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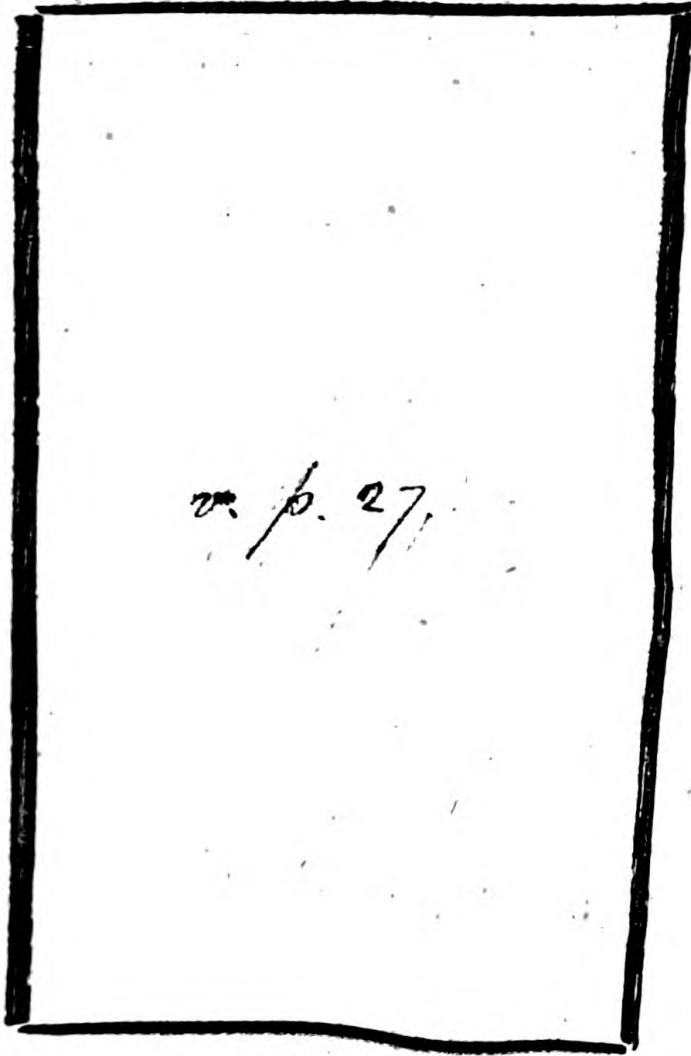


FLORENTINES.

A TALE.

3/1

B. CLARKE, Printer, Well-Street.



v. p. 27

LONDON:
PRINTED FOR J. F. HUGHES, WIGMORE-
STREET, CAVENDISH-SQUARE.

1808.



have at once plunged headlong into the current of their story. These are diffident authors—now I happen not to be diffident; in proof of which I desire it to be understood that I abide by no rules, but such as my own judgment at the moment may lay down for me. I shall hold converse with the reader, or myself, or the moon, at any time, on any subject, and after any method that I think proper. My genius will no more submit to be fettered by the dull rules of former scribblers than Dick's* would to be cramped by a pestle and mortar.

Let me first mention how I became possessed of the story, on which I am about to enter.

* The Apprentice.

My

My schoolfellow and worthy friend, Timothy Sadboy Snooks, had, some years ago, a few hundred pounds, which he wished much to dispose of. Being young and thoughtless, it is not surprising that his wishes were soon realized by the cash finding its way into general circulation. A considerable portion of it, however, was spent in a more rational manner than he may have credit for, unless I make the requisite explanation.

Being his own lord and master, *id est*, not having then thrust his neck into the yoke of matrimony, he formed a resolution of seeing the wide world, as a venerable ancestor of his used to call it. I cannot exactly say that he convinced himself how wide it was,

B 2

but

but he wandered, to my knowledge, through a considerable part of Christendom, and would probably have penetrated further than Abyssinian Bruce, Mungo Park, or Lord Valentia, but that a wealthy uncle left him a fortune, which made his presence necessary at home.

