuser; and not only the accuser, but the judge. Here was the disclosure of the *secret*—here was displayed the successful expediency, which stopping at nothing, prefers the end to the means. Hence the source to which we owed our divisions, and the dissolving of an union which had promised so much good.

Alas ! how short-sighted had we been in rejoicing over the removal of an enemy, whose influence could reach us from afar. How much worse than short-sighted, when throwing off one incubus, we so soon loaded ourselves with another. Mr. Austin was, no doubt, in league with the former Confessor. Mr. Austin, who, true to his creed, had assumed for a time the tone of moderation, only till the plot should be ripe, the hour at hand—only till he could exercise his fatal authority for the total immolation of their victim.

She lay as if for dead, that poor deluded victim ! A low murmuring and an occasional tear which dropped from her closed eye-lids, alone indicating life. But my endeavours to restore her were suddenly interrupted by a distinct rustling of the foliage which hung about the window ; and recollecting, that the open shutters and the lights must expose us to observation from without, I rose though not with much courage, to secure our privacy.

But I dared not proceed—I dared not perform my

purpose, for a foot was on the gravel; and something like a human form retreated from the window on my approach. At a sight so appalling, the power of motion forsook me. We were so solitary, so defenceless, so remote from protection—a pane of glass only between us and some prowler of the night. All I could do was to extinguish the candles; and then, standing in perfect darkness, every object without became more distinct. The shrubs, the grass-plat, the bright light of the moon, and the retreating figure of a man, who, still keeping the window in his view, secreted himself, as he thought, beneath the spreading covert of a walnut-tree.

At so frightful a confirmation of my fears I was perfectly paralyzed. To close the shutters would have been an effort far beyond my courage; to move from where I stood was as little in my power. I could only sink upon the nearest seat, and fix my eyes on one terrific object, the outline of whose tall figure, though not his face, was accurately described in the moon-beams. His form was not

that of a clown, neither did it resemble Mac Cardwell, who I must confess first occurred to my mind. It was a dignified, an aristocratic form, enveloped in a large dark cloak, the cape of which was thrown over, and partly concealed the head. There was something peculiar about that cloak, something melancholy, but graceful in the figure thus enveloped. I looked intently for a minute. Was it? Oh, yes! too surely I was right—too indubitably the figure was that of Mr. Austin.

Description fails to pourtray the horrors of that discovery, for thoughts rushed to my brain, and convictions to my heart, the most injurious, the most unkind, yet not altogether unnatural. Fear, however, personal fear, I no longer felt, for it was at once superseded by indignation—by a sense of the wrong into which Clotilde was entrapped—by the deepest of all insults perpetrated against my brother. “I am here to save her,” was the first impulse of my thoughts. She shall be saved; and he shall quit a spot so disgraced by his presence; yes, the incendiary shall learn that I know him;

that his baseness is discovered. Oh, my Clotilde ! my sister, my friend, you shall yet be preserved !

With this heroic resolution I advanced to the window, my heart throbbing violently, but my purpose unshaken ; and, prepared to accost a fiend in human shape, I undrew the bolt, and stepped out on the walk. Had he retreated I could have followed ; had he come on but one foot-fall I could have persevered. But he remained fixed as a statue ; and there was something in his stern and immovable position, as he stood under the shade of the old walnut, with his arms crossed beneath the folds of the cloak, and his bent head enveloped in its abundant cape, inexpressively awful. I had now no personal fears to surmount. It was the moral injury, that a visit so mysteriously conducted, and so suspiciously timed, must affix to Clotilde, which filled me with alarm ; but it was alarm surpassed by resentment. I thought of my brother, of the dreadful consequences that might ensue, the loss of character, perhaps of life, were he at that moment in my place. Again my courage was

stimulated, and making a desperate effort, I said, sternly and distinctly, "Mr. Austin, you are known: everything is known: I am not deceived, and I warn you to depart, without one moment's delay, from a spot which you have surrounded with destruction. Leave my unhappy sister to the protection of her own more honourable friends, or I shall call for aid, which in this country suffers no human being to be the victim of persecution."

Still the mysterious figure maintained its rigid position. Had there been a movement, had there been a word, I could have sustained myself, for the sound of a foot-fall, or of a voice, of any human voice, would have saved me from fainting. But the impenetrable silence, the statue-like stillness, struck me with undefinable terror; and turning suddenly round, I rushed to the window, pushed it in, and fell forward.

Immediately a step was at my side; I was raised, I was spoken to, I was reassured. Ah! what a misconception! I had taken my brother for the Confessor. I had confounded his stately figure

with that of Mr. Austin; yet the latter was stately too; and their almost equal height, the cloak made at Bath, after a travelling one of his then favourite associate, with the shadowy light, had all aided my delusion. He bore me in his arms toward the bath; we sat down on the steps, and then in accents the most miserable that ever reached my ear, he said, "Mary, I perceive you know all; you took me for Austin; you thought it not impossible that he might be here? I had a vague—a most horrible suspicion myself."

"Oh, no! I had no suspicion—I had no reason for any. But I was not thinking of you, and was thinking very much of him. The resemblance of your persons, the peculiar pattern of the cloak, the chapel, the association of ideas connected with previous events, all put that improbable imagination into my head. Thank Heaven! it was no more than imagination."

"You are my only sister," returned Charles, with the most touching solemnity; "almost my only friend. The honour of a brother may be in

your keeping. There are some secrets which it becomes infamy to screen—there are some actions which it is criminal to overlook. I heard you say, taking me for the Confessor, that you knew *all*. I heard you threaten him with the laws of your country. What is this *all*? Wherefore this threat?"

"I spoke in that manner to drive him away, to make him believe that I saw into his designs; for indeed, my dear Charles, I feel perfectly assured, that there is a conspiracy on foot to rob Clotilde of her senses, or most likely of her life, before she gives birth to her infant, lest a heretic son should inherit the St. Aubin estates. This strikes me to be the plan. It seems not improbable; or, it may be, that they want possession of herself now that she is rich. I am sure that money—that avarice is at the bottom of all; and, probably, connected with the resentment of Mac Cardwell to you."

"Why, what can that priest have to do with us now?" inquired Charles impatiently; "he is in Italy, is he not? We hear nothing of him; his

was a vulgar, overbearing tyranny; she must ere long have revolted from its impositions—but this polished, this artful, this *intellectual* companion—this most interesting of men—it is he, he who proceeds on surer grounds, whom we never should have countenanced, never trusted. It is such a one, who, in the sacred seeming of a Confessor, establishes an undying influence—an influence so confiding and mysterious—so dangerously exclusive. I know not what I say—what I infer—nor how to describe the suffering of my soul; but I am conscious of holding the second place where I once held the first—of being no longer the friend, the adviser, the preferred companion of my wife. She is, alas! a foreigner, a Roman Catholic. I might have known, that her education, her religion——”

“Oh! Charles, be more just. Her education was as pure as our own; her religion, though it subjects her to undue domination, and affords dangerous opportunities to the designing, is a religion, which in times past has produced the noblest instances of self-denial, of heroic virtue, and spiritual strength;

which even now, deteriorated as it is, and rare as are the instances, emits such lights as may well redeem its general deceptiveness."

"A religion," he indignantly exclaimed, "the moral code of which is so extremely dangerous, that even Napoleon, while he bowed to it for form's sake, forbade the circulation of its test books. And as for spirituality—Oh, Mary! talk not to me of spirituality connected with Confessors, or emanating from confessionals. You know not—Heaven forbid that you should know—the horrors to which I allude; which, alas! I dreamt not of, neither inquired about, before I formed that fatal contract which based my honour on such polluted ground."

"Your marriage," I replied, when he ceased to speak, "was no foreign contract. It was the result of mutual inclination; she loved as devotedly as yourself, and at this moment, however appearances may cast a doubt on the truth of what I vouch for, you remain, as ever, the first object of her heart. Indeed I speak to facts; I do know

her sentiments; I know that some secret, cruel penance—not any abatement of affection——”

He interrupted me impetuously. “You will distract me if you speak thus. What penances, what secrets should a wife submit to without the participation of her husband? What conscientious spiritual director would wish to supersede a husband’s influence? If penances are acts of righteousness—if they are innocent—if unconnected with injury to me, why are they so secretly performed? Mac Cardwell’s influence was harmless compared to this. He assumed on it, it is true; but his assumption was of a different kind, it was vulgar, it was offensive; he did not possess the deep mysterious interest, the intellectual intelligence of *Father Austin*. Oh, Mary! it is now the sympathy of kindred minds. In it I have no part.”

“Listen to me, Charles, calmly if you can. Your wife is most unfortunately circumstanced: she is attached to you most fervently, but she is attached to her religion even more; all devout Ro-

man Catholics are, I believe, more or less subject to the ministers of their church, and you must not be jealous that she is so, you must not repel her affection, you must submit for a little—now and then—to whatever exactions that church may require; and always remember, that your trial was self-chosen.”

“It is too clear,” he replied, in a melancholy tone, “that affection for your friend blinds you to the wretchedness of your brother; and that I am not to possess, on this unhappy subject, an unprejudiced listener even in my only sister. I meant to tell you what I have already suffered; I meant to explain my reasons for quitting home upon so short a notice; but from you no consolation is to be had, and I must endeavour to support my misfortunes alone.”

“Dearest Charles, do not wilfully mistake me! Do not let the good opinion I entertain of your wife, the steadiness of my regard for an inestimable but credulous character, deprive me of your brotherly affection. Tell me, I pray, all you wish

I should know. He 'from whom no secrets are hid' knows how truly I enter into your feelings."

"Another time, when I am more the master of those feelings. But this is no hour, nor place. You are cold, and tremble! Alas! how selfish does disappointment and sorrow render us all! You have had no rest: let us return to the house."

"Come through the chapel," I said: "she sleeps, she will not hear us."

"Oh, no; I dare not trust myself! You go, however, and secure the window. Why is it not closed? What motive can she have in being so accessible?"

"No motive, on my word, but thoughtlessness; or rather from her thoughts being unhappily abstracted from outward things."

"But why here at such an hour?—why not in her bed?"

"Why are we not all in our beds?" I returned. "Why not enjoying the blessed repose which a beneficent God vouchsafes us for our health; and which, like numberless other mercies as richly

bestowed, we abjure, and cast away? Alas! how many who possess not a bed, how many to whom the shelter of a roof is precarious, envy the happier fate of Sir Charles Trevillion! Let us return to the house. The chapel is the most direct, the entrance least subject to observation."

I drew his arm within mine, and approached the open window: he suffered me to lead him, and we entered with noiseless steps. Clotilde still slept: but the darkness was not so complete as we imagined; for a declining moon sent her horizontal beams across the chamber, which resting on the couch of the breathless sleeper gave to her pale face a hue still paler, and threw over her recumbent figure such a mystic softness, that she looked more like the marble representation of repose, than a being endued with life.

Urged by an irresistible impulse, the unhappy husband approached that mystic figure, and gazed upon the pallid features, which wore an expression as if their last movement had been one of pain. He stooped down: his lips touched the cold cheek,

on which some tears still lingered. One fervent kiss was imprinted on that passive cheek, and he instantly rushed from the apartment.

I waited a few moments, until he was quite out of hearing, and then went in search of Celeste. She was sleeping most soundly, but got up when called, shrugged her shoulders, muttered something not very respectful of confessors' penances, then followed to the chapel; from whence we conveyed its almost senseless inmate, who, completely exhausted, had no strength for resistance. Having seen her in bed, and once more in a deep slumber—the result of grief, fasting, and weakness—I returned to my own room, and to those anxious forebodings which banished rest from my uneasy couch.

Charles, when next we met, had little to tell with which I was not previously acquainted. There had been much to create uneasiness, to engender distrust, to rouse the demon jealousy. But he acknowledged that, though thus tormented, there was nothing on which to ground a positive complaint—nothing specific, until this late separation; that,

although conscious of a change in his own feelings toward Mr. Austin,—perhaps of betraying that change to Clotilde,—yet that she never remonstrated, never complained. Had she accused him of capriciousness, and defended the Confessor, he might have been less wretched: it was her silence, her grief, her quiet submission to what she must deem injustice, that wounded him so deeply; and which, even before her late chilling withdrawal, had inflicted a death-blow on his happiness. Austin had become a fixture in their neighbourhood; had visited at Pendyffryn on the same terms as at Bath. But, whether in avoidance of Doctor Bentley, or that he soon discerned a change in the master of the house, the intimacy once so eagerly cultivated dissolved into air, silently, coldly, without explanation, reproach, or incivility. While Charles, not knowing what to think, or how to act, sometimes angry with himself, sometimes blaming his wife, sometimes regarding her with the tenderest pity, was himself the most pitiable of men. And, as I could not obtain her permission to repeat

what she had confided to me, and that we waited without receiving the answer so long expected from the Père Montcalm, his sufferings, except that he had the power of pouring them into a friendly ear, were but little alleviated by my presence.

Never, surely, did the spirit of intolerance interfere to mar a promise of more perfect happiness; never was error more severely punished than that which had united the destinies of two persons, in themselves so estimable, but between whom religion had placed a barrier that rendered their union, to say the least of it, an act of short-sighted presumption; and never did the demon of dissent exert a more baneful influence than when forcing an ingenuous being to act in opposition to her own feelings of right, or to her natural character, the great beauty of which consisted in its artlessness, and in the boundless overflowings of an affectionate heart.

Charles meanwhile—anxious to fly from that baneful influence—hurried our removal, so that a

few days after my return from Scotland we were ready to depart.

Of Mr. Austin we heard nothing more; but I knew that he communicated with Clotilde, and that she wrote him sheet after sheet, entreating permission to be candid with her husband. But her entreaties were disregarded: he justified his refusal on the ground of having applied to a higher power, but that his application was unanswered. We therefore left home without one word of explanation between husband and wife; nor did a letter received at last from the Père Montcalm—full of affection and pity, but otherwise unsatisfactory—bring with it the slightest consolation.

Alas! how little could any of our party have anticipated, when entering the protecting gates of Pendyffryn but eighteen months before, that their closing on our departure should be a sound of relief,—that those venerable woods and fertile pastures, which then promised an Eden of bliss, should in so short a time be fled from in disgust;

and be looked back upon, while fading from our view, as the abode of distrust, the scene of estrangement, of divided interests, and of alienated hearts.

CHAPTER XXIV.

IT was late in the evening when our short land journey terminated at Plymouth; from whence, next morning, a packet sailed for Jersey. The passage was prosperous, we went on shore to sleep, spent a whole day on that paradisaical little island, the retreat of Charles, and explored its castle immortalized by Pym, and next afternoon proceeded so as to catch the tide, and time our entrance into the rocky port of St. Malo with all the benefit of daylight. The weather was fine, and gaily did our vessel cut through the blue waves. The marine prospect was animated here and there with a clustering sail of French and English fishing boats,

like little clouds upon the deep ; and our steamer passed almost within hail of a frigate, the folds of whose heavy ensign displayed the white-field and red-cross that had braved the battle and the breeze for a thousand years. We were given to understand that an arduous service was entrusted to the commander of this gallant vessel *. In his superintendence of the fisheries, he had to keep constant watch over the evolutions of these Arabs of the deep, lest collision of interests, aggravated by national antipathy, should betray the rival crews of the little fishermen into acts that might compromise the honour of their respective countries.

Four hours brought us to the insulated fortress of

* The commander at present designated to the station off Jersey is more peculiarly qualified for the nice and difficult duties of his appointment, in having to communicate with the French authorities and naval *chefs*, than perhaps any other officer in her Majesty's service.

With the steady principle, stern resolve, and dauntless intrepidity proper to the British sailor, Lieutenant Robilliard combines in intimate union the *air dégagé*, the conciliating manner, and the conversible politeness which are characteristic of the French gentleman.

St. Malo. It was market day, and as our steamer drew close to the pier we were surrounded by numberless boats full of admiring gazers; while the mole was crowded with pedestrians, and the distant river looked gay with little barges full of country people in their best attire, taking advantage of the tide to secure their return to the mainland. The novelty of their costumes, the bright and glowing colours in which the females were arrayed, their peculiar and picturesque caps, invested the lively and perfectly foreign scene with an interest not easily forgotten, although it was not without its annoyances. No sooner did our vessel touch the pier than it was boarded by several custom-house officers, attended by as many *gens d'armes*, and by two coarse-looking women. The first were to take charge of our baggage, the second to examine our passports, and the third our persons. For this last purpose the female passengers were remanded to the cabin, some of whom evinced, by various little shufflings, that such a species of examination was not altogether uncalled for, while

others sustained it with perfect heroism. Clotilde and myself, as we happened to enjoy the distinction which French people know how to appreciate—that of rank and attendants—were allowed to pass with only the form of a search: such courtesy being acknowledged according to tacit understanding by the *compliment à l'Anglais* of a few francs.

Our detention in the cabin was consequently short, but when I returned upon deck, Clotilde remained below in conversation with a young French lady, the wife of an officer of chasseurs who had sailed with us from Jersey. I perceived that the comparing of passports with their passengers was still going on. Charles stood in the stern, looking through a telescope at the citadel. As I would have moved forward to join him, my purpose was arrested by a medical gentleman, who during our short passage had already been attentive to my sister. Alluding to her, and indicating with his finger where the *gens d'armes* were surrounding some person near the binnacle, he said, “I hope that Madame may remain below stairs

until that man has undergone his examination, for I am sure they will oblige him to take off his nose."

"What in the world can you mean?" I inquired, looking toward the individual in question.

"I mean that his nose is a false one. Remark it for a moment; you will see that it is china."

"Bless me! so it is, quite blue and unnatural. What a very disfiguring feature! But why should those officers force him to remove it?"

"Because, though such a resource is sometimes adopted in cases of bodily ailment, it is also used as a disguise, and has a suspicious appearance. At all events, let the motives of the wearer be what they may, it is as well that Madame should avoid to observe him."

I thanked my considerate informant, and instead of joining Charles returned toward the gangway, accompanied by the former, who called my attention, ere we descended, to the object of our previous remark. He stood with his back to a group of persons collected round the baggage; and

was still remonstrating with his examiners through the medium of an interpreter, when one of them very unceremoniously snatched at the nose, which instantly gave way, and I as instantaneously recognized our quondam postmaster of Pendyffryn.

It was a frightful recognition, and I had nearly betrayed myself by an involuntary scream; but the curiosity of my new acquaintance averting his attention from me, he kept his eyes fixed on the still struggling Doughty, and calling out "a disguise! a disguise!"—joined the police; while I hastened below for the purpose of detaining Clotilde.

She was still engaged in conversation with the young French woman; and I sat down to recover my presence of mind, and to consider what was best to be done. The figure of the postmaster I now recollected to have seen, when first we went on board the packet at Plymouth. Perhaps the peculiar expression given to his countenance by so strange a disguise first attracted my notice. Charles had gone below with Clotilde; but, feeling un-

comfortable in the cabin, I remained upon deck. It was then that this man, very much muffled up, with the collar of his cloak drawn almost over his face, and his hat pulled down over his eyes, came near me in search of a bag, which, having found, he immediately retired; nor did I see him again until pointed out to me at the end of our voyage. Oh! what a host of terrors, of painful recollections, were conjured up in my mind by this fatal discovery! To be thus haunted by an enemy! our steps dodged by the accomplice of the designing Mac Cardwell!—to be caught in the snare of the destroyer! It was a grievous disappointment. It was more: it necessitated the terrible conviction that we were doomed to misfortune, and that wherever we might bend our steps, flight for us afforded no chance, no hopes of escape.

Before the lapse of many minutes we were joined by my brother, who reported that the deck was then clear, and who presently conducted us on shore, or rather on the ramparts. There was nothing to be seen of Doughty or his guards; my

medical friend had also disappeared ; but the portentous aspect of the postmaster haunted my memory—I could think of, I could see nothing else, although there was ample novelty in the number of market-boats, the variety of costumes, the women in their strange looking head-gear, even in the busy eagerness of rival inn-keepers, all talking together, and each assuring us that his house, and his alone, was the only good one in the town, to divert a mind less painfully engaged ; and by the time that a tolerably long walk brought us to the wild and comfortless shelter called an hotel, I was ready to drop, not with what my dear companions believed to be fatigue, but with weakness, proceeding from alarm.

We remained in this singular town the following day. We judged it better to do so for the sake of rest ; but had it been otherwise, since it was a *fête Dieu*, we could not have released our baggage from the safe keeping of the custom-house. I was perplexed, whether or not to confide my recent discovery to Charles ; but, surrounded by strangers,

shocked by the sight of priestly processions, and every demonstration of Romish influence, I feared to involve him in danger, and came to the resolution of keeping my burden to myself, until we should have left a place which might still be the asylum of a murderer.

Clotilde being rather indisposed, did not venture out of doors. After breakfast I went for a stroll with my brother; when meeting with our medical acquaintance, he asked me if I were not curious to hear the *dénouement* of the Nose?—adding, that its wearer had undergone a strict scrutiny at the Hôtel de Ville, and would have been committed to prison, but that the ecclesiastical authorities had interfered, and vouched for his veracity; while he accounted for his disguise, and for considerable property found upon his person, by stating, that he was employed to convey a valuable peace-offering from a wealthy penitent to some mediating saint at Rome; and that the false nose, which was extremely painful, and (as might be seen) had bruised the natural feature, was adopted as a

penance, at once to expiate some venial sin committed by himself, and to ensure the safety of his consignments while going forward on his pilgrimage.

“ And do the civil authorities admit such interference as you describe ?” inquired Charles.

“ Bah !” exclaimed the physician. “ How can they help it ?”

I asked if the adventurous masker had been set at liberty.

“ Gone southwards, at an early hour,” returned my informant, “ under the protection of a clerical guide, one who interested himself much in the liberation of the prisoner, more perhaps in the safety of his very valuable peace-offering.”

“ Such travellers,” observed Charles, “ stand some chance, I should think, of being way-laid and robbed in the forests of Brittany.”

“ They are protected by the Jesuits,” returned our companion.

“ That august body is sure to look after their peace-offerings.”

“Were poor Juba forthcoming,” methought, “he might chance to know something of this same valuable peace-offering;” but I kept my suspicions to myself, and returned to our hotel—Charles proceeding with the physician and the Colonel of Chasseurs, who at that moment joined us, to inspect the fortifications of a town, which, to military observation, must be as interesting as they are singular.

Although much relieved by the knowledge of Doughty’s departure, it was impossible not to have many anxious thoughts under circumstances so strange and unaccountable. His passing over from Plymouth to Jersey in the same vessel with ourselves might be accidental; but his hazarding recognition in the smaller packet to St. Malo looked too like a system of concerted *espionage*. Then again, the interference of a friendly priest, that priest going on with him as his guide and companion—I could not help connecting the whole either with Mac Cardwell or Austin. I could not but feel, that Doughty had been despatched to

Cornwall as a spy upon our movements, as well as for the purpose of conveying that anathematizing letter to Clotilde, which caused her estrangement from Charles ; and I could not now but conclude, that we were still under his *surveillance* ; and that in England or France, at home or abroad, there was neither safety nor peace to be hoped for.

The road from St. Malo to Dinan is rough, hilly, and tedious ; but the river, which runs parallel, and is navigable at high water, affords so charming a sail, that our military friend advised us to send on the carriage, and take a boat with the next tide for ourselves. Nantes was necessarily our last point before proceeding to St. Aubin, as at that city my sister had to see her notary, and to go through some forms before taking possession of her estates. This obligation consequently throwing us out of the direct line, we had a circuitous and much less convenient journey to perform. Indeed, the report both of roads and inns was exceedingly discouraging. Our host at St. Malo assuring us, “on his honour,” that we should not,

at any of the wretched cabarets throughout the line we had adopted, find a bed we could sleep on, or a morsel to eat, Dinan excepted, where there was a splendid hotel, almost equal to his own, or at Rennes, where of course there was a choice. But from the latter city to Nantes we must make up our minds to proceed without resting, and be provided with eatables in the carriage.

Here again we found that our Colonel of Chasseurs was a most useful adviser. He interposed to set us right, by recommending—in preference to over fatigue, or pursuing our journey in forest darkness—that we should take chance of accommodation at Derval, a small village, or rather hamlet, pleasantly situated about twenty leagues from Rennes, on the borders of the Forest of Chateaubriand. The inn, he forewarned us, was only a farm-house, but it was excellently furnished with beds, and clean as our English tastes could possibly desire—comforts, which at Jersey and St. Malo we certainly did not experience.

Obliged to sleep at Dinan, as the tide served too

late to allow of our proceeding further, we paid for the delights of our river voyage, and for the first imposing view of the town, by the thorough discomfort of the "splendid hotel," and left it early next morning for Rennes. But, however historically interesting that once royal city, however much of romance may be attached to its remains, a vivid recollection of its famed Princess Anne, with all her noble suitors and her gallant court, were insufficient to cause any impression in its favour, so dull and so cheerless did it seem in our eyes.

But had Rennes been the gayest and most beautiful of cities—had the road that we travelled been one of "mountain and flood," instead of interminable avenues, lined with decapitated trees—we were none of us in a frame of mind to appreciate or derive pleasure from outward objects. Without giving a day to the capital of Brittany, we resumed our journey at sunrise—a journey, the prospect of which was not rendered safer to me, from believing that our implacable enemies were

on our trail. The image of Doughty haunted me continually, I imagined a foe under every cloak, and my sight either deceived, or I saw him in the dubious day-light hovering about the carriage as we entered it. When working our weary way through roads beyond all calculation tedious, that tedium was rendered doubly irksome from vague, though not idle apprehensions.

But it is not fair to fasten on any route or any country the unfavourable impression which a mind ill at ease is prone to take of every outward object; and I must acknowledge, that if the part of Brittany through which we passed was deficient in attractive scenery, if there were no hills to diversify its sylvan sameness, no vistas to enliven its forests, still enough remained in its inhabitants to win and to secure approbation.

One hundred years behind in modern improvement, safe as yet from modern deterioration, generous by nature, loyal in their feelings, and simple in their habits, if the honest and kind hearted Armoricans owe their origin to ancient

Britain, such relationship does honour to the parent stock, and Cambria may be proud of descendants whose primitive habits—so far as temporalities are concerned—require nothing from father-land in the way of radical reform, except perhaps a few friendly hints on the state of their roads.

Clotilde, weak and spiritless, could scarcely sit up in the carriage ; and I began to be apprehensive lest other dangers, independent of Mac Cardwell or Doughty, awaited us, in the event of our having to spend a night amidst the woods. Most anxiously did we look for the resting place promised by our military friend ; yet rest was scarcely to be expected in any of those miserable hovels, which, to judge by the specimens already passed, whether cabaret or farm-house, justified the contempt with which every one spoke of Derval, save the aforesaid Colonel of Chasseurs.

But never to be forgotten is our first impression of that primitive retreat, for never did peace or comfort assume a more imposing aspect. Night had overtaken us—the rough causeway was be-

come nearly impassable—the horses were tired, their drivers out of temper; Clotilde lay faint and powerless in the arms of her husband. Repeatedly did we inquire if there were any tokens of a village—as often did the postillions answer in the negative. No noise greeted our ears, no lights emanated through the dark foliage of the unbroken forest. At last, oh grateful sound! our ears caught the deep-mouthed barking of dogs; and presently the welcome glare of torches glanced across the road. Then in a few seconds the carriage drew up before a porch, supported on rustic pillars, and ornamented with creeping plants. Friendly voices hushed the canine salutation, and inquired if an English cavalier, two ladies and a child, were in the carriage? And on an affirmative answer being given, the host and hostess presented themselves. The former opened the door of our loaded vehicle, received Clotilde in his arms, and transferred her to those of his wife. He then assisted us all to alight; meanwhile, the kind dame bore her helpless charge into a kitchen, clean as if in England, where sundry

fowls roasting before a bright wood fire betokened an immediate prospect of refreshment. Resting for a few minutes before the invigorating blaze, we had time to remark the appearance of these rustic inn-keepers. The man in his smock-frock, or *blouse*, of bright blue linen, embroidered in scarlet and white, large beaver hat, with the low crown ornamented with large beads of different colours, was only surpassed in appearance by his wife, whose handsome person was set off by a black boddice fitting close to her shape laced with gold, and clasped, stomacher fashion, with little buckles of the same material; a cap of prodigious height, and formed of the finest lace, a full petticoat of scarlet, and a snow white apron; from the girdle of which there hung a chased *couteau* or carving-knife: a screw and scissors in their silver cases completed her picturesque costume. Several servants dressed less costly, but in a similar uniform, brought in our baggage. Clotilde borne up stairs, was laid on a couch in one of the most inviting sleeping apartments that can be imagined. The

floor of which, with every article of wood composing furniture, was polished, and shining like a mirror; but round the fire-place, and beside the beds, were placed pieces of tapestry or milk white sheep skins, which added comfort to elegance. One door of this dormitory opened into the lobby, another to the apartment beyond—a bed-room also, but upon such occasions as the present converted into a saloon.

There we found a table ready spread: the spoons, and forks, and china were all so bright, every thing in short was so delicately neat, that after what we had experienced of larger hotels, the rustic inn at Derval was perfectly luxurious.

Two charming girls, whose very handsome faces bespoke their parentage, and who—except that they wore bright kerchiefs of various hues around their heads instead of caps—were habited like their mother, brought up our travelling bags, and offered their services to wait upon us. Happy change from the attendance of garçons! One knelt down, and untying Clotilde's shoes, put on her slippers.

She, poor soul ! overcome by fatigue, and by the first feeling of relief that she had experienced for hours, burst into tears, and passionately exclaimed, “O ! that I could remain in this place, to be nursed by that kind woman, to be attended by these gentle girls ! How happy, how enviable would be my lot !”

This was said in French. The girls shook their heads, while little William, who had slept soundly in the carriage, and was now wide awake, attracted by their pleasant looks, challenged the youngest to play. She caught him in her arms, ran off with him to her mother’s apartment, and we heard his joyous laugh through the house. In half an hour our dinner was served, and no meal could be better of its kind. Fowls, pigeons, ham and eggs, all the production of the farm, were spread before us, all equally good. Even the wines exceeded any we had met with in the city of Rennes ; and novelty enhanced the excellence of the entertainment. In short, the whole menage was like fairy land, the incident had all the characters of a fairy

tale. But a question and its answer solved the enigma; Derval was a hunting station, the woods were famous for all sorts of sport, and huntsmen—as many as the house could accommodate—were in the habit of meeting there for a week at a time. We, however, owed the extraordinary comfort of being expected to the attention of our military friend, who turned out to be proprietor of the surrounding property, and who had written from St. Malo to notify our coming.

As might have been apprehended from the state of the roads, we were informed next morning, that an accident had occurred to the carriage, and it was no disappointment either to Clotilde or myself when assured, that we must lie by for two days, the only person who could repair the disaster having gone a few leagues from the village. Charles went to ascertain if the report were correct, and we all made up our minds to be content.

A walk in the forest, with our landlord and his gun, helped to pass the morning for my brother; while his wife, glad of a few hours' rest, did not

get up until late. I went out a short way with the younger daughter of the house, who carried our dear boy, and amused him with her lively prattle—running, dancing, and singing, till he was in perfect delight ; while Celeste remained at home to wait upon his melancholy mother. Clotilde joined us at dinner looking more languid than ever, and Charles, who had come in rather amused and invigorated by a long morning's successful sport, disposed perhaps to forget his misfortunes, was soon reminded by her sadness of their real existence, and relapsed into sadness himself.

Books, with which we took care to be provided, were again our evening's resource ; and, as familiar sounds from below broke on the ear of Clotilde, with the songs of her native country, and the cheerful voices of her compatriots indicating their national freedom from care, she sat apart, an isolated being, endeavouring to take an interest in fictitious story ; while every recollection of her own spoke of disappointed hopes, or reverted to conventual peace, to parental affection, or early enjoyment.

Heaven knows, that even I, with all my English prejudices, with the prospect of a happy future which lightened the present burden, could almost have envied these cheerful villagers, and those bright looking girls who made a pleasure of their duty; and whose smiles, and animated remarks, as they attended to our wants, formed a mortifying contrast with the ascetic feelings and unsocial tempers of their richer, but less grateful inmates.

CHAPTER XXV.

A SECOND day dawned upon us in this abode of cheerful industry and seemingly unalloyed content. Celeste went out for a few hours with Catherine, (the elder of the Derval sisters,) to visit the neighbouring monastery of Chateaubriand : an institution which, owing to the loyalty of the district, perhaps to its privacy in the forest, had escaped the desecrations of the Revolution. It had its superior, and contained more than its original number of clergy ; for the Restoration had brought back many wanderers to the shelter of its venerable walls : some of whom, chastened by privations, were become lights of the church ;

while the majority, rendered lax in discipline, and hardened of heart by indiscriminate admixture with poverty and vice, were now idly hanging on the benevolence of Mother Church, doing little credit to her protection, and causing much anxiety to all those who were zealous for the re-establishment of religious order.

Our hostess, herself a good Catholic, spoke openly upon the subject, and expressed her horror of these unregenerate sons in a manner which communicated itself to me, and dispelled that vision of security with which perfect seclusion from the world and its temptations had, in imagination, invested Derval.

Alas ! it is not upon place, upon country, upon outward circumstances, that virtue or contentment depend. The sequestered village, seemingly remote from every evil, sheltered by its wide-spreading woods, apparently answering the wise man's prayer, who asked for "neither poverty nor riches;" even that village, like the garden of Eden, had its share in the inheritance of disobe-

dience, its sting, its serpent, in the midst of sweets!

Celeste returned early. She had seen the chateau, the abbey, and, what was a still greater novelty in that part of France, she had enjoyed an extensive view from a rising ground, not more than one English mile from the village; which view, spreading southward in the direction of Nantes, and taking in some distant towers and spires, besides those of the neighbouring monastery, promised a more interesting road for the remainder of our journey than as yet we had traversed.

I felt no inclination to follow her advice, and ascend the "*grande montagne*," of which she spoke in such raptures. But Clotilde warmly urged me to take a little air, and, yielding to persuasion rather than to choice, I set out for a walk, accompanied by Catherine's younger sister, the gentle and intelligent Louise.

There was, doubtless, a rising ground, and it commanded a view, though by no means answering

the florid description of Celeste. I saw some towers, which my companion pointed out as belonging to the monastery of Chateaubriand; I could also distinguish a few distant objects rising above the interminable line of wood, which might be either the spires of churches or a few naked poplars; but nothing, as I have said, to answer my raised expectation.

Charles had gone out again with our host. During his absence and that of Celeste, I had enjoyed with Clotilde a confidential *tête-à-tête*, our first since we left the shores of England. I took advantage of the propitious opportunity to urge her on a subject so necessary to her peace, as that of having some explanations with Charles. I spoke of the cruelty to him, the injustice to herself, of perseverance in such heartless reserve; and I ventured to suggest the expedient of laying all her perplexities before the archbishop of the diocess, so soon as we should arrive at St. Aubin, which would at once place her under respectable, and I hoped generous protection. She did not reject this idea,

but rather seemed inclined to adopt it, acknowledging that she cherished some hopes of ecclesiastic indulgence when put in possession of her estates, provided that Charles were content to make a pecuniary sacrifice. I answered for him on this point. She yielded to happier impressions: the morbid lassitude of grief, so heart-breaking to witness, gave way while we spoke; and, instead of pronouncing Derval to be the limit of her wishes, she expressed herself rather anxious to proceed, to confer with the notary at Nantes, and go through those forms which should place in her power the rich, and, as she now gratefully termed it, the blessed bequest of her relative.

It was because this conversation proved so cheering that I wished to prolong it; but Celeste, on coming home, had interrupted us continually, and there being, therefore, no chance of pursuing our topic, I was unfortunately prevailed upon to leave the house. I say unfortunately, for all the good effects which I had augured were quite done away with in my absence. I found Clotilde, when I re-

turned, in a most agitated state : she had been weeping abundantly, and, though affecting to appear at ease, she could not disguise that something afflicted her deeply. Nothing less dreadful than a fresh threat from Mac Cardwell occurred to me as likely to account for the change, and, extremely alarmed, I hastily inquired if she had heard any ill news, or seen any one since I went out.

She coloured, and said that she had not seen any one except her own maid, that she had heard nothing new. " But the blessed hopes," she added, " imparted by you, the consolation afforded me while hearing you speak, forsook me when deprived of your presence. Some recollections of Pendyffryn, accidentally renewed, have brought to mind all those bitter realities which render me the most wretched of mortals. Oh, my sweet Marie ! think not harshly of your sister ! Condemn her not for submitting to a power more influential than friendship ! Your church, less strict than mine, imposes no self-denials, uses no mysteries. We may not argue on the merits or demerits of either : but the

day is at hand when all shall be made plain, when the moral use or abuse of Protestant indulgences, or of Roman Catholic restrictions, shall be rewarded or punished according to their performance, when every secret shall be revealed, when we shall stand face to face; then, and not till then, shall the husband of my choice, and the sister of my affections, be able to judge, without prejudice, of a heart, which, except in what concerns my religious safety, has not a feeling or a thought separated from them. Is it too much to hope, after an intimacy of several years, that your judgment may be deferred until then?"

"Alas! my dear Clotilde, I have no right to judge: I have no right whatever to condemn. But I cannot help my thoughts. I cannot but think, that those who yield to the sophistries which recommend concealment, subject themselves to the dominion of the father of lies; and peril not only their peace of mind, and their honour in this present life, but their eternal happiness hereafter. I do believe, that doubts and fears—images unde-

fined and dreadful, must intercept their bewildered path, and contract their misty horizon day by day, until at length it closes in upon them in everlasting darkness. And, if the pit-falls that obstruct that path; if the deep chasms which you fear to cross alone, have not one gleam of light—if you trust implicitly to the guidance of a mortal hand, and that hand should fail, *if it should be false*, even mistaken, where? oh! where is your safety? Do such questions never occur to yourself? Do you never long for that lamp which burns everlastingly? which owes nothing to the devices of man; but which, clear as the unclouded sunbeam, and lit by the hand of Truth, is sufficient of itself to guide the pilgrim to his final rest, either through the trackless desert, or on the crowded highway?”