He was concerned in many an odd adventure, and no tourist was ever more inquisitive. His entertaining Travels, in letters to myself, will probably some day or other be communicated to the public. This I think a very clever mode of announcing them, for it answers all the purposes of an advertisement, and is sure, from the fame attendant on the work in which I have incorporated it, to gain extensive circulation—

ulation—an economical and praiseworthy scheme in these hard times.

Among the curiosities with which Italy abounds, the fame of the Delta Crusean school attracted my friend Snooks to Florence; and there it was that he procured the interesting papers, which supply me with materials for the following pages. The plain truth is, that they were given to him by a celebrated courtezan, and by him to me. I found them in a very chaotic state: I have cleared away the rubbish, and expect the public to remunerate me for my trouble. The courtezan received these records from a fat friar, with whom he was on particular terms of intimacy; the fat friar had borrowed them of the holy confessor in the

B 3 family

family De C** ; the holy confessor had stolen them from : in short, I could make out a history as long as "The house that Jack built." Suffice it, I have them.

Two recommendations they, at all events, possess, appertaining to very few publications in these degenerate days. First, they evidently form a narrative of facts—I cannot say a simple and unadorned narrative, because it will be often and materially embellished by the beauties of my style, which is, of course, the second recommendation.

There is scarcely any thing, in which fashion has more varied than in the article hitherto deemed a necessary precursor to a book—I mean its title. The constitutional

constitutional form thereof has undergone so many revolutions, and counter-revolutions, that it is hardly possible to give any regular account of them.

The first kind of titles seem to have been of a very laconic description. Writers went upon the plain principle of *Verbum sat*: they announced their subject in a stout strong single word. One called his book *ILIAS*, another *ONEIDOS*, and the thing was done.

From this extreme bounce flew the literary world into the opposite one, and the title became almost a book in itself. Now lived our incomparable Shakespeare, who, as his commentators justly observe, has more than once modestly apologized for his untutored

lines, while his publishers make no scruple of announcing "his most pleasant and excellent conceited comedies, with sundry variable and pleasing humours."

Another change took place—the titles were neither so brief nor diffuse as before; but being wrapt up in a kind of mystery, it became absolutely necessary to read the work, before the work could be understood. Nevertheless, I must enter a *caveat*. I grant there were books of this class, which could not be understood by any reader on earth, and such there were, are, and will be in every class. The present was, however, an excellent plan on the part of the author, for mystery creates curiosity—purchase precedes perusal, and he pockets the pence.

N. B. I here *give* notice, once for all, that I am very fond of an alliteration.

Now for another revolution, a strange unaccountable one, and reserved for modern ingenuity to accomplish. Will you believe me, reader?—The titles have nothing whatever to do with the works which they precede. The author's recipe is this: He writes on separate slips of paper, a dozen, all varying as to signification, but all of a *taking* nature, and puts them into his hat: the first which falls, on throwing them out, he adopts. If, therefore, you should chance to see the *Life of Chaucer* or *Spencer* announced, you may venture large odds that it is in reality the life of any other person, and treats

B 5 principally

principally of things with which Chaucer or Spencer had no concern.

I had written these few lines one day when my friend Snooks happened to call on me. I always like his society, because his oddity is a perpetual source of amusement. I shewed him my *exordium*; and the mode of dividing titles into classes seemed to tickle his fancy. He laughed heartily, took down some notes, and, after a little common conversation, took his departure. I thought no more of this; but the next morning, while I was seated at breakfast, he threw open the door, and entered the room with every mark of perturbation in his countenance.

“ I have been robbed,” exclaimed he.

“ Indeed!”

“ Indeed!” cried I, starting up,
“ in the open street ?”

“ Yes,” retorted he, “ in the open street, and during broad day-light, robbed, murdered, and thrown into a ditch.”

I know my friend’s humours, and seeing that he was *in alt*, I resumed my seat with a determination of quietly listening to the account of his adventure. He saw my intention, and taking a chair just opposite to me began in a tone somewhat more moderate.