She endeavoured to reply without betraying that she was moved; but the tremulous tone that counteracted her efforts, and in which she vindicated her motives and her religion, created in my mind the deepest sympathy; and never did I feel more thorough pity for her delusion, than at the

moment when that delusion disappointed me most.

It was *meagre* day; and she begged of me to excuse her appearance at dinner. "Charles will return late, as he did yesterday," she added, "and, after a long morning's exercise, feel well inclined for his dinner. I am fatigued already, and should prefer lying down. Besides, the abstinence, that it is necessary for me to practise, renders him uneasy, and increases the disgust which he feels toward my religion. I am also a restraint. You are thinking of me; so afraid, in my presence, of saying any thing that seems pointed. In short, my dear Mary, your brother and yourself are happier alone."

"Oh, my sweet sister, what a miserable feeling! How unjust to the friends, whose happiness, whose enjoyment, whose every comfort depends upon you; who can feel no peace if separated from the dear object of their tenderest solicitude."

"Whatever I do, however I may act," she replied, while tears ran down her face, "believe me, trust me, that your happiness, your peace, and

that of my most dear Charles, guides every thought, and stimulates every action. But we must wait the answer from Paris. I have written again, and may hear perhaps soon. Give your brother my love. Tell him that I am not very well, nor fit for society this evening, but shall be ready as early as he pleases in the morning. And do you, dearest Mary, meet him with a happier face, so that he may not dread a return to his own domestic circle. William will amuse him after he has dined: good night."

I saw, by her manner, that she was determined, and only begged to bring her some fruit and a little wine, entreating she would remember the fatigue of to-morrow.

"Well, be it so," she said; "but bring them now, for I have many exercises to perform this evening, and wish to be interrupted no more."

I went to the next room and called for some fruit. Charles came in, and I delivered her message. He took the plate out of my hand, poured out some wine, and said, "I suppose we must sub-

scribe to her wishes? This I know is a fast-day. The carriage is repaired; I will go and tell her so myself."

When he returned his face was overcast, but though serious, it was not severe. "I have bid her good-night," he said. "She begs not to be disturbed, but has ordered her breakfast at daylight. It is some comfort, that she appears anxious to prosecute this journey, and to take possession of her estates. Perhaps this French acquisition is one cause of our present estrangement: she may be undergoing a penance, which, were she not rich, might never have been thought of. The property in question is exclusively her own. If it might purchase back our happiness, how well should I think it disposed of."

Dinner was served, and with the dessert, Celeste, as usual, brought us the child, who was just beginning to stand: she had purchased, at Rennes, those long ribbons which French nurses attach to infants like bridles, in order to assist them in walking. He came into the room highly delighted with his

finery. Charles suffered him to be indulged for the present, but disapproving of the system, a warm argument ensued, especially between Celeste and Catherine, who, having assisted in arranging the ribbons, defended their utility. There was very animated talking, and some laughter at poor little William's tumbling essays. My heart smote me, that such sounds should reach the ear of the solitary recluse, and realize the suspicion that her presence imposed a restraint. I therefore got rid of the women, and divesting the child of his bridle-rein, placed him on the knee of his papa.

We strictly obeyed the injunctions of Clotilde, and refrained from disturbing her. When Celeste came again, she told us, that her lady had retired to bed, had bolted her door, and desired to be called at daybreak. We each took our book, read for some time, and separated early.

I forgot to mention, that my maid, having taken fright at the last moment, or perhaps not liking to part from her friends, had disappointed me, just as we were leaving Pendyffryn. As I could not hear

of another on such short notice, I was under the necessity of doing without until our arrival at Nantes, where there could be no great difficulty in supplying her place. A family, about that time leaving Tours, had promised to transfer some of their household, with an experienced nurse for Clotilde, to the chateau de St. Aubin. Therefore our travelling suite consisted only of Celeste, with my brother's servant and a footman. Since our arrival at Derval, Louise had exclusively waited upon me, and proved herself remarkably obliging. As she this night performed the little offices of the toilette, and lingered in my room, seemingly unwilling to leave it, I thought, that though a more experienced attendant might be found at Nantes, none more pleasing or intelligent could possibly offer, and I made her the proposal at once.

The sparkling of her bright eyes corroborated the ready consent, which, as far as she could answer for herself, my offer received. "But I must speak to my mother," she added, "before she goes to bed." And off flew the animated girl

like a bird on the wing, promising to return immediately.

But half an hour elapsed before she again made her appearance, and then with looks as downcast as they had before been glad. Her father would have consented, as he knew the Chateau de St. Aubin, and had one or two relations in that neighbourhood, but her mother was obdurate. She would not comply. I was certainly disappointed, and told her so.

She suggested, that I should speak to her mother myself; adding, "you will not, I am sure, be ungenerous to me; you will not wish to change my religion, nor prohibit my seeing a Confessor, whenever it is needful."

I assured her that Protestants were very indulgent in such matters; that in my country she should have liberty of conscience to the fullest extent, and access to a priest whenever she pleased; but that, if her mother imagined I was not to be trusted, she had much better give up the point. Indeed, the fears already expressed had opened my

eyes; I recollected how much happier for myself it would be to procure a Protestant attendant, and therefore, upon further consideration, declined receiving her in that capacity. Louise was exceedingly mortified, and by way of apologizing for her mother, and softening down what she had said, instanced the melancholy situation of *Miladi*, who was remarked to be as *triste* as the Chevalier was reserved.

I assured her, that no husband could be more indulgent; that Lady Trevillion had her own place of worship, a private chapel in the house, a Confessor whenever she pleased, a Roman Catholic maid, and as much money as ever she wished for, to spend in whatever manner she liked.

Louise looked surprised, though not incredulous. She believed what I told her; but inquired, "if such was the case, why Madame was always so discontented?"

I replied, that at present she was undergoing a penance, which rendered her unhappy; that it was no ways attributable to any severity on the part of

her husband, who most anxiously desired to have it removed, and who never contradicted her wishes.

“Then why is Madame not allowed to see her Confessor? Why not receive him in the house?”

“She is never prevented,” I said, rather surprised at the question.

“We thought she was prevented,” returned Louise; “because, if Monsieur did not object to the priest coming here, there would be no occasion for Madame to go out.”

“I cannot understand you, Louise! Surely no priest has been here?”

“Not nearer than the cherry orchard, where Miladi went to meet him while you were at dinner. Ah! I have done wrong, I see you are displeased. Santa Maria! what will become of me? Indeed, Mademoiselle, I concluded you must know. I thought that it was only of her husband Madame was afraid—that you were her friend.”

“Madame does nothing but what we approve,” I replied, struggling with my fears, which were immediately aroused; “she might have received

such a visitor in the house if she liked ; no one has more liberty. But, as there is only one sitting room, and that we were at dinner, she preferred, I suppose, a short walk in the orchard. Celeste, of course, attended her lady ?”

“ Oh, no. Mademoiselle Celeste remained with the *petit* : she was putting him to bed. Madame went out alone. No person saw her but my father. The postillion met a priest close by the orchard. We are not sure, we only suppose that he waited there for Madame.”

“ Most likely you are wrong : most likely she did not walk beyond the garden.”

“ Ah, Mademoiselle, how can I tell. It was only when speaking to my parents of your kind offer, that they mentioned the circumstance. Indeed we all grieve for the beautiful lady : I am sure she came back soon : I am sure she meant no harm. It was only a priest ; most likely one of the poor mendicant friars from Chateaubriand. They have no provision there, only the bare shelter of a roof, and Miladi is rich.”

“ Yes, Louisa, and very humane. Good night, and remember to call me as you have promised.”

Poor girl, her eyes were fixed on my face ; she saw that her communication gave pain, and seizing my hand, she entreated my pardon, prayed me not to betray Madame to the Chevalier—of whom the whole family seemed to think unfavourably—and then, though with evident reluctance, she left me to myself.

It was, indeed, a relief to be freed from observation. Yet mine was a solitude not to be envied ; I could not separate the idea of Mac Cardwell from every thing that afflicted Clotilde. The secret appointment of the evening, the melancholy change wrought in her during my short absence of the morning, could not be otherwise accounted for than in connection with that dangerous man, and I took myself severely to task for not having immediately disclosed to Charles my detection of Doughty under his extraordinary disguise. He might, and surely would, have taken measures to prevent a collision with Mac Cardwell. He might

have discovered if the latter was really at St. Malo, the protector and guide of the *ci-devant* postmaster. Alas! it was now too late. I could only regret that mistaken fears had prompted procrastination; however, I made up my mind not to lose a moment, either early next morning, or as soon as we should reach Nantes, where we should have assistance if necessary from the British Consul, in revealing every thing I knew to my brother.

Impatient to leave Derval, I watched the first dawn of day, and hearkened to the first movement in the house with sleepless anxiety. Louise was punctual to the hour; and it will be long ere the impression of that hour, when light first broke over the forest of Chateaubriand, is effaced from my remembrance. A beautiful sunrise shed its bright beams upon the retired village, on the autumnal foliage, and mellow orchards rich in golden fruit, and cheered the early wakefulness of happy industry, as the abundant farm-yard was once more filled by busy looks and gladsome voices.

While the obliging Louise busied herself in

packing up my dressing-case, I saw from my window the two carriages drawn out, with their imperials already strapped on. She also saw them, and sighed.

“It cannot be helped, Mademoiselle; but, if my father should go towards La Valière, will you permit me to inquire for your health at the Chateau de St. Aubin?”

“Most willingly,” I replied. “We shall rejoice to see you there, and to return some of the kindness received in this place.”

The grateful girl expressed her thanks and her regrets in a manner that brought tears into my eyes. But, ere she ceased to speak, a noise in the passage alarmed us both. There was a loud exclamation, a violent knocking, the cry of a child, and a scream from Celeste which rang through the house.

We rushed to the door; and were met by my brother, whose flashing eyes, ghastly looks, and passionate expressions, left nothing for conjecture. Clotilde, the unfortunate Clotilde, could nowhere

be found ! Her door stood open, it had just been forced ; but she was not in her chamber, nor had she been throughout the night,—at least not from the hour when every one else had retired to rest,—for both landlord and landlady assured us, on their honour, that no human person could get in or out of the house after their doors and windows were secured for the night. My fears pointed to Mac Cardwell ; my suspicions of connivance to Celeste. I recollected many circumstances in her manner the preceding day, the forcing me out, the remarkable change in her unfortunate lady ; and, taking Charles aside, I acquainted him with every circumstance. He had briefly questioned her in the first moment of his agony ; but she had protested innocence in such violent terms as, for the present, silenced inquiry.

We now sought her together, and renewed these inquiries. She had returned to the nursery, and was endeavouring to pacify William, who, frightened by the uproar, was calling out bitterly for his mamma.

“ Woman ! ” exclaimed Charles, snatching his

child from her arms, and placing him in mine, "I am not to be deceived by your untruths! I am aware that, in your opinion, to lie for the good of your church is not to sin; but, if liberty be dear to you, if you value earthly comfort, confess what you know of Lady Trevillion! If imprisonment and punishment are your choice, persist in your denials, and I shall instantly send you to Nantes, where the utmost rigour of the law shall force a late confession of those mysterious proceedings to which you are privy. The police are without; there is not a moment to lose!"

She screamed louder than before, and repeated her denials with redoubled violence. It was dreadful to hear the denunciations she drew down on herself; most dreadful to disbelieve and contradict her, yet impossible to give her credit for sincerity. Charles persevered in his threats, I in my entreaties, but all without effect; until at length, to get rid of us, she pretended suddenly to recollect having seen a mendicant friar about the house yesterday: she believed he had sent up a peti-

tion, and received some money in return. She added, that it was after this occurrence she had seen Lady Trevillion reading a letter, and weeping very much; but that, not daring to make any observations, she could only conclude that, as her writing-box was open, the letter must have been one of old date.

Catherine, when called upon, rather corroborated the truth of Celeste, by saying that she was the person to whom a mendicant friar had entrusted his petition, and that Lady Trevillion had given her a few francs with the petition, which she had returned; but that, to the best of her belief, there was no letter, or other paper, along with it.

The postillion, who observed a priest to hover about the house, and to enter the orchard after nightfall, was examined again and again. He could only repeat the same story, and describe the person of the priest, who was not a mendicant, he said, either in dress or appearance, being ruddy in the complexion, rather corpulent, and very differently clad from the begging fraternity that haunted

Chateaubriand. He wore over his shoulders a large clerical cloak, and carried a similar one on his arm.

To give any idea of the confusion, the noise, the curiosity, with which we were surrounded, would be totally impossible. Every one asking questions, every one talking at the same time, every one giving a different opinion, some offering advice; all, evidently, more inclined to pity than to blame the interesting fugitive.

I flew back to her chamber, and carefully examined her things. The scrutiny convinced me that she meant, when she went out, to return; her watch, wound up at the usual hour, was left on the night-table; her writing-box was unlocked; I found there her purse, together with an unfinished letter, intended for the Père Montcalm; another letter, directed, but not sealed, for Mr. Austin, and beside them lay two addressed to herself.

Calling my brother into the room, and closing the door, I immediately committed these letters to him. I wished, for her sake, that he should read them; I was not afraid that her thoughts on the

subject of her correspondence with these confessors should be made known. The one to Mr. Austin, which he eagerly read, was a repetition of former entreaties; she implored leave to be explicit with her husband; she expressed her firm reliance on the generosity of the latter, in allowing her the free disposal of money, if money could, as she seemed to expect, purchase a mitigation of the punishment she suffered, or reverse the dreadful sentence of separation.

That to the Père Montcalm was a still more urgent appeal to his feelings. It described in warmer terms the misery she endured in so cruel an estrangement from her nearest and most beloved friends. It reverted more openly to the accusations of Mac Cardwell—his charge of an assault at the hands of her husband—and the circumstances attending his trial! In short, that letter expressed enough to corroborate all I repeated to my brother of Clotilde's explanations to myself, and by referring to the frightful subject of the anathemas pronounced against him, explained the cruel cause

of her avoidance, her penances, her silence—all those suspicious mysteries which had justly called forth his displeasure and awakened his jealousy. The two letters addressed to Clotilde were from the Père Montcalm, they afforded proof of her innocence, and served as a balm to the lacerated heart of her husband. But they filled us both with fourfold resentment of her injuries, and fourfold indignation against the authors of her wrongs. Charging me to preserve those precious letters as I would my life, he placed her watch in his bosom, and hastened again into the midst of that vociferous crowd, from whom he demanded a guide to the nearest *dépôt* of police.

Two or three of those mounted *gensd'armes*, whom we so frequently met on the roads, immediately offered their services, and made no difficulty of being able to recover the lady, unless, indeed, she were in the hands of the Jesuits; at which supposition some of the bystanders shrugged their shoulders or shook their heads; and others shrunk off, as if fearful of compromising their safety.

I spent that wretched morning wandering about

with William in my arms, whom I never lost sight of, followed by the kind-hearted Louise ; and endeavouring to trace those dear footsteps in the orchard, whose impression had so mysteriously forsaken our path. But the ground was crisp and dry—not a vestige was there, even of a footfall much heavier than hers. At length on a cross country road, half an English mile south of Derval, we discovered the track of a two-wheeled carriage, which had turned round and gone back, without coming on to the village. This appeared somewhat unaccountable, and, in our case, rather suspicious. There was no house within miles, except that we had just come from, or the old chateau and monastery of Chateaubriand ; yet this two-wheeled carriage had stopped short of both, and retraced its route within the last few hours.

I should not, perhaps, have attached so much importance to the circumstance, but that Louise, with her local knowledge, seemed to consider it so strange. And as all agreed, that the track was that of a two-wheeled calashe, I offered tempting rewards to whoever would pursue it.

Three young men set off at a very brisk pace. At midnight they came back, saying, they had traced the carriage about four leagues south-east of Derval, but that at the junction of three roads every vestige was lost, for at that point there were intersections of various descriptions in the deep muddy thoroughfare.

Vague and hopeless as was this statement, Charles, who had just returned but could not rest, set out again, taking with him one of the young men. His search, as might have been expected, threw no light on our darkness, neither did the persevering efforts of the three following days. At the end of that time, accompanied by me, our poor motherless child, and the suspected Celeste, he proceeded to Nantes. It had been his intention at first to part with this woman. But on consideration was persuaded, that it might for the present be more prudent to retain her.

CHAPTER XXVI.

AT Nantes, as elsewhere, disappointment awaited us, though aided in our efforts by the zealous exertions of the British consul, and the apparent assistance of the late Monsieur de St. Aubin's man of business. This person could give no information respecting the next heirs of his client. He had been lately employed, but understood that the family, who were dispersed in the late Revolution, had none of them returned to the neighbourhood; excepting only the proprietor of the estates bequeathed to Clotilde; and he had purchased back, in the commencement of Napoleon's first consulship, the Chateau de St. Aubin from an extravagant liberal.

Charles, in despair, brought himself to address Mr. Austin. I copied the letters found after the loss of his unfortunate wife, and enclosed them with her melancholy history to the Père Montcalm. From him, in a few days, we received the most affecting reply, expressive of grief, which I am sure was sincere, but assuring us of his total inability to form a conjecture on so inexplicable a subject. He concluded by referring us to the civil authorities at Nantes, and recommending the aid of the police.

Having waited for this letter, and put every possible inquiry in train, we next prepared for an investigation in the neighbourhood of La Valiere—Charles still building some hope on the co-operation, if he could find them, of Clotilde's male relatives.

Believing our misery incapable of augmentation, we little dreamt that a blow, full as heavy as the last, was ready to fall on our heads. Never, for one moment, since the loss of his mother, had William been left to the sole care of Celeste, whom

I still regarded as an object of distrust, although she was retained as a matter of prudence. He slept in my room, and partook of our meals. We had no other comfort but keeping him in sight. Unhappily, while the carriage was preparing for our journey, I walked into the town to buy him some *bonbons*. Celeste had been directed to a shop on the Quay, and thither we proceeded at a very smart pace, unconscious, that from the moment of leaving the hôtel, we had been followed by two men, who kept us within sight. While standing in the shop, a crowd collected without, sufficiently dense to prevent our egress; the object of curiosity being a mountebank, followed by persons of the lowest description.

Celeste, who carried William, kept close by my side, and after a few attempts to pass, for we were rather pressed for time, some amongst the crowd opened us a passage. But, before we could get through, it was closed in again, and I found myself rudely impeded, a rather unusual occurrence in France. Suddenly Celeste uttered a scream. As

suddenly the child was snatched from her arms. They were some paces in advance. I saw him borne off: I saw her (apparently frantic) pursue him: while in my equally frantic endeavours to follow, I was nearly crushed to death by the pressure.

The cries that I uttered might have raised the whole town. Alas! they brought me no aid, but only increased my perplexities, for more people collecting, barred up every passage. At length, some *gensd'armes* came to my rescue, dispersed the curious mob, and securing me a shelter, ran hither and thither, in search of the child.

How I got to the hotel, how I told Charles what had happened, is out of my power to explain, for much that must have passed has escaped my recollection. But I know that a number of persons surrounded me; that my unfortunate brother rushed out like a madman; that I was carried to bed, and a draught forced down my throat. The draught produced stupor, which the surgeon called sleep. But, what, oh! what an awakening was mine! The

large silent apartment; the startling remembrance, so confused, yet so convincing; so vague, yet so true! The frightful particulars recurring by degrees! The well-defined scene! I was well nigh deprived of my reason; but weak, and subdued like a new-born baby, I had scarcely strength to ask a question of two severe looking women who sate by my couch. One bade me be quiet; another ran for the doctor, who came, felt my pulse, and gave me more medicine, which lulled me again. During this state, the poor distracted father was differently occupied. Never one moment at rest, his search was incessant. There was nothing left undone: no means untried. Advertisements were sent to all the provincial towns; hand-bills were posted up; immense rewards offered; but all failed to elicit the slightest information. We were not, however, without anonymous hints, or very bold attempts to obtain the reward. But I need not now enlarge on these harassing details, or the dreadful alternations of hope and despair to which for many months we were subjected. Action of any kind was, how-

ever, essential to the mind's health of both; for as to rest or inactivity, the first was impossible, and in the second there was madness.

At one time we followed a vessel from Nantes to Bourdeaux, missed her there, and proceeded to Marseilles. But, though a woman and child were really on board, they proved to be a soldier's wife, with a female baby in her arms, no way answering the description of Celeste and our William. Again, we actually thought we had found him in Picardy, where, owing to the extreme heat and hurry of a journey in April, I was laid up with a fever. Meanwhile there had been a reply from Mr. Austin, very long delayed, and equally unsatisfactory, as every other application; but written, as he conversed, in the most dignified language; and calculated, by the seeming candour of its style, and the sympathy with which he expressed himself, to deceive persons less well read in his character than ourselves. He strongly advised our seeking for Mac Cardwell at Rome, and deprecated the severity that had led to such painful results. But so far were we from taking his ad-

vice, that, although at Charles's own suggestion, we had contemplated a journey to Rome, the idea was at once abandoned when the Confessor proposed it.

One circumstance connected with this letter I must not omit, as it made a very deep impression on Charles. Though dated Prior Park, and bearing the English post-mark, the paper on which Austin wrote was of French manufacture; and, about the time of its reaching us, we heard from Doctor Bentley, in answer to our inquiries, that the Confessor was neither at Bath nor at Morvyn Park.

It was now late in May; we had been led here and there by various delusions; we had gone again to La Valière—remained three days in the neighbourhood of the Chateau de St. Aubin—revisited Derval—seen the Notary at Nantes. But neither offered reward nor threatened punishment had any effect, except in one or two instances to lead us astray; the fate of mother and child remaining as darkly enigmatical as ever.

Up to this time my poor unhappy brother had

been sustained by the restless activity of hopes, which, however vague, still served to lead him on. But extreme fatigue, and as extreme mental excitement, overcame in the end his natural strength; he gave way all at once; and bodily ailment benumbed for a time the acuteness of his feelings. When the fever subsided, and that he at length arose from his bed, it was in so subdued a state of mind as I feared must have ended in melancholy madness. But renovation of bodily strength promoted by degrees mental recovery, not to a softened or tender submission; but to a silent, severe contemplation of his miseries—a closing, as it were, of the heart to all consolation—a stern avoidance of every subject connected with Clotilde or his child.

In the course of his illness, which lasted a considerable time, I again addressed a letter to the Père Montcalm, entreating once more his interference with the higher powers of his church in the recovery of my sister or her son. But my renewed appeal produced only a repetition of his

good wishes, his sincere commiseration, and sorrow that neither his nor our inquiries had been attended with success; and assurances, that he had no influence whatever with the powers to which I referred.

Failing with the Père Montcalm, my wishes recurred to a project long thought of; and soon as Charles was sufficiently recovered to bear a removal from Lyons to Tours, where he proposed spending the winter, I took courage to break that cruel reserve which he had imposed upon our conversation, by suggesting an application to the Archbishop of the Diocess, whose extensive jurisdiction embraced more than the theatre of our calamities. Alas! the answer that he made penetrated my heart. It robbed me of my only consolation, the assurance I had till then felt, that his love for Clotilde and his confidence in her innocence were unchanged.

“If,” he said, “by laying myself at the feet of every Roman Catholic prelate in Europe, one trace of my innocent child might be discovered, I

would perform a pilgrimage from diocess to diocess, not only through France, but Italy, with more devotion and sincerity than the most bigoted devotee since the days of the Crusade. But as for her!—do you believe, that if her flight was compulsory, she would not long since have found means of escape, at least some means of communication? Women are not destitute of expedients—French women especially—and she who could deceive affection such as ours, if equally well inclined, could as easily elude the vigilance of those she disliked. When we recollect that she is rich, and of course influential, can we believe her without some freedom of will? And as for those letters that deceived me at first, might they not have been purposely left in her writing desk? The preservation of a copy—so called—is no proof that there was an original. Or, if there had been, does that acquit her of taking into confidence the designing Celeste, or of keeping up a correspondence with the vilest of men, whose aim and end has been to render her husband obnoxious? Be assured,

Mary, that every act of that last scene was premeditated—that she knew Doughty sailed with us—that Mac Cardwell was in waiting at St. Malo—that Austin, the insidious intellectual Austin! was also about to leave England. Reflect on what has passed, coolly, dispassionately, as I have learnt to reflect, and all is accounted for; all but the last, the greatest misfortune of my life, the cruel bereavement of my child, which baffles elucidation.”

I had imagined until now, that my cup of bitterness was drained to the dregs; for throughout he had professed himself as if thoroughly relying on the innocence of Clotilde, and always spoke of her as the victim, not the accomplice of her Confessors. His change of opinion cut me to the heart: it roused me to defend her: I forgot his reserve, the renewal of that severity, which always threw me to a distance, and I expressed with all the warmth of affection and pity my perfect conviction of her integrity and worth. But rising from his seat he silenced me at once.

“ This is a subject, Mary, that must never recur

between us. If it is impossible to refrain from it, we had better part; and, indeed, it is right that your former engagements should be fulfilled. I do not desire that you should make so great a sacrifice for me. Write to Major Melville: let me place you under his protection, and then retire with my misfortunes to the solitude they court."

"No, Charles, I have relinquished those engagements, and gave them up willingly, without reference to you. A broken spirit and a cheerless heart would ill requite the disinterested attachment of Major Melville. He, I hope, may find his happiness elsewhere, with one who can give him her undivided thoughts, as well as a heart full of anxiety to him alone. I would not obtrude my cares and disappointments into that peaceful family for all the world."

"Well then," he resumed, "we must e'en perform our pilgrimage together, but on condition that you never revert to the subject of this day—that a name once so dear, but now so dishonoured, be never mentioned between us."

I had no choice but submission. After sojourning at Tours a few months, we proceeded to Germany, where a circumstance occurred which obliged Charles to remove his unnatural interdict, which dispelled his assumed apathy, renewed his anxieties, filled me with hopes, and sent us once more to Nantes on an errand of disappointment.

It was at Weisbaden that he received a letter from the law-agent of the St. Aubin estates, to say, that an order had been forwarded to him from Lady Trevillion, making over the rents of those estates to Monsieur Augustine de St. Aubin, the next heir at law. He added, that the deed of assignment was legally executed, every proper form having been gone through, and delivered by Clotilde Trevillion née de Montmorency, at the Hotel de Rue St. Thomas, Paris; that it was witnessed by the master of the hotel, and one other respectable housekeeper, on the second day of the preceding April.

It was now late in August; the letter had been written in May, and directed in so confused a

manner, that I only wonder it reached us at all. On the very day of its receipt we set off for Nantes —my brother's renewed vigour being more than commensurate with the apathy of months. But this journey, like all others preceding it, might have been spared; for the notary had no more information to impart than that which was contained in his letter. The deed of assignment was put into our hands, and we immediately recognized the signature of our unfortunate lost one. It seemed, for the moment, to realize that loved presence: it renewed all our anguish: it brought back, as if they had occurred but that moment, the bitter scenes of the last miserable year. We hurried from Nantes, and once more pursued the road to Paris.

But the banker at Paris was as little satisfactory as the notary at Nantes. He denied having any knowledge of the St. Aubin affairs, but recollected Lady Trevillion coming to his house and signing an acquittance for money. She received a sum then in hand, and was accompanied by two persons —one appeared to be a legal, the other a clerical

friend. Since that period he had honoured the drafts of Augustine de St. Aubin, with whose person as well as whose residence he was unacquainted. Mr. de St. Aubin was now the receiver of the rents, forwarded to the bank by the steward at the Chateau de St. Aubin.

We went to the hotel in the Rue St. Thomas, but it had changed proprietors. The person who signed as a witness for Clotilde had gone to some town in the south. Our inquiries for the respectable housekeeper in the Fauxbourg St. Martin were equally unsuccessful, no person inhabiting the house recollected such a name. It was, however, a sort of habitation which admitted many lodgers, and he might have lived there at the time.

I saw the Père Montcalm, a venerable, and to all appearance kindly old man, who received me as the friend of a favourite daughter, but who, alas! was as ignorant of Lady Trevillion's fate as myself; nor could I—even with my experience of Roman Catholic evasion—distrust his sincerity when he

assured me, tears streaming down his face, that he knew not, until that moment, how near Clotilde had been to him. But age had benumbed his faculties and weakened his mind. I saw that there was little to expect, either from his services or the duration of his life.

By the middle of December we were once more settled at Tours. Charles clung to that locality, and prosecuted his inquiries for William.

Another winter having passed, and another spring going by, he no longer hopes any thing in France, but begins to speak of searching for Mac Cardwell at Rome: should we fail there as here, he will not, I fear, return to England. I have thrown these few particulars together with the hope of interesting those dear friends, who are still interested for me, in the fate of a sister whom I shall never cease to love; and of whose vindication I can never let myself despair: upon their affection I cast myself—they will receive and candidly examine the statements I have made. They will not refuse the last request of an unwilling exile,

who entreats that they will prosecute that search, which, were she to remain at home, would be the occupation of her life. They will not hesitate to correspond with a few persons in France who are employed in this service, and should any information be received, to investigate it fully. And oh ! should the injured fugitive be found, they will not reject her, nor close the gates of mercy on her returning steps. They will remember that she is the wife of Sir Charles Trevillion—the mother of his son—the sister of a suppliant, who depends solely on their aid.

Charles has lately talked of hiring a vessel and cruizing about the Mediterranean. Sometimes he proposes a journey through Egypt and Palestine : his thoughts return toward the East—not to the scene of his military existence, not to European India—for all that leads to individual retrospect lacerates his heart. But he yearns for something never seen before, something to carry him quite beyond self. He wishes to explore those desolate regions where the voice of eternal justice is not

drowned in the noisy din of worldly excitement; where pure and primitive religion needs neither artificial proofs nor costly varnishings to mark the rise and progress of its orient light. He detests the arts, the luxuries, the refinements on which he used to set a value, and he pines to behold a scene where their ruin is perfected—where the depopulated city and the trackless waste witness the punishment of sin equally with its gracious atonement. He longs to contemplate a patriarchal state of existence—the sacred locale of a first people; who pitched their tents in the wilderness, and worshipped God beneath the canopy of the heavens. Books hitherto creating little interest, are resorted to for information. He selects those which treat of the countries where he means to travel. Biblical history becomes a pursuit—not as it was pursued at Bath, for the purposes of theological research—but for the purpose of informing his mind, which, till a wish to explore in person the scenes there described, was sunk in deplorable sadness; now carried so far back from the subjects of his grief,

he lives in a different atmosphere, and forgets individual misery in meditating on the desolation of nations.

His thoughts become more elevated, his feelings are softened; and this is an improvement which, with his present occupations, is sure to progress. Every object in these Roman Catholic countries reminds him of his wrongs, and the great alterations in England preclude forgetfulness there. Shall I, then, regret leaving the territories of a church where those wrongs are ever objective, are always present?—of a church, that holy fane which should be a refuge from oppression, an asylum for the broken in heart, but which superstition, idolatry, and priestcraft have robbed of its consolations, or changed into the rallying point of the despoiler; whence issues, instead of peace, the war-cry of persecution and blood? Oh, no! we must fly these heart-rending witnesses, these costly adornings, these artificial pomps, beneath which the seven hills of Rome hide their modern deformities. We require a more primitive country, a

less luxurious hot-bed, where religion was first modelled by the hand of its incarnate Founder; we must seek a land where, apart from interruption, we shall contemplate at leisure, amidst the destruction of empires, a union of mercy with justice, and learn to hate sin, not in the person of the sinner, not because we ourselves have suffered from its inflictions, but because it demanded an expiation at once so gracious and so agonizing.

Looking to our exile in such a light as this, I endeavour to subdue the regrets which would bind me to home; and I remember that, however separated by distance from those we most love, the communion of hearts must remain. Even should the country of my choice, and the friends of my youth, never more bless me by their presence in this world, the hour is not distant when we must all meet again, when our affections and our lives must be renewed.

We go to Paris *en route* towards Rome; and this manuscript, written at different periods, I mean to leave with our banker, directed to Major Mel-

ville, and enclosed to our kind aunt, at Heathery Haugh. She will deliver it; and she will, I know, assist in removing whatever prejudices may remain. You will read it together, my best and dearest friends. My own gentle Lucy will feel for her absent cousin; and you, Henry, yes, I know you will forgive whatever disappointments it has been my misfortune to inflict, when you learn how severely I have suffered. Above all, you will not forget that there is another to love, another exile, who may be the most pitiable, the most innocent sufferer amongst us.

I will write from Paris to Scotland, and prepare my dear aunt Melville for the receipt of this packet from her grateful

MARY TREVILLION.

TOURS, April 2d, 18—.

END OF VOL. II.

PERE LA CHAISE;

OR,

THE CONFESSOR.

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PERE LA CHAISE;

OR,

THE CONFESSOR:

A TALE OF THE TIMES.

EDITED BY

GEORGE STEPHENS, Esq.

AUTHOR OF

“THE INTRODUCTION TO THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND QUARTERLY
REVIEW,” AND SUBSEQUENT ARTICLES.

“At the sight of a cross, or crucifix, I can dispense with my hat, but scarce with the thought or memory of my Saviour; I cannot laugh at, but rather pity, the fruitless journeys of pilgrims, or condemn the miserable condition of friars; for though misplaced in circumstances, there is something in it of devotion. I could never hear the Ave Maria bell without an elevation, or think it a sufficient warrant, because they erred in one circumstance, for me to err in all, that is, in silence and dumb contempt; whilst therefore they direct their devotions to her, I offered mine to God, and rectify the errors of their prayers by rightly ordering mine own.”—SIR THOMAS BROWN.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

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PERE LA CHAISE.

CHAPTER XXVII.

[MAJOR MELVILLE IN CONTINUATION.]

SUCH was the narrative of Mary Trevillion, such the history promised me of her feelings towards one whom I had condemned as guilty and ungrateful, but whom I now acquitted of all save that palsied weakness which the Romish creed engenders, and with which it is the policy of the Romish church to strike her dupes, by inculcating, from the cradle to the grave, that salvation depends on obedience, until at length the mind loses all confi-

dence in itself, and becomes utterly debilitated. It was this prostration of her faculties at the shrine of priestcraft that rendered Lady Trevillion the victim of a hypocritical conspiracy. Time was forgotten in the perusal of her pitiable story, and the bright sun of morning had long blushed through my crimson window-curtains ere I could have believed, but for so glowing a witness, that half the night were over.

If Mary's gentle and feminine attractions had first won my admiration, how much did the consistency of her character and the warmth of her heart enhance every perfection formerly discovered. She could not have enlisted a more zealous champion in her cause. I pledged myself never to abandon it, never to cease in aiding her benevolent researches, never to relinquish the hope of accomplishing their object. Austin, I now was sure, would not keep his appointment; he had merely given his address to gain time, and to rid himself of importunity. And, even should he meet me, what could be expected from him? Would he con-

fess to have played the deceiver, to have leagued himself with Mac Cardwell? Certainly not: he would guard their mutual secret; and these two worthies would work on together, and share the wealth of their victim, in concert with the assumed heir of those estates of which they had, doubtless, possessed themselves.

It struck me as a most propitious incident, my sudden acquaintance with Matilde, and our as accidentally meeting with the elderly priest, whom I had afterwards seen in company with Austin. Through the means of this communicative girl, I hoped to discover the retreat of the latter, should he fail to meet me by appointment; and then would come my turn to watch his proceedings, his associations, his haunts, some of which might lead to the ultimate recovery of Lady Trevillion, or her son.

But such a conclusion, though easy to jump at by anticipation, might be difficult enough to execute at in practice. A foreigner, like myself, a straightforward soldier, was certainly no match for a thorough-bred Jesuit, with the advantage of being

a native of the country where I was a stranger; for, however Mr. Austin might prefer a maternal claim upon old England, there was unquestionable evidence of his parental relationship with France. To circumvent him would, therefore, be a difficult process—a thing impossible. No; I retract my words, not impossible. Where love, pity, indignation, were all enlisted on the side of justice, he could not be a man whose energies should fail him. Neither, upon longer reflection, did the ultimate discovery of either mother or child appear to be impracticable. Sir Charles might have relaxed in his efforts too soon; Mary had, therefore, pursued hers under a disadvantage. They were both too well known; were doubtless under ecclesiastical *surveillance*, and could not move an inch without being observed; I should embark *incognito*, an unsuspected stranger. Neither at Tours, Nantes, or ~~Paris~~ was I likely to be recognized—at least not as the agent of Sir Charles Trevillion; I should prosecute inquiry without creating suspicion, or placing interested persons upon their guard; suffi-

cient time had elapsed to wear out the vigilance of even Jesuitical caution, and it would be strange if zeal, the application of money, with personal exertion, did not win some reward.

But how were these personal exertions to be made?—in what manner begun? Here was the puzzle. I spoke French, it is true, as Englishmen speak it who have not lived much amongst foreigners; yet not with sufficient fluency to make my way with the natives, or to get intimate with their customs and manners. A courier must be hired, one on whom I could depend; neither a Frenchman nor a Roman Catholic: here I was puzzled again. But Mary Trevillion remained to be consulted; and her knowledge of France might smooth all difficulties.

Meanwhile the morning was wearing away; it was nearly approaching the hour of my appointment. A waiter, half French, half Irish, who had been very obliging since my *séjour* in the hotel, brought up the breakfast; and, while he poured out the coffee with a good-humoured smile, it occurred

to me to inquire if he knew of such a person as a trustworthy courier?

“How far do you travel, sir?” was his characteristic reply.

“I have not determined. Is it necessary I should?”

“Oh, by no manner of *manes*, sir! only the answer came natural.”

“You speak French,” I observed, “as if you were a native.”