“ Talk of stealing a horse or a sheep! What is this, compared with mental robbery?—Make a fuss about breaking into a man’s house, and
B 6 marching

marching off with a few silver spoons !
 What is this, compared with breaking
 into a man's brain, and stealing there-
 from divers articles of golden know-
 ledge?—I had made such an improve-
 ment upon your system of classing ti-
 tles, that you yourself would have been
 astonished. Listen," continued he,
 " I called them—" (and here, reader,
 observe that they are not recapitulated
 without an object)—" I called them,

First, the *Laconic*, or *Stout and
 Strong*.

Secondly, the *Diffuse*, or *Thousand-
 worded*.

Thirdly, the *Contracted*, or *Myste-
 rious*.

Fourthly, the *Humbug*, or *Modern
 Take-in*.

Fifthly,——

That

That you know *nothing* about: no wonder, for I myself *invented* it only last night, and not once could I afterwards close my eyes, so intoxicated was I with the idea of being announced to the public as the sole and indisputable proprietor. But, as many persons have said before me, how delusive are *all our* hopes and expectations! Mine have vanished—my spirits, like *Prospero's*, are “melted into air, into thin air, and I am left disconsolate.”

Here my friend Snooks rested his forehead on his hand, as if extremely dejected. I sipped my *coffee* with perfect composure.

“Attend,” continued he, at length, “for my communication is important.

Amidst

Amidst the numerous inventions of titles, it suddenly, and as I fondly fancied in a most auspicious moment, occurred to me, that no one, as far as my knowledge extends, had ever hit upon the idea of giving a book no title at all.

“Glorious, glorious! exclaimed I, leaping out of bed, a dukedom should not buy the glorious thought. Never was I so proud of one; I felt as if my very stature had obtained a material increase. No itinerant knight of the buskin ever stalked up and down the floor of a barn with more fancied importance than I did, while anticipating the literary honours which awaited me. At length, however, the cold Christmas air induced me to revisit my couch,
when



when I in vain endeavoured to compose myself, even with that *pleasantest* of all opiates—self-complacency.

“Restless I toss’d and tumbled to and fro,
“And roll’d and wriggled——”

as Dryden, after Chaucer, perhaps more correctly than elegantly describes it. By degrees, however, the ferment abated, and my mind was occupied till morning by a retrospective enquiry into the causes which could possibly have led me to make a discovery of such essential importance to the republic of letters—for that it is so you must allow.”

I felt as if obliged to bow assent, and he resumed his narration thus:

“Know,

“Know, then, as I happened, in the course of my nocturnal studies, to be gracefully waving my right hand to and fro, which is my custom when particularly intent on any subject, the said hand accidentally alighted on a certain part of my wife’s attire, called a petticoat.”

“Have a care,” interrupted I. “What will Mrs. Snooks say, if you thus tell the secrets of the prison-house?”—“She has no concern with my visit,” replied he. “I came here to talk about the De C** papers, and not about “The Miseries of Human Life.”—No more of that, Hal, an thou lovest me. What is the reason I know not; but I never see a petticoat without being fired, as it were, instantaneously

taneously with a peculiar train of ideas."

"Yet, on this occasion," returned I, "you surely could not see it; for at midnight, and near Christmas——"

"Right," interrupted he, "but I felt it, and I know no reason why that should inspire me the less. In fact, it led me to a comparative train of reasoning. Fashion-mongers have been by some writer (whose name has escaped me) compared not unaptly to church-clocks—they often go wrong; but still every one is regulated by them. The changes of fashion in the titles of books, thought I, are the same as in petticoats. Formerly, these were of the first, or stout and strong class; about

about my great-grandmother's time, when a single good woollen one was deemed sufficient. Next, they were of the second or diffuse class, when several came into vogue one above another, of different lengths, widths, textures and qualities, with a hoop into the bargain. By the third metamorphose they were contracted again; but still matters were modestly wrapped up in a kind of mystery. This, however, like every other dog, only had its day; for the class which has of late years been the greatest favourite, is the fourth or *Humbug*, in which the petticoat is absolutely a transparent *Take-in*. Now, continued I, simpering at the neat way in which I made these arguments square with your doctrine of book-titles—the lady of fashion, whom



whom I this morning saw, as she was stepping into her carriage from the shop in Pall-Mall, wore something even beyond the *Humbug*; it was almost more than transparent; it could scarcely be called a petticoat at all.