“My ’prenticeship to the tongue has been full eighteen years, Major. And I had a small smattering beforehand from my poor father—may pace be about him!—for, though he never would part with me while he could help it, and that was for the life, yet the good sowl gave me schooling at home; the very best he could get me at that present time. And young Father Tom, who was Father Joe’s coadjutor, and is, may be, to the fore in it still, taught me between whiles, what he could get me to larn; and had the run of the house for his pains. The lad had been in France, and spoke French mighty well—at least what sounded well all the

way off in Ireland: so, as I liked it better than Latin, and that my own poor ould daddy knew nothing of the difference, why the tutor let me take my own choice; which was the more convenient to himself, for sorrow word of Latin could be driv into his scull, savin' the litinies and chants that he must repeat in the chapel. So when it was my luck, as well as my betters', to be nabbed by Napoleon, and pent up in Verdun, I got on like mad at the pronounciation; being, as you know, book-larned already. And that is the way I come to spake like a native."

"So like," I replied, "that the first two days I was here, you passed for a Frenchman."

He bowed very low, and put another question. If the services of a courier would be required for long?

"It is impossible to say. Perhaps the business I am engaged in may take up some time. Perhaps it may be concluded in a week or a month."

"Then it is not to travel you want a courier, Major?"

“ Really, my friend, I cannot pledge myself to anything. But perhaps your questions are not merely those of common curiosity? Perhaps you would like to accompany me yourself?”

“ I should like to travel well enough, sir,” he replied, “supposing it was with a gentleman who knows something of the world—a real gentleman, such as yourself, Major, and not a green-horn, as once was my fate; or rather a brace of them, reeking-hot out of Leeds, or some such place in the factory line. Och! it’s myself was sick of those chaps, and could have made an end of them again and again. They deserved a short summons for disgracing their birth-place. Murdering French, and knocking English out of joint. They committed manslaughter with their tongues every minute of the day; and, what was twenty times worse, I being their courier, came in for my share of the ridicule.”

“ I should have thought such a service very amusing, and have joined in the laugh they raised.”

“ So I did, with a vengeance, after leaving them at Geneva, where they were provided with one in

my place ; for, by the time we reached there, I could stand it no longer, with their ‘Alley vows song ;’ and their ‘Venice I say ;’ calling all the waiters names, and the kitchen their *cousin*. But that’s neither here nor there, nor to your purpose, sir, at this present time, so, to make a long story short, summer is coming, and I should like a few months touring uncommonly.”

I had been all along pleased with the appearance and manners of this good-natured Irishman, the best exile of his grade and country that I ever happened to meet. Shrewd, intelligent, and obliging ; he was frank without impertinence, and civil without obsequiousness. I could not but suspect that he had known better days, and had bought his experience with the loss of his fortune. But, though probably fallen from a more respectable station, there was no false shame, no mean pride which interfered with his duty ; and an hilarity in his looks, with an unvarying cheerfulness of manner, were to me the best proofs of a conscience unseared. A man may be exempt from calamity,

yet dull and dissatisfied, and many lack contentment who lack nothing else; but it is ever my opinion, that good temper and good spirits are at least the guarantees of a heart "void of offence;" and I felt as if some of my difficulties were got over when my guide offered to engage himself as my courier.

The Confessor failed, as I thought he would, in keeping his appointment. The house at which he gave his address had not had a clerical inhabitant for several months. I could not bring myself to carry a disappointment so directly to Mary Trevillion; and as my only resource seemed to rest with Matilde, I walked slowly on to her abode. But when I reached it she had gone out, and the person who answered me I conjectured to be her father, from the circumstance of his having one arm tied up. He eyed me, as I inquired for his daughter, with such keen curiosity, that instead of appointing an hour to look at his paintings, which had been my intention, I affected indifference, and hastened away without leaving my name, but much

mortified at missing Matilde. The very next minute, however, I was amply rewarded, by catching a glimpse of the identical being whom I so eagerly sought. Just as I was turning out of the street Austin turned in. We were at different corners: he walked fast, and held down his head; I retraced my steps unobserved, and saw him actually enter the door through which I had just made my exit.

This was enough, I now knew one of his haunts, and, glad to escape recognition, proceeded forthwith to see Mary Trevillion; much better pleased than had he kept his appointment, and anxious to consult with her as to future proceedings. Sir Charles and his sister were gone for the day to St. Cloud; and I own, that the not finding her at home rendered me rather impatient. I wished to consult with her before going farther. Vigour, perseverance, and courage, I knew myself to possess; but prudence, foresight, and caution, were qualities better suited to the present occasion, and these I had to acquire. Lady Trevillion's abduction must have been effected by such a train of intrigue,

falsehood, and duplicity, as might scarcely be equalled. One incautious step, one rash interrogatory, one precipitous act, might render my services abortive. It was now a matter of doubt whether I should not have forced myself upon the Confessor; for if the lodgings of the lace-mender were not also his, if he should only have called at the house on some charitable errand connected with his profession, I might not find him again; and if so, what an opportunity had been thrown away.

In this dilemma I thought of my courier, and determined to send him about the close of evening to find out what he could in the Rue des Postes; where I was now fearful of returning myself. Accordingly, having reached my apartments, I rang the bell for Bourke.

“My good fellow,” I said, “you must do me a service this evening. I have a commission to execute, and as you seem both intelligent and steady”—

“Begging your pardon, sir, for the interruption,” said Bourke, “I never was known to de-

ceive ; and if anything about me says I am steady, the sooner that's contradicted the better, Harry Bourke being one of the wildest and the easiest led of any poor Irish exile that ever left house and home, or followed bad luck across the salt seas. As for the commission, that's another affair. I never broke faith with gentle or simple, and you are not the first to begin with."

" May I ask, without offence, before we go farther, if you, Master Bourke, are Protestant or Papist?"

" I am a Catholic, Major. Neither better nor worse."

" You are therefore under obligations to confess all you do to the priest."

" In reason, sir. When I do what is wrong I go for the sake of absolution ; and a very great comfort it is, bringing peace to one's soul in the form of a few words ; and placing oneself once for all on a sure footing, instead of wearing out life on the stool of repentance. When I'm doubtful between the wrong and the right, I go to confes-

sion for information's sake ; for how should ignorant mortals tell the difference between one sin and another, the great and the small, unless they inquire from those that's well experienced in the same. But, as to betray another man's secrets, or repating to the priest what is tould me in confidence, why it's a penance I'd deserve, and not an absolution for turning informer."

" I ask pardon, Master Bourke, for making such inquiries, but my case is very peculiar."

" No offence in life, sir. There's bad, good, false, and true in every persuasion ; and it's not wholesome for any Christian to be dwelling on the dark side, thinking the worst of his fellow-creatures. In respect of the commission, if you're not inclined to trust me *now*, there is no harm done. No offence in the world, sir."

" I am perfectly determined to trust you ; but my commission requires caution, perseverance, and zeal. Above everything silence ; for 'tis of a delicate nature."

" Ah, sir," responded the Irishman, dropping

his under jaw, and exhibiting a ludicrous expression of sympathy, while he laid his hand—French fashion—on his heart; “I am a person of experience in such matters, and would take the freedom of advising so fine a young gentleman to go home and consort with one like himself, in his own native place. There’s nothing genuine here but the brandy; and that same is false, for its own name belies its nature. Commend me to the stuff which spakes for itself; potsheen or pentseek will never deceive, and it’s the same with our country women once they are married.”

I agreed with his sentiment, though not with his comparison. And then, without committing the parties by name, except Mr. Austin himself, proceeded to say, that the liberty, perhaps the life of a most amiable lady was concerned in keeping this person in view, and finding out his haunts. That I had seen him to enter a particular house in the Rue des Postes, inhabited by a lace-mender, her brother, and some children; and that my present business was to discover whether he also had taken

up his quarters in that house; if not, whether he was remaining in Paris, or about to depart elsewhere, and whither? I described the person of Matilde, and told him what she had told me of her story; adding, that the lady was so interesting an object to me, I meant to traverse all France until she was discovered.

“France is a wide place, Major Melville; but may be you have some guess as to quarters: the lady is of your own persuasion, I hope, sir.”

“She is a Roman Catholic; and we have good reason to suspect is concealed against her will by this and another Roman Catholic priest.”

“Jesuits, perhaps?” said Bourke, looking alarmed. “Well may you say that it’s a delicate business: they are dreadful to meddle with, these same Jesuits.”

“I am aware of their influence, but difficulties should not deter an honourable man and a soldier from endeavouring to redress the oppressed. I presume you a soldier, Master Bourke, your appearance bespeaks the profession of arms.”

“An officer, with your leave,” he said, drawing himself up; “it cost my poor father enough for the qualification, setting care I had made a good use of it. But that’s nothing to the purpose at this time of day: soldiers no more than officers should shrink in a case of distress; and I’m not one to be frightened by those we were speaking of, though it’s themselves that are to be feared. They are here, they are there,” he added, dropping his voice to a whisper, “and no where at all, at the very same minute. Though we are speaking so low in this inner room, two stories from the ground, three feet of wall between us and the street, with the doors of the ante-room fastened, it’s a wonder to me if every word is not taken down and entered against us in letters of blood. Oh, sir, it’s not the words which we utter, but the words we never speak that will be reaching their ears, and rising in judgment against us. May the blessed saints be our safeguard, both here and hereafter !”

“Notwithstanding so devout an aspiration, Master Bourke, I rather suspect that you are not a good Catholic?”

“ I don't set up to be good ; nor ever did. But, Holy Mother ! it is'nt goodness would save us, if we cross them that's nameless, or meddle with their doings in any way at all.”

“ You would rather not interfere, I see, in this business of mine. There is no liberty of choice for a Roman Catholic layman.”

“ There's two sorts of liberty, Major Melville, as I know to my cost ; one's all blarney and lip deep, the other is in a man's conscience ; mine, the Heavens be praised ! is free as the wind, and at your service entirely.”

I accepted with my usual precipitance this very liberal offer. And enough being said to create in the warm heart of my courier a sincere zeal for my success, he would have persuaded me to take into our confidence one Father Murphy, or Father Peter, his own particular clergy ; “ a very decent man, and no friend at all to the Jesuits.” But I expressed in explicit terms my determination not to admit a third into our confidence, especially an Irish priest.

Bourke seemed to think me very silly in not

enlisting so able an assistant. But added, "there's no help for a man's feelings, only it's not wise to be throwing away luck, for every thing's ordained. If I had not been a prisoner sixteen long years, where would be the language that stands our friend now? Ah, sir, it's not right to be setting up the forethought of man in opposition to Providence, or throwing away chances that falls in one's way; and sure they're teeming down upon us now like April showers, with the sun breaking out every minute between. There's at this blessed moment, a young lady, *en première*, beautiful and good with plenty of money; she asked me last night to find her a lace-mender. Never question chances or luck after that; her errand will furnish me with an excuse; and I'll away to the Rue des Postes in no time, where something shall be gathered from the women at least. Madame, the lace-mender, has a very pretty niece?"

"Yes, she is pretty, and innocent, and only just sixteen. Please to remember, Master Bourke, that thy business to the Rue des Postes has nothing to do with this young girl."

“ But sixteen !” exclaimed Bourke.” Poor child ! I might be her father. Ah, sir ! the heart in my body was broke over and over before she saw the light. ’Tis I that have purchased my experience of women ; and could tell you a story, only it’s tedious, and over-moving for this hour of the day. I always make it a rule to postpone thinking of my troubles until business is over ; and until I can find an hour’s leisure for recreation, which, with bells here, and *garçon* there, and *toute-de-suite* every where, very seldom falls to my lot.”

“ So much the better, I should think, since your pastime is none of the most cheering.”

“ Oh sir, not so bad either—for, though, as I say, the heart in my body was broke long ago, which can’t be helped now, it happened through no fault of mine : and though I am in one sense of the word a banished man, there’s little weight on my mind, the Holy Virgin be praised ! Once I was richer, but not an ounce lighter. Neither man, woman, nor child are worse through my means ; and though there’s a trifle difference between officer and waiter—between obeying your colonel and answering

bells—after all, sir, it is the man who makes the profession; in short, nothing goes to my heart of what's done but the sporting. I, that have ridden to cover twenty good miles, and been in at the death after all! Their method of hunting is not to my mind here, supposing I had time for the same, or a baste worth the crossing. But who could expect to match Norah Creina in France? You know the bog of Allen, Major, or must know it by hearsay? Well, it's that is the beautiful ground, and the Curragh of Kildare not to be matched in the world, neither a tree nor a hedge-row for fifteen good miles, except the tower of Kildare standing up in the midst of the ancient ould town for all the world like a poplar tree or a gallows: all the fire wood that they'll burn from one end of France to the other will never leave them so handsome a clearance as that. It's across the bog of Allen I used to ride poor spanking Norah—she was younger sister to Wildoats—and make nothing of joining the hounds before day break. You'll have heard of the Kildare hounds, sir, they are known through the

three kingdoms?—and been in at the death, as I mentioned this minute. You shall hear more of Wildoats when I come to my troubles. But sure there's no pleasure in speaking of past times at this busy hour, so I will postpone that gratification till a convenient opportunity, and be off for the Rue des Postes to engage my lace-mender for Mademoiselle Molesworth *en première*, then settle with Madame here to give me my *congé*. There is one thing in our favour I forgot to mention before, which is my knowing, as luck will have it, almost every conductor in France."

I concluded our engagement, and inquired if he could enter my service on the morrow; "for to say the truth, Bourke," I added, "you are just the person I wanted, especially as it seems you anticipate my wishes."

"*Toute au contraire*, Monsieur, you anticipate mine. For as to travelling it is quite to my taste. I never did good when too long in one place, and if Father Murphy were to hoist me up into Paradise to morrow, I doubt if I should not soon be after

regretting this dirty probationary world we live in. As to leaving Madame it is easy enough—she is good-natured, and it's only hiring a *garçon* ex officio. I'll take care to see that she's honestly served. But there go the bells, my mistresses still, and here comes *le dîner*. *Tout-de-suite! chère demoiselles! tout-de-suite.*"

So saying, away flew my military *garçon*, who was especially in attendance on the English ladies up stairs. I therefore saw no more of him for several hours. Afraid to intrude on Sir Charles Trevillion, I spent my evening in reperusing the MS. of his sister.

About ten o'clock Bourke made his appearance, looking brimful of intelligence and glowing with success; it was really surprising how well he had prospered: but I must let my trusty *courier* speak for himself.

"I am disappointed, and I am not, sir," he said, having closed to the door; "Father Austin is like the fairies, no where to be found. He has been to that lodging of the lace-mender's once or twice

before this morning, and came there last night after dark in a carriage, which however was left at the end of the street. Madame the lace-mender, with a young child in her arms, set off in that carriage about eleven o'clock. The child, a little girl, is a nursed one, about eighteen months old, and has been *en pension* with the lace-mender since September last year. You said something to me, sir, about the disappearance of a child."

"I did, but the boy whom I alluded to was older than you say, by a year at the least. However, his poor mother, when lost to her friends, was expecting her second confinement. Estates of considerable value were lately devised her; and to her next child who should be born at the family chateau, should this condition not be fulfilled, the estates were to devolve, after her death, to the nearest male heir of the testator. Her child, if fairly dealt by, might be eighteen months old: altogether the coincidence is striking."

"Why the case is as clear as the sun," replied Bourke. "We seem to have hit the right nail

like a miracle. O! its myself would glory to aid you! and to see the sweet babby righted and restored, and sated in the fine ancient ould chateau, and those villains of kidnappers chained down in the bottomless pit, without one single *sous* to buy them a mass. May the saints be about us, and tache us to lay up for emergencies!"

Bourke had gained his information from a young man, a waiter out of place, who lodged in the Rue des Postes opposite Matilde, whom he described as crying most bitterly when placing the little girl in the carriage with her aunt. This young man, whom Bourke promised to befriend, was to come early in the morning and bring us what news he could collect; my indefatigable courier having given him a commission to purchase some trifling drawing from Matilde's father, the *ci-devant* artist, who still made a trade of selling second-rate pictures.

I'd have gladly undertaken the same errand myself, and laid out a few pieces with the artist, but Austin most probably had his spies on my actions, and I was obliged to be prudent.

Our envoy came early in the morning, self-interest had rendered him vigilant. He had some acquaintance with Monsieur André, the artist, having sold a cheap painting for him at one or two hotels, and was slightly known to Matilde, who acted in general as nurse to the little *pensionnaire*, whom he described as a beautiful child, with a very fair complexion, and very bright blue eyes, more like an English than a French child. He said that she was never taken out into the town, but always had her walks without the *barrière*. That he never remarked the tall fine-looking Priest until within the last week, when he saw him twice with Monsieur André. That the child had been nursed somewhere in La Vendée, and was brought to Paris about six months before. He also said, that to the best of his belief the journey of Madame Bellenger was suddenly determined upon, for he had been with her brother, Monsieur André, until a late hour that evening cleaning some old picture frames, and observed no preparations. On the contrary, all the children were gone to their beds, and he believed

that Matilde had repaired to hers before he left the house. That it was about eleven o'clock when he heard a carriage in the street, and saw Madame Bellenger walk towards it alone. Presently André, carrying something beneath his cloak, and Matilde crying by his side, joined Madame. André's burden proved to be the little girl, who was in a quiet sleep, and who was placed in the carriage without awaking; Madame took her in her arms, and the carriage drove off.

Bourke contrived to find occupation for our informant more lucrative and easy than that of a mendicant picture-dealer, and so kept him in sight. We both felt very sanguine on the subject of this child. On connecting its sudden removal with Miss Trevillion's recognition of Austin at Père la Chaise, and with the circumstance of his companion having seen me in the company of Matilde, I had little doubt but that the infant in question had an important bearing upon the mysteries we were determined to unravel.

“ If there was not some secret concerning your-

selves, belonging to the babby," remarked the Irishman, "it's queer enough of the Confessor to be sending her off at that time of night; little thinking, Major Melville, that there's scarcely a postillion or conductor in Paris whom I do not know something of at this time of day. Let Harry Bourke alone for following a scent, even athwart running water."

About noon I made another attempt to see Mary, and fortunately found her alone, which gave us a delightful opportunity of talking over the interesting manuscript. I made the *amende honorable*, confessed that Lady Trevillion was washed white as snow, and signified my intention to follow up her recovery with every energy of my soul. Mary thanked me with tears.

I did not, however, add to the pleasurable excitement my determination produced, by venturing to impart what had come to my knowledge respecting the child. It would be time enough for such intelligence if my hopes should be realized; and I therefore kept that little secret to myself. But

I told her that I had traced out some haunts of Mr. Austin's, and was fortunate in finding a most intelligent assistant, with whom I meant to perform my pilgrimage in Tourain. She gave me a line of introduction to Louise Garsin, at Derval, from whom she had not heard for several months; and I left her full of hopes, which I almost repented to have raised, but, stimulated by her gratitude to accomplish the task which I had undertaken. Bourke, who was no small favourite with Madame la Propriétaire, succeeded in appointing our new ally as his substitute; and the young man, charmed by his good fortune, was more than zealous in our service. He had to run home after dinner for some clothes, and he brought back a budget of intelligence. Madame Bellenger was expected to return the following evening, and André, her brother, had received orders from their employer to leave Paris the succeeding day. "André," he added, "was most anxious to sell a few paintings, and he had advised him to bring them him-

self that very night to the hôtel, in order that I might have an opportunity of questioning him."

This was rather beyond my commission ; I foresaw no good in making acquaintance with the confidential agent of Priest Austin ; but Bourke, with one glance, discovered a thousand advantages. "It's all for the best," he said. "It's laid out that you should know all these people—Père la Chaise for that, and your meeting with the daughter. I have thought of a scheme. Let us leave Paris along with him, the very same day, in the very same carriage. Depend on it, he's going to be a watch on the child. Perhaps he might lead to the mother : sure it's all clear as the daylight. You must see him, Major Melville ! You must buy one of his daubs : he is, by all accounts, a conceited ignoramus, and in very poor circumstances to boot, quite dependent on his sister, who is a terrible brim—. It might be the best thing you could do to engage him for a travelling companion."

"I cry you mercy, Master Bourke ! this is

really going too far—running at once into the mouth of the lion. Besides, he is already engaged to the priest.”

“No better way to stop a lion’s mouth,” resumed the persevering courier, “provided you cram it sufficiently. Oh, Major Melville; if we miss this tide, such another piece of good luck will never be borne on the floods again. Do you think he will mind being engaged to Father Austin? Do you think he would mind putting Protestant money in one pouch, and the priest’s blessing into another?—Not a bit. He’s one of that kidney, who fears neither Pope nor Presbytery: he lives by his wits, and would as soon serve ten masters as one. Don’t make believe to know where he’s going, or indeed that he is going at all; but just ask him if he could find you a mighty agreeable, well-informed, experienced companion, for a short excursion to the country, who would direct a little tour, and give a few lessons in sketching; that you want to be off to-morrow or next day, &c. &c.:—it’s he that will jump, I’ll engage;

it's he that will make no scruple at all of killing two birds with one stone."

"And may it not strike him as something extraordinary, that I should want two travelling companions? For, as to letting you off, that is out of the question."

"Sure you don't think I want to be off?—that's the least of my thoughts, Major. It isn't one of us, by ourselves, that can watch Monsieur André. It isn't less than the four eyes of both that will keep him in sight."

I could not at once take in the drift of Bourke's plan, yet it did not appear an unwise one; and, by the time of the artist's arrival, had made up my mind to be guided by circumstances, and by the opinion I might form of him.

It was one part of Bourke's scheme to play least in sight; so that Monsieur André was introduced to me by his old acquaintance the waiter. We found sufficient occupation in looking over his portfolio, which contained the most execrable collection of what he called original views. I made one or two

selections, which put him in excellent humour. He talked much of himself—expatiated on his delight (before the accident occurred, which deprived him of his arm) in professional tours—inquired if I sketched; and soon proclaimed his satisfaction at having the happiness of conversing with a gentleman of considerable taste. We bandied compliments in a most laughable manner; and I could scarcely refrain from betraying myself, when, on intimating my wish to make a sketching excursion, he almost offered his services. I said, “that I only waited in Paris until a competent travelling companion could be procured; that I was impatient to be off while the verdure continued fresh; but, being particular, had found it difficult to suit myself, although very well inclined to be liberal.”

On this inductive bit of temptation, André could no longer resist. I saw his eyes sparkle, and a look of self-satisfaction prefaced what was coming. He inquired if I meant to begin, like most travellers, with Brussels. I replied, that I was indiffer-

ent as to route, provided the scenery pleased me, and that I could leave Paris without delay. Then came the offer, almost breathlessly delivered, followed by a vivid description of Tourain. He expatiated on the wonders of Orleans, of Tours, of the forest of Chinon. I professed ignorance of all. Perfectly acquainted with each bank of the Loire, he spoke of the scenery as superb, of the towns as magnificent, of the hôtels as being beyond praise. He had no doubt (notwithstanding that his right arm was useless) of being able to direct me in sketching, so as to render the excursion one of great advantage to me. In short, there was no hesitation, no modest reserves, as to his own competency. He could descant on any subject—botany, history, architecture. I should have been an ignoramus indeed, not to make sure of so valuable a man; I had absolutely the offer of a prize. Of course I did not decline it. Terms were very soon arranged; but not one word, meanwhile, escaped him of his previous intentions. I could gather, by his very accommodating readiness

to suit my impatience, that it was an object with himself to leave Paris immediately. He could be ready, if I wished, to set out on the next morning but one. He required a day to settle some affairs. Of course I made no objections, but left the arrangement of our journey to him, with no other restrictions than that we were not to have a private carriage. We then appointed to meet at a *mes-sagerie*, and at an hour which he named.

I showed him down stairs, to prevent any encounter with the waiter, and returned to my apartment very much pleased with the trim of affairs; not without admiring the ready ingenuity of Bourke, who had so happy a knack of reconciling cross purposes. That person soon after joined me, and augured success from our having secured possession of André.

“With your leave, sir,” he proceeded, “it isn’t my intention to let this travelling companion of ours see a sight of me at all. I can easily manage it. While he sits with yourself in the *coupée* of a diligence, thinking, to be sure, that he has you

all alone, I shall take up my quarters as rear guard; and thus, close at hand, without making one of the party, be able to keep a sharp look out upon him. If he knew I was your courier he would be on the alert. It's far better, don't you see, to leave him unsuspecting."

Just as I promised not to interfere with the operation of a plan which was rather too intricate for my guidance, I received a packet from Mary Trevillion, inclosing some introductory letters to friends of hers at Tours, with a few useful references to guide my own movements. Dismissing less agreeable company, I resigned myself to contemplations which I had long forborne, but in which I ever delighted to indulge.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

AT the early hour appointed by Monsieur André, I was seated *tête-à-tête* in the *coupée* of a diligence with my self-satisfied and busy companion; who proved, at least in the department of the *cuisine*, a very efficient courier. We had an excellent *déjeûné* at Etampes; of which, however, Bourke did not venture to partake. But at Orleans, when I joined the *table d'hôte*, he placed himself *en face*, looking, to use his own expression, quite innocent, and fully occupied in discussing several excellently cooked dishes which lay within reach. Observation was not, however, absorbed in the business of eating; for his quick intelligent eye lit occasion-

ally on André, who, seated lower down, talked without intermission. I longed to rid myself of the latter, whose loquacity in the pent-up carriage had wearied me to death, and find relief in the originality of Bourke. But this could not be. Prudence condemned me for the remainder of the evening to sight-seeing and view-hunting with my sketching master.

Travellers, with their minds at ease, and having leisure, may no doubt find much at Orleans to interest and amuse ; but to me, the most pleasing incident of the evening was a shabby sealed note that I found thrust into my dressing case, and which during my absence had been placed there by Bourke.

“Sir, you lose time by staying at Orleans ; Blois is likely to prove a more interesting place. Please to choose your own apartment in the Hôtel de France ; a long gallery *en seconde* affords the best accommodation ; little white crosses shall mark two rooms most convenient. The one you sleep in

here to night is only separated by a thin partition from your next neighbour, so true is the saying that 'walls have ears.'

"H. B."

André used much persuasion to keep me at Orleans; and must have set me down as a very incurious, unenlightened, and unmanageable specimen of the John Bull tribe, when I insisted on proceeding.

Nothing worth notice occurred on the road. He either knew, or pretended to know, the name of every chateau, of every vineyard that we passed; and I arrived at Blois, with my head full of information, which, whether interesting or useful, was soon put to flight by an excellent dinner, and the still more pleasing sight of Bourke when supper appeared, whose intelligent eye told, plain as eye could tell, of realized expectation.

He declined a rubber of whist, or a pool of *écarté*, with two half-pay officers and a teacher of languages; but, retiring into a corner, read over, with

seeming attention, an old Paris newspaper; and withdrew, ere long, to his chamber. I presently followed, having already made choice of the room pointed out in his note; which, as I guessed, joined that which he had taken for himself.

The presence of this good-natured man, and the pleasant expression of his countenance, soon relieved the tedium of solitude. "It's fine times for me, Major," he said, on entering, while he carefully secured the door, "to be seeing the world in this sort of way; travelling about for my own recreation, and at your expense. However, I've got some inkling of hope which is likely to pay. It was late last night when I got out of Orleans; but no great harm in that. We reached Amboise betimes in the morning: an ancient town enough, with a castle on a hill; looking grand at a distance, like most places in France, and certain people in it to boot, but, like them, having nothing to boast of on nearer inspection. However, be it as it may, real grandeur or sham, gloomy or gay, it's in the same town of Amboise I met with my quarry: not

the woman we want, but another who knows her. Well, the child is safe any how; for I'm sure it's the same. Angers is our mark, and not far from the Chateau de St. Aubin; neither is Chinon—a short day's journey. And, should there be any delay or difficulty in the business, I know a decent French priest, who lives at the last place. He speaks beautiful English, having passed a couple of years in the county of Mayo."

"Bourke, my good fellow, have done with the priests, at all events till you have done with my business. I would not accept the Tower of Kildare, with Norah Creina to boot, to let one of the fraternity into my councils."

"That's just as you please, Major: not but that this honest old gentleman is as true as the sun. His story would go to your heart, if there was time to hear it. However, we will let him alone: things may get on without benefit of clergy; for the road is straightforward before us as the windings of the river. You can stay here, if you like, or meet me at Tours; where I shall (please St. Peter) show

myself by the day after to-morrow ; if not, the day after that.”

“ You have not told me yet whither you are going, what woman you are in pursuit of, or why you feel so sure that the little girl of the Rue des Postes is the daughter of Lady Trevillion ?”

“ Sure, Major, I’m not come to her yet, nor to her nurse. It’s all guess work ; but that’s above reason sometimes ; or rather it’s the way the hounds reason by shorthand, Major. I’m as certain it’s she as that I’m an Irishman born. However, you know I could not take my oath upon either. To-morrow (please the saints) I start early for Angers ; make out this nurse, with whom I hear the child is placed, and return to Tours ; where you will wait for me, of course.”

“ Why should I not go on to Angers ? I am all impatience to ascertain if this child be Lady Trevillion’s ; to discover the secret of the mother’s detention.”

“ Ah, Major ! it’s little you know of secret conspiracies ; or how these long-headed plotters

organize their plans. Yes, organize, sir ; for it's all done on a system. I larnt more than I should have done amongst them that are nameless. But ' by-gones are by-gones,' as your countrymen say ; and, if the knowledge I gained in the paths of the evil one can help us along in our way to the truth, why it's not had for nothing, that's all. 'Tisn't straightforward, all's right, bowl away, like the English mail-coaches ; which, no matter how many the starting-posts, all come in together at the very same time : neither deviation, nor circumlocution, nor any molestation, as ever I heard of. But this business of yours is another guess sort of case ; unless we take a circuit, we'll never come straight.

“ Supposing this woman is not at Angers, supposing the child is not where I am told, all our chance is keeping André in sight. He'll not give you up while you pay him so well ; yet he must do his duty by this Father Austin : so we shall catch him some day in a dilemma, while he is striving to hit his two birds with one stone. Besides, Major, it would not answer the part we are acting, for you

to pass by *la belle Tours* : no Frenchman alive could forgive the affront. It's a fine city, in ayrneest ; and I can work on by myself much more at my ease than in company."

" You seem intimately acquainted with our proposed scene of action ; yet I do not remember that you acknowledged this till now."

" May be not, Major Melville ; for the thought of it leads to my troubles : and there has been no time for them, nor for any other recreation, since I have had the honour to serve you. But it's odd if I didn't say that it was when sailing up the Loire I first got acquainted with old Father — Bless me ! his name is gone out of my head. But that's nothing to the purpose. He's a good honest sowl, and as grateful-hearted a crathur as if he was born in the kingdom of Kerry, for all that he's a priest."

" I make no objection to your friends, individually ; but, as it is to priestly influence mine owe their misfortunes, we might do much mischief by taking the best of them into our councils. You

have told me nothing as yet about this woman at Amboise; and I am impatient to learn particulars."

"You shall have all that I know, in less than two words. First and foremost, I met the conductor of the *diligence* who took Madame Bellenger up at Orleans, the very first half-hour that I entered the town. He saw her off from Blois in a *calèche*, on her way to Amboise, as he thought. Now I'm informed, by the woman I saw at Amboise, that she went on to Angers, by way of Chinon, without touching at Tours. It's at Chinon the worthy old crathur of a priest"——

I interrupted him rather impatiently. "We must have nothing to do with the priest! I protest against such sort of assistants! The loosing and binding of Jesuitical engagements are pretty well understood by me now."

"Sure you don't take this old gentleman for one of them?" he cried. "St. Mary defend us! Ah no, by no manes. Isn't he one of the poor persecuted clergy that stuck to his king and his church, and

the government of his country, so long as it had one, and never joined art or part with rebels, or revolutionists, but lost all by his loyalty? When nothing remained of his friends and fellow sufferers but them that was murdered in cold blood, or died of destitution, he escaped by a miracle, and came over to Ireland, which has been a refuge for saints time immemorial; and though his church and his government have now got back their own, there is he—an honour and credit to both—starving upon a bit of a chapel at Chinon; and was starved entirely, when by good luck he cast up with us on board the steam boat;—that's with an English clergyman—God bless him and his!—who gave the poor heart-broken priest share and share alike of his males on the passage, and a cast in his carriage from Chinon to Tours.”

“Was he of La Vendée?” I inquired, wishing to hear more of a person who I foresaw would be thrust upon me.

“Of La Vendée! sure enough, sir. There's some of his story connected with my troubles, for

he keeps up a correspondence in Nenagh to this day; and it was through his kindness I first larnt the decaits of Miss Bailey—that's the chief constable's daughter at Nenagh—who stood five feet six in her stockings, with as portly a step as ever trod on a floor. Ah! it was not on French paving stones she got her paces! But we'll lave her alone for the present, and name no names at all, but poor old Father—The saints be about us, what is the matter? Sure it can't be that my memory's failing me? The man that I know as well as myself, and his name gone clean out of my head."

"It seems rather strange," I replied: "I should take it as a warning to have nothing to do with him."

"Do you think so in ayrnest?" he asked very seriously. "For if it is a warning we're bound to respect it. It's I that have a right not to mock at the same, for it was neglect of a warning that brought me where I am, lost me house and home and caused all my troubles: I'll tell you the story, Major, in less than two minutes. My mother, to begin, was a lady promiscuously."

“Promiscuously!—what can you mean by a lady promiscuously?”

“I mane, Major Melville, by nature and birth, not like one that is made by money or larning, which may be the case with any mechanic. A born lady, such as she; who loved a free horse and a fox chase, and could ride like the wind; so off she canters one day with a first cousin of her own, eldest son of a third sister of her father’s by the second wife, as likely a young fellow as ever trod in shoe-leather, and as bold a huntsman as ever went out with the hounds. But not one brass farthen had they between them, except the horse that they rode, and he got in a present from my mother’s eldest brother, Mr. Richard, for breaking his neck in his stead; or offering to break it, which was much the same thing.”

“Really Bourke you are quite incomprehensible, and I am so anxious to hear more of Amboise.”

“Well sure, I’m spaking plain English as ever was spoken, and a very great pleasure it is, espe-

cially in company with a regular gentleman, who is not despising his fellow creatures for their losses. Besides the comfort of calling in all the old recollections, that are gone out of one's memory long ago. I'll not be five minutes telling what happened."

"How? what happened?"

"O Major, you Scotch are enough to puzzle the Chancellor; as if I was not quite comprehensive, and sailing away like the wind, or a steam-packet. But to explain, my mother's youngest brother—she was not my mother at that time—had a noble fine hunter; you could not match her for beauty, but she had the very deuce of a speret, especially for running away; and Mr. Richard—but this is *entre nous*—was no great things of a rider. So my mother says to my father—and they sweet-hearts at the time, but unknown to themselves, as I verily believe—'Jack,' says she, 'couldn't you stop my brother Dick riding Wildoats? That baste will be the death of the lad.'

"With that my father's heart jumps up in his

mouth—I've heard him tell the story thousands of times—for her will was his law; and he goes straight to the young squire, who no one dare thwart, for he was terribly passionate, and he lays him a wager—there was no other way of daling with the lad—betting the one life that was to run in the lase against Wildoats himself, that he would ride the same horse without whip or spur, and win the fox's brush after all. Not another penny's worth had he to bet, but the lase of the farm and the one life that was to run. However, he thought little of that in comparison of plaising Miss Monica; for, as I said before, her will was his law. So Mr. Richard he laughed, and he closed; adding a condition, that there should be no stirrups.

“Divel a care father cared; there was not such a rider, old or young, in the province of Leinster. And next morning he mounts Wildoats according to agreement—is in at the death according to promise—and home before one of them. Miss Monica herself looking out from the window, and crying ‘Bravo!’ when she sees the brush in his hat. No

other than himself could have it won that day, riding at such odds, without stirrups or spurs. In course he gained the horse, and with it the lady. Not a fortnight elapsed till he had Wildoats well trained, and made a moon-light race of it, as mentioned already, the two cousins together; as handsome a couple as ever went to the priest.

“But, as I have said, they had scarce a farthen between them, and might have been sore pressed for the marriage fee itself, except that Father Fagan had a spite to her father, and being a good-natured man, he joined the young couple in a compliment.

“From that present time, neither father or mother or brothers ever forgave her. To be sure the rack-rent old house was no home for a born lady like my mother, although the blood of Tom Bourke was as good as their own, saving that their mother was third cousin by her father’s side to the Fitzgeralds, a noble fine race; I could tell you of them and their pedigree since the days when poor ould Ireland had kings of her own; and

how Priest Mac Cormack came to be a Bishop through them—he nothing to begin but the son of a cow-herd; they were good as they were knowledgeable—that's the Fitzgeralds;—and when the ould Lord saw Pat counting the stars, and striving night after night to make out their numbers, he conjectured by that, that the boy was a genius. So what does he do but sends him straight to Maynooth; and what he learned there being past comprehension, from less to more he comes to a bishoprick; and that's what my mother thought of for me, only in respect to the Bees."

"For mercy's sake, Bourke," I entreated, "have done with digressions; we shall not reach the end of your story to night; and besides my impatience to get back to Amboise, I have quite lost the thread of the discourse."

"Well, of all the stories that ever I told, this same gets on quickest; sure I've never digressed a step out of the road, except to tell you of Wild-oats, and the wager concerning him, and how my father and mother got married in a compliment,

or about the Fitzgeralds and Bishop Mac Cormack. But to go back to the farm which he held by a lease of three lives, two of which had dropped: the house, as before mentioned, was no place for my mother, she being a lady promiscuously, and brought up like a queen, as were her fathers before her, caring for nothing or nobody except plaising themselves from morning till night. But though she was not rich, she was very happy; for he gave her her way to the hour of her death, and what could she have more in a palace? However, now comes the consequence of neglecting signs, which brings us back to where we began. A fortune-teller foretold, when she was sixteen years old, that her husband should be the handsomest man and the boldest hunter in Leinster; but that he would go out before the birth-day of her first-born child, and that his horse should come home without saddle or bridle. Well, she was young then, poor thing! and she thought more of the handsome man and the bold hunter than she did of the warning; and as John Bourke was both the

one and the other, none else could be laid out for her. So all being ordained, how could she help herself? Not but she fretted, as in duty bound, for the hard-heartedness of her parents, and the insolence of her brothers, looking down, as they did, on their own flesh and blood. However, one day, a month before I was expected, she was walking alone in the bit of a kitchen garden, striving if she could see a few strawberries, poor thing! being used, till that summer, to plenty of fruit. She had on her beaver hat and a big bunch of black feathers. So what should take place but the swarming of a hive, and they lit on her feathers: never a word did she say, or a call did she call, but up with her two hands quite gently to her ears, and walks slow as a snail round the garden; the bees hanging down all about her like a veil, Heaven preserve us! old nurse Kelly standing in the back door looking on, saying nothing or doing nothing, but screeching as if she was murdered. Peggy the dairy girl echoing her again, with little Mick the gossoon. But a better thing could never

have happened, for the bees rose clever and clean off my mother's black hat, and following the noise would have swarmed every one of them on Peggy's red head, only she ran into the chimney. So nothing was talked of all day but the luck of my mother, and the wonderful fortune that must come to her child;—it's to come yet, Major, that same wonderful fortune, and no doubt would have come long before now, only for the sake of one pint of sweet milk. It's a bad thing, as they say in Ireland, to dream of sweet milk, or to spill it, or refuse it to any one. And it's only a wonder to me how a woman of nurse Kelly's experience did not know better: but you shall hear. That very same evening, just before dark, a queer little old woman comes softly to the door and asks for a drink of sweet milk; my mother had lain down with the headache, father was out in the stable, and nurse Kelly—there is no saying what came over the woman—refused her the drink, and bid her be off. Not a word did she utter, but lifts up her stick and shakes it at nurse, hitting the door-sill three times; Peggy

and the gossoon were busy a same time with a kettle and pot beating up for a swarm; she looked over the wall, and never as much as saying ‘God bless your work,’ strides out of the place muttering something which they could swear was a curse: so it turned out, for next day my father rode into Rosscree; not that he had any business at the sessions, or any thing to sell in the market, only it was expected there would be a raction, and his pride was in showing the folk at the big house that he always had time for his pleasure; besides, it killed Mr. Richard to see him on Wildoats; but he paid dear, as we all did, for that satisfaction. A more unlucky ride could not have been taken, for, to make good the prophecy, home comes his horse without saddle or bridle, galloping and snorting the way mother should hear him.

“Hear him she did, poor delicate creature! The pains of childbirth came on, and myself, born of a misfortune, came into this weary world at the very same hour that her gentle spirit left it for a better. Mortal eye in the parish never set

eyes on that same old woman, and it's long before my father spoke a word to nurse Kelly; only for her care and her tenderness to myself he would have been the death of her often, for trouble and losses fell on the house. He took to the bottle for comfort; and was often beside himself, unfortunate man!"

"I thought that your father was to have died by that fall from his horse. It was exceedingly unkind of the seer not to explain things more clearly."

"Death was to come of it, Major Melville," said Bourke very seriously, "and so it did; you'll mind that the fortune-teller did not name day or date, but she said what was true for all that.

"The spade of the Sexton should not be long idle,
When the Hunter came home without saddle or bridle."

He only got off to tighten the girths, when Wild-oats made a bound out of his hand, and dashed home over hedge and ditch. Father's time was not come, nor did it come for seventeen years. But he never did good from that day of doom, and before I was eight years old you might have

counted him eighty, going off by degrees like the snuff of a candle. It was on my nineteenth birthday that he drew his last breath. So much, Major Melville, for neglecting warnings."

Astonished at the seriousness of his aspect, I inquired if it were possible that a man of his apparent good sense and experience of the world could possibly retain such idle superstitions, believe in the power of a wretched old beggar woman, or imagine that the control of life and death, good and evil, are transferred by an all-wise, just, and merciful Creator into the hands of poor sinning mortals.

"We don't know if the old woman was mortal," he replied with a sort of a shudder, "and it's not good to be doubting any thing. A curse is a curse let it come whence it may, and brings death and destruction to many a door—a warning is a warning. I cannot remember the decent old Vendean clergyman by name, and may be so best, only he was a good-hearted, grateful-minded creature, and had no more thought for self-interest than the

baby unborn, or the father before me, who had pride enough to hinder him making up with poor mother's unnatural parents, although they repented after her death, and would have given her the grandest funeral in the county, if he had taken it from them; and they would have brought me home to their own place, and put me to college, only he would not demean himself to owe them that much; but sold the two cows to buy Nora Creina, the way I might ride out with the hounds to prove my independence, whereby he lost house and land, and may be his life. If you had seen him on the deck of the steam packet, as I did!"

"Your father in the steam packet!"

"Lord! no, sir, but the Priest: surely father died before ever I left the place; shortly after, all he possessed was carted for three years rent, the two horses and every thing, proving that Wildoats was his death in the end, for from the day and hour he saw that glorious baste go out of the yard, his heart died within him. One and twenty years old was the noble hunter that day, and not much

the worse for the wear. My father left me his blessing—he had nothing else then—on condition that I would never exchange one civil word with the new owners of Wildoats; and no more I did, nor ever forfeited his blessing, thanks be to God and Father Phelim O'Donahoe, who spirited me up when my pride was giving in. His sister's son is settled in the farm, and I'm told it's a prosperous place. But though the old grandfather would have left it to me, I preferred travelling with my own father's legacy, rather than staying in Ireland without it. And that's what brought me to France, and made me throw up the ensigncy, which Colonel Bourke promised I should have in the Mayo Militia, the farm, you know, being a qualification. Oh, Major Melville! it's the Vendean Priest could tell you of signs, and wonders, and events that were foretold in the troublesome times. Poor old gentleman! I wish you could have seen him standing, as I did, his arms crossed on his bosom, tall, spare, and bent by age and misfortune. It's not yourself would have doubted him. Clean and decent he was

withal ; his pale face calm as the slow-moving river, and the black gown of him threadbare and patched. 'Twas the month of November, sir, the deck frozen over, every one on board eating and drinking, and keeping the life in them with coffee or soup, and plenty of clothing. But there he stood upon deck, while others went down, the cold wind cutting through him, neglected by all, and jeered at by some—for the worst sign of the times we live in is disrespect for the cloth, Major—until the state cabin passengers came up from their dinner. There were three clergymen present, a Dean and his coadjutor, with a lusty young priest as red as a parrot. They took no more notice than if he was a dog, Jesuits every soul of them ; till the gentleman in whose company I travelled at that time, a Protestant clergyman, happening to spy him, asked of the captain why he was not at dinner ?

“ ‘ Because,’ said the scoffer, ‘ he’s under the penance of poverty. Monsieur le Curé has paid but half price for his passage. I cannot afford to give him his nourishment likewise.’

“ Well, sir, Mr. Jessop goes straight to the steerage, and falls into talk with the priest. From less to more they soon got acquainted, and the former calls for spiced wine, and we gave him share of our coffee before leaving the boat. Some shrugged their shoulders, and others cried ‘ Bah !’ But Mr. Jessop said he was much the best of the party, and that he told him a great deal of the war in La Vendée, pointing at the most remarkable places as we sailed up the Loire. It was a tedious sail, Major, from Nantes to Angers; not worth the time at that season of the year. As for the vineyards, they’re no better looking than withered potatoe-fields; and the banks of the river entirely tame, except here and there a battered old castle, or a ruined convent; all mighty sad, till you come up to Saumur. The bridge and the castle is there pretty well. But commend me to the green hills of Old Ireland! and the bright sparkling rivers, or the ancient oak trees of Old England, let to grow to their natural size; and the evergreens, and shady lanes, and white cottages, with their

tidy paddocks, and nice curling smoke in the evenings, putting a man in mind of his own fire-side. The fine noble parks kept like so many gardens; and the teeming cattle up to their eyes in the choicest of grass, browsing at freedom, or bathing in the rivers;—not one poor solitary baste, like a babby in leading strings, turning out for an hour's walk with its nurse by its side;—and the spanking fine horses, bowling-roads, and mail-coaches! Well, after all, there's no country like England or Ireland either on the face of the globe. More shame to them that quits one or the other!"

"May I ask, Master Bourke, why you follow so pernicious an example?"

"Oh! as to me, sir, it's a different matter. I bring nothing out of it, excepting my poverty, of which there's plenty remaining, though I never went home; and for staying here, now that I'm in it, use is second nature, one very bad consequence of coming abroad. England again, though the first of all places to live in, provided one has money to pay for the luxury, is not without its

drawbacks to a man of gentility and education like myself, who runs short. Sure there's a root in old England that every mother's son commits idolatry with, and that's 'the root of all evil;' worst luck i' the end to them or their children, they may depend on it. But here I am, Major Melville, keeping you up, and forgetting the hour; and I have not been in bed for two nights myself."

"Forgetting what brought us to Blois, my friend. Be so good as begin once more at the beginning, and without any diversions inform me at once of the plan of proceedings. What do we gain by this visit to Angers?—and when am I to see you again?"

"I can tell neither one nor the other, until I have been at Angers myself. My direction to the nurse there is our only clue at present: I got her address by going to Amboise, and the Holy Virgin alone knows to what she may lead. If we could make sure of the child, would it not be something?"

"It would be everything, for I trust that the

child might lead to the mother. You start early to-morrow?"

"Yes; and please the saints, shall meet you at Tours. The Hôtel d'Angleterre is a very good house; you can spend a few days there comfortably enough, and keep André in sight till my return. It would not do at all were he to slip to Angers."

I exclaimed against a few days, and he promised, if possible, to join me in two; but, at the same time, begged not to be hurried, as caution was everything in so delicate a business; "and you know, sir," he added, "that when once a man finds himself caught in a labyrinth, if he don't wind and wind out of it, he'll lose himself entirely. I could tell you a droll story of a labyrinth, Major."

"Not till you have had a night's rest, Master Bourke, so away to your bed, and for Angers betimes. This is Saturday evening. I shall expect you on Monday at Tours."

CHAPTER XXIX.

ARRIVED at Tours, set down at the Hôtel d'Angleterre, obliged to keep André in sight, lest he should, as Bourke said, "slip to Angers unknownst," and counteract our plans; not daring to stir an inch, lest I should do mischief; I felt very much out of sorts for three days. It did not at all help the matter that I had to suffer the tortures of suspense, added to those of sight-seeing in company with my self-inflicted guide, who lost no opportunity of displaying his zeal, or his fitness for the office of a Cicerone.

We ascertained the exact length of the Rue Royale, from the far-famed bridge of forty arches

to the Barrier of Bourdeaux, with as much accuracy as if the ground was never trodden before. We penetrated the dark Cemetery of St. Martin, walked beneath the Tower of Charlemagne, sauntered round the promenades, heard a military band in the Cathedral, examined the excavated cellars of Louis the Eleventh; nor forgot the Prison Palace of that royal tyrant.

Although Plessis, as it now stands, with little more to recommend it, even as a ruin, than one melancholy tower and the remains of a few dismal dungeons, presents nothing picturesque in its site or venerable in its decay; still, who would be at Tours and not visit Plessis?—a place forgotten in the lapse of centuries; but for which, in later days, the wand of the Enchanter has created an undying interest. Led thither by feeling, rather than curiosity, I explored the prison chamber of the royal Charles, and looked into its fearful *oubliettes*, “a sad memento of a savage heart.” Thankful that such power was no longer possessed by kings, and praying, with some misgivings, *that it might*

never be usurped by any democratical assembly, I stood in the neglected garden and dilapidated courts of that once gorgeous residence, filled with increased admiration of *his* resuscitating touch, who possessed the magic power of restoring to life, to light, to beauty, in all their pristine vigour, the stirring scenes and busy actors of former ages. I leant against the scathed and gnarled oak, which tradition points out as having served the purpose of a gallows; nor did its leafless branches, like the withered arms of death, nor the sterile ground beneath them, contradict their melancholy history. Not a soul was visible, yet the breathings of a multitude seemed to float around us. The music of the clarion, the clangour of arms, the rattling of chains, the voices of Oliver, of Quentin Durward, sounded in our ears. Never did the genius of Walter Scott exert a more delightful influence over the mind, never lead to reflections more salutary. It carried me back to scenes of usefulness; it filled me with patriotism. Proud of owing my birth to the same soil whence

emanated that genius, pictures of Caledonia, true as they were gratifying, presented themselves to my recollection.

“ While home scenes pass'd before the Exile's eye,
Pure as the retrospects of infancy.”

Dandie of Liddesdale, whistling his harriers over the heathery hills; Dandie Dinmont, a representation of every thing excellent and elevating in human nature; one of a thousand characters equally well drawn, equally natural,

“ Brought back the wanderer, who too soon forgets
His purer feelings with his home regrets.”

The brown moors and sparkling rivers of my native land rose before me with an impression so vivid that I could have imagined familiar sounds to fill all space, and the barking of Pepper and Mustard to answer their master's call.

But my companion took care that such reveries should not be long enjoyed. The accents of the Frenchman dispelled the barking of the dogs, reminding me that dinner would be waiting, and probably spoiled; and obliging me to exchange

the imaginary freshness of the pure northern breeze for the rich *fumets* of a southern *cuisine*.

There was no sign of Bourke that evening, neither the next day; and my observant *Cicerone*, seeing that I took little delight in the lions of Tours, proposed that we should ride to Chanonsone; adding that he could procure me a good horse, and an English saddle. To this proposal I readily agreed; it being the most eligible plan by which I could keep him in view, without chance of awkward rencounters with any old acquaintances, which I especially wished to avoid at the time. A saddle-horse was also a temptation to a man tired to death of being pent up in a close carriage, with the never-ceasing egotism of a companion who had already exhausted my patience. Indeed, the more I knew of André the more I disliked him. Querulous as busy; gay one moment, dissatisfied the next; always selfish, mean, and distrustful, I longed for the hour which might rid me of his presence. On the other hand experience seemed to warrant the good opinion that I had so hastily formed of my Irish

adjunct; who, though shrewd and observant, was still full of confidence in his fellow-creatures; and who, seeing every thing under the influence of his own happy temper, kept me, when we met, in good humour with himself, and all the world beside.

But the self-infliction of such companionship was a small tribute of service to Mary Trevillion; and I strictly adhered to the injunctions of Bourke, by keeping André about me so late at night, and so early in the morning, that it was quite impossible he could find out the movements of the latter, or “slip to Angers unknownst;” nor was it until the morning of our intended ride to Chanonsone that I detected any thing suspicious in his conduct. But, upon this occasion, he certainly had his own plans in view, and was determined we should sleep at Amboise; which I as determinedly opposed. Upon which he had recourse to expedients; such as purposely delaying the horses, and neglecting to have our passports altered in time, then making a two hours’ business of what any one could do in ten minutes.

By means of all this contrivance, it was very late when we set forth; yet not sufficiently so to render the staying out at night absolutely imperative. He, however, insisted on carrying a small *valise*, containing some dressing articles, in case of accidental detention; and when we had ridden about two English miles out of the city, he suddenly reined in his horse, searched his pockets hastily, and uttered a thousand exclamations of vexation, and sundry accusations against himself. At last it came out that the passport was forgotten, that he had left it on the table in his haste. Ten minutes would suffice for its recovery; if I would only ride on at a moderate pace, he would overtake me immediately."

So saying, and scarcely waiting my reply, he flew off at full gallop. It was now past one o'clock. I determined not to be the dupe of his schemes; and, when he had ridden out of sight, followed him slowly, in the direction of Tours. I had nearly reached the bridge, when he came posting towards me at the utmost vigour of speed.

I heard the exclamation "*Sacré*" escape him as he pulled up his horse, and marked the extreme chagrin expressed in his looks.

"The passport must do another day, Monsieur André," I said; "it is now much too late for our expedition to commence. So in lieu of Chanonsone we will e'en take a breathing along the Saumur road."

Having no choice, he was forced to acquiesce, and, though with evident reluctance, faced about to the left, when a man riding full gallop over the bridge, caused me to pause for a moment. He was mounted on an excellent roadster, and I instantly recognized Bourke.

He saw me also, and at the same time who rode beside me. Therefore, without taking any notice or slackening his speed, he crossed at the *barrière* and proceeded up the opposite hill.

I had now reason to congratulate myself on my retrograde movement, and shortening my ride, returned home in the course of an hour, to wait,

with what patience I might, for the much-desired colloquy with my indefatigable envoy.

But though André went out for some errand of his own, promising to return in an hour, that hour—the longest I ever passed—had gone the circuit of the pendule, before a low knocking at a chamber door, which communicated with mine, gave notice of the neighbourhood and vigilance of Bourke.

“ Sir,” said he, cautiously protruding his head, “ you must get rid of Monsieur André for a short time this evening. Treat him to the *comédie*, but bid him return at supper time. Oh, Major Melville ! ’tis I who have prospered, ’tis I that have something to tell. There’s nothing like going upon one’s own business. Here was the poor lady’s husband living in Tours, in the very thick of the plot, in the heart of the mischief, and he knowing no more than the man in the moon ! Here was his sister, by your account, breaking her heart, and spending her money all to no purpose, bribing a set of rogues who were

laughing in their sleeves, and paying her off with lies and inventions. Here were they both, within twelve leagues of Saumur, never dreaming or thinking that the poor dear decaived crature, who had her senses may be as well as themselves, was shut up for a maniac in that villanous den, called '*L'Hospice de la Providence.*' Her babby torn from her and sent divel knows where, with some of his Majesty's subjects and co-partners to be sure. You would'nt believe that I have seen Louise, the pretty little girl from Derval—you would not believe that I know all about the babby, dear darling child!—and who it is in charge with. But there's not a moment at present to tell you a word. André will be in, and if he was to see me all the game would be up. Well! if that's not a rogue!—I have him, however, 'cute as he thinks himself. Thanks to my bit of a cabinet, and to the crowded hôtel that had not a better room disengaged; look at it, Major, is it not the very moral of an eavesdropper?"

"Run off," I said, "to some other hôtel; the

Pheasant for instance. Hire a room at any expense, I cannot wait till evening,—I will join you immediately if you run down to the Pheasant.”

“No, sir, with your leave, we’ll stay quietly here. This shark of an artist might track us to the Pheasant. Besides tisn’t safe to be laving this room—I’ll explain all in the evening. The *comédie* is early, and André, I am sure, will be glad to go out. Meanwhile I’ll take a stretch on my bit of a bed: you’ll just knock me up when the coast is quite clear.”

Bourke had indeed crammed himself into the smallest possible space: a very little bed took up half the little chamber, one chair and a washing stand occupied the other. His dressing-glass hung against the wall. But, as he said, “it was mighty convenient,” having one door of communication with my spacious apartment, and another by which he could get out on the lobby.

I will not attempt to describe my impatience until dinner was served: it was at length eaten, and Maurice André fairly off to the *comédie*. He

had proposed this resource *pour passer le temps* every evening, at every place where we stopped; but as I wished to remain unrecognized by any chance travellers, his suggestions were thrown out to no purpose. On the present occasion I pleaded having letters to write, and begged he would amuse himself his own way.

“We will bolt the door, if you please,” said Bourke when I joined him. “I have watched the movements of Monsieur André to some purpose this morning. But it would be all labour thrown away if he saw me with you. But all in rotation is the only fair way of telling a story. You remember, Major Melville, that we parted at Blois.”

“Certainly, but what of the unhappy Lady Trevillion; tell me, I beg of you, if she is a maniac at Saumur?”

“No, not now, as I know of, but ’tis a question easier put than answered. In short, sir, ’tis from travelling along with me you can form a judgment. My tale’s not so clear that a glance can show it all. And interruptions, begging pardon,

in the way of questions, delay the conclusion considerably, just as stopping to take up passengers retards the progress of a coach ; and that's one reason, Major Melville, that I don't like public conveyances."

"Let's back to Blois then," I cried, "and not a question will I ask ; but if you digress, it will be utterly impossible to restrain my impatience."

"In troth I believe you, sir, though, speaking generally, the natives of your country let themselves out less than the natives of mine. You would be surprised to hear me reckoned a talker ; that is, one that did talk before trouble and sorrow tied up my tongue. It is no harm, however, to be a little out-spoken, if what one says makes no mischief ; for pent-up sorrow is the worst of all sorrow, and preys most upon the health as well as the spirits. I must have died of the poor girl in Ireland, when her decait came to my knowledge, only for Lieutenant Dixon of the Connaught Rangers. He was at our hôtel, and had troubles of his own : so being a Tipperary lad, and an officer to boot, we

used to make our confessions no secrets, and much good did they do us, and a great consolation they were."

"For pity's sake," I exclaimed, "let us go back to Blois! I am perfectly satisfied with that retrograde movement; but if you diverge to Paris, André will be home from the *comédie*."

"Not at all, sir; not at all. Lieutenant Dixon takes me to Blois. He has a mother and sister living in the town; and I had a sight of them before I left it. Very nice ladies both—Irish born—Milesians by the mother's side, Mrs. Dixon being a Miss Mac Namara—real royalty every drop in their veins. I've a rason for speaking about them, which you shall hear in due course. But, to begin at the beginning, I had half-an-hour's law of the *diligence*; and they coming into my head, up I runs to their lodging on the top of the hill, where they made very much of me, though I was a stranger—sure sign how kind they felt towards their relation; for nothing's so true, though it's a worn-out saying, as 'Love me love my dog.'

And, by the by, this puts me in mind—had Lady Trevillion a maid called Celeste? I remembered the names of the girls at Derval, Catherine and Louise; but I never heard you tell of that same lady's maid."

"No matter; go on. What have you heard of her?"

"A good deal, sir, St. Mary be praised! And a sweet pretty girl she is. Not Celeste, poor unfortunate crathur! but this little Louise. What puts me in mind of 'Love me love my dog' is the great regard this same Louise has for a carrier-pigeon, which she gave the lady's little boy when he was staying at her father's, and which the poor child left behind him at Nantes. Well, there might be some excuse for taking off the lady; but the innocent child—holy saints be about us!—meddling with what was not their own! But, to go back to Louise, she knows this Celeste, who, it seems, is as great a villain as the other men; only she repented in a sort of way, and made a bit of a confession. But, as I say, what's the good of re-

penitance after the sin is committed: if she had done so before, it might have been of some use. Think of her being all along a confederate with the Irish Confessor! However, she told a good deal. And guess who it was to? Why, to no other living than to old Father Gregory at Chinon. Louise minded me of his name: sure sign there's luck to come of that girl."

"But did he repeat what she told him? Was it possible for a priest to betray a confession?"

"May be we've no occasion to ask him the favour; may be Louise was beforehand in hearing it all. But I'm not come to her yet, nor to Amboise, nor Angers; and there's no making head or tail of a story, unless after a straightforward fashion. You have the patience of Job, Major; and, only for interrupting me in the commencement, we should have been at La Valière before now: but that will come in time.

"It was quite by a chance that I saw Louise; for the old woman at Amboise was a premeditatrix—she, as I told you, who gave me the direction

to Angers. However, to make a long story short, I posted to Angers, and put up my quarters at a second-rate inn. It was late when I got there, and a good-looking young woman was waiting me up ; not me in particular, but any chance traveller. By good luck, there were none but myself ; so I ordered supper, the best in the place, by way of prolonging conversation, and inducing civility. So we fell into talk ; and, by one thing and another,—making believe to know what I wanted to hear,—this girl at last came round to the point I was aiming at, and told me that one Madame Clement, who lived near La Valière, and whose husband was steward at the Chateau de St. Aubin, had been to Angers a few days before, to take charge of a little girl that arrived there from Paris. This woman, Madame Clement, had not come to their house, but had hired a horse from them, her own being lamed. I did not let on to her that I wanted to go there, or speak as if I had any interest in the matter ; but, getting up in the morning, I provided myself with a pony, and inquired my way to St. Aubin.

“ Well, Major, I did not come quite so straight as you may suppose; for there was no child at all with the steward or his wife—at least no one about the place knew of any child, male or female, having come to their house. But Madame Clement had been away for two days; and it was easy to guess the cause of her journey: the child must be somewhere. I debated with myself whether I would go to the steward’s house or not, or what I should say when I got there. But I had a great notion to do it; and bethought me of an errand, riding along. So I prayed to blessed St. Peter again and again, for it was his holy day into the bargain. A light heart and a hard gallop I had, through as rich a country, and as promising a harvest, as if I was on the banks of the Shannon, God be with it! Every thing smiling, and promising fairly. After all, there’s nothing speeds a journey so well as fine weather and sunshine—especially in a fine country. It’s worse than heresy, begging your pardon, sir, not to believe that there’s a blessing in all things.

“ Well, it was the afternoon when I reached my destination, for the road was much longer than I had supposed ; and when at last I sees the house, my courage was cooled. But my heart rose up again : I felt as if the power of the keys was upon me ; so, in the name of the same blessed saint, I made up my mind to ask boldly for Monsieur Clement. He was within, and so was his wife. They looked strange enough ; but I spoke them so civil, and so like themselves, that they came to after a minute ; for I inquired, in the friendliest manner you can imagine, for Alphonse de Clement, their relation, and said I would rather see him again on the face of the earth, than any other friend in the world. They knew nothing of Alphonse—no blame to them for that ; but were pleased that I tacked the *de* to their name, and boasted enough of brave soldiers and officers bearing the same—their relations, of course. I, to be sure, was very much disappointed, having ridden so far out of my way for no other purpose but to see my best friend, who had been so kind to me on

many occasions, and who, I was told, lived at St. Aubin. The old man and his wife were chatty enough; so I made a remark on the Chateau, and asked if the Count lived at home, with a few more leading questions concerning the family. But here their mouths closed, not a word would they speak; and I should have come off as wise as I went, only for a young girl who sat present by. This, you may guess, was Louise; who, though she never looked up, nor seemed to mind me, thinking of nothing but petting her dove, lost not a word of what was going on, and was all the time paying attention: for when I got up to take leave, and that her uncle, old Clement, asked me to stop, and take something, she seconded his hospitality with so inviting a look, that I dropped down on my chair as if at the command of an angel.

“Such eyes! Major Melville. It’s them that can speak. But you shall see her yourself. She’s good as she’s pretty, and willing to serve us. The day’s not done yet, thinks I to myself; and who knows what’s to come before the clock strikes mid-

night? so thanking the old man for his consideration, and confessing myself both hungry and thirsty, I e'en kept my seat. He left the room for some wine; his wife followed after. When both were out of hearing, Louise looks up, and, in a quick low voice, inquired, 'if I was English?'

" 'I'm a subject of Great Britain, Mademoiselle,' was my answer. 'But Irish born, and much at your service.'

" 'Do you come from England?' she asked me again.

" 'What do you know of England?' I made answer.

" 'I wish,' said she, in reply, 'that I were really certain of what brought you here.'

" 'Had you condescended, Mademoiselle, to bestow half the attention on me that you do on that bird, there would be no need to inquire my errand to these parts.'

" 'I have attended to you particularly, Monsieur,' she said, looking rather arch, 'and hope to be excused for what may seem impertinent; but it ap-

pears to me that you are somewhat more interested about the Chateau de St. Aubin than about your friend Alphonse de Clement. Should this be the case, say so to me. I will not evade the subject as my uncle did; he is on his guard; you'll get nothing from him; I see that he suspects you already.'

"You may believe there was no doubting Louise, especially in such a case as mine; and, when fixing her large eyes again on my face, they seemed to say, as plain as tongue could speak, that there was no use on earth in denying the truth.

"I felt queer enough when making my confession, which was done in a way the most guarded; though it was not in the nature of things to believe, that a creature so beautiful should be made to deceive, or that the signs of the morning should not be read before night.

"No more did she deceive, and in the short time that we were left alone, I found out that she has both the will and the way to serve our turn. Oh, sir! it is she that has the kind heart. A heart

worth the gaining: if once touched, you may trust it for ever. She is coming here to-morrow on a visit to a friend, who lives in the Rue de Commerce. We shall then have all particulars. For the present she had only a few minutes time, while Madame, her aunt, was getting the supper; and all we know yet is, that Louise has some papers, I believe written by Lady Trevillion herself; that she heard a good deal from Celeste; that the poor lady was taken a maniac to L'Hospice de la Providence, and that the little girl of the Rue des Postes is her child. Madame, the lace-mender, came only so far as Angers, and gave up the child to Madame Clement, who took it over the water, where it is to stay until Sir Charles Trevillion is safe off for Rome, when Madame Bellenger's brother, our scamp of an artist, is to carry it back to Paris again. These people know everything; but I hope they do not know us. We must not, however, let the grass grow under our feet, for there is a spy on the premises. Monsieur André, however, is caught in a trap."

I begged he would tell me his meaning.

“ I mean,” he continued, “ that one saint’s day is as lucky as another. May they be our guidance ! Monsieur André is neither more nor less, at this present moment, than a thief and a robber : no later than a few hours ago he was caught in the fact of committing an assault on your writing-desk. Just after you set off for Chanonsone I came into the yard here, and hearing some of the stable-boys speak of your route, guessed, by the lateness of the hour, that you meant to sleep at Amboise. Thinks I to myself, this will not do ; so choosing a fresh horse, I came up, first and foremost, to the hole of a room, which having secured, and changed my apparel, whose voice should I hear, talking at all rates, and saying he had rode back for the forgotten passport, than that of your precious sketching-master. I, of course, kept close in my crib, saying nothing to nobody, until the fellow shuts himself up in this room, opens drawer after drawer, locking and unlocking in a violent hurry ; so there being but a temporary partition between us, with two or three loop-holes very temptingly placed,

I thought it no harm to make use of my eyes, the ears being already engaged in your service; and, would you believe it?—what should I see but André in the act of opening your writing-desk with two or three skeleton-keys on the table. ‘It isn’t much knowledge you’ll gain by your tricks,’ says I to myself, as he tossed over the letters, ‘for the Major’s correspondents are not like to be French.’ But no matter for that; he selects what he wants, locks up the desk, and hastens down stairs, confirming a suspicion I have often entertained, that these sort of folk, foreign servants and couriers, understand more of English than they choose to avow. I mounted my horse as he mounted his, and followed him down the Rue Royale. We passed unsuspected, as you know, at the bridge; and seeing that the Chanonsone ride was relinquished, I returned to my post, got a morsel of dinner, and ensconced myself again in my hole of a hiding-place. You came home: André went out. I followed him instantly, and dodged him until he reached a certain street, and

until he entered the poverty-struck lodging of a language master—some half-starving devil, who is ready for any job. Well, two or three tailors were working on the same floor, and I stayed looking at waistcoats until André departed. I then pounced on the little scholar at his task, that of translating your correspondence, and putting the English letters into French, which, in his vain eagerness to hide that he worked with a dictionary, were left open for my edification. I pretended to want some lessons in Italian, of which, by the bye, he don't know a word, and gained a few moments to glance at the papers; when perfectly satisfied that they were yours, I hastened away lest our artist should return."

"Should we not commit him at once for a robbery?" I said: "but let us first examine the writing-desk."

Mary Trevillion's manuscript I knew was not in it, or else I should not have waited so quietly; but there were several letters from Lucy and others, with Mary's memorandum, and references to persons

both at Tours and at Nantes. There were quite enough to give André all the information he wanted, with power to frustrate my plans and proceedings. I therefore recommended his immediate detention as a measure of security, until we should confer with Louise. But Bourke was of a different opinion. He contended, that if we had recourse to the civil authorities, all our power over André would be at an end. That, though there were no better police in the world, nor no more efficient magistrates than at that time in France; still, when law or justice was required by Englishmen, John Bull had small chance of an impartial verdict. "Besides," he continued, "the church has to do in this matter, or rather the Jesuits; and André, as their agent, is sure of protection. If it was murder, Major Melville, instead of robbery, he would be got out of the scrape in some way or other. They could turn the tables as easy as whistle. May be it's myself would be strung up in his place. The only thing for us is to see Louise first—perhaps secure the child; and, if we cannot do without

André in the case of the lady, then tax him ourselves, and frighten his life out."

"In other words, Master Bourke, extort a confession; for it would be rather unchristian to send him off the stage under such a weight of crime as he carries about him, without one moment's time for benefit of clergy."

"It would, indeed, be unchristian in one sense, for the poor wretch might be writhing long enough in his doom of expiation before all belonging to him could raise a sum sufficient to pay his way out. Louise will not be here until late in the evening. You will have time to ride to Chanonsone early tomorrow; it is a curious old place, well worth the seeing; besides, we must evade the suspicions of André by not giving up the excursion, and kill our two birds by keeping him in sight. Do, Major Melville, be guided by me. I have pretty good experience of this people now. The only way to manage is to catch them in their toils; and if we see them watching us, to watch them more closely, but appear, all the while, to take their palaver for gospel."

“ I have heard, Master Bourke, of Irish invention ; but, however ingenious the system may be, for myself I should prefer a more straightforward course.”

“ As to invention, sir,” said Bourke, rather piqued, “ you must know before this, that it’s the child of necessity ; and where, may I ask, is there any parent so prolific as Ireland ! It’s from the hand to the mouth with most of her offspring ; and neither one nor the other can afford time to be stopping for trifles.”

“ Say rather, to hesitate between invention and facts ; because the one may afford an immediate resource, the other a distant security, and because the reciprocal sympathy between these two members must be carried on at all hazards. A nation of bulls is not a misnomer, where the shortest way to gain an end, is by means of a circumbendibus.”

“ Oh, it’s very fine talking, sir, of circumbendibuses and straightforward courses, but you forget, at this moment, that we’re not in old England, where in nine cases out of ten the law does its

duty. There, *as yet*, there are no hidden places like monasteries or asylums, where the arm of justice can't reach at all hours. But show me one chance in this country, if we go thwarting the church. None upon earth but loss and disappointment. The poor lady, should she live, would be hid ten fathoms deep; her child crammed into some dungeon of a convent. Is not there Italy open, if France couldn't hide them? They would be over the frontier before André's warrant was issued. Let us go on, Major, as we have begun; there's nothing worse in the world than slipping the course of events, or quarrelling with one's bread and butter before it is spread."

"At all events, Bourke, I shall not quarrel with you, for your zeal and activity deserves my best thanks; Louise, you say, will be here to-morrow evening, and ready to see me in the Rue de Commerce?"

"Yes; there's no fear of her, if there's truth in a woman. I will be in waiting at number two hundred—no occasion to make any inquiry at all—

by eight o'clock in the evening, you will find me as I say ; and now, sir, good night. André will be in from the *comédie*, give him some Scotch letter to put in the post. Say in it, that you have given up all hope of finding Lady Trevillion ; we must play him off for a day or two longer, until we know what is come of the inmate in L'Hospice de la Providence. Poor lady ! it's like enough that her senses are gone."

I shared the fears of my companion, and felt more anxious than ever for the recovery of this interesting being. As yet, in so short a time, my enterprise had prospered beyond my expectations. Louise having known something of Celeste, and being so providentially connected with the steward at St. Aubin, gave every hope of success ; if, indeed, the unfortunate Clotilde and her son were not shrouded from all discovery in the awful darkness of the grave.

Ten o'clock struck. The vaudeville was over. Bourke hastened down stairs to his supper. I prepared my Scotch letter, which was finished and

sealed when André came in. We talked of the comédie and indifferent matters; arranged for a very early ride in the morning, and I got rid of his loquacity by retiring to bed.

CHAPTER XXX.

CHANONSONE, at present possessed by the Vis-comte de Villeneuf, well known as a luxurious residence of Marie de Medecis, and fortunate as having escaped spoliation during the levelling period of the revolutionary madness, presents one of the most interesting locales near Tours, being a perfect specimen of the olden time. The ride thence through a richly wooded plain, bounded right and left by two beautiful rivers, is varied on one side by magnificent reaches of the Loire, on the other by occasional vistas reaching to the Cher. While the castle itself, embracing both banks of that deep though silent river, and principally erected on arches which span its width, containing

kitchens and oublettes opening into the water, and possessing antique and gorgeous furniture in the highest state of preservation, afford much more curious and gratifying objects of admiration, than the desecrated churches of Tours, transformed, most of them, into warehouses, smithies, or carriers' yards.

But Chanonsone, abounding in local beauty and historical remains, failed to create the interest it must otherwise have done, had my mind been less preoccupied, and I returned to the *Hôtel d'Angleterre* in the Rue Royale at Tours, thinking much more of Louise Garsin than of Marie de Medecis.

I found, on entering my apartments, that I was no longer incognito. Mr. Innes, a countryman, had espied me on horseback, and left his card in my rooms with an invitation to dinner. It was too late to avail myself of it, but I was beginning to feel the want of a companion such as Innes, and of a counsellor, less fond of roundabout paths, than my very ealous but too sanguine *attaché*, Harry Bourke.

At nine o'clock to the moment I kept my appointment; but having to blind André, I called first on Innes. True to his post I met my trusty Bourke. We ascended together the wide public stair of what had once been a splendid hôtel, and in a *chambre particulière* found the interesting Louise, whose admiration of Mademoiselle Trevillion rendered her still more charming to me.

Bourke, looking rather unhappy, left us alone, though I suspect he had had his previous *tête-à-tête*. Louise was intelligent, and expressed herself willing to tell me all she knew, now that there was a safe opportunity. Two priests had come to Derval about twelve months before, putting the whole family under an interdict of silence. The church, they said, had taken up the affair, and could allow of no secular interference. Therefore it was that she had not dared to answer Miss Trevillion's letters, or venture any information, except once in the case of Celeste, which had failed, as Mademoiselle was not at Tours at the time, and Louise, afraid of compromising her parents, had abided by

the restriction ever since. The little girl brought from Paris by its nurse, and given in care to Madame Clement, she now knew to be the daughter of Lady Trevillion. It was in charge, for the present, with persons she named, at the south bank of the Loire ; but these persons, she was sure, knew nothing of its parentage. I then questioned her on the touching subject of L'Hospice de la Providence, but she knew only so far as had dropped from Celeste.