“Then by the golden locks of Apollo, this Italian story shall have no title at all. Glorious, glorious!” cried I, as I sprung out of bed and threw down the petticoat, with the very same air that Achilles assumed when he spurned the distaff, “a dukedom——”

“Thanks,” observed I, “we have had the rest before.”—“True,” replied Snooks. “Well then; by this happy combination of ideas and circumstances was I determined to request, my friend, that you would send the bantling
into

into the world without a name. I formed the resolution, as you perceive, before you produced him. Nay, I employed myself as soon as I rose in making a sketch of my new device; for I meant to recommend that, on opening the volume, your reader's eye should have been thus gratified." He here presented to me a card, of which this is an exact copy:

A BOOK WITHOUT A TITLE,

WRITTEN BY

N O B O D Y,

Of whom Nothing is to be expected.

"Judge,

“Judge, then,” continued he, “of my disappointment and chagrin, when, as I was hastening to you, Fred Flam, the very first person to whom I confidentially imparted my purpose, assured me that he had a work in the press, which he meant to announce in a way nearly similar, his fancy having, as he said, suggested it to him long before. *Credat Judæus!* There’s honour for you. But friends are like melons,—you will sometimes try a dozen or a score before you find one that is good for any thing. Shameful robbery! I could have almost choaked the fellow, for I myself was half-choaked with rage.”

“You are certainly ill used,” said I, perceiving that the choler of the Snooks family was rising again.

“I know

"I know it, Sir," answered he, "you need not tell me that. The loss, however, is your's; for you must now hit upon a title yourself.—I wash my hands of the concern..... And yet am I to forfeit my rights? Is not the case clear? May I not claim the idea as my own? Ought I not to say with Shylock: "Tis mine, and I will have it?" Did any other navigator discover the New World on the same day that Columbus espied it? No, but Americanus took advantage of the certainty established that there was such a country, and that the passage was practicable. He landed, claimed the honour, and gave name to the whole continent."

During this last harangue, my friend had thrice struck the table with such
vehemence

vehemence as to cause a *general* concussion of the articles upon it. He now concluded by vaulting into his chair, where he appeared as if about to play the part of Alexander, and I fully expected every moment to hear the "Victoria, Victoria," and to see my whole breakfast apparatus crushed to atoms by his fall. In this I was mistaken; for suddenly assuming an air of great solemnity, he raised his right arm, and thus proceeded:

"Immortal Columbus! thou, like myself, wert a victim to thy rival's cunning; thou, like myself, wert deprived of the renown, which so justly appertained to thee. But fear not, brave associate in adversity; I will redeem thy reputation; for from this day,

day, on which our destinies were interwoven, I charge every potentate of Europe, Asia, and Africa, henceforth, to call the New World by no other name than COLUMBA. "*Institia est perpetua voluntas suumcuique tribuendi,*" says one Justinian, and so says Timothy Sadboy Snooks also."

With these words he bounded straight over the table, and rushed out of the room. This mode of *exit* caused no surprise in my mind, for I am accustomed to the general eccentricities of his character. I have seen him gravely argue at table for a couple of hours with a learned doctor, and immediately afterwards stand upon his head in a drawing-room. He gives a splendid annual ball during the dog-days, and
never

never uses the cold bath nor eats ice but in January. When he plays at chess (and an intricate game appears to demand his whole attention) he often thunders forth a long political oration, and patriotically contends that all Bonaparte's victories are gained by stale-mate. He is an epicure in his own way, too; for he fattens and slaughters a horse occasionally, because he thinks the rump-steak of this animal so far superior to any part of the ox. In short, it may be said of my friend Snooks, as that judicious dramatist George Colman has observed of Kemble: * "He is a paragon representative of the *Lusus Naturæ*; and were he sewed up in a skin, to act a hog in a pantomime, he would act a hog

* Preface to the Iron Chest.

with six legs better than a hog with four."

Having now told you, reader, what I think proper, I proceed