“About ten months ago,” continued Louise, “I went with my sister, at that time a bride, to her house in the neighbourhood of Chinon ; we there recognized Celeste, looking wretchedly ill ; she was shortly after laid up in a fever : I went to see her. She talked a great deal, and said many things in her ravings that went to my heart. It was on that occasion I wrote to Mademoiselle, but she was gone to Germany ; and the letter, which merely desired her presence at Chinon, being returned, I durst not, as I have said, write to her again. But let what might be the hazard, I took

down in writing much that fell from Celeste, and have that paper in safety at Derval. I sent for the *curé*, an excellent man, who confessed her, and got from her a packet, which she told me was written by her Lady, and left behind when she went to L'Hospice de la Providence at Saumur. This packet is still in possession of Le Père Gregoire. He has promised to give it me whenever I claim it; I mean to do so on Thursday: it is sealed, and marked for me—was sealed before I saw it. You, sir, can make what use of it you please. I have not dared to examine the contents. We know Celeste is dead, for the wretched woman, when she recovered her fever, wandered away no one knew whither, and a body being found in the river near Amboise, we are sure, by the description, that it was that miserable creature. Monsieur Bourke is coming to Derval, he shall then have the paper I told you of, but to send any packet here would be out of my power."

"But can you not now," I said, "remember the contents? Can you not give me some clue to discover this poor lady, who, whether maniac or

not, deserves our pity, and every exertion which it is in our power to make?"

"I would that I could!" she cried, bursting into tears. "But I have promised my mother not to open my lips. The papers, Monsieur, are none of my property. They belong, I feel certain, to Mademoiselle Trevillion—I wish to get rid of them. They are not safe to keep, my parents and friends may be endangered; I will give them up to Monsieur Bourke; and as for the packet in charge of Le Père Gregoire, I wish it were also safe in your keeping. I durst not demand it till there was some one to take it. We return to Chinon to morrow afternoon; next day, if Monsieur Bourke waits where I told him, he shall receive it from me."

"O Louise!" I said, "it is a dreadful long waiting: as you have broken the ice, why not tell me more?—why not say if Lady Trevillion is a maniac or not?"

"I have said little or nothing of Lady Trevillion," replied Louise, "I am interdicted from speaking of her; nor indeed, Monsieur, have I

any thing to say. Celeste did rave of L'Hospice at Saumur, but Madame, I should think, was not long confined there."

"And William!—Dear Louise! is there nothing of that child? He whom you loved and played with at Derval. Did not Celeste tell you if he lived?"

"The papers will tell you," she said, again bursting into tears. "But ask me no more, I have done wrong already; I have disobeyed my mother; I may bring down the arm of the church on our house; and now, sir, good night, my sister will return, she will not like to see a stranger. Do not think me unkind—do not let Mademoiselle hate me—I give up the papers—it is all I can do."

For this "*all*" I thanked her warmly, and took leave, not having any desire to encounter her sister. Bourke was waiting my departure at the foot of the stairs: I promised to sit up and send André to bed. The former returned to his cabinet in a happy flow of spirits. We met in my room, and, bolting the door, talked over our plans till day

broke through the window blinds. Not inclined for bed, and extremely impatient at the delays in prospective, I took a sudden desire of visiting Saumur. Bourke was commissioned to deliver a letter from the proprietaire of our hotel in Paris to a sister of charity at Saumur, who was a relative of the former. I wished to be the bearer of this letter myself, and to make acquaintance with the *religieuse*. I should have abundant time before the return of Bourke with his packet from Chinon, and I knew that a *diligence* would leave Tours for Saumur in less than an hour. In short, the spirit of action had taken hold of my mind; I was not in a humour to act the automaton—self-denial was out of the question, L'Hospice de la Providence ran in my head. It would have been more agreeable to leave André behind, but policy required that I should keep him in sight; and therefore calling him up, I desired he would get himself ready for an excursion.

He looked rather surprised, but made no demur.

I obtained the letter from Bourke. We started at five, and reached our destination by noon.

This daring resolve, which in my state of thralldom was rather an out-break, had every chance of incurring the disappointment which rashness deserves. I might not, during my short stay, find the *Religieuse* disengaged; or if disengaged, and inclined to be communicative, a very improbable supposition, how should I contrive an hour's *tête-à-tête*, without exciting the curiosity, and subjecting myself to the watchfulness of André. But André, as if involved in cares of his own, was less curious and watchful than usual. We mounted the castle, saw the military school, and sauntered on the bridge, which is a general promenade, and from which the town, the castle, and river, present a splendid *coup d'œil*. I know few places which wear a more imposing appearance at first sight, or which falls so short of real interest on further acquaintance, than Saumur—a general fault with all striking beauties.

On the bridge André left me, to seek, as he said, for some old acquaintances at the other side the river, when I wended my way back to the town, and soon found out the house which I wanted.

The *Religieuse* was at home, and very much pleased to hear from her friend. She asked much about Paris, and other worldly news; but her manners were tinged by her occupation—mild and benevolent, though a little important. We talked on various subjects connected with Saumur, and came at last to *L'Hospice de la Providence*, of which she was a charitable visitor, frequently taking her turn as nurse to the insane. In short, my fair friend was quite in her element, and no ways inclined to put her candle under a bushel. She offered to show me part of this boasted asylum, if I could remain until the next afternoon. But to comply with her condition was not in my power: the return of Bourke, with the packet from Chinon, inferred a much more material as well as more certain acquisition, than what might accrue from my

exploring a prison of unfortunate maniacs, especially as the person of Lady Trevillion was not known to me. And I saw, as we conversed, that, obliging as was our "Sister of Charity," and communicative as she seemed on general subjects, there was no obtaining from her any information upon individual cases. She would not acknowledge, though she could not deny, that some unfortunate persons were there concealed from their friends. But she found excuses, "if such were the case," in conscientious motives, for the apparent oppression. She said that the names of all patients were scrupulously held back, in delicacy to themselves and their families.

In short, nothing more was to be obtained from Constance La Clair; and, joining André at the hotel, I got over the tedium of the evening by accompanying him to the theatre.

By the first public conveyance, we left Saumur next morning; and reached Tours again early in the afternoon. In the court of the *Hôtel d'Angleterre* I met my friend Innes, who insisted on my

dining with him that day. To this proposition I could not object. Nor, indeed, had I any repugnance; for it had occurred to me, since aware of his residence at Tours, that I wanted a friend—especially on this business of the writing-desk—more experienced in jurisprudence than my zealous Irish adjunct, and less devoted to a system where “necessity owns no law.”

When on my way to dinner, as the clocks were chiming five, I came up with Bourke in the Rue Archevêché. He had that moment arrived, and exhibited a picture of success and self-applause.

We stopped for an instant, and appointed our meeting at ten; a most vexatious delay, but one not to be avoided. He had obtained the promised papers, and information besides; which, from his hasty hints, led me to believe that our search was near an end, and that no less a prize than Lady Trevillion herself was to reward our exertions.

The social evening with Innes and his agreeable family must have proved a delightful treat, had

my mind been less pre-occupied. Even as it was, such cheerful society braced and enlivened me. But, had it been the reverse,—had that evening been spent in a palace of dulness, or in the deepest dungeon in France,—its conclusion would have amply rewarded me : for, speaking of my previous excursion to Saumur, that town made a subject of conversation, in which *L'Hospice de la Providence* formed a principal feature ; Mrs. Innes having, about three months before, made a similar visit to a “ Sister of Charity,” with pretty much the same success as myself.

“ A friend of hers,” she told me, “ having passed some days at Saumur, in the summer of the preceding year, had witnessed a scene in the court of the *hospice*, which left a melancholy impression on her mind ; and, aware that Mrs. Innes was coming to Tours, had begged of her to make inquiry as to the object which caused that impression. She gave me,” continued Mrs. Innes, “ the address of that very person whose name you have mentioned. But I will read you part of her letter

which refers to this subject. Your recent visit to the spot will render it more interesting.

“ ‘ It was in the month of August,’ wrote Mrs. Grant, ‘ that I went with this *Religieuse*, Constance St. Clair, a “ Sister of Charity,” who nurses the insane patients at *L’Hospice de la Providence*, at Saumur, to inspect that melancholy asylum. Having satisfied curiosity, we were passing out again, when a two-wheeled carriage drove into the yard. It was one of those heavy, lumbering vehicles common to the country, with a deep leathern head, and would scarcely have attracted my attention, except that a *gensd’arme* sat beside the driver, and that, looking to see whom he guarded, I perceived a young female, very wretchedly clad—inasmuch as that her clothes were torn and soiled,—but of a most distinguished appearance. Never can I forget the wan, wasted, yet majestic figure of that unhappy creature, the dignity with which she repelled every attempt of those in waiting to assist her from the carriage, or to relieve her from the burden of a female child, somewhere about six months old, who

was clasped—poor infant!—with fearful fondness to the maternal bosom; but who turned round its sweet unconscious face, and smiled upon the bystanders. It was a heart-rending contrast, the placid countenance and bright blue smiling eyes of that innocent creature, with the fixed despair imprinted on its mother's young but faded features, her affrighted and averted glance.

“ ‘ Dreadful, too, was the agonized fondness with which that child was retained in the arms of a maniac. Still more dreadful to contemplate the cruel, forcible separation, which must ere long deprive a miserable captive of her only solace; and I could not resist an entreaty that my conductress would return, and bespeak for these unfortunates the kind attendance of her gentle sisters. But it might not be. An inexorable porter guarded the door; and we, with a few other stragglers, were ordered to depart.

“ ‘ Still the poor maniac, though goaded by her guards, lingered on the steps, looked wistfully back upon the court, and seemed as if watching a moment

to escape. I kept my place ; and seeing the two keepers attempt to urge her progress by force of arms, could not resist an exclamation of horror. My exclamation was in English. The wretched object who excited it quickly turned round, darted from her retainers, threw herself at my feet, and implored me in the same language to protect her. But the porter interfered—the two keepers rushed between us—I was thrust down the steps, and as they closed her in from my sight, the piercing shriek that she uttered rendered me almost as wild as herself.

“ ‘ Through the medium of my companion I learned next day, that the police, in traversing a forest some leagues from Saumur, had come up with this interesting wanderer, and, seeing her to be insane, naturally sought refuge for her at L’Hospice, where no doubt she would shortly be claimed by her friends. It was supposed, and indeed very evident, that she had stolen her child from those who had it in charge, and that she lived in horror of losing it again.

“ ‘ The expression of her countenance as she fell at my feet, the idea of all she had to go through, the language in which she implored me to save her, have made the most painful impression on my mind. I could only learn since that she had been removed. But by whom, or under what circumstances, no one could inform me. Constance St. Clair may have gained some intelligence since. She promised to inquire. Do try and see her. We conclude the poor lady to be a person of rank, and that some unusual circumstances are attached to her insanity. I never beheld a more queen-like deportment, although clothed in torn fragments of a rather coarse dress. Her eyes were dark, large, and in shape, colour, and expression, albeit they were wild, exceedingly beautiful. Her look of entreaty, as she knelt, for that heart-rending moment, at my feet, might have melted the stern soul of a Nero. The eyes of the infant formed a remarkable contrast, being what is termed a bright liquid blue, soft, infantine, and mirthful. The mother dropped from her bosom

a small map of the provinces stamped upon linen. She had dotted, with ink, the cross country roads to St. Malo. This little circumstance proves at least that there was method in her madness; that escape was contemplated upon somewhat of a plan; and, added to the circumstance of her addressing me in English, increases the interest I feel in her fate.' ”

Here was Clotilde described to the life. Here was the ruin of that lovely original, so accurately painted by Mary Trevillion. Could it be looked upon with any feelings save anguish! A being once so cherished, so admired, so indulged! The child of prosperity—the envied—the adored, become a homeless wanderer—a naked fugitive. Hunted like a doomed animal in her own native forests! rudely assailed! savagely retained! driven to madness! contaminated by the brutal touch of low-lived coercion! Yes; it was herself! the Clotilde whom I sought; whom, independent of all other interest, of name or of relationship, I could have forfeited my life to recover.

Ten o'clock struck. There was not a moment to make Innes a partner in my feelings. But I determined to do so, and, on taking leave, requested he would receive me next morning.

Eleven had chimed, and no Harry Bourke. Every minute seemed an hour. I longed to behold that face fraught with good tidings—to hear the recital which promised so much. Above all, to receive the paper written by Clotilde. But, when he did at last come—when he stood silent before me, it was with so changed an appearance, an aspect so woful, that I could scarcely believe my own sight.

Fear, mortification, vexation, a mingled expression not seen there before, entirely altered that late exulting countenance. We looked at each other but neither of us spoke. At length, throwing his hat on the floor, and himself into a chair, as if reckless of propriety, he thrust a dirty letter into my hand, telling me to read it; but, at the same time, anticipating its contents in the following characteristic lament:—

“ Oh, it’s long and it’s long since I thought to see a Moll Doyle, or a Ribbon notice in these foreign parts ! or to have one or the other left in my way at such a distance from home ! It never came across me to look for the same. What have you done, Harry Bourke !—fool that you are to deserve such a visitation ? Read it, sir, read it. You’ll see that it’s over with us from this moment, for ever. For ever ! isn’t that a desperation of a word ? You’ll see that we’re tracked, that we’re known ; that every action’s reported of, and that we are informed of, or may be found out without any information whatever, by those that has a knowledge of all things, and are in all places. Sure I’ve known the country since they came into power. Sure I’ve heard enough to be more on my guard ! only I’m an idiot ; and was so from my birth, and ever shall be—the steward at St. Aubin for that ; the hornet’s nest that I rushed into there. Oh ! it’s I that am vexed and grieved to the heart. But it cannot be helped. It’s my fate : it was born with me. The bees, and the drink of milk, and

the witch wife together. Signs on them all! Have you any commands to old England, Major? for 'tis as true as the sun, that I must be off. Ay, off like a shot before dawn of day, while the dew is on the grass—that's supposing there is dew or anything like it in this parched-up land, where hearts are as hard as the pastures are bare. I that was laid out for a different journey! I that was to follow Louise on Saturday. Oh, no! Harry Bourke, it's not the track of your foot that will be seen in the village of Derval. Louise may well wonder, as no doubt she will. But—you're not reading a word of the letter, sir!"

"I am silent with astonishment, and trying to ascertain your meaning; truly, Bourke, it seems as if your senses were gone. Let me, however, look over this scroll."

He placed his finger on his parched lip in token of obedience, while I read as follows:—

"These lines are to let you know, Mister Henry Bourke, that the motive of your visits to Amboise and Angers is pretty well known; and that, touch-

ing the matter in hand, it is safe neither for body nor soul. What business have you to be meddling or making with Holy Mother Church, or interfering with matters above your comprehension? Have a care that you are not marked down as a heretic for going against her decrees, and uniting yourself with her enemies. Have a care, I say, that no Scottish gold tempts you to defy those who serve this same notice; who have the power to make mincemeat of you here, and send you to the four winds of heaven hereafter, never to be united in death. Mark that, Harry Bourke! The poor sinful soul condemned for everlasting to the tortures of purgatory; which all the Scotch lairds or Cornish baronets from John o'Groat's house to the Land's-end could make no interest to release you from. So take a friend's warning before it be too late, or a short stop will be put to your touring. Remember whose eye is upon you. Remember that there's no escape. Take care and be off out of Tours. No more at present, only depend on a well-wisher, that less friendly advice will await you

if this is neglected; or if to-morrow's sun shines on your head at this side Le Mans."

"The most iniquitous squib that ever was penned," I said, returning the scroll; "and evidently written by a countryman of your own. What power can such a one have at this distance from home? Think nought of it: scorn it. Why should a Moll Doyle or a Terry Alt (as you call these anonymous threats) frighten you here? or have sufficient influence to absolve an honest man from performing his promise?"

"What power did you say, sir? Oh! it's little either yourself or any Scotch or English gentleman knows of that power. I could tell you enough, only it's safest not speaking; and as to a promise one way or another, sure the Church has authority to bind or to loose, to absolve us from promises, should we be led by indiscretion, over-zeal, design, or evil communication, to make any pledge injurious to her interests. Little did I think what I was about! little did I reflect on the consequences! Suppose this poor lady was restored to her hus-

band—suppose the kindness of heretics, compared with the discipline which, for the soul's sake, she is now forced to undergo, was to run the length of changing her religion—where would I be?—having first and foremost abetted in her eternal destruction, and made myself accountable for that same. Oh no, Major Melville! the breaking of my promise—if in such a case the breaking be a sin—must lie at the door of my clergy; but the abiding by it must fall on myself. Not but I'm sorry—not but what I'm grieved. It was the steward at St. Aubin, with his two-faced hospitality, and the old witch-wife his dame—'tis they have informed; but it is the girl Louise who's the real heart-scald."

"To tell you the truth, Bourke, I had my apprehensions of that visit. It was putting your head in the mouth of the lion."

"And what should we have known of Louise or the papers but for that same lion's mouth?" returned Bourke; "and who is to hinder you going to Derval? To be sure it was a venture; and may

be the cause of our present disappointment—may be not: for these Jesuits—the saints be about us!—throng in the city of Tours, Irish as well as others. Folk say they are sent here to keep watch, and report the proceedings of certain individuals who learnt too much liberality in England. But that's neither here nor there, nor nothing to the purpose; be it as it may, they are crowding into the town like a swarm of locusts. It's the very worst place we could pitch upon; and so Father Gregory—bless his honest heart!—told me no later than this morning.”

“Then you have actually been to this priest—against my advice—against my positive commands—and your disobedience has met its reward. But where are the papers? Where is the packet promised me by Louise? She too is not, I trust, a cowardly bigot.”

“I cannot give the papers. That would be tantamount to telling you every thing. The letter you've read not only puts a seal on my lips, but a lock on my fingers. Oh! it's I am the heart-

broken man ! May the Heavens be with you ! and the saints be your guidance ! I've a long journey to make before the sun shines on Tourain."

"Is it possible," I cried, "that you can act in this manner? That having accepted a trust you wilfully betray it?—That you have made me professions only to deceive?—That you falsify your word, and break a solemn engagement merely in consequence of an anonymous threat—a dirty bit of paper—a thing without a name!—unworthy a thought from any man of honour—any one professing a spark of courage, of conscience, of fidelity?"

"Say on, Major, say on," cried the mortified wretch, in accents of despair; "say on, and break, as you are doing, the heart in my body. Make an end of Harry Bourke, and he'll be bound to you for ever. But surely it isn't a coward you take me for? Surely it's not them that has only power over the body you think I would mind? Oh, no! the like of them may cut me in mincemeat, and heartily welcome. It's the soul, the immortal soul!"

It's them that has power to cast the soul into hell—to keep it there in bonds; it's them I dare not cross. Have you not seen it down on the paper? '*Never to be united!*' Think, only think, at the last day of all, to see thousands and thousands renewed in the flesh, the bones and the blood, the dust gathered together, the dead brought to life, the old and the withered young and beautiful again; and one's own outcast soul lying in torment, without as much as its old ancient tenement to own it. Oh, if that's not enough!—Major, you are not the kind gentleman I took you for, if you could wish any fellow-creature to run such a chance."

"And if you, Bourke, with the semblance of a rational being, can believe in such monstrous deceptions—can be so duped, so absurd, I am as well to be quit of your services. If you can suppose that mortals like ourselves have power to put such blasphemous threats in execution, to stand between a creature and his Creator, I have no more to say: I have only to entreat, that you will refer to authority higher than mine, that you will lay hold

of a Bible, and read the inspired word from beginning to end: that you will remember it is every word that of God, every line inspiration, owing nothing to the devices of man. That you will make use of reason, be guided by truth, and pray, as you proceed, that God will grant you light. And that, should we ever meet again, you will candidly tell me if in all that blessed book there is one single line to authorize the doctrine by which you are blinded?—if, after reading it with a desire of knowledge, you can submit to any other preparation for eternity, or believe it possible to perform your probationary part, if not taught by the written word of the Lord?”

“ We’ll not argue cases just now, Major Melville, for don’t they say that the eye is upon us? I go in the first instance to Paris; and if my mind mis-gives me there, lose no time in setting forward toward England. Blessed be Heaven! my conscience is clear; what I did, I did in ignorance; and meant to do no harm, neither would I have broken my word, only in respect to my soul. I am

grieved to the heart for the necessity; and the disappointment to you, Major. Especially knowing what I know. But it cannot be helped; I am not my own master. There's one thing however, and that I will do—I will leave alone confessing me at this side the water, and I'll give you a month, let me be where I may, though it's a great self-denial; for neither peace nor rest will come to my share until I obtain absolution. The Heavens be with you, again and again!"

Never in my life had I been so thoroughly vexed; but it was in vain that I expressed my vexation. In vain that I entreated—expostulated—reasoned. Equally in vain that I bitterly reproached him. To every effort, either of persuasion or anger, I received but one answer. "He was not his own master. He was bound to obey."

"Suppose," I said at last, "that these inexorable tyrants should enjoin you to rob or to murder me; would you, in that case, esteem obedience meritorious?"

"Yes, without doubt, because obedience would

be the greatest of penances. But I would not perform it for all that, soul and body should suffer here and hereafter, before a hand of mine should be raised against you. I never betrayed trust, Major Melville, I never will; but no man living can expect me to go against the orders received this blessed night from them who has the power to bind and to loose. That is, to keep my poor sinful soul in purgatory till the last day, though I might have the wealth of a Rothschild to pay myself out—let alone being penniless and dependent—the worse chance for me.”

“And this poor persecuted lady,” I said with indignation — “this once happy wife, so good and so charitable, so innocent of crime, torn from her husband, bereaved of her children, robbed of her inheritance!—is she to remain unredressed? How can a clear-sighted or reflecting being reconcile to his conscience so great an injustice? or be accessory to the protracted sufferings of an afflicted fellow creature?—a creature fraudulently separated from all she holds dear, sustaining, in her own

person, the calumny which attaches to those who violate their vows—bearing the burden which should fall on her betrayers—wounded in spirit, broken in heart, and deprived of her reason in consequence of persecution? You acknowledge to have acquired the information we seek—to know that, which must ensure me success; yet upon a plea the most absurd and unmanly, refuse the assistance which you pledged yourself to give.”

“Don’t speak so urgent, Major,” he replied with tears in his eyes. “Don’t be persuading me, it’s no manner of use. I could not be art or part in restoring my own sister (were she begging of me on her bended knees) to the power of a heretic husband. No; my own soul is enough to account for, you have my prayers for your safety—I dare not say your success. Don’t cross the will of Heaven, whatever betides; if things go against you, just leave them alone. ’Tis not for us, poor ignorant creatures, to be directing events. We cannot know what is for the best,—we are no more than new born babes, every one of us, in the hands of God.”

“How lamentable !” I cried, “that with so much submission, such Christian *feeling* at least, you should cherish opinions in other respects so erroneous—that with an impulse which leads you to reliance on God, you should trust so implicitly in man, and take for your guides the fallible councils of the earthly, when the revealed will of Heaven is open for your instruction !”

“I am a poor ignorant creature, sir, and how can such a one understand the mysteries of the Scriptures, unless they be explained by persons learned in their difficulties, or ordained to instruct? The written word is awful enough, let alone the traditions of the Fathers, which are handed down to the Roman Catholic church through her vicars from the beginning. No, sir, I’ll neither forsake my clergy, nor betray my church. But you have confided in me, and I would go to the stake rather than turn informer. Holy Virgin! I am staying too long! I have stayed too long! The heart’s up in my mouth, and there’s an unruly member every minute on the tip of betraying me.

May the saints have you in keeping, and forewarn you in time! Good night, sir."

"Good night, Harry Bourke, it is indeed waste of words to talk with you now. But should we meet again when these scheming Jesuits are far and away, perhaps your natural good sense may be allowed some fair play, and you may have shaken off the thralldom which renders a brave man a coward. Meanwhile I am your debtor for time spent in my service."

"Not a fraction, Major Melville; not as much as a *sous*. I would not touch your money for the treasury of England! Oh no! I have sinned as they tell me, and 'the wages of sin is death.' That's Scripture any how!—and a clear text enough: it needs no expounding: yet I heard it expounded, when I went to hear a crack preacher of your church for once in my life. Oh! it's that man was the special pleader in argument. Thinks I to myself, it's well for whoever has you at his side. But I never went again, on account of the penance. Put up your purse, Major, I have treated

you bad enough without touching your gold. I have done evil already, without taking payment for nothing. There's no hindrance, sir, if you wish to see Louise."

So saying, he wrung my hand and darted from the room; the expression of his sorrowful face contradicting the obstinacy of his refusal. But I had no time for the solving so difficult an enigma as the sayings and doings of the Irish dupe; for the predicament in which he left me was sufficiently vexatious and puzzling to try the temper of an angel.

I had no resource left but to follow Louise, and get possession of the papers, if Bourke had returned them; unless, indeed, some death's-head or cloven-foot notice had reached her as well as him, and that she too should feel it necessary to falsify her word. That very night would have seen me off for Derval, only I was at a loss what to do with André, who might after all be my best mask for the safety of the child, and the discovery of her unfortunate mother.

Independent of my extreme disappointment in not receiving the promised packet, I felt exceedingly annoyed by the absence of Bourke; for, added to the useful nature of his services hitherto—added to his ready wit and disinterestedness of action—there was something so cheerful in the never-failing sunshine of his face, as led me, while it lasted, like a beacon of hope, safe through a wilderness of difficulties.

But, happily for me, Innes was at Tours: he was my fellow-countryman, an acute, sensible person, who, being bred to the law, though he did not now practise, was more skilful than myself in the solving of intricacies. Still, though acute and sensible, Innes was slow—perhaps over cautious and calculating for the present emergency. The very opposite in all respects of my Irish defaulter, toward whom at that moment my feelings were inexplicable, and who (strange as it may seem) I would still have confided in, and trusted to without suspicion. So much for the overflowing of a kindly disposition—so much for a countenance beaming

with good humour and hilarity—so much for the occasional burst of an unsophisticated heart, the outpourings of a generous mind, though guided by error, and the slave of superstition.

I had sat ruminating on my disappointment for above half an hour, when the door cautiously opening aroused my attention; and, to my no small surprise, I saw the pale and agitated visage of Bourke once more protruded into the apartment.

Starting up, I approached, and welcomed him back; but repulsing my advances, he drew toward the table, and with an air of assumed, or rather a reckless sort of carriage, emanating more from fear than from bravery, he threw down a small packet, and said, in hollow accents:—

“It’s a folly to talk, Major, I cannot be breaking my word; or rather, second thoughts is wisest. Not that I’m going to open my lips, or give you a syllable of information; but I’ve been reading that Moll Doyle—may her name be a pestilence!—and there’s not a word, good or bad, against giving up that paper. May be it’s not safe to be keeping it

about me, so I make it over to your care for better for worse. Time will prove whether the deed be a wrong or a right one ; if the last, recollect me in the hour of my death ; and that all the return Harry Bourke seeks at your hands is, that to neither chance nor to charity you'll leave his poor soul, but spend a few pounds to shorten its pains."

I snatched at the paper, and seized hold of his hand, for he was instantly quitting the room. "One favour more, ere I thank you for this : give me your promise that I shall see you in Scotland ; that you will make me a visit on the banks of the Forth, where we may talk over these matters without fear of our lives. We have done with Moll Doyles and Terry Alts in my country since John Knox sent their precursors over the water."

"It's all as well for yourself and your peace, Major Melville ; but I'll never see that same country alive ; promise me, sir, the small favour I ask. It will ease my poor mind when I'm at the last gasp."

"Tell me first," I inquired, "where this paper was had?"

“It was had at Chinon last night from Father Gregory himself. I’ll tell you no lie; Louise and myself went to him together; so there’s the whole truth; and no harm on earth if we had not been tracked, and found out, and noticed. Father Gregory, I’ll answer for him, did us no mischief; neither Ribbon-men nor Moll Doyles has he any knowledge of.”

“I will see him,” I said; “I will leave a small sum in his hands for your use, to be appropriated to what purpose you please. Still I hope, my poor fellow, that we may meet in East Lothian, when the debt which I owe you——”

“Don’t mention the word, sir,” he cried, interrupting me; “I’m not my own master to do you a service; there’s a duty to my superiors, and it must be performed. I was wrong, very wrong to bind myself as I did; but your being a Protestant lightens the obligation. Don’t mind Father Gregory till you hear from myself. Wherever you are, abroad or at home, when my day of doom comes, Harry Bourke will appear; and you will

know by that token that the time has arrived, when Father Gregory of Chinon, or some other decent priest, will want what I speak of for the purpose I mean. Meanwhile I must be off, according to orders. May the Mother of mercies see you safe out of Tours !”

“I wish I could see you throw off the yoke, Bourke, that you could defy, as I do, Jesuitical influence.”

He wrung my hand, shook his head, and, hurrying away, left the room without speaking.

CHAPTER XXXI.

I HAD now occupation of the deepest interest. It was in decyphering a worn and scarcely legible journal, which one glance sufficed to show was written by Clotilde. No date was affixed: no specific reference as to abode. But let the writer speak for herself.

JOURNAL OF LADY TREVILLION.

“Where are you, my beloved, my injured husband? My tender, generous sister? Will this memorial of her misery, who has been the wretched cause of misery to those she so much loves, ever reach your hands? Celeste promises that it shall. Alas! are her promises to be relied on? She

knows my remorse; she is a witness of my agony; she is aware that I doubt my right to act as I have done; she pities, and is kind to me. But, afraid of her employers, she hesitates to relieve my distress by one word of such information as I would give my life to obtain. Life! what is life, separated from all I hold dear?—an object of distrust, where I was once so much esteemed—of reproach, of degradation, to the most honourable of men. Ye, who are truth itself, do ye not banish from your hearts the perpetrator of a falsehood? Do ye not loath the despised being who has acted so deceitfully? Can you, at this late hour, when repentance comes too late—can you believe that my elopement was unintentional? Can you credit the contrition of your broken-hearted Clotilde?

“ Yes, I know that you can—I know your generosity. I am aware, from experience, that the sun does not go down on your wrath; that you are Christians, and that a brief recital of all that I have secretly endured will not only be credited, but commiserated.

“ In the commencement of my married life, when, next to God, I loved my husband, and trusted that such love was innocent; when gratitude was all my debt to Heaven on earth, and existence one bright stream of overflowing joy, all appeared harmony, and all was peace. But when a doubt was raised, when duty was rendered distinct from happiness—when told that I had sinned, was sinning still, who shall describe my tortures? You, my dearest friends, cannot conceive them, for remorse has not been your bitter portion, and mine was bitter beyond all description. Despair, regret, but not repentance. I neither loathed nor could forsake my sin. I durst not bring myself to give it up. Alas! I loved it more than ever; while every grateful, every pious thought, connected with my former duties, were changed to apprehension. All my sweet and heavenly aspirations were converted into bitterness. Instead of resting on connubial love, as on the tranquil security of virtue, I clung to it, as passion clings to vice, wanting the courage to renounce

it; and, ten thousand times more dreadful! the love of God, which made my world a Paradise, gave place to terror of his gracious name.

“ Oh, my own Marie! when the cloud first came, that cold and dismal cloud o’ershadowing all my once bright prospects; when I found endurance so painful, and repentance such a task, what consolation would it not have been could I have opened my full heart to you. But, alas! such consolation was not mine! I dared not, on such a subject, hold converse with an heretic. And thus condemned to bear my load alone, no wonder if my judgment was obscured, or if the power of discrimination failed beneath a weight so cruelly oppressive.

“ No longer daring to return that affection which made my sum of mortal happiness, dreading the interchange of sentiments that had so lately uttered all our souls, I shrunk from the domestic circle, became an alien under the domestic roof, and turned my steps from every haunt of social happiness.

“ Educated in implicit obedience to my spiritual directors, forced to submit, and above all to dissemble, the conflict that I suffered became visible in my appearance. Can I forget the kind endeavours both of sister and husband? The incurious, delicate efforts made by one to win back the confidence of early years, by the other to amuse and indulge me? nor how my heart recoiled at accepting such generous tokens of his love, which, though bestowed by him, and paid away by me to purchase happiness, failed so completely in their object?—while one word of unrestricted feeling—one burst of natural tears—one out-pouring of the troubled heart, would have been an indescribable relief.

“ I fear it was sin to wish for a less exacting Confessor—to feel lighter of heart when mine announced his intention of making a journey to Rome; but if so, it has been expiated by subsequent suffering. Of the wreck and its awful consequences I will not now speak, except to say, that the acquittal of the accused, and their de-

parture from the country, tranquillized my most tormenting fears. Lighter of heart when this agitating circumstance was over, my spirits and my feelings underwent the most beneficial reaction; and when indulged with a visit to Bath, I felt, in quitting Pendyffryn for a short period, that I should return to it the happiest of human beings.

“ A change of Confessors was a decided benefit. I found Mr. Austin less severe than my late spiritual director; and though, in my case, he judged it safest to prohibit an indiscriminate use of the Bible and other books, and that the restrictions of his predecessor, relative to confidential intercourse with heretics, especially on matters of faith, lost none of their force, though he could not altogether acquit me of sin in uniting myself to a Protestant, the sin was not represented in so heinous a light; and his exemption from avarice allowed me the enjoyment of appropriating as I pleased the munificent gifts of my husband, and of consulting the latter as to their distribution.

“ Above all, the retiring manners of Mr. Austin rendered him perfectly inoffensive. I was happier during our short sojourn at Bath than of late I had ever expected to be. I enjoyed the privileges of my religion ; and, except within the walls of my church, was identified with none of its clergy but our accomplished and favourite visitor.

“ We found our darling William in excellent health. He had not forgotten us ; and clung to his father and myself with such liveliness of recollection, so much sensibility, that I totally forgot how criminal it was to be the mother of an heretic, how doubly criminal to lavish fondness on a creature so proscribed. But, alas ! that forgetfulness was not without its punishment. On the second evening after our return to Pendyffryn, Celeste presented me with a packet, which she said had been put into her hand by some person unknown. Its envelope indicated the wear and tear of a journey, and the handwriting of the superscription resembled that of Father Mac Cardwell.

“ I had not thought much of him lately ; and

a memento, so presented, filled me with dread. There was something portentous of evil in being reminded so immediately on my return to my home, that home was for me no haven of rest. Desiring Celeste to put the packet away, I deferred its perusal until the following morning; and again in the morning, until Charles went out; ill prepared, by a night of fearful forebodings, for the cruel shock that awaited that perusal.

“I then discovered, my poor Marie! what had afflicted you so much; what, even previous to the terrible event of the wreck, had robbed your cheek of its bloom, and given to your face so pained an expression. Alas! you were present at the first fatal affray, when your unfortunate brother was guilty of a sacrilege. You saw him raise his hand against the anointed of the Lord—against a priest of the holy Roman Catholic church! And the effect of such a scene on your mind, an effect so remarkable at the time, and which recurred to my memory while I perused the fatal paper, must have confirmed the dreadful tale it conveyed, had not an

appalling witness of its writer's truth been also sent me. This witness was no other than the remnant of a handkerchief, torn, and stained with blood,—with the blood of a priest, of my Confessor, drawn by my husband,—and you saw it flow! Every thing that then seemed strange was now accounted for; your ill-concealed terrors, the deep gloom of your brother, from which he was only roused by the event of the wreck, or relieved by the absence of the falsely-accused priest. But the calm which then followed was no more than a mockery: the storm, apparently gone by, was only stilled till the arrival of the Confessor at Rome. And then in what a form did it break upon our heads! I was commanded, under pain of excommunication, to part from you all, especially from him who lay under the curse promulgated by our church; to separate my thoughts, my interests, my affections, from the dear partners of my heart. I was told to wear the semblance of obedience—to explain nothing, repeat nothing, *until I should receive final instructions from Rome.*

“ This was hard ; almost impossible. The doctrine of remaining in sin, of exercising myself in the works of deception, was a doctrine I could not comprehend, although assured that the end would justify the means, and that there were always indulgences proportionate to exigent cases, and to the benefits which individuals had the power of conferring on the church. All this was incomprehensible. But could my teachers err? Ah, no! However conscience, reason, judgment, truth itself, might demur, I dare not doubt the infallibility of those teachers, unless I were heretical at heart.

“ In so wretched a state, I wished for the worst to arrive. I desired to relinquish all; to bury myself in the seclusion of a convent; to expiate for my own sins, and satisfy for those of my husband, by personal inflictions of the severest kind. But this would not be allowed: the time was not come.

“ Mr. Austin arrived in the country: Charles received him with pleasure; and I flew to confession as my only resource; hoping much from his

mild and charitable temper. But he could only pity, not relieve me: he could do no more than encourage perseverance, and enjoin me to obedience. I had written to the Père Montcalm, I had laid my whole heart open to that holy man; and the last hope of the wretched Clotilde hung upon the answer of her old preceptor.

“ Alas ! that answer, so long delayed, proved but a consummation of my fate—served only to confirm my wretchedness. Agonized both in body and mind, I felt as if death would soon relieve me of my sufferings; and I augmented my load of guilt by wishing for such relief. But the corporeal agony subsided, a mysterious power upheld me. I was reserved, as has been proved, for trials more severe. The hour came when I was to make a separation from the bed of my husband, and the illness, which furnished some excuse, was indeed no pretence. But the more difficult the task, the more acute my sufferings, so much more worthy did I consider my penance. It was on this occasion, or shortly after, that you, my poor sister !

were brought from happiness and Scotland, to misery and Cornwall. It was from my conscientious perseverance in this separation that your brother looked coldly on Mr. Austin, that he became reserved with his late admired companion; and, until then, it could not be said that I really suffered.

“ We sailed for France. Alas ! I knew not that the bearer of that fatal packet from my Confessor sailed along with us. I knew not, till we reached Rennes, that the Confessor had returned from Rome, that he travelled our way; nor, until that unhappy morning when we lingered at Derval, had I any communication from him. Some expressions contained in a *billet* delivered to me by Celeste, excited a faint hope in my bosom; I flattered myself, while reading it again and again, that, by making a great pecuniary sacrifice through the medium of the writer, I might purchase up the removal of the interdict. Under such an impression, I was induced to confer with him; under such an impression, I stole from my chamber; and, as

the joyous laugh of my child reached me from the *salon*, I hailed it as an omen of good.

“ The Confessor was waiting in the orchard : but he could not, he said, confer with me there ; nor was he himself authorized to make the communication hinted at in his note. I must drive with him to the neighbouring monastery of Chateaubriand, and hear the opinion of his superiors. For the purpose of my doing so without any delay, he had ordered a carriage, which was then in waiting.

“ I had locked my chamber-door, I had feigned to go to rest ; there was, therefore, no danger of detection—at least before day-light, and he promised to bring me back in two hours. Thus led to commit the indiscretion of quitting, without his knowledge, the protection of my husband, of compromising my delicacy by so imprudent an act, I need not now say how justly that act has been punished—how completely I proved myself a dupe !

“ After a tedious progress over almost impassable roads, and through the mazes of a wood, I became

exceedingly anxious to arrive at the monastery; but we halted, instead, at a mean looking hut, where two more priests joining us, I was then informed, that in removing me from my heretical husband, they complied with a decree of the church; and that my spiritual directors had adopted the present plan to avoid unnecessary delay or remonstrance.

“I will not attempt to describe my astonishment—to depict my despair—or to speak of the difficulty with which these authorized directors of my conduct had to contend, ere they forced me to comply with their determination. I heard, indeed, that he, for whom I would have hazarded every thing but the safety of my soul, lay under the malediction of my church, and that there was a spiritual necessity for the proceedings which papal authority prescribed.

“Distracted in mind, agonized by pain, I had neither mental nor corporeal ability to combat with my fate, if combat could have altered it; and, a mere automaton in the hands of power, was borne

more dead than alive to the north bank of the Loire, where a small boat, rowed by my two conductors, conveyed me across the river. Landing on the other side, a calashe, attended by another priest, was found to be in waiting; he seemed to be of the lowest professional rank, and walking, led the horse by the bridle, while the Confessor, dismissing the others, seated himself by my side. About midday we halted at a lone house in the forest, for I could no longer sit up; but after a few hours' rest, proceeded again, and arrived before the next morning at our final destination—a large ruinous building, where there was an apartment prepared. Pain and debility rendered me perfectly passive; and I was soon installed in that apartment, which, though somewhat decently furnished, was desolate from its spaciousness, and which I too soon understood was to be my home, my hiding place, the limits of my freedom, and, for aught that I could tell, my tomb.

“Contrasting its wildness and desolation with all I had lost—comparing its associations with the

associations I was torn from—my grief amounted to frenzy. Sobs and hysterics convulsed my whole frame; my repentance, uttered and unutterable, amounted to madness. Madame Peltier, the duenna of the chateau, undressed and forced me into bed; she was a robust, determined woman, and I had no power of resistance. Bodily pain superseded for a while the distress of my mind; and before the dawn of another day I had given birth to a daughter. Total exhaustion now stood my friend; for insensibility to my destitute state, to the contrast between a former scene of unalloyed happiness, and the present one of unqualified woe, was the blessed consequence.

“It pleased God to raise me from that weary couch, to restore me to my reason, and to console me with the sight of my child. I was occupied from thenceforth in taking care of my treasure. They allowed me to be her nurse. She was for ever in my arms. Baptized according to the rites of the Roman Catholic church, I lavished no sinful fondness on a Protestant. She was the

solace of my prison hours—the preserver of my senses—what would I not have gone through to present her to her father! Alas! he must not see—must not protect his own offspring. He was unworthy, in the estimation of that church of which I had made her a member, to enjoy the hallowed privileges of a parent. I gave her the beloved name of Marie. She was lively, robust, and possessed a fine constitution. The days lengthened, they become sultry; but my chamber was airy. The Confessor came to visit me in May. He had been there to baptize my child—to perform for myself the sacrifices of the church. He had extolled my submission: he had taught me that I was acting a meritorious part; and conveyed to me a few lines of approbation from the venerable Père Montcalm. Alas! they were written with a tremulous hand, they were the sad evidence of declining strength of age. Still they were infinitely soothing, for they helped to clear away those doubts which until then had distracted me, that in breaking so solemn a contract as that of

marriage, I was securing the safety of my soul. On this the Confessor's second visit he told me, that my husband, satisfied with the reasons assigned for my withdrawal, had partly given up his pursuit; that he had returned to England, but not without putting in his claim for the St. Aubin estates; which were, however, contested by the heir at law—a male descendant of the family—to whom it was probable they might be assigned, unless I made them over to the church. He intimated, that if I consented to endow a convent, and thus secure for myself and my daughter a suitable provision, I could do so most munificently, and leave a large surplus for charitable purposes. He concluded by saying, that he would undertake to be my agent, and to establish my right to a distribution, which would obtain for me the security of ecclesiastical protection.

“ My silence, as I listened to this proposition, induced the Father to reckon on my compliance. But though broken in spirit, and deprived of my freedom, I had still the independence to assert my

own judgment; and having reason to suspect my adviser of avarice, I refused to rob my child of her inheritance, or to dictate, at so early a period, her choice of a conventual life. But I offered—as these estates were mine for my life—to appropriate their early proceeds to the service of the church, provided that my little Marie and myself were allowed to remove to a particular convent I should name, and that I might correspond with my sister.

“He replied, that without express permission from the higher powers at Rome, (considering the predicament in which Sir Charles Trevillion was placed,) he could not permit me to receive letters from my sister; but that if I wished for once to write her an account of myself he would, though at a risk, endeavour to forward one letter. As to my other proposition, he affirmed that it was utterly useless, as these estates being at present contested, the only way by which I could rescue them from the grasp of the secular authorities was by voluntarily giving them up to the church. If, however, I would hand him over my draft on the agent at

St. Aubin, it might be a trial of my authority there, and he would let me know the result.

“The draft was worded, ‘for charitable purposes, connected with the interests of the church.’ In return, I was promised a supply of paper, pens, and ink, with permission to write one letter explanatory of my conduct to Marie.

“My husband, my sister, if you have received that long letter; the explanation I was thus permitted to make, your sympathy is certainly mine; for the once-trusted Clotilde will not fail to be credited. The tears which blot that paper you will know to be the tears of sincerity, and yours will fall unrestrained for the miserable writer. Alas! I shall never see this; I shall receive from your hands no written proof of your kindness; for those who direct the progress of my salvation are apprehensive of your still-existing influence. They know that my heart is not yet weaned from the objects of its love!

“I write beside the cradle of my darling. She is now five months old. I could describe her sweet

blue eyes, the beautiful symmetry of her limbs, the daily proofs which she gives of her intelligence. I could fill sheet upon sheet by indulging myself in converse with my friends; but am afraid to exhaust my materials. Writing robs my solitude of its desolation; it makes me feel as if I were not so totally lost. The month of March is almost over—April approaches fast,—the Confessor will be here about this time; perhaps he may bring me news of my friends—of England—of my far distant son. Perhaps he may have received permission to remove me. At all events I shall acquire a supply of writing materials. What a value do I place on this indulgence! There may be some forms to go through about these St. Aubin estates. I have not executed any deed. Would to Heaven they had never been left me!

* * * *

“He is come, and I am more wretched than ever. My brain is on fire! my heart is torn to pieces!

“William, my sweet William has been stolen from his father. Mac Cardwell! Father Austin!

they are privy to this barbarism. They—the anointed servants of the Most Merciful—have the audacity to defend such an act. I cannot comprehend them. I recoil from—I abjure such cruel expediencies. They talk of necessity. They say that my relative had no right to entail his vast property upon a girl; that my son, in case Augustine de St. Aubin should not make good his claim, comes in before his sister; that his doing so would render my marriage doubly a crime, as through my means an heretic would thus be enriched. They tell me, that William, in order to prevent such a misfortune, is being brought up a Roman Catholic; that he must remain (until his principles are decidedly fixed) in the hands of Roman Catholic teachers, and consequently be detained at a distance from his father. His father! The son of that father to be brought up in a separate faith!—and I have promised so sacredly not to interfere! I have vowed at the solemnization of our ill-fated union to respect the religion of my husband in his own person, and the persons of his sons; while he

bound himself by equal obligations to me. And he!—has he forfeited his promise?—has he restricted my privileges?—Never!

“Perhaps he believes that I am privy to this scheme? Perhaps the blame of this heartless, this unprincipled bereavement, may be laid to my charge? Fathers Mac Cardwell and Austin will be believed to be my agents. How shall I exculpate myself from so cruel a suspicion? What shall I do to restore my poor boy to his father?

“Another discovery. Father Austin is my cousin. He is that Augustine de St. Aubin, the person who contests with my children their right to the bequest of their relative. Were he to persevere in his contest, I might, Mac Cardwell tells me, lose the estates even now. But, as a priest, he eschews litigation; and it is only to preserve them for the church, to prevent them eventually enriching an enemy of the faith, that he is induced to come forward. Can I not resign them at once? Can I not put him in immediate possession? The Confessor raises objections; he starts difficulties that I do not com-

prehend. But he has consented that I should write to Augustine. Oh, that he may consent!—that this property, one source of my woes, were relinquished for ever!—that my son were restored to his father!

* * * *

“ Augustine has consented. Lord of Heaven be glorified! I have obtained my desire. I shall be exculpated. I shall no longer be a party in such cruel proceedings. Were it the possession of a kingdom, would I not thankfully resign it, rather than that those I esteem should deem me so guilty, rather than that my son should be deprived of parental affection?

“ We set out for Paris to-morrow. The deeds must be legally executed. Would that I could take my little Marie! Would that we could remain there in the same convent where I passed my own childhood! But no, it must not be. Augustine promises, that our comfort shall be his principal object, after the just appropriation of the relinquished property to further the interests of reli-

gion. I must, meanwhile, return here : no matter, I am perfectly content. A full week I shall be absent from my Marie ; but, by the end of that time, my son will be on the road to his father. My sweet girl is thus deprived of her legacy, but by such a deprivation her brother's safety is secured, and her mother exonerated from the supposed commission of a perjury. Surely wealth is as nothing compared with these advantages. Surely the riches of an empire would not repay such a father as Charles for the bereavement he suffers. It would not weigh a feather in the scale with the honour of his wife. Why was not this alternative submitted to me before ? Did they suspect me of parsimony ? Was there any reason to believe that the father of my son valued an estate in comparison with his religion ? That he would not rather William were a beggar, than an apostate from his faith ? Oh, my dear boy ! I shall not witness your restoration. I shall not see thee safe beneath the paternal roof, but you *will* be there. Ere many days you will enjoy the security of legitimate protection.

“ Every hour seems an age. I wish these deeds were signed: that I were returned to my cherub in the forest; but impatience is ungrateful. Thank God! it is in my power to purchase for my husband the return of his child.

“ Alas! I am for ever making purchases. I am buying, but I never receive—I never know peace. Where are—what I have heard of—the free gifts of God? How is it with the poor and the pennyless? They cannot purchase. Do they therefore enjoy? It is hard to understand these contradictions. The Confessor does not explain; he attempts it, but I am mystified the more. I will not inquire of him again; yet, of whom shall I inquire? My mind is a chaos. Would to Heaven that it were enlightened!—that God would bid it ‘be day.’ They will not allow me a Bible; they suspect me of searching. I have asked too many questions; and the church, during pleasure, suspends information. I wish I could supply myself in Paris. But would not such a gratification be heretical? Would it not be for the satisfaction of

a vain curiosity? I do not feel as if this were a term descriptive of my wishes; yet it is the term they use. And if I get a Bible, must I not confess? Ah! whither shall I turn me?—what shall I do? ‘*Lord, I beseech thee, give me understanding!*’

* * * *

“I am now in Paris: we leave it to-morrow: I have signed away the property; and William, they tell me, is on his way to his father. Celeste has had the charge of him. She is in future to be the nurse of his sister: I do not like this—Marie wants no nurse. Her presence will remind me of what I had better forget; it will bring Pendyffryn before my eyes. Happy, miserable Pendyffryn! Can it be possible that a spot at once so lovely, so much the abode of charity, of love, of every moral virtue, should have been also, for a time, the abode of guilt? Can it be possible, that the confidence, the affection, the charities, that at one time surrounded me, were less the attributes of a pure religion than the concealments, the doubts, the

jealousies, the sacrifices, which have since occurred? I am returned to the Forest, but not to my former abode. Celeste met us on the road, and Father Mac Cardwell is gone with William to London. By this time he is safe with his natural protectors. They would not let me see him, yet he must have been at hand. Augustine however assures me, that when my marriage vows are absolved—when I am the sworn inmate of some religious establishment—all such restrictions shall cease. Augustine is kind, but mysterious. I wish I had not met him: he has revived too many agitating recollections.

“I have not yet seen my younger treasure. Peltier retains her until she is vaccinated: for that purpose they take her to some town. I am wretched till she joins me. I am dissatisfied for various reasons, and would rather have remained at the old chateau. It was not quite so lonely. The lower rooms were full of inhabitants: I heard voices in the distance, and had got accustomed to the attendance of Peltier. But I shall be easier when they bring me my child, and there is a

garden to this place, where she will have liberty to exercise. That at the chateau was too public for us. Why such caution now? If my husband has ceased to inquire for me, if William is no longer in concealment, what can be the motive for secrecy?

“I am not sorry to have Celeste; she talks to me of my boy, she tells me that he is the most amiable and intelligent of children, full of life, of health, of affection. Heaven bless her that she has encouraged the latter propensity! it will endear him to his father. Poor soul! I forgive her all her duplicity for the care that she has taken of him—for the love that she bears him.

“The Confessor gave her his promise to write to her from London. He was to leave William in charge of a careful person there, who would deliver him up to his friends. Celeste is angry that she did not also go: she wished to witness his restoration. She is uneasy, but assures me that there is no cause for uneasiness—that the Priest dare not deceive. Surely she is right? He would not

deceive—he would not be unfaithful—I don't know: I am puzzled. Did he not teach me to deceive? Are his actions consistent? And why did he always betray a desire for money? Father Austin was not so. He never drained my purse, even now that I have resigned to him my property, is it not for the exaltation of his church? He himself is indifferent to gold. But Mac Cardwell had a mission to perform: he had many missions: he could do nothing without means. He acted as the agent for others. I may be unjust by accusing him of avarice. Mother of mercy, forgive the sacrilegious thought!

“ This house is in a court, the walls of which are high, but the garden is teeming with produce. How I long for my precious companion! There is a smooth green turf: I shall see her playing about. The birds, and the insects, how much they will amuse her! She will become a child of nature. I shall teach her, that nothing comes by chance, that every thing is made for our use, and for our gratification, by her invisible Father—by

an all-powerful Creator, whom she must serve, worship, and obey; who is all-sufficient—whose service is happiness and freedom.

“Alas! my sweet child, can I say this with truth?—am I fitted to instruct?—am I instructed myself?—do I understand the term ‘*all-sufficient*?’

“I try to recollect the precepts of my mother—of our excellent *gouvernante*—of the Père Montcalm. But they are as if I had forgotten them: they confuse, they perplex me. Those of Mrs. Murray, which are of later date, dwell more on my memory. Is it because they are of later date, or that they are easier of comprehension? She obliged me to get off-book a great deal of Scripture. I could not shut my ears to what was before my eyes. I suffered a penance for my obedience to her, but was under the necessity of submitting, not only to the penance, but to the act for which it was incurred. It is strange how well those tasks are remembered. How accurately I can repeat much of the Gospel of St. John—that gospel of love—besides chapters of the Epistles. There are some verses of Timothy

which dwell on my mind : they relate to the instruction of children. Can it be wrong to remember these things ? Can it be heretical ?—I hope not, for they are my food, my solace. I lie down in peace after repeating them. If I cannot sleep, they calm my restless thoughts. They are a secret treasury of knowledge fresh opened to my comfort. Has God renewed them in my mind for the benefit of my daughter ? Celeste has heard from the Confessor : his letter is dated from London, but the post mark is Nantes. It was to come so far, he said, by private hand. She is not pleased ; she would rather the stamp had been London. Good God ! can she doubt ? I have pressed her to tell me ; but she denies that she doubts ; yet I expected to have seen her better pleased. I expected to feel happier myself. But my nerves are so shaken, that the slightest cloud on a brow, the least remarkable alteration in the expression or manner of those whom I see, affects me with terror.

“ William, no doubt, is safe at Pendyffryn, why should he not ? What motive could there be in

detaining him now—now that those estates are relinquished: he will be the pupil of Doctor Bentley. I often recur to the conversations which took place with that good man—to the arguments which he held with my Confessor. I remember his denying that there was Scripture authority for auricular confession. I hope he was right, for there are many of my feelings I should not like to confess.

“It is a great resource to think over what then passed. Perhaps the short absence of my darling is a merciful dispensation, as it gives me time for thoughts of the kind. Alas! the scenes in that library are ever present to my mind: I hear my Confessor vindicate his creed: I hear Doctor Bentley refute his favourite doctrines: I remember the harshness of the one, the merciful tenets of the other. O that I had such an opportunity given me again!—*that I had a Bible!*”

* * * *

“I have had the opportunity: a Bible has been lent me, surely the gift is from God! It is strange—

it is miraculous: a feeble old man labours in the garden; he is perfectly deaf, but his looks are intelligent; and once or twice when he caught me in tears, his eyes have been turned toward heaven with infinite fervour, and his hand raised as if to direct me whence help was to be had. I became interested in this old man, but durst not address him, lest Celeste might observe me and he be dismissed—for she had told me not to do so, as he was both deaf and dumb. But one day in her absence, I surprised him alone. He was praying aloud in a spot the most remote, and held a book in his hand. That book was a Bible. I asked him by signs to let me look into its pages. He gave it, and told me I might keep it till morning; that it was the word of the Lord, and *all-sufficient* for my peace. I took it to my chamber, and read it in secret. I knelt down, and petitioned that it might be to me revelation. It was revelation—I understood many things; and I grieved when the time to return it approached. The old man was deaf, but not dumb, as they told me. When

opportunity occurred I learned his story. He had been for some years a Roman Catholic priest, the suffragan of a strict disciplinarian—one who exacted to the utmost all Popish observances. He served him with zeal, and grew old in the service. But he was attacked with a severe illness, and was believed to be dying.

“ Priests stood by his bed, and heard his confessions. . Absolution was pronounced, justification admitted, extreme unction administered, the anointing with oil, the sprinkling with ashes, in short all was gone through—no one form omitted; but, when every thing was over, and the priests were departing, his *curé*—the steady exacter of ceremonies, the inflicter of penances, the advocate of justification—leant over his bed, and whispered these words in his ear: ‘ Trust not in these things, they are not *all-sufficient!* Think not of the Virgin; trouble not your poor soul about the saints: cast thyself upon the Lord, the one only atonement! Believe in His ‘ *one oblation, once offered;*’ remember His words to the thief on the cross, and

thou wilt be saved, if thou believest to meet thy Saviour in Paradise !' *

“ The sick man recovered. These words dwelt in his thoughts : he reminded the speaker of their import. But the latter denied to have used them ; and accused him of repeating his own heretical ravings. The poor *curé* was dismissed, or rather he left his employer, threw off his vestments, and with them the errors of his religion, embraced the Reformed faith, and the humble profession of a gardener. A more devout and pious Christian cannot breathe the breath of heaven. He is every thing to me. Oh ! if my child were returned, would I have a wish beyond this place, except for the sake of her instruction ? But she is not come. She is still at the Chateau : she is to remain some time longer in charge of the woman Peltier.

“ Am I deceived ? Is she really there ? Oh, that I could walk, that I could creep through the thicket ! that I could watch, night after night, in

* The above is an undoubted fact.

sight of her habitation ! that I could get a peep of my treasure !

“ Celeste’s health is declining. I perceive that she is anxious. Poor girl ! she fears for her life. She wishes to go home : her friends live in a village called Chinon. I am afraid that she will leave me ; but there is no getting away, and her confinement is as strict as my own.

“ I have found a little map. It describes the road to Nantes, to L’Orient, to St. Malo. I will keep it very safe. If they should deceive me ; if I should be the victim of avarice ; if, instead of a religious expiation, Mac Cardwell should have concocted a systematic scheme for his own exclusive emolument, where is my obligation to abide by his guidance ? Is it not dreadful to form a suspicion of any professing Christian ? Is it not impious ? Yet the old man’s story is true. His vicar could deceive—most horribly deceive ! Should Mac Cardwell be false, should Father Austin lead me astray, should the venerated Père Montcalm be himself deceived, what remains for the miserable Clo-

tilde? Could I convince myself on this point—could I think as this old gardener—I would scale my prison walls: nothing should prevent the attempt. Might I not claim the protection of my husband, yet not forsake the religion of my mother? He is generous, he is just. Under his guardianship my conscience was free. Oh! if what they tell me be untrue! if the story of the assault be exaggerated, if that blood-stained witness should be a misrepresentation—and my own truthful sister, I think, told me that it was—if my noble-minded husband acted from a sense of duty alone, not from pique or jealousy, what a dupe I have been! for how much have they made me responsible!

“ My Marie! my innocent, my helpless child! would thou wert safe under the parental roof, in free and happy England! Alas! I have forfeited the privilege of home; I have separated myself from protection; I have been duped into the voluntary relinquishment of my happiness!

“ Mac Cardwell has been here: I have been obliged to confess. Shall my innocent Marie ever

confess? Mother of mercies! how much is involved in that question! Guide me, direct me, my Father and my God! Thou, who art 'of purer eyes than to behold iniquity,' preserve her purity, even as Thou art pure!

“A stranger has been to see me—the same person who attended us to Paris. He says that my child is in health, that she is at the Chateau; but that there is no intention of returning her to me. I feel that I am deceived, and that treason surrounds me. This cruel detention confirms many suspicions that I would fain have rejected, but which the contradictory answers of Celeste first gave rise to in my mind. Oh, that I could place my darling out of the power of these people!—that I could escape! This person seems compassionate: he offers to aid me. My money is gone; I have left myself destitute; I have parted with power. But this man knows who I am, and that my husband is rich. He seems to want money, for he lays a great stress on its necessity; and poverty may induce him, as much as compassion, to release

a poor prisoner like myself, and to restore me my child. Yet he was, perhaps is, in the pay of these people, for they trusted him to attend us to Paris. He seemed disappointed when I told him that my property was gone, and not quite so zealous to befriend me; but this might be that he knows we cannot get on without money, and is afraid to incur the dangers of pursuit. But Nantes is not so far, and there I might be safe. Oh, no, not there! it is too near St. Aubin, I now recollect. There must be some other sea-port—no matter where: I could walk, I could hide in the woods. Freedom would give strength, and I can live very long without food; I could carry my child, and take with me hence what should suffice her for days. With my face turned towards England, I should never grow faint. Would that I had not parted with all!—that I had gold! He says that we cannot travel without. There remain, however, some trinkets, and I can faithfully promise him a future reward. My mind is made up—my scruples are over—I am no longer a coward. He says that I shall see him

in a fortnight; that it will take all that time to arrange for securing my child, and for our mutual escape. How shall I calm the perturbations of my heart?—how endure the suspense of that fortnight? The old gardener and his Bible remain. What a mercy that I was not induced to betray that poor old man! I was right: there could be, surely, no obligation to carry confession so far.

“Yes, the gardener remains, and he leaves me his Bible. Blessed old man!—ever blessed loan! Oh! how such reading soothes my anxiety—how it calms, yet inspires me! What courage it imparts—what a tower of strength! Yes; ‘*the gospel of Christ is the tower of God unto salvation for them that believe.*’ What a solace is that! Again, we are told, that faith is belief; we are desired to be ‘strong in the faith,’ ‘to cast all our burden on Christ;’ who is ‘the rock of ages.’ God not only permits me to rely on this strength, but he commands me to do so. How do I know that he commands? Because I believe—because I know that he has spoken—and I cannot believe

without I know. Faith is belief, and faith has a large grasp, for it takes in the reason and the understanding. I see in the inspired word that God permits us to understand—that he tells us—that he has spoken—that he bids us ‘*ask in faith nothing wavering.*’ What a privilege is this ! Oh, that I may have grace to use it as I should !

“Some days of the fortnight have passed: the time draws near; the time that I imagined was never to arrive. How short in comparison with what I expected ! But Hope has winged the hours, and Faith points to their conclusion.

“I build myself a tower in my prison : I mount to its summit, and I see the road of truth, illumined by the light of revelation. What a fortnight has this been ! What years of perplexities, distractions, delusions are pressed into this short space of time ! How have they crowded, surrounded, but not overwhelmed me ! My path is as clear as the day. I PRAY, AND MY PLAGUES ARE DISPERSED.

“My child ! my sweet Marie ! shall I indeed

see you again? Is it possible that to-morrow will reunite us? Is it possible this stranger is faithful? Or—may he not deceive, as did others?”

Here was, indeed, a glorious vindication of the much-injured Lady Trevillion. How would Mary weep and rejoice over a document so precious! How much must it soften Sir Charles! Yes; Clotilde was undoubtedly the maniac of Saumur. I would send off her Journal without delay: I would relieve one anxious heart to the utmost of my power. The conclusion of that Journal would be a solace to the sister, even were the sweet writer not restored to her senses. It had evidently been broken off when she perpetrated that wild act of stealing her child, the issue of which was disappointment, detection, and madness.

CHAPTER XXXII.

IT was now I sincerely rejoiced that Innes was at hand ; for though I had already prospered to a miracle, still my perplexities were innumerable, and to go on acting alone was quite out of the question.

Here was André, a snake in the grass—a thorn in my sleeve—a spy on my actions—an incumbrance which I knew not how to get rid of. Were I to accuse him of breaking open my writing desk, where now was my witness? Could I produce any proof? Bourke had gone off; and as to the language-master, he would be sure not to betray his employer. The abstracted papers had been

restored to their places. I could expect nothing but worry; and perhaps run a great risk in making an accusation, which there were no means of supporting. Besides, one step injudiciously taken, might—as Bourke often warned me—undo all I had done, and check my proceedings on the eve of success. Ten months had elapsed since the incident at Saumur—time enough to transport Clotilde to the antipodes: and as for the child, though aware of its destination, we might not, without being legally authorized, have the power to withdraw it from the guardianship of its ecclesiastical protectors. But Innes, as I have said, was happily near me, and putting the Journal, with Mary Trevillion's MS. into my pocket—safe out of reach of skeleton keys—I forthwith set out to consult with, and tell him my story.

It was, of course, only a very brief outline, but his zeal and indignation were sufficiently roused. I told him my plan of sending or going to Paris. He strongly advised, as a preliminary step, that we should put an end to the intermeddling of my

courier or sketching-master, by laying an embargo on his personal liberty—the circumstance of the writing-desk furnishing us with power.

I urged, on the other hand, the absence of Bourke, and the original deficiency of proof.

“You should,” replied Innes, “have taken down in writing the depositions of this witness, and have had them attested before the proper authorities. But we have the language-master still, and our first step should be to bring him to impeach André.”

“And put that fellow on his guard?” said I.

“We should not allow him time,” resumed Innes, “our safety depends upon promptitude. You know where this language-master lives, we should go to him directly, make him acknowledge to translating the letters, and immediately place the culprit under arrest. It may not be necessary to commit at once: could he be frightened into the acknowledgments we wanted, his future disposal might depend on your mercy. But to leave him his freedom even for a day—a few hours only

—under present circumstances, strikes me as an indulgence which you might sorely repent.”

“I sorely repent having any thing to do with him: it was the most ill-advised step I ever took in my life.”

“By-gones are by-gones,” replied Innes, laughing, “it was, to say the least of it, a hazard; but we do not know yet. He possesses, it is clear, the confidence of the parties, and has means, within reach, to render null and void all you are doing. Sir Charles Trevillion should be written to without delay; but let us, in the first instance, secure you from the machinations of this precious artist.”

“It will be better to write than to go to Paris,” I observed; “we can send an express there to day; and soon as it is dispatched, I must fly to Derval. Not an hour should be lost in pursuing our lights, and finding Lady Trevillion—if she be still in this world.”

“Not a moment that we can possibly avoid,” returned Innes; “for these persecuting Confessors, having gone such lengths already, will leave nothing

undone to secure their advantages, and save them from discovery. We know not to what crime the fear of pecuniary loss or exposure may yet lead them. To gain any point by appealing to justice, where an unprincipled Jesuit like Mac Cardwell, and an influential native like Father Austin, are interested in our discomfiture, is no easy matter."

"Sir Charles I hope may assist us," I said; "his right as a husband cannot be denied."

"He is too well known here," rejoined Innes; "his presence at this juncture might do more harm than good. Besides, we must be stirring before he could arrive. It is so easy for those priests to put us on the wrong scent; they have done so already. I would rather work on my own way without Sir Charles; indeed, I doubt very much the policy of yet communicating with him—at least I would not do so till our statements can assume a clearer form, and our position be better known to ourselves."

"What, not let Miss Trevillion partake in our hopes? Postpone, till I know not when, sending

her the Journal that she would so rejoice to receive?"

"I doubt," my friend still objected with some seriousness, "if it be kind to show hopes which as yet have so slight a foundation."

"But we lose time. Let us at all events dispose of your courier."

The poverty-struck lodging, as it had been designated by Bourke, of the translator of letters was easily found. And as that individual reluctantly answered our interrogations, his appearance might have been a study for Shakespere's Apothecary, or, "to a fanciful view," he might have stood in the shoes of that immortal manikin.

Innes, skilled in extracting information as well as in detecting evasions, soon gained his point, even so far as to obtain the first rough copies of the abstracted letters. With these irrefragable witnesses in our possession, we proceeded forthwith to a magistrate with whom my friend was acquainted, and having obtained the necessary authority, and the assistance of two acute police-

men, we soon lodged Monsieur André in the Hotel de Ville.

I shall not repeat the protestations, denials, or violent vituperations of the astonished artist, or depict his rage, or his attempts to turn the tables on Bourke, whom he accused of purloining the papers himself, and making his escape after implicating another. He was not, in the first moments of anger and surprise, likely to make a concession; so we secured for him a small chamber in the debtors' prison; yet, afraid to trust such a slippery eel to the charge of his own countrymen, left the Scotch coachman of Innes, a right trusty warden, to keep guard on the captive until our return.

Having thus for the present incarcerated André, and so put him out of the way of doing mischief, we next held a consultation upon the chances of expecting further aid from Louise, or of following up the directions already procured, and going in quest of the child. This last seemed the more promising plea of the two, and calculating that, if

not deceived as to the place, I could be back at Tours by the following morning, we resolved to set off the next hour.

I say we, for my friend would insist upon accompanying me. He prepared Mrs. Innes to receive the expected charge, and was waiting for me at the door of his house, when the idea occurred to each of us at the same moment, that we had no authority to demand the child from its guardians.

Here was a stumbling-block at the outset; and after another consultation, no plan seemed likely to be attended with so little delay, so little noise, and more security, than that of obtaining an order for her being given up from André himself, who, when we returned to him to demand it, was obviously much more subdued. After sundry denials, protestations, and delays, he was brought to acknowledge that there had been a little girl called *Marie en pensionne* with his sister, for the previous half year; and that she was then at nurse in La Vendée, where he was daily expected, as *Mademoiselle* had become so attached to him and

Matilde, that she was unhappy without either the one or the other. Had we not already been cognizant of most of the circumstances he told us, we never should have succeeded in getting the order. But, on finding that his secrets were already in our possession, he made a virtue of necessity, and signed the paper we dictated. A steam-boat was just leaving the bridge for Saumur: we threw ourselves on board; the tide was on the ebb, and our passage down the river kept tolerable pace with my impatience. We arrived at Saumur in good time, crossed the river, and hired a carriage, which brought us, before night-fall, to the farm we were in quest of. We found it a retired, but very pleasing spot, in what might deserve the name of the bocage, though not in reality within that privileged circle. Some little children were playing in the garden, and I soon distinguished, by her beautiful fairness and her dress, the daughter of Sir Charles Trevillion. A girl caught her up, and would have borne her away, but she made some resistance; and I arrested the flight in an authoritative voice,

which, as no one was near to protect her, the girl obeyed; and returned, as she was desired, to her place.

The sweetest and brightest blue eyes in the world were seldom absent from my thoughts; and when the sweet infant smiled in my face, I should have known her amongst thousands as a Mary Trevillion. There were none of the elders of the family at home; they were all out in the harvest. Three little boys belonging to the house, with their *bonne*, not much older, were the only persons we saw; and telling the latter that we were come for Mademoiselle Mary, she was ordered to prepare the child for a journey.

Such a command alarmed her exceedingly. Afraid of her employers, should she surrender her charge, but still more afraid of two stern strangers, the poor little *bonne* stood trembling and doubtful. I read her the order, which reassured her a little; and after a few attempts to procrastinate, in hopes, I suppose, that in the meanwhile her employers would return, she equipped the dear infant for its

journey. This was so far performed with ease. But when I came to take little Mary in my arms, in order to carry her away, she made such desperate battle, and cried so loud and so bitterly, that I really knew not how to proceed. Even Innes, more experienced in such scenes than myself, was not more successful in his pacific overtures. And while thus at a pause, the people of the house came home from their labours. Half a dozen tongues now set on us at once; but we produced our order, saying, that Monsieur André was unavoidably detained at Tours, and that we had come in his place to take away the child. The mother of the family made a demand for expenses, which I most willingly paid, not forgetting to commend her care as a nurse; which well-timed piece of flattery was so grateful, that the good dame offered to speed the child a few miles in the carriage, an offer we not only accepted, but encroached upon, by persuading her to come on where it was our intention to sleep for the night.

Next morning we dismissed her with a hand-

some gratuity, and separated mutually pleased. Mrs. Innes received our precious deposit, and so many young faces and affectionate voices soon reconciled the little stranger to its new home and novel associates. Having acceded to the more considerate counsels of Innes, and abstained from writing to Paris until there was something definitive to say, I now made up my packet for Mary, with a circumstantial account of our proceedings, not omitting the very happy result of our having recovered his daughter for Sir Charles Trevillion. The journal, that transcript of a beloved sister's feelings—of her thoughts, as they sprung at the moment—would, I was aware, awaken the saddest recollections, yet at the same time impart consolation.

My little history was concluded with assurances of unabating zeal, and I promised to transmit her the earliest intelligence when I had any information to communicate. This done, and the packet dispatched by a trusty express—for, uncertain whether the Trevillions were still in Paris, we dared not run the risk of sending such a missive by

mail—Innes joined me again, when we agreed to make one more attempt upon the fears and the avarice of André, previous to my setting forward, on the strength of Lady Trevillion's journal, to traverse the labyrinths of La Vendée.

Accordingly, proceeding to the place of the artist's detention, we jointly taxed him with being privy to a traitorous conspiracy, which had robbed Sir Charles Trevillion of his domestic comfort, and broken the links of an union which promised so much happiness to both parties. We spoke in the severest terms of his own criminal conduct in purloining from my desk certain papers relative to the Trevillion family, thereby not only committing a robbery, but compromising himself with the guilt and conspiracy of others. Obstinate denial was all we obtained; and finding him so hardened, Innes gave me a hint not to proffer any bribe. We told him he was to be transferred to a very different sort of prison next day; at which he changed colour, but suffered us to go without making the slightest concession.

To wait the answer from Paris would be to hazard all chances of future discoveries ; for André, however closely guarded, might find some means of communication with his employers ; and indeed, the very circumstances of his arrest and detention were sufficient to create alarm, and might even peril our success. It was therefore decided between Innes and myself, that I should leave the Rue Royale very early next morning, proceed forthwith to Derval, and take up my quarters there like any other chance traveller. I might easily find an opportunity of speaking with Louise, and securing any documents in her possession relative to Celeste, when, acting upon what information they might contain, I was to follow up the pursuit of Lady Trevillion.

I was glad, when night came, to sit down in my apartments, and, "nobody with me at sea but myself," refresh myself with an hour's quietness. But it was not ordained, as Bourke would have said, that I should enjoy such indulgence ; for, a very few minutes after reaching the *hôtel*, I was told

that a person, seemingly on business, desired to see me.

Such a request, at such a time, was not to be refused; and a stranger was presently shown into my room. He came, as he said, on a mission of delicacy, and presented me the following lines:—

“ If Major Melville is determined to go through with his present undertaking, the writer of this offers to aid him; for he is able to lead, by a very direct path, where, to all appearance, the way is impassable.

“ For the assistance thus offered, the friends of the *victim* must, in the first place, pledge themselves for the safety of their informant; they must secure for him a free passage, and safe conduct, to New York; and likewise supply him with a small sum of money—say three thousand francs—to keep him independent when he gets there. If Major Melville will put under his hand that these conditions shall be faithfully performed, the writer repeats, that within two days his errand shall be done, and the *lost one* restored.

“ One word, in conclusion. Should this not meet with approbation, Major Melville need not indulge the slightest hope of success.”

I requested the bearer of this extraordinary note to wait my return from speaking with a friend ; and, obtaining his promise to remain in my room, I flew off with my prize to Innes.

“ We seem to sail with the tide,” I said, placing the anonymous scroll in his hand.

He read it twice with tantalizing deliberation, while I expected an instantaneous burst of applause. He turned it round, examined the direction, and took out his pencil, as if to make a calculation.

“ Three thousand francs,” he observed, “ a modest demand !—three thousand francs, exclusive of the free passage to America. But if we take into the per contra account all you may have to encounter in the way of disappointment, the waste of time, the repeated—perhaps unsuccessful—journeys, bribes to induce information, rewards if obtained, I doubt very much if the demand is so exorbitant, and

whether the first expense would not be the less of the two. I doubt——”

“Doubt no more, my dear friend!” I exclaimed, rather petulantly; “for were the demand made in Napoleons instead of francs, I should not hesitate for one single second. What is the value of three thousand francs in comparison with the peace of the Trevillions?—in comparison with the recovery of Clotilde? If it were only to save a few days’, a few hours’ suspense, I should think that pitiful sum well expended.”

“I trust that your means may ever meet your liberality!” said the kind-hearted Innes, grasping my hand. “But stop one moment, Melville. You will not, surely, bind yourself by an unconditional promise?”

“Every moment seems lost till I close with this offer, till I obtain the promised instructions. Suppose Lady Trevillion were within one day’s journey, and that our delay and over-caution gave the opportunity to transport her where she might be heard of no more! nay, her persecutors might *remove* her beyond recal!”

“Suppose, my dear Melville, that we could enforce this promise without coming into terms; suppose your anonymous correspondent were no other than André himself?”

“I have thought of this already; and, for that very reason, wish to make a promise which cannot be recalled. We have André in our power by a very slender thread. I should rather come to terms with an anonymous correspondent than with a detected culprit.”

“Well,” resumed Innes, “the game seems to me in your hands; and I can only give my advice, neither to hazard delay, nor to lose your chances by precipitancy. You must, at all events, insist that a witness be present when you come to sign and to seal.”

To this I could make no objection, and, taking Innes with me, I returned to the *hôtel*.

We found the man waiting; of whom I inquired, what was to be done? and where was my security for the fulfilment of the contract?

“Sign this paper,” he replied, handing me some

writing; "you will see that all is fair and above board. Soon as it is signed I will take you to the writer."

The paper merely stated that I bound myself to ensure a free passage to New York, personal freedom, and three thousand francs, in return for information which would lead directly to the lady I sought for.

"This will not do," objected my friend, the cautious Innes: "it is not at all a fair contract. When Major Melville actually recovers the lady he will pay down the money, but no sooner. As to the American passage, that shall be secured in the first ship that sails after the writer performs his part of the stipulation."

"I am content," replied the stranger. "If Major Melville binds himself to the fulfilment of your offer—personal freedom, a voyage to New York, and three thousand francs—I promise for my employer, that he will deliver the lady into your hands."

Innes drew up the agreement, and afterwards witnessed when I had signed.

“ Now, sir,” said the agent, putting the paper in his pocket, “ I will take you, if you wish, to my friend.”

Innes accompanied us. We walked down the street; and ten minutes more brought us, as we had suspected, into the presence of André.

I pass over his protestations of innocence, his ingenious palliations, his assurances of having been led quite by accident into a knowledge and participation of the particulars to be divulged, and give, in his own words, the following recital :—

“ It will be two years next September since I went, for the recovery of my health, to spend some months with a sister who resides in the south. The house she inhabits is in a remote situation ; one of those old *chateaux* which belonged to the ancient *noblesse*, and which had stood many hard blows during the sixteen years' war. But a few rooms remain in tolerable repair. There is a large farm, with some vineyards attached. My brother-in-law acts as steward to the estate, and rents a good portion of land. He is a republican ; but makes no

open profession of his principles—especially since the Restoration. About that period, some emigrant priests—poor wandering creatures, who had been seeking a livelihood in whatever way they could obtain it, and wherever it could be found,—returned to the country. Truly, Messieurs, there was so great an influx of the same gentry that neither Government nor Church could provide for the half of them; so that many were put to expedients. Some established small schools in the more remote provinces, wherever they found any of the old leaven remaining. My brother-in-law, though no friend to their order, gave leave to half-a-dozen of the better sort, who were not entirely beggars, to inhabit part of the Chateau. By so doing, he not only obliged his wife, who was a *religieuse*, but secured influence amongst the loyal or bigoted party. In return, these priests shared the doles which they contrived to extort from a few pious dupes with my sister: doles readily supplied by the superstitious to whom these ecclesiastics afforded spiritual consolation, as well as instruction to the

rising generation. Thus making themselves useful on more counts than one.

“Few or no families of the higher classes have as yet returned to that retired country; consequently my sister and her inmates have it all their own way; indeed, the neighbourhood is so completely deserted, that but for the clergy it would be insupportably dull.

“You may judge, Messieurs, from my social disposition and acquirements, how very much I must have felt myself lost; and what a relief I must have anticipated from the tedium of rural life, when one morning before day-light the welcome sound of carriage wheels was heard to enter the court.

“Starting up immediately, and throwing on my clothes, I was hastening down stairs, when my sister intercepting me, checked my impatience.

“‘Go back to your chamber, André,’ she said, ‘and keep in retirement; the less that you observe, the greater your safety. In two hours hence the carriage will be gone: you must not

acknowledge to have heard it. I forgot that your chamber was over the gateway.'

" 'But whom does it bring here?' I anxiously inquired.

" 'I can make you no answer,' she said; 'one word of curiosity, and this house is no longer your home. When *they* are gone,' she added, putting her finger to her lips in a significant manner, 'I may perhaps tell you something.'

" By her very great caution, I suspected that one of our reverend fraternity had got into some scrape, and that his superiors had come secretly to investigate the matter. Our discipline was not always very strict, so that this seemed the most probable solution of the mystery. I willingly took Madame Peltier's advice, and kept out of sight till the inquisitors were off. But no sooner did their carriage wheels sound a retreat than curiosity got the better of fear, and I descended the stairs to see what was going on. Except a morose looking member, whom I always detested, none of the brotherhood made their appearance. My sister again cautioned

me not to ask questions, saying none but ourselves had heard the noise of the carriage. This might or might not be, as the clerical quarters were distant from my chamber. But at all events no good could accrue from disbelieving her.

“A fortnight passed over without the promised explanation, though I frequently jogged my sister’s memory upon the subject. But she always silenced me by saying, that curiosity was a very troublesome propensity, especially in such households as hers, advising me rather to encourage forgetfulness.

“Now a monotonous life was not very favourable to the course she recommended, and though my recent accident rendered me rather dependent, I still cherished the most gentlemanly principles. These urged the necessity of not submitting to insult, and of avenging myself, which in the present instance I could not do more effectually than by watching Madame Peltier, and getting possession of her secret; for a secret there certainly was. I had seen her prepare, and convey out of

sight, such delicate viands as are used by the sick ; certainly not such as were partaken in public. One evening I remarked her manner to be unusually flurried, and, as she seemed anxious that we should all retire early to bed, I resolved to keep an eye on her movements.

“ About one in the morning my zeal was rewarded. I detected her, heavily loaded with firewood, cautiously ascending a rather ruinous staircase, which led to a remote quarter of the building. The door on the head of that staircase was invariably locked ; my sister assigning as a reason for such carefulness, that the apartments beyond were perfectly waste, and that that wing of the chateau was in a dangerous state. It was not the first time that I had seen her, when she thought herself unobserved, mounting these interdicted stairs ; neither was it my first attempt to follow in the same perilous direction. But the barred door at the top had ever impeded my progress. This night it was open ; and the faint flickering of a distant lamp directed me onwards.

“Coming to the end of a gallery, and to the crevice whence issued that light, I heard, as I thought, the most pitiable wailing that ever met my ears. But Peltier’s voice, sometimes loud, sometimes soothing, deterred me from venturing too near. I was, however, master of a secret; and next morning on reproaching my sister for her unnatural reserve, at the same time assuming to know more than I did, she gave me a full explanation.

“The carriage, it seemed, had brought her a lodger; which lodger was a young French lady of distinction, married, unfortunately, to an English Protestant gentleman, who being an heretical bigot, and a tyrant withal, had the bad taste to persecute her on account of her religion—recollect, Messieurs, I only repeat the words of Madame, my sister—the poor lady had therefore no resource, if she would not turn apostate, but to quit her husband. So she had fled from his coercions, and was hiding from his search.

“‘Being an immensely rich heiress,’ continued

my sister, 'the church has of course taken her under its protection ; and she will soon be secured by conventual protection from the bigoted persecution which pursues her. The convent no doubt will be handsomely endowed. One object in her coming here was to get over her confinement, the poor lady being *enciente* when forced to make her escape. She has been a mother these ten days. You may judge what a weight is removed from my mind, and what I have had to go through. But, ah ! André, we must not think of self when holy Church is concerned. The lady was very poorly last night, but is better to-day.'

“ ‘ If she is so very rich,' I said, ‘ no doubt you will be amply rewarded.'

“ ‘ No doubt I shall be justly repaid, especially if the child remains here ; it is a charming little creature, and sufficiently strong. I attend both with the tenderest care ; but were they as poor as they are rich, my tenderness would be the same. I meant all along to confide in and employ you ; to be, in short, the framer of your fortunes. But

have not had time for a moment's conversation, as you may judge from all I have to do. Madame nurses her baby; it keeps them both quiet; they have no other attendant than me. We must use the utmost secrecy until she is legally rid of her husband, and legally possessed of her estates. Don't mention the subject to Peltier; he might not like you to be in the secret.'

"I inquired if any of our clerical inmates were privy to the affair. She said not; but admitted that Madame had been accompanied by two clergymen, one of whom was expected to visit her again. He would probably come, as before, in the night; and I must take care not to be seen on the watch.

"Here, Messieurs, was my first knowledge of this mysterious transaction. You see it was perfectly a chance. But my sister's explanation surprised and delighted me. I felt myself, though poor, no longer dependent. Peltier would soon make me useful. The good benefactress of myself and my

daughter was dead. We had buried Madame de La Curelle in July. Matilde lived on the bounty of one sister. I was indebted for a temporary home to another, whose cleverness I had always respected, but who on this occasion won my warmest admiration, both for the skill and the secrecy with which she conducted so delicate a business. I pressed for the names of the parties. She denied having been told, but I doubted her veracity in this respect; and being easily hurt by the appearance of reserve toward myself, I determined once more to assert my own rights, by obtaining the knowledge I desired.

“By means best known to myself, but perfectly honourable, Messieurs, I assure you, the rank of the parties, their names, and the name of her property, were soon in my possession. I traced her first arrival at Derval. I followed the Chevalier and his sister from Derval to Nantes, where I understood that a little boy had been stolen, and that splendid rewards were offered for his recovery. Overcome

by compassion for the doubly bereaved father, I determined, if possible, to find him his son, but unhappily failed of success.

“ Conjecturing that the priest who accompanied the lady might be privy to the concealment of the child, I returned home, determined, when next he should visit the Chateau, to track his subsequent movements. Unluckily he had been there during my absence, and, though my zeal in the matter was lively as ever, my exhausted finances obliged me reluctantly to give up the search.”

“ Did it not occur to you,” inquired Innes, “ that the information you already possessed, if carried at once to the injured father of the child, would effect your purpose ?”

“ I should, by so doing, have compromised my sister,” returned the artist. “ Therefore principle interfered to prevent the operations of pity. I certainly panted to restore the unhappy Chevalier his son. I would have travelled all over the continent to effect such a purpose. But I wished to do so without injuring my sister. In process of

time I renewed my inquiries; for by the reward being increased I knew the child was not found; but though unwearied in my exertions, I failed of success, and, overwhelmed by pity and disappointment, spoke on the subject to my sister.

“ Alarmed, lest my feelings should get the better of prudence, and lead to an exposure of everything, she expressed herself most warmly on the occasion; represented the rashness of my proceedings; assured me, that by interfering I might do the poor lady an irreparable injury, raise doubts as to the security of her present asylum, place her under less tender care; perhaps accelerate her removal to the Convent, and consequent separation from her infant. She urged the very influential position of those who acted as guardians to both; and warned me so awfully, if I meddled or made in the matter, that, however reluctant to obey, I was forced to abide by her dictation.

“ I remained at the Chateau all winter. The lady was twice visited by her Confessor, but I saw neither the one nor the other. She never left her

apartment, which was airy enough, but was unceasingly occupied in nursing her child. In the month of April this same priest came openly to the house, his avowed purpose being to inquire into the state of our reverend inmates, to whom he gave some money and employment on a mission elsewhere, which would detain them at a distance for three or four days. Madame, during that period, was excessively ill. I believe she had received some news of a harassing nature; but the result of the priest's visit was a journey to Paris. I was now first employed in this mysterious affair, and obtained a sight of both parties. I was engaged to attend them for a week. Madame was with difficulty persuaded to leave the infant behind; and I heard her say, as I waited in the passage, that 'nothing but the hope of restoring William to his father could have induced a separation from her darling.'

“This piece of information was mortifying to me. I wished to be the happy instrument of that restoration. But there was no use in lamenting my

misfortunes. We travelled as fast as the poor lady's strength would permit, and remained only two whole days at Paris. She was most eager to complete the business which brought her so far, and thought the hour would never come for her return to our old Chateau.

“ Alas ! Messieurs, she never returned. I conclude they thought it best, after her appearance in Paris, to change her quarters. Another forest residence was found, about four leagues farther south. I forgot to mention, that an ecclesiastic of superior intelligence, and with an air more *distingué* than that of the usual Confessor, joined us at Paris. At La Fleche, on our way back, I was dismissed, and ordered by my employers to go home to my sister. But, anxious for the fate of the beautiful lady, I lingered behind, and, following secretly, never lost sight of her till she entered the court of her new habitation, attended by the priest, whom she called Father Austin, and a woman named Celeste, who met us at La Fleche.

“ On reaching the Chateau I was surprised to see

my sister walking about openly, with Mademoiselle Marie in her arms. She took me to one side, and said, 'Listen to me, André: this is a nursed child, which I have been to Chinon to fetch. You will hear in the house that her parents live at Nantes. It would have been impossible to conceal her, when the mother was gone, especially as being weaned makes her so cross. You understand.'

" 'I don't understand why she is not sent to her mother. Have you forgotten your promises to that unfortunate lady?'

" 'André,' said my sister, 'you are much too inquisitive. The baby must be weaned and vaccinated also; after which, we shall most likely send her to her mother. If you do not like to be employed without further explanation, pack up your things, and return to Paris.'

" The alternative she offered was by no means convenient, especially as I had not yet been remunerated for my journey, and week's attendance on the priests and the lady; and my only resource being compliance, I did so with the best possible

grace. I attached myself to the interesting child, whom every one nursed, every one admired, and who soon became familiarized to a variety of faces.

“But my thoughts dwelt continually with the poor bereaved mother, so young, of such parentage, possessing such wealth ; yet immured in a prison, debarred the solace of her child, without a will of her own. These thoughts troubled me by day, and in the visions of the night. I made an excuse to leave home, and found myself once more in view of her melancholy dwelling. It was indeed a perfect seclusion—a lonely old mansion in the midst of the woods, surrounded by a labyrinth of trees, and shut up in an inaccessible court. But what, Messieurs, will not an heroic resolution achieve? I penetrated the labyrinth. I surmounted the walls. I waited patiently for hours in that gloomy enclosure, and at length, finding the object of my solicitude alone, presented myself before her. I was frightened to death, for she screamed most imprudently ; and, had Celeste overheard her, I was undone. But providentially the latter was gone to

bed with a headach, and the risk that I ran brought with it no evil.

“Madame recognized, flew to me, and asked for her child: I said she was safe and in excellent health. Her tears and her gratitude moved me extremely, and after due preparation I made a proposal, which for some time had been floating in my mind.

“This was no other than to aid in her escape, secure her little girl, and restore them both to their friends. For a few minutes she looked wild and perplexed; then uttering a cry of joy, fell down at my feet. Judge, Messieurs, of my fears and my danger, for it was impossible to allay the agitation I had raised, to moderate the eagerness with which she entered into my views, or to persuade her, that she could not escape on the instant; at length she was convinced that we must wait a few days, for that it must take full that time to form any plan, or indeed ere I could find an opportunity of kidnapping the child. All that I suggested met with approbation; she promised

that her husband would amply reward me, that every thing should be done to advance my fortunes and ascertain my safety. But, alas! when we came to discuss present resources, what an unexpected falling off!—not a sous had they left her, those self-aggrandizing priests! Both for the present and in future she had resigned all her estates, in order by that means to restore the boy to his father. Such was the pretext upon which she had been robbed, and such was the finale of my compassionate projects. You will naturally ask how she bore her disappointment. In a way which alarmed me dreadfully. I had no time to soothe—not ten minutes to spend in restoring her. Without funds, I knew that we could not proceed. But it was hard to convince her of this—she who had never felt the pressure of poverty. She contended that her trinkets would take us to the coast, and that once safe in England she would be amply supplied. But was I certain that Sir Charles Trevillion would like my interference? How assure myself of the kindness with which a wife might be received

who had thrown away so splendid a fortune? In short I saw there was an absolute end to the scheme; but I could not venture to say so at once, I could only promise to come back when I had considered it further. She bade me name a certain time: I was obliged to comply, for without doing so I could not have got off; having appointed that day fortnight I left her somewhat more at ease. I soon formed the wiser resolution of being guided by prudence rather than compassion. Heaven knows how it grieved me not to go back, when I pictured to myself the despair of the lady. But, as I have said, we were without funds. She had rendered herself dependent on the bounty of those whom by her rashness she had so greatly enriched.

“I now come, Major Melville, to that part of my story which identifies this poor lady with the scene at L’Hospice de la Providence. And pardon me for saying, that had you dealt candidly at first, had you confided to myself the real purport of your journey, there would have been little necessity to employ round-about ways. I am not much in

the habit of making professions, and shall say no more on the subject at present; but my feelings were wounded at the want of confidence displayed, and I only waited the removal of your Irish friend to prove, that a Frenchman could serve you as faithfully. To do so without betraying my sister was a delicate business: we have all our own method of gaining a point. If Monsieur Bourke was placed as a spy on my actions, I was at least entitled to watch over his. But enough on this subject, let's proceed with the story.

“Our vintage drew on. It was out of my power to see Madame again, for if Celeste should discover me, I could give a shrewd guess how my meddling would end. Besides, my sister being then in bed with the rheumatism, I was obliged to superintend her domestic arrangements. My brother-in-law and his servants were occupied continually in a vineyard at some distance from home. No one remained with me but a very young girl, who assisted in the care of Mademoiselle. One morning this girl begged to go to the vineyard, and to carry the

child with her there. I refused rather hastily, and she went without leave. I missed the child also, and concluded she had taken her. My sister was enraged: but what could I do? To follow would be useless, for two hours had elapsed. I was busy with breakfast, and other household concerns, therefore had not perceived their departure; besides, Peltier himself was at the vineyard, he would see to the safety of Mademoiselle. They would all return together in the cool of the evening.

“But I was mistaken, the child did not come back, neither had she been taken to the vineyard. The nurse positively asserted that she had left her behind, asleep in her cradle, by the door of my sister’s apartment, concluding I should find her there after my breakfast. But Madame Peltier had taken her coffee before, and fallen into a slumber herself, and thus two hours passed, as already mentioned, before I missed either the nurse or the child.

“My sister, despite her painful complaint, jumped out of bed and examined the house. Peltier him-

self raved like a madman. The servants, tired with their day's labour, were sent to explore the woods. Every corner of the house underwent our search. My suspicions rested on the poor hapless mother, but I durst not let fall a hint of the kind; and, to avoid ten thousand reproaches which assailed me at all sides, I joined in the search for Mademoiselle.

“Though my suspicions, as I have said, fell on the mother, yet the adroitness with which she must have seized on the child seemed to me no less than a miracle. Neither could I account for her having left her place of confinement without the assistance of Celeste, or her having found out, without a guide, her way to the Chateau. But Celeste might be bribed, she might be weary of solitude, she might even repent; and one of the trinkets which Madame had talked of, would easily get them a guide. Were they to succeed in their project, it was up with us all; but of this there was no great probability.

“Shaking off my companions, I pursued my search

alone ; almost sure of the track she would take, but quite at a loss as to my own subsequent conduct, if it turned out that my suspicions were just.

“ By daylight the following morning I proved myself no unintelligent prophet. Not that Celeste accompanied her lady, nor did any other guide, as I saw, except an old deaf and dumb creature of a gardener, who turned out to be a renegade priest, and on whom his church, I make no doubt, inflicted commensurate penances.

“ I had not, as I have told you, made up my mind ; but the terrors, the entreaties, the tears of the fugitive, worked on my sensitive feelings, and, instead of compelling her return, I promised to aid her design. Poor lady ! she was then not insane ; but I found her provokingly obstinate. She would suffer none but herself to carry the child, and, therefore, our progress was fearfully slow.

“ Towards evening we came unexpectedly near to a village, which no persuasions could induce her to enter. I, however, ventured on to procure her some nutriment ; for, added to anxiety and unusual

fatigue, she was absolutely faint from starvation, having had nothing to eat since she effected her escape, except what fruit was to be found in the forest. I procured all I wanted, and returned to our *rendezvous* ; but not one of the trio were there. The old renegade guide whom I had seen at the Chateau, no doubt, instilled in her mind suspicions of me. Be that as it may, I followed up the pursuit, and overtook them before it was long ; but this unfortunate deviation brought its own punishment : we were all overtaken in consequence. Some *gensd'armes*, perambulating the woods, remarked our party. One seized the old man, another the lady ; I was robbed of all presence of mind ; she, I believe, of her senses."

" And did you not interpose ?" I exclaimed. " Did you not explain her situation ? Surely these officers were the persons of all others under whose protection she should have been placed. They should have been employed to take charge of her ; to restore her to her lawful protector."

" Monsieur, you are unacquainted with the tem-

pers of these police. They never attend to explanations. They would not have taken my word: I should have been lodged in a police-station with the old man, and thus restricted from being of service. If Madame had not gone distracted, they would have done the same by her; but, believing her mad, they only performed a duty by taking her to an asylum like *L'Hospice*."

"And how, may I inquire," said Innes, "did these discriminating persons dispose of yourself?"

"I took care, Monsieur, not to give them unnecessary trouble. I saw at once that the fate of my companions was decided—that my detention could do the lady no good. It was easy enough, while they struggled with her, for one of our number to effect an escape; and I therefore hurried home to report what had happened, and to avert, if it were possible, her horrible fate in a mad-house; where, in consequence of my promptitude, she did not remain many days."

"You behaved in the whole affair," I could not help saying, "like a self-interested villain, and a

despicable coward! But we want no vindications: proceed with the details of this iniquitous story."

"They are short, but afflicting; my heart would bleed to repeat them. Enough that the poor lady resisted her captors to madness, and that the *gens-d'armes* thought proper to lodge her at Saumur; a proceeding which, when reported to Peltier and my sister, rendered them nearly as mad. The former, furnished with ecclesiastical authority, shortly had her removed. She inhabited again the old apartment at the Chateau, guarded, as formerly, by my sister herself. Celeste, in the confusion, went no one knows whither; but we heard before long of her death near Chinon. The child, as you are aware, was eventually placed with Madame Belenger; for whose care and affection I can conscientiously answer."

"Is Lady Trevillion still at this same Chateau? Has she not recovered her senses?"

"She is still, I believe, under the care of my sister; but I have not seen her these six months. When Mademoiselle came to Paris, I also returned;

for she knew me so well, and my health was re-established. I ever have desired to serve Lady Trevillion: I wish to restore her her child. I now volunteer to place both in your hands; but expect, for so doing, the means of independence, because I incur the wrath of my sisters. They seem to be harsh, perhaps avaricious; but they act, on my honour, according to their lights, according to the best of their understanding, according to conscience; being placed much above the temptations of poverty."

"But not above the temptations of worldliness!" interposed Innes. "According to conscience indeed! The unktion which all such grasping people lay to their pitiful souls, after their conscience has been stunted by long habits of selfishness. It is plain, not only that Madame Peltier's fortunes would suffer, but yours, and your sister's in the Rue des Postes, were Lady Trevillion to be released from her prison. In short, that a base and unprincipled family benefit largely by the heartless vocation in which you are united to labour!"

"I do not pretend to advocate the conduct of

my sisters. I can only account for it by saying, that they are *religieux*, that they are entirely guided by their Confessors ; and that, though they would not accept of a sous of your money, or be accessory to the reunion of Lady Trevillion with her heretic husband ; yet that, as their time is their most valuable possession, if they devote it to the cause of their Church, they expect to be remunerated for their trouble. But should they err—should there be any mistake—their Confessor is accountable of course. They trust to his judgment, and he absolves them if wrong.”

“How extremely convenient !” cried Innes. “Do you place equal faith in this tempting commodity, absolution ?”

“Confession makes no part of my creed,” replied André, “or I should like absolution well enough ; not but that ’tis more suitable for the rich than the poor, as Confessors are somewhat exacting at times. I am, Messieurs, a disciple of reason ; and being therefore a friend to liberality, see things in different lights.

“I calculate, I discuss, I act upon principle : and not seeing—just now—that it is necessary to aid Lady Trevillion’s detention, I choose to aid and abet in setting her free. But reason tells me that I must not follow the dictates of a humane disposition so far as to incur serious distress—that I must provide for the consequences, as they may affect myself, by accepting at your hands an adequate provision ; as also the means of personal security ; for without being a slave to the prejudices of my sisters, I am not such a fool as to brave the vengeance of the Church. Three thousand francs and a free passage to New York are my stipulations ; soon as these are secured, I pledge myself that you shall be guided to Madame.”

“As soon as Lady Trevillion is safe under my care, and not sooner,” I replied, “your future provision and safety shall be secured.”

“Monsieur ! is my word to be doubted ?” exclaimed the disciple of reason, laying his hand on his heart. “Does not my candour merit your confidence ?”

“Reason,” observed Innes, “might dictate the breaking of your promise, as it did the breaking of Major Melville’s locks. What you dignify by that name I call expediency, a principle in which Major Melville and myself place no trust, and we shall therefore insist upon value received before paying down the stipulated sum.”

“There is no going back, Monsieur André,” I added ; “you have mentioned the names of persons and places, you have also given dates. We can find Lady Trevillion ourselves ; not perhaps so soon as with your guidance, and therefore are ready to pay for it.”

“One word from me,” replied André with the utmost *sang-froid*, “and the lady is removed out of reach. Recollect, Major Melville, that I found an opportunity of writing to you this afternoon. I could with as much ease write to my sister : not that I desire to do so. Madame Peltier has never forgiven me for letting Lady Trevillion get into the hands of the police. She will, of course, resent my recent engagement with you. I was to have joined

Mademoiselle Marie, and watched over her, until Sir Charles Trevillion should leave Paris for Rome : my delaying to do so has led to these consequences. I do not regret them—I wish the poor lady to be happy once more. I care nothing about her religion. If I can accelerate that happiness, it will add to my own.”

“ We perfectly understand you, Monsieur André, and when your part of the compact is performed, there shall be no delay on our side.”

“ *C'est une affaire finie,*” replied the artist, “ again placing his hand on his heart.”

CHAPTER XXXIII.

WHEN we parted from André, the night was far spent. I will not dwell on preliminary measures, but proceed at once with my journey, which was undertaken in company with the vacillating artist, of whom we agreed I was not to lose sight, with a Scotch servant belonging to Innes, and a trusty *gend'arme* to render security more secure. Innes also insisted upon joining our party, and in this manner we set forward for Nantes. This was making rather a detour, but we thought we might require the authority of the British Consul stationed in that city, in case of opposition on the part of Madame Peltier.

Neither my friend nor myself had set forth on this service without much deliberation of thought, nor without taking into consideration the feelings of Sir Charles Trevillion, in whose affairs we had so zealously interested ourselves. He was, as I have said, but little known to me, and that little was rather calculated to check than to encourage the hope of meriting his gratitude by interfering with his concerns, however well-intentioned that interference might be. Nor, had not dispatch been vitally important, do I think I should have ventured such unauthorized freedoms with a gentleman whose character was so opposed to all encroachment on the part of others. But dispatch was important. Mary Trevillion could never forgive me—I never could forgive myself, if one hour's delay—one moment's hesitation on the score of propriety, should lose us the prize almost within our grasp. I knew that in this shallow world success was at once held the sure criterion of desert, and the best title of approbation : so much depended on decision, that I would not let myself doubt. We left Nantes under

the sanction of the British resident Consul, to explore the patriarchal mazes of the Bocage, and could not but lament, that amongst scenes so hallowed and so pure, such characters as André and his sister should have penetrated.

But our unwilling guide had not been quite candid in describing the situation of the Chateau, which, though environed by woods, and very much secluded, deserved no such praise as belonged to La Vendée. We found it however before the closing in of evening, having traversed for some leagues over almost impassable roads, which well nigh broke a light carriage I had hired at Nantes. We left it in a lane when we came within sight of the building, while Innes, two *gensd'armes*, André, and myself walked silently on. I could see that my companion was frightened, and very unwilling to enter the court: despite all his bombast he had a dread of the Church; neither was he very courageous on the score of his sister; but fortunately for us all no one appeared, and we entered the house without meeting a creature. It was

strange, almost incredible, to reflect, that I was there, quietly master of a spot so hopelessly sought for. André pointed out the desolate quarter formerly used as the prison of Clotilde, where a ruinous staircase answered his description. This we ascended without interruption, and penetrated a long passage, from which diverged other outlets, flanked by apparently uninhabited rooms; after some turnings, a door fastened within arrested our progress. But André pointed to a slip on the architrave, where I perceived the handle of a bolt, when pulling it resolutely, a loud voice from beyond called out, "Who is there?" At the same moment a coarse looking woman rushed forward. I let myself in, and she set up a continuous scream. From behind her, in the distance, a shadow seemed emerging. I could not believe it a substance, and timidly advancing, though only one step, it gazed on us with a mingled expression of curiosity and terror.

It was my first sight of the once lovely, the altered Clotilde; but even in that guise it would have been impossible to mistake her. Tall, wasted

to a transparency, her head bent forward, her dark hair falling negligently down, her face all eyes—I recognized, in that heart-rending figure, the portrait so faithfully sketched by her sister; and pushing the screaming duenna aside, advanced and addressed her in English.

With a glance of fear toward the woman, whom Innes now held, she shrunk back when I spoke; but upon my repeating the short sentence again, she looked curiously in my face, and laid her cold hand on my arm.

“Lady Trevillion,” I said, speaking low and very gently, “have you forgotten the language of England? I am an Englishman—your friend—the friend of your sister—of Mary Trevillion—I have a message from her—it is of love—would you not wish me to repeat it?”

“They have taken my child,” she whispered, in scarcely articulate accents, “do you know where she is?”

“Yes, in Paris, safe and well; you must come with me to see her.”

“They will not let me out,” she whispered again, pointing to the window, which I saw had an iron railing.

“But I will take you out; I will convey you to your friends. Should you not like to come with me?”

This sentence was spoken in English; but believing, from the vacancy of her gaze, that she did not understand me, I repeated it in French.

“They have taken my child,” she whispered once more, “I don’t know where to find her.”

“But I know: I have seen her. I left her two days ago; she was well and happy. Will you not come to your own little Marie?”

A ray of intelligence seemed to light up her eyes, and she murmured the name I have mentioned; but that ray passed away in a moment. Her face became more ghastly than ever, and pressing her arm heavily upon mine, before I could prevent her, she fell down at my feet.

Innes, meanwhile, had been struggling with her keeper, whose cries by this time had given the

alarm. Madame Peltier and another woman rushed through the passage: they flew at me instantly, as I supported Clotilde, screaming at the top of their voices; but Innes, and the *gens d'armes*, who had concealed themselves till now, came forward and produced their authority. Peltier raved like a maniac, and stamp'd on the floor. I never before saw a female so outrageous. Taking advantage of the insensibility of the poor sufferer in my arms to bear her from so terrific a scene, I wrapped her in a cloak which Innes took down from a peg, and carried her to the lower part of the house, my friend remaining to keep guard above.

The open air, the motion, some water thrown on her face, and other restoratives, presently recalled Lady Trevillion to life; but, alas! it was life without intelligence. I sent for the calèche, and watched by her side, while she sat seemingly unconscious of her change of apartment.

Meanwhile the *gens d'armes* having locked Madame Peltier and her amazons in the late prison

chamber, our operations below stairs were unimpeded, except by a few exclamations of wonder or curiosity from two or three children, and a young girl who had them in charge. When the vehicle arrived I carried my delicate burden into the court, not apprehending any opposition on her part. To my surprise however, she shrunk back as if affrighted, evinced reluctance to enter the carriage; and turning her melancholy looks wishfully towards the house, afforded the saddest proof I had yet seen of derangement. But while my persuasions failed of success, one of Peltier's children, comprehending her better, ran back to the kitchen, and brought out a small bird-cage which he placed in the carriage.

His simple expedient had the desired effect—her brow instantly cleared—she smiled, gave me her hand, mounted the vehicle, and seizing the cage, which contained a young linnet, held it carefully in her arms.

“I knew what she wished for,” observed the boy; “she loves that little bird. It is ill-natured of mamma to take it from her ever.”

“And does your mamma take it from her?” I inquired.

“Yes, sometimes, when Madame will not eat; or when she is violent; but it is given back to her after a while.”

I now heard a voice screaming to us from above, and looking up saw the woman Peltier with her head pushed through the bars of the window. “You are taking the lady by force; she is not willing to go. I do not acknowledge your authority,” she reiterated, “I resist it: if my husband or any of his men-servants were within, no one durst commit such an outrage.”

“Drive on!” exclaimed Innes, who sprang to his horse; and immediately obeying the word of command, we proceeded with care over the rough and narrow causeway, dignified with the name of an avenue, which served as an approach to the chateau.

My interesting charge was weak in body as in mind, and it afflicted me beyond expression to witness the aberration of an intellect once so fine

and so sensitive. I tried in vain to recal her recollection, but it went no further back than the loss of her child. That one idea absorbed her ; that one was the chord not quite broken of her memory ; and, sometimes caressing the bird as if it were part or figure of that precious being, she bestowed upon it the tenderest regards, speaking as if it understood her, and never letting the cage out of her keeping.

We found André in the forest awaiting us, whither he had fled on the appearance of his sister, whose recognition he thus contrived to shun. Nantes being once more our destination, I would gladly have crossed the river that night ; but ere we reached Clisson, Clotilde could no longer sit up, and I was forced to lay to for some hours. The women of the hotel were kind and obliging. I gave her into their charge, and kept guard myself in an outer apartment. Despite the threats of Madame Peltier, we heard nothing of her husband, and reached Nantes next afternoon without molestation. My gentle companion, quite passive in

my hands, and apparently insensible to her change of position, suffered me, as before, to lift her from the carriage, support her in my arms, and place her on a sofa. The extreme paleness of her face, and the morbid state of her feelings, alarmed me extremely. I sent for a physician, the most skilful in the town, who soon saw that a shock had caused her derangement. Of his hopes or his fears he would express no opinion, but prescribed quiet, with some medicine, and found me a nurse. When all this was arranged, and the patient in bed, I sat down in an anteroom, and wrote to Miss Trevillion.

Success had so far outstripped expectation. One child was snatched from the fangs of destruction; but the mother, though personally restored to us, was more lost than if dead; while her gentleness, docility, and tenderness, though that tenderness was bestowed on a bird, rendered her peculiarly and painfully interesting. In my letter to Mary I stated things as they were. I begged she might come and try the effect of her presence; but I

entreated, in pity to Sir Charles Trevillion, that he should not risk so hazardous a meeting. I repeated to her the words of the physician, that one shock had cost her her senses, and that any sudden surprise might cost her her life.

Innes took André completely off my hands, procured him his passport, and negotiated the money transaction. We then gave him his *congé*, and saw him off for America, when my kind and active friend returned to Tours, leaving me sufficient occupation in the watchful discharge of my duty at Nantes, where I resolved to await the answer to my letter.

That restlessness so usual in mental derangement was very apparent in Clotilde. She rose early, and spent hour after hour walking up and down her room, a practice probably formed when nursing her child, and which she persevered in, always carrying the bird-cage. A suite of airy apartments opened one within the other; and these I engaged, not only to render her seclusion less monotonous, but that she might accustom herself to move be-

yond a given space. At first afraid to venture farther than our room, she merely peeped through the door; but leaving her entirely to find her own way, she, after a day or two, dared to step over the threshold, then walked rapidly on, entered another apartment, took a circuit of all; and, so soon as she felt I was observing her, retreated with tremulous haste to her seat.

Nothing could be more affecting than her acquired feelings of fear, manifested as they were in every action. One day I came into the room, while she endeavoured to open a window-sash; when, believing herself detected, she clasped her poor hands, and trembling all over, sank down on a seat. But I feigned not to observe, and withdrawing the bolt, stepped out on the balcony. She looked wistfully after me, and I invited her to follow; some minutes elapsed before she had courage to rise, but at length coming nearer, she gave me her hand. I placed it within my arm, and led her to the rails. Some little children were playing beneath; she stooped forward, and watched

them attentively ; her eyes eagerly pursuing every rapid movement they made. Then gazing most piteously up in my face, she repeated those touching words :—“ They have taken my child.”

“ Yes,” I replied. “ It was very cruel of them. But she is perfectly safe, and in excellent health. We must soon go to Paris and see her.”

She shook her head reproachfully, let my arm drop, sighed, and catching up the bird-cage, held it tight to her bosom ; then murmuring a few plaintive words, she returned into the room, and recommenced her hourly task of walking up and down.

I would have given worlds, as her melancholy plaint was renewed, to induce a few salutary tears. But no, the poor maniac’s sorrow was a blight ; it had seared, but not melted her heart.

My letters to Miss Trevillion were addressed both to Paris and Brussels. I told her, in all, where she would find the little girl ; and repeated my resolution of remaining at Nantes until after I heard from her. A week had passed since, and I had received no answer either to my letter from

Nantes or from Tours. I almost hoped that some change was taking place in my patient; for though silent as ever, there was occasionally somewhat less vacancy of look.

Another morning she followed me to the balcony-window; some flowers in pots had been placed there. I got water, and watered them. "If your little Marie should come here," I said, "she would like to pluck some of these flowers. We must try and preserve them in bloom."

She smiled, took the watering-pot out of my hand, and began deluging the plants. Just then sounds of music broke on our ear, and we shortly distinguished a chant. Immediately the square was crowded with people, and a religious procession advanced.

It consisted of some high functionary in full-dress canonicals, a number of priests in their vestments, and the members, young and old, of a college, forming altogether what is called by the profane a *spectacle*. Clotilde turned pale. She let the watering-pot drop, and uttering a

cry of alarm, fled trembling to the inner apartment.

“Fear nothing, dear Lady Trevillion,” I said. “Rely upon me. I am your friend, your protector. These priests shall not molest you.”

“Oh, save me!” she exclaimed, falling on her knees. “I am not mad—I will not run away—I have given them all. They have killed poor Celeste. But you are not one of them; you are an Englishman.”

“Yes,” I replied, exceedingly pleased to recognize a slight trait of reason. “Yes, I am an Englishman—your relation—the cousin of Mary Trevillion! I have found out where they concealed your poor child. We shall all be so happy when she is once more with you, and when we return to England. There are no old chateaux there, where you can be hidden from your friends: no prison chambers such as you have been immured in. Should you not like to come with me to England?”

“We were on our way,” she said. “I was

taking home my child, they stole her away : I forget how it happened, can you not tell me ?”

“ I can. You got off from Celeste. The old gardener assisted you, you reached the Chateau, got into the house, and found your child in her cradle.”

“ No, it was Jerome,” she said, seeming very much interested in my explanation.

“ Well, Jerome found her for you, and no one perceived him while he stole her away. Then you went into the woods and hid there in the day time. You ate cherries, or plums, or whatever you could find ; and you slept under the shade of the trees.”

“ I had a little cake,” she said, still following up the train of remembrance, “ and my baby ate of it.”

“ I am glad you had a cake, for cherries and plums might not have agreed with her—did she eat it all ?”

“ It was a very little cake, I soaked it in the stream. Oh !” she continued, sighing as if her heart

would break, "I wish I were back by the side of that stream!"

"You shall see streams in England as clear and as cool, and your dear little girl shall run by your side."

"I will carry her in my arms," she said, with one of her most melancholy smiles. Then recollecting the bird, added in a tone of alarm, "But where is the cage? Oh, where have you left it?"

"Come and see," I replied, taking her hand. We went back to the balcony: all was safe there: the little bird was pluming its wings in the sun. She snatched it eagerly up, and spoke to it for some time in her usual indistinct murmuring accents. I felt certain that she associated the idea of this bird with that of her child of whom she raved so continually; but as I tried to comprehend these indistinct murmurings, a travelling carriage entered the square, and drove at full speed to our hotel; she also heard it, and trembled, but every sudden noise had the same enervating effect.

"What if this should be Mary?" thought I,

and almost trembling myself, led her instantly back to the farther apartment: she observed that in doing so I was more hurried than usual, and looking timidly in my face, asked "If they were coming?"

"Whom do you mean?"

"Mr. Austin and the Confessor—Father Fitzgerald. But I will not confess—I cannot confess—they ask me cruel questions—I will not answer them again."

She was pallid with fear, her features almost convulsed, her eyes staring wildly.

"There is no such person," I said, "as Mr. Austin. You mean Augustine de St. Aubin—him to whom you resigned your estates. Him, who assumes to be heir at law to your relation."

She hesitated for a minute as if trying to recollect herself, then said very quietly—"Yes, Father Austin! He promised to give me back my child; but he could not, she is dead. The Confessor left her soul in chains, but Augustine released it. She is not with me in the likeness of my own little girl, but you may see her fluttering

about. As soon as I die, she will be an angel in heaven."

Such expressions as these explained what was before inexplicable. She believed the green linnet to be the soul of her child, as Father Austin—alias Augustine—had pretended; and I recollected while she spoke, that Bourke had told me some story of going a pilgrimage with his father to release his mother's soul, which he verily believed to have seen, like a bird on the wing, emerge from behind the high altar of a half-darkened chapel, amidst incense, and odours, which confused (as they were meant to do) both the faculties and sight. A dreadful exhibition of blasphemy, which, had I not heard it from another, would never have occurred to my mind.

Meanwhile hurried steps without on the lobby, the opening and shutting of several doors, plainly bespoke an arrival. I had engaged the suite of rooms in that wing of the house; I knew that no strangers would be permitted to intrude; and, with

Mary Trevillion full in my thoughts, I attempted to disengage myself from Clotilde.

But this day, for the first time, she desired to retain me, and pressing my arm, entreated I would stay. "They will come! They will take me again!" she cried, covering the cage with her shawl.

At that moment the door slowly opened, and Sir Charles Trevillion stood gazing on his wife. But her face was hidden in the shawl, she did not see who was there. I implored him by a sign to retreat; and his sister, who stood behind, seconded my wishes by drawing him toward herself, and closing the door.

Clotilde's female attendant, aware of who was come, now waited on her patient, and the former no longer resisted my leaving her. I immediately sought the justly anxious husband, and found him pacing the apartment, in a most excited state of mind. But he came forward, seized my hand, uttered an emphatic "God bless you!" and throwing himself on a sofa burst into tears. Mary, pale

as death, and scarcely less agitated, approached with the child, saying in her own placid manner, "May we not hope much from such a restorative as this?"

"Yes," I replied, "if any thing can restore her it will be such a sight. But caution must be practised—we must do nothing rash."

"Does the physician give no hope?" cried Sir Charles in an agony. "Does he not reckon on change of scene—on the soothing presence of her friends?"

"He dreads any sudden change, but reckons on the happy circumstances in which she now is placed, with the influence of quietness and time; above all he hopes something from the presence of her child."

"Does she remember no one else?" inquired the sensitive husband.

"The loss of her little girl was the latest of her misfortunes. It was the shock that first upset her reason, consequently it is the one which fills all her mind. At present she has few other recollections, though within these two days there

are some mystic glimpses of the past, which if tenderly encouraged may assume a form more definite."

While I spoke Clotilde's nurse knocked at the door, and requested I would come to Madame, who was getting extremely uneasy.

"Oh, take her this treasure," interposed Mary; "do not prolong her anxiety, if it is possible to be relieved."

Adopting her advice I received the little girl in my arms, and ventured, so burthened, into the presence of her mother.

She was sitting on a stool, rocking to and fro; having suffered the linnet to escape, which now flew beyond her reach; and whilst her eyes wildly followed it from window to window, she uttered the most piteous lamentations. I brought the little girl immediately before her, but she did not perceive her. Every attention was given to the bird.

"Open the casement," I said in an under tone to the nurse, "let the linnet free."

She did as she was desired—opened the farthest

casement at top—and at that moment, when the impatient flutterer darted out of sight, I knelt before the mother, and presented her her child.

Who may describe the varying expression of that maternal face? or imagine the secret workings of that maternal bosom, as the little girl, still supported by me, was laid tranquilly upon her trembling knees? Afraid to breathe, to touch it, or to move, lest the beautiful vision should vanish from her sight, she gazed on it in silent wonder, until the playful little creature, seizing a long lock of the mother's dishevelled hair, twisted it around her tiny fingers and laughed exultingly.

Did a touch so conveyed, thrill to that mother's heart? Did nature recognize that delicate appeal? Or did the lively act, the animated smile, recal to mind the likeness of her lost one? They surely did. Recollection was awakened—feeling renewed. She looked in my face with an expression perfectly intelligent, clasped her recovered treasure to her breast, and sank upon her knees.

I endeavoured to raise her, but she resisted

my efforts. "You have brought me back my child," she said; "I did not believe you: I thought she was dead. My child!—my child!—you've brought me back my child." Then raising her tearful eyes to Heaven she poured forth a prayer so fervent, so distinct, so rational, that every syllable was heard in the next room; and Sir Charles, believing her to be convalescent, no longer able to resist an impulse of affectionate impatience, suddenly opened the door, and rushing forward, threw himself also on his knees, and clasped her to his bosom.

By this act of precipitation every thing was undone. Her senses were again scared away, and memory, on which a faint light had just begun to dawn, was once more plunged into chaos. Incapable of recognizing in her husband any other than some ruffian come to carry off her child, she pushed him away, sprung upon her feet, and darting past me to the door, crouched down in the farthest corner of the passage, almost smothering the poor terrified infant in her eagerness to hide it.

Sir Charles stood aghast. He had formed no idea of her appearance, or of the extent of her malady—he had entertained no fears for her recollection; and even now, while she averted her face, and reiterated her cries, he believed that she knew him, and that his presence was the cause of her terror. I seized him by the arm, and almost drew him to the door; saying to his sister, whom I pitied from my heart, “Your brother has undone all—he must not show himself again.”

“It is you, sir, who have to answer for every thing,” returned Sir Charles in menacing accents; “it is you who have deceived me. Why was I deceived?—Why was I not warned of her hatred?—Why was I let to come here?”

“We will speak on this mistaken subject another time, Sir Charles! At present, our object is to counteract the mischief; I will send for the physician: meanwhile, rest assured that you were not known; that Lady Trevillion took you for a stranger come to rob her of her child.”

Not waiting his reply, I returned to Clotilde,

whom I found it impossible to tranquillize; she heard nothing that was said, she would not rise from the floor, nor release the poor infant from her agitated embrace, until the arrival of the physician, who compelled her.

A fever ensued, which menaced her life, and entirely deprived her of consciousness. Mary, unrecognized, nursed her unceasingly; and if this most devoted of sisters had not been known to me before, her tenderness, her resignation, the depth of her feeling, and the piety of her mind, would have subjugated my heart a thousand times more, than when, in the bloom of health, of beauty, and of early youth, she won it in my native country.

Never was grief more bitterly expressed than in the wretched aspect of Sir Charles Trevillion, or in the few words that he uttered. Once, and but once, he went to the bedside of the motionless Clotilde; but the sight of that death-like face, of those unmeaning eyes, the rigidity of the features, the rapid movement of the lips, and the incoherent murmurings that issued from them, drove him away

nearly in an equal state of derangement. He never sought his bed—he took no refreshment—he spent every moment in the ante-room. One of the first physicians in Paris was sent for, but he could only approve of what we had already done; and say, like those of Nantes, that the complaint was highly alarming, that its progress would be slow, and that it was impossible, at that stage, to form an opinion. It was in this scene of misery that I first became acquainted with the brother of Mary Trevillion, or had an opportunity of appreciating those qualities which grief and disappointment unreservedly display.

Perfectly moral, with the strictest sense of rectitude, a high veneration of religion, a strong conviction of its efficacy, and an obedient servant of God, he fell short of his sister in those heavenly attainments, which, even in a terrestrial state, fitted her for celestial communion. With him, the kingdom of heaven was to come, with her it had come. He, though bearing misfortune like a man, was more courageous than resigned; and feeling his

stripes more as an injustice than a desert, believed himself submissive because he did not rebel, without remembering that through all there was mercy. She, on the contrary, accepted the mercy, acknowledged that the stripes were deserved ; and, instead of complaint, blessed God that no more was exacted. The one lamented for himself, the other for her fellow-sufferers ; and, while watching by the side of her adored Clotilde, whose life hung upon a thread, it was in what way to render the impending blow lightest to him, not how she might sustain it herself, that occupied the thoughts of Mary Trevillion.

“ It is a cruel fate,” murmured Sir Charles, “ which thus gives us back our lost one, only that we should lose her again. Oh ! if thus to be bereaved, why was she ever recovered ? ”

Mary, instead of murmurs, poured forth her thanks. She looked on the short restoration of her sister as an especial favour ; she was grateful that the hand of affection might close the eyes of her beloved ; she only dared to entreat that one lucid

interval might be allowed at the last—one word of peace, to soothe the regrets of the survivors, and assure them that the departing spirit was passing from darkness into light.

Three tedious weeks—weeks spent without one cheering ray of earthly hope—came to an end before Clotilde began to exhibit any of those changes that were so anxiously looked for. Even her eyes, wide awake, were never seen to close; but on the last evening of the third miserable week their lids dropped down, and such extreme languor ensued, that little else was anticipated than total extinction. Her sleep, if sleep it might be called, appeared like that of the grave: nor did the medical attendants venture to express a hope. But, after lying in this state of torpor for many hours, those heavy lids were once more raised, and the late vacant eyes gave token of intelligence.

Mary retreated out of sight, and beckoned me to take her place. It was the first time that I had seen a perfectly tranquillized expression on the face of the invalid; it was the first time that her

sweet voice returned a rational answer to my inquiries.

“ Yes,” she said, “ I have had a blessed sleep and been so happy ! Affection has ministered to soothe my pain ; angels have visited me.”

The physician now interposed ; prescribed a cordial, and forbade all conversation until her strength should be renovated.

“ One hour’s more sleep,” he said, “ after this medicine, and I shall rejoice to hear you speak, and to answer your inquiries.”

She thanked him, swallowed the draught, turned herself from the light, and was soon sleeping like an infant.

Mary left the room. I followed, and found her in the arms of her brother : they were weeping on each other’s necks. Such tears should flow uninterruptedly, and I was turning away, when Sir Charles recalled me.

“ Melville !” he cried ; “ My friend—my brother !”

I flew to him. He wrung my hand : he en-

deavoured to add more, but could not. Then, disengaging himself from his sister, he placed her hands in mine ; and saying, “ She will reward you,” left us to ourselves.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

OUR interesting patient awoke from her second long and tranquil sleep with a perfect consciousness of all that was passing in her chamber. And, seeing me there, endeavoured to express her thanks; but I interdicted such conversation, or any conversation for the present. And the physicians desired that she should see no one except the nurse and myself, until all fear of excitement should be over. But the subsequent evening she called me to her bedside, and spoke in the following terms :—

“ I am forbidden to ask questions, and have been obedient for several hours; but thought will be busy; it suggests many things. I should feel

infinitely more tranquil durst I make a few inquiries."

"You need not fear to do so," I replied. "Whatever may be the question, I trust it is in my power to answer satisfactorily. Hope the best. But do not allow yourself to be excited."

"I keep as tranquil as I can; but they are mistaken who suppose that conversation is more prejudicial than thought, or that disappointment has a worse punishment in store than the silence I impose upon myself."

"Impose such a silence no longer. I can easily guess at its pain. Unburden your mind, Lady Trevillion; ask any question that occurs—about your little girl, for instance."

"Ah, Heaven! then it was not a dream. I have seen her: she was here: I have held her in my arms!"

"Yes, dear Lady Trevillion, your memory does not deceive: she is here. The fever was coming on, when first she arrived; but now it is over, I think you may see her again."

She clasped her trembling hands in a transport of joy, and uttered a fervent thanksgiving, then added—"No: it is enough that I learn this from you; that I know she is safe in your care. The fever may be contagious—Oh, no! I would not be so selfish."

I assured her that the fever was not contagious, and offered to bring her little girl, if only to the door, where she could play, with the nurse in her sight.

"It would be most merciful," she replied, bursting into tears. They were the first she had shed, and I let them flow on for some minutes. Then went for the child, whom the nurse brought in her arms, and set down near the door; while the eyes of the mother, although nearly blinded with weeping, rested on her with admiration and delight. I gave her some playthings; but she soon tired of the sedentary occupation, and, accustomed to more animated exercise with me, threw away the toys, twisted herself round, and crept on all fours to where I stood. Unluckily forgetting the nervous

state of the mother, I raised the little creature too suddenly; and gratified her wishes by throwing her toward the ceiling. Clotilde, easily frightened, cried out aloud, and Mary Trevillion, as heedless as myself, rushed into the room. I carried the child to its mother, and placed it on the bed. But another object divided that mother's attention, an object scarcely less dear. Throwing herself forward, she pronounced the name of "Marie!" and, without another word, these affectionate sisters, so long estranged, and so happily reunited, were clasped in each other's arms, mingling their tears together, and uttering ejaculations of the most grateful joy.

* * * *

I had now done my part. The tenderest, the most faithful of friends, were restored to each other. The desolate was surrounded by affection. Her child and her sister were living in her sight—she saw them—she heard their voices. A blissful certainty was hers.

Sir Charles had seen me take his daughter to her

mother: he had listened to the cry of the latter: he now overheard her soft accents, but having suffered so bitterly in consequence of precipitance before, he was taught, in the present instance, to practise self-denial. Self-denial was not, however, exacted for long. The inquiring looks of Clotilde, although she breathed not the name of her husband, proved that he was present in her thoughts; that, though she dared not to ask, she suspected him to be near. Mary, guessing these thoughts, ventured to answer them, when the brightest expression of joy animating her tearful face, she softly inquired, "if he had forgiven her?"

"Yes, dearest love, a thousand and a thousand times. May he not come here to tell you so?"

This question was immediately answered by the watchful husband himself. When he entered the chamber I made my exit, and Mary soon following, left them to the sacred and unrestrained out-pourings of their wedded hearts, to their affectionate and unreserved confessions. The journal of Clotilde had prepared Sir Charles for a change in the sen-

timents of his wife, which was alone wanting to ensure their future confidence in each other. Of the sincerity of this change he was now perfectly satisfied, and from henceforth was himself an altered man. For happiness—as it should do—rendered him the most grateful of mortals, the most benevolent, the least exacting. Still it was a happiness not without serious alloy, for in all our discoveries we had no tidings of his son; and while the restoration of the mother kept pace with our hopes, we had to dread for her the effects of a cruel disappointment. As yet, exciting conversation was carefully avoided, no reference made to the past; and, instead of much speaking, a tranquillized silence was encouraged. But this state of things could not always go on. The time was approaching when painful questions would be asked, and when she would require them answered.

Already so successful in the case of the mother, I offered my services again in that of the son; and Sir Charles, though professing to abandon all hope,

was cheered, as I could see, when he observed us concerting our plans.

The unexpected agency of André in the recovery of Lady Trevillion, with her own interesting journal, rendering it unnecessary that I should upon that occasion apply for the promised papers at Derval, those papers had scarcely been thought of. But for our present objects they might be important, and I forthwith set forward to claim them from Louise.

That peaceful looking home-scene, the forest, the inn, and its occupants, were so well known by description, that on my arrival I was in danger of addressing, not only the fair girl herself, but all whom I saw, as my friends and acquaintances; and, had not the self-possession of the former, by checking my enthusiasm, assisted to preserve my incognito, and compelled me to act the part of a stranger, I should certainly, in the very first instance, have betrayed myself, and thus lost the opportunity of conversing with her apart.

Transported with joy to learn such good tidings, Louise proved her sincerity in the ready performance of her promise, and deposited the packet safe in my keeping. She would also have found an opportunity of coming over to Nantes, but that I positively forbade her; reminiscences of Derval being the last risk we should venture in the case of the sensitive Clotilde.

The confessions, or rather the ravings of the unhappy Celeste, would ill repay the trouble of transcribing. Suffice to say, that they proved her not inherently vicious, but a sordid dupe, too easily led into error. Willing to place her conscience at the disposal of others, she was little scrupulous, at least for a time, to go halves in the iniquity of her employers, if she could only thereby entitle herself to a share of their remuneration.

She was not, however, without some natural touches of humanity, and the lovely child committed to her care, whom she had conspired to rob of his birthright, became dear in her eyes. Surrounded by deception and falsities of every kind, a constant

association with innocence like his, awoke in her bosom some better feelings of our nature ; and brought to mind the recollection of her own early years. She longed to recal those years, to be again a little child. But that was impossible. The dread barrier was passed, over which, for her, there could be no return. Remorse and repentance might wash away her stains, but the remembrance could never be obliterated. She never could be as that little child, who smiled on its betrayers in the unsuspecting confidence of infancy. Mac Cardwell, believing her equally base as himself, had not been sufficiently guarded in his communications. He had thrown off the mask of sanctity, and betrayed the real cupidity of his character. Celeste discovered that it was avarice, not zeal for religion, ambition, nor even bigotry, that influenced him. She saw this much plainer when, not satisfied with getting the mother into his clutches, he afterwards grasped at the son. But, superstitious as weak, though she despised him as a man, she still feared him as the appointed agent of his church, selected

to work for her interests, and immolate victims on her shrine.

It was while under the influence of fever, that she made a sort of confession to Louise; and we could collect, amid her complex vindications of self and accusations of others, that she would have made atonement for her participation in the cruelties of her employers, by acknowledging every thing to Sir Charles Trevillion; but was fearful, as she expressed herself, of selling her precious soul by betraying a minister of the Holy Roman Catholic Church, especially into heretic hands; yet she gave into keeping of Louise that journal of her lady, which must one day elucidate all his deceits; and she named Toulouse as the place where William was likely to be found, should the Confessor not have restored him, as he promised.

Sir Charles would fain have accompanied me to Toulouse. But his sister united her efforts with mine, and we persuaded him to relinquish the project. I, as a personal stranger both to Mac Cardwell and Doughty—the latter of whom Celeste im-

plicated in every plot of the former—was more likely to prosecute inquiry without exciting observation. Added to which, the parting from her husband so soon after their reunion might be too great a trial for the feelings of so fragile a creature as the invalid.

CHAPTER XXXV.

ARRIVED at Toulouse, I spent three days in the town, and three more in the neighbourhood, to very little purpose. But, at the end of the week, I heard a story of a trial which had occurred at Marseilles about nine months before, and which, had not Sir Charles and his sister been travelling in Germany, consequently not in the way of seeing local newspapers, might have led their inquiries again to that place.

Two travellers, as it appeared, waiting for the sailing of a vessel, had called at the shop of a jeweller, and offered some valuable trinkets for sale. The jeweller, for reasons best known to

himself, having examined the articles, and shown the strangers very politely into a private sitting-room, slipped out for a minute, and sent for the police ; on the arrival of whom he charged his two astonished visitors with robbery, under circumstances of a very aggravated nature. He stated that the trinkets thus offered for sale were formerly manufactured by himself ; that they were since supposed to be wrested from the person of a deceased lady, whose friends had offered large rewards for their recovery.

One of the two persons thus detained by the jeweller spoke French very fluently : the other neither understood nor could speak it. The first had, therefore, a great advantage while protesting his innocence, and accounting for the situation in which circumstances placed him.

Journeying towards Marseilles, with the purpose of sailing for Rome, he had chanced, he said, on his companion at an inn. They were countrymen, bound for the same port, and sailing in the same vessel, it was natural they should continue to-

gether. In some respects they had both one object in common—a journey, connected with religious purposes, to Rome. The tale his companion told him was, that a pious female devotee was sending these jewels as an offering to her favourite saint; and that the bearer had permission, should illness or other casualty occur on the road, to dispose of a small part for his own immediate necessities. In offering them for sale he meant to give the buyer a choice, but only to dispose of what might pay his way on. The speaker again denied any knowledge of his companion, except from having accidentally encountered him on the road.

The jeweller thought it not a little extraordinary that any devotee should trust so rich an offering into such ignorant hands, or send a person on a foreign mission who knew no language but his own.

He was told that the bearer of the jewels was a confidential servant of their owner; that his passage had been taken in a vessel bound for Leghorn, where he was to be received by her friends; but that the vessel, getting damaged, had put into

Bourdeaux ; whence, there being no other about to sail for the Italian states, he lost no time in journeying to Marseilles.

This explanation by no means satisfied the jeweller. He believed that the man who professed ignorance of French, perfectly understood all that went on ; as might be seen in the expression of his countenance, and anxious attention, while the priest made his statement. It was, therefore, no vindication in the eyes of his accuser, that, when the interpreter took his examination, he corroborated, word for word, all that was said for him by his companion.

In short, notwithstanding their solemn protestations of innocence, the two travellers were committed to prison ; where they were incarcerated some time, waiting the arrival of a witness, one of the sailors saved from the wreck, and who was a native of that neighbourhood.

This man had already appeared in evidence at the memorable trial in Cornwall ; he had often repeated to his friends at Marseilles the particulars

of that strange occurrence, and, on being brought forward, he immediately identified Doughty as the person implicated, and in the person of his companion he recognized the priest to whom the prisoner owed his acquittal.

This providential discovery caused a violent sensation in the city: all Marseilles was in an uproar. And when the day of trial came on, the prisoners found themselves in a perilous situation enough. They had now an ordeal to go through very different from that which they had so triumphantly evaded in England. Here was no special pleader to take up their cause; no popular feeling excited in their favour. Strangers in a foreign land, they could rely only on their innocence for their defence; and Doughty, on his own shewing, as the confessed possessor of the stolen casket, was condemned to the galleys for life. Mac Cardwell, however, being a priest, and having letters to influential persons at Rome, contrived to get himself transferred to that city.

It was remarkable that, throughout many weeks

of imprisonment, during the whole of the trial, nay at the very hour of condemnation, Doughty should refrain from implicating the priest. On the contrary, he adhered to the statement of the latter, persisting that they had never known each other until their accidental meeting at an inn on the road. Totally under the dominion of the hypocrite, whose only object at the moment was self-preservation, this wretched man, while he sought to vindicate his betrayer, only the more deeply implicated himself.

At his daily task in the docks, manacled and degraded, he wore a constant air of defiance, and had the appearance of one who encouraged some authorized expectation of a speedy release.

I found him chained to a fellow-labourer, possibly less guilty than himself, working out his time at the most slavish, the most humiliating of all manual labours—a gazing stock for scoffers, a mark for curiosity—reduced to sullen despair, but morose and unsubdued, as if he were suffering unjustly.

On my first addressing him—a privilege which

he knew I must have obtained from the authorities at Marseilles—a sudden flash of triumph gleamed from his dark eye ; but when a few words explained that my mission was not one of release, he relapsed into gloom, and it was some time before he would answer me a word.

I was not, however, repelled by his surliness, for he held in his keeping the secret of William Trevillion's retreat. But I durst not avow the real motive which led me to visit him, as I knew that he would have stipulated for his own freedom as the price of any information. My inquiries were, therefore, confined to Mac Cardwell, on which subject alone I found he might be moved. And, whetting his indignation to the utmost of my power, he soon broke out into the most vindictive accusations against his former colleague, who had seduced, betrayed, and deserted him ; and whom he in turn—especially when informed that Lady Trevillion was now with her friends, and every thing known—was as ready to betray and desert.

Of course, in referring to the subject of the

casket, he vehemently denied having taken it from the person of its owner; a female, he said, clung to a rock, the wind at the time was blowing a hurricane, and the waves dashing over her; he endeavoured to reach, in order to save her, but the violence of the current prevented his efforts. She threw herself forward and fell; no human power could then have rescued her. She was borne away in a moment. He saw some other body, and did his utmost to grasp at it; but this effort also failing, he gave up his vain attempts, and was struggling to regain the shore, when some glittering object was washed on before him; he seized what proved to be a richly chased casket, which, for present security, he hid in a cavern, and rushed backed to the shore. Mac Cardwell, however, as it chanced, had seen the treasure in his possession, and afterwards induced him to retain it. No good purpose, he said, could possibly be effected by resigning it into the keeping of the magistrates, or into the coffers of the king. But the Church of Rome was sustaining a great struggle; she was at im-

mense expense in furnishing missions to preserve her religion intact from the base attempts of an extirpating enemy. One half of the treasure so miraculously found might, like the draught of the fishes, feed hundreds of hungry souls ; and bring a blessing on the other half, though it rested in the hands of the donor.

In consequence of this representation, the casket was carefully buried in a cellar at the post-office, where prudence obliged them to leave it for the present, nor was it until about the time of Lady Trevillion's return from Bath, that Doughty ventured back for the purpose of disinterring his valuable deposit. Mac Cardwell, at that period, also revisited England for a short time, Father Austin alone being privy to his return. From Celeste they gleaned all the information that was wanting to facilitate the working of their plot. Doughty had remained in Cornwall to sail along with their victim, as a precautionary measure, should Sir Charles change the plan of his journey. He also took charge of the jewels ; and, in order to

aid Mac Cardwell the better, and elude recognition, he afterwards adopted a clerical disguise. It was he who led the carriage which dragged Lady Trevillion from her friends, who listened unmoved to her cries and entreaties; and who, lastly, performed a principal part in the as cruel abduction of her son.

Accompanied by Celeste, they threw themselves and their prize on board a small fishing smack which was hired for the purpose. On reaching L'Orient, they found a vessel weighing anchor for Lisbon. But Lisbon was only a temporary hiding place. In the course of three months they brought their little charge into the neighbourhood of Po, where Celeste had some relations. There he whiled away the hours until summoned by Mac Cardwell to join him at La Fleche. Celeste was given to understand that the poor infant was to be returned to his father, while the care of Lady Trevillion devolved upon her. But Mac Cardwell had no such purpose in view as parting with William Trevillion; though his detention, and

indeed the stealing him in the first instance, were opposed by Father Austin, as being an unnecessary incitement to Sir Charles Trevillion's vigilance. Mac Cardwell, however, hated the latter with a deadly hatred. He had set his mind on restoring the heir of Pendyffryn—should he ever be restored—only as a bigoted Romanist.

At La Fleche, the Confessor took charge of poor William himself; and with Doughty in company, proceeded towards the south. They lingered in a town some leagues from Marseilles, until Father Austin remitted his confederate some money.

There William, for whom a nurse was found at St. Macaire, remained, while his guardians proceeded to Marseilles, when the attempt to turn their merchandize into gold, put a final stop to the proceedings of this precious pair. Mac Cardwell, however, succeeded in getting himself transferred to the spiritual direction of his superiors at Rome.

“Did William go with him?” I inadvertently asked. Doughty looked at me earnestly; a strange

expression of joy flashed in his malignant eyes. There was yet something in his power. He guessed that I was come to gain information from him. The ready lie was instantly on his lip.

“William has been removed. He is no longer in France ; but he is not in Italy. I am waiting till he is older to purchase my freedom at his hands.”

“You can hold no communication with any person,” I said, “unless permitted by the authorities here ; it was with much difficulty that I, who came openly to work, got leave to speak with you.”

“I do not go openly to work ; I have means of communication which you know nothing about.”

“You will gain nothing,” I replied, “by defiance ; except, perhaps, a severer infliction of punishment.”

“There can be none more severe,” he said : “death would be a reprieve ; but by death you would close the only lips which have power to give the information you seek. It is not impossible to break such chains as mine ; others have been

released by judicious interference. If you are wise, and sincere in desiring to recover this boy, exert yourself in my favour, and he shall be forthcoming. Some of the father's wealth might be well bestowed in such a case. I ask no other reward than my liberty."

I assured him that neither Sir Charles Trevillion nor myself would act in the manner he proposed. That the last thing we should do would be to defeat for our own purposes the ends of justice. "Lady Trevillion," I added, "is now beyond the reach of a heartless conspiracy; we do not fear to accuse her betrayers and bring them to punishment. No government but what will aid us in the restoration of an unoffending child."

His answer was a laugh of the most satanic meaning, which, as I turned away gave emphasis to these words: "You will find the grave of him you seek in the cemetery at Bourdeaux: if you had procured me my liberty, I would have showed it you myself."

This was, indeed, an astounding conclusion to

my hopes ; but the malicious asseverations of a disappointed wretch did not deter me from prosecuting my search. I proceeded to Macaire.

The information I got there was disheartening, and partly corroborated the last words of Doughty. An old Curé of the place remembered the child, and knew something of the woman who had him in charge. A small sum of money had been left with her for the child's use, and she waited four months expecting the return of those persons who entrusted him with her. Her name, he said, was Gironde ; she had, soon after, gone to live with a daughter whose husband was a gardener, and resided either in the neighbourhood of Bourdeaux or Niort.

Not a little alarmed, I set forward again ; hope led me toward Niort, which was much nearer to Macaire than Bourdeaux, which if I had obeyed my fears I should have first sought. I was right in preferring the dictates of a guide, which if she sometimes deceives, is at least always encouraging. Not far from the river, on which is situated that retired little town, in one of the prettiest

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habitations imaginable, I found the fair daughter of Madame Gironde. On inquiring for the mother, I was told she had gone to market with fruit. I ventured to ask if she had not a little boy left under her care; the young woman replied in the affirmative, adding, that he always accompanied her mother, whenever the weather was fine.

She sent a *garçon* to show me the market-place, and from our conversation on the road, I had little fear of having to repair to the cemetery at Bourdeaux.

He pointed out the gardener's stall; it was the best, and most tastefully arranged in the place. But its greatest attraction was a beautiful boy, with the eyes—as Mary Trevillion would say—the large lustrous eyes of Clotilde.

Full of glee and activity he was sorting the fruit, helping himself to what best suited his taste, and occasionally serving the customers, while a remarkably fine looking woman, the ostensible *proprietaire*, regarded his infantine performances with smiles of approbation and pride.

Stifling my emotion, I stood by her side, and inquired the price of some cherries ; but observing me to be more attracted by the child than the fruit, she, without answering my question, took off his straw hat, stroked back the rich curls from his face, and asked me if he was not quite charming ?

I warmly expressed my admiration, and inquired if she had heard nothing of the persons who placed him under her care.

She was startled, but no way confused, and readily made answer, that she had never heard from them since.

“ I knew nothing of them at the time,” she said, “ but that one was a priest called Father Mathias. The dear boy seemed to me to be delicately nurtured ; and though you now see him assisting in a market, poor little love, for his pleasure, all his habits, when he came to me, were those of the *noblesse*.”

I could no longer restrain myself ; but catching the dear boy in my arms, and embracing him heartily, told her I had come from his parents, who

were suffering the greatest anxiety, not knowing at that moment if he were dead or alive. And commending, as she merited, the healthful, and happy, and extremely neat appearance of he charge.

“ Ah, Monsieur !” she replied, “ he fares as we do, and the husband of my daughter loves him as his own. But the clothes, Monsieur, are not of our buying. Some little time since,” she subjoined in a whisper, “ one, who charged us not to mention her name, but who was a mother to the orphan, and a friend to the poor, passed through this country, incog. as they call it. She saw our pensionnaire, and on hearing his story, gave me money to dress him and send him to school. She also promised to inquire for his parents. But misfortune has since overtaken herself. Alas ! poor Madame has been too confiding ; and, as we are told, too much of a heroine. But let her faults be what they may, she has the prayers of the poor, and the voice of the fatherless is raised up to bless her. She was loved very dearly in this

country at least. From the banks of the Loire to the source of the Garonne, all hearts were her own. We however know, in comparison, little about her : go into Normandy—inquire at Rosni, you will hear of her there *.”

Gironde then opened the shirt collar of the child, and bade me remark the whiteness of his neck.

“ You must,” I said, “ present him to his father : you must come with me to Nantes, where his mother is staying, and receive from them both the thanks so much your due, for the preservation of their darling.” She was perfectly willing ; indeed the mention of the journey was alone what could reconcile her to the loss of her charge. She expressed a lively wish to make acquaintance with his mother.

I gave her the shortest possible time to get ready, as I was impatient to report progress at Nantes ; and the good dame being active as

* This is a true anecdote of the unfortunate Duchess.

willing, her preparations were promptly completed, so that in less than two hours after my arrival at Niort, I was retracing my journey, with all the speed of success.

CHAPTER XXXVI.

I SHALL be silent as to the overflowing joy of Sir Charles Trevillion when it was my happiness to restore him his son ; neither will I dwell on the mother's tearful extacies, when she held the precious child to her heart ; still less describe—if it were in my power—the smiles with which Mary rewarded my success. They would have repaid me had I traversed the globe, or served a seven years' apprenticeship to earn them.

Gironde, I need not say, came in for her share of gratitude ; and being substantially rewarded, the noble peasant returned to a home, which is, I trust, as much the abode of love, charity, and content, as when such virtues were its only possessions.

William clung to her to the last; but a variety of sights and scenes, the playfulness of his sister, and his subsequent journey—till the eve of which Gironde remained—reconciled the affectionate child to her loss, and to the nurse who had hitherto attended his mother.

I could not prevail upon Sir Charles to take one step, previous to leaving Nantes, toward the recovery of the St. Aubin estates. The evidence of the process by which Lady Trevillion was induced to relinquish her rights, would have annulled, without much trouble, the iniquitous assignment. But her husband could not bear to bring her again into collision with Austin, or to make public the impositions by which she had been duped. He was sick at heart of France, and shrunk (as he would from the bite of a serpent) from any allusion to the authors of his misery. I, on the contrary, was eager to bring them to the end they deserved, to publish their crimes, and to prove, not only to the world but to themselves, that they were thoroughly detected. But the feelings of the husband were

different. He wished nothing more than the quiet possession of his happiness—the enjoyment of his renewed comforts. “Let me,” he said, “return to England in peace, let me rest on my present restored blessings, let me forget, in the renewal of domestic confidence, and the recurrence of home occupations, that I ever left that home—that it ever was a scene of duplicity. I wish for no interest elsewhere. I would not accept these St. Aubin estates if they were offered to me to-morrow.”

Perhaps he is right. I endeavour to think so, and to reconcile myself to his patient endurance in the prospect of future vengeance on the vile offenders. If the father of the heiress will not contest her rights, the future protector of our little Mary may do so if he pleases.

We returned to England; but not at first to Pedyffryn. A medical friend, whom Sir Charles consulted in London, advised his detaining Clotilde elsewhere, rather than take her to Cornwall too soon. He hired a house in the neighbourhood of

Worthing, and the first friend he received there was the invaluable Doctor Bentley.

It is not my province to enlarge on the blessed results of this visit; so I shall only observe, that Clotilde received from him those counsels for which her heart so much yearned. Quietly and progressively her conversion was established, and whatever excitement was likely to ensue from a change so portentous, his judicious influence served to allay. At length, with mental and bodily health renovated, she recovered her strength of mind and cheerfulness of temper. She sincerely desires to become acquainted with the grounds of that religion so conscientiously adopted. She reads—she examines—she compares for herself; and, if a difficulty occurs, she inquires of her spiritual pastor, who, not satisfied with placing the staff in her hand, unweariedly directs her to its use. And now decidedly a Christian in faith, as in profession; she knows that it is like the sun to the understanding—that the higher it goes, the more it enlightens—the more it brings to fruition every good and per-

fect seed. That it not only guides her to everlasting bliss—though she knows it cannot render her deserving of that bliss—but fits her for the enjoyment of it by purifying her soul. That it is a balm, distilled from the tree of life, which is also the tree of knowledge—not merely meant to ease the anguish of the sufferer; but to cure, to heal, to bind up afresh—to fill a heart capacious of happiness, with peace the most perfect. And she seeks for that faith at the footstool of God, in the *alone* mediation of the *one* oblation *once offered*.

But my active occupations are gone, and I feel my incompetency in detailing any others; suffice it to say, that an autumn spent in Scotland braced whatever was relaxed in the moral or intellectual health of all parties. Coming from scenes of suffering and terror to one of peace and security, the force of such a contrast could not but place the religion adopted by Clotilde, her reformation from error, in the most advantageous point of view. While the unpretending goodness of Lucy Melville acted as a sedative upon any bursts of enthusiasm

that might agitate the feelings of the convert; nor could there be an anodyne more truly efficacious. Surrounded by affection, treated with confidence, prized as a recovered jewel, Clotilde yields to the genial influence which waits her grateful acknowledgment. She is an object of esteem with the numerous relations of her husband; while that husband, having drank deeply of the bitter cup mixed by himself, feels its corrective influence, and confesses with thanks that the salutary effects of a medicine so severe were not purchased too dearly.

Mary is at length persuaded that both brother and sister can manage for the future without her. And once more under the influence of hope, I am arrived at Melville Park for the purpose of rendering it a worthy, and I trust a happy abode for her, who, as amiable in person as in mind, would transform a desert into a paradise.

THE END.

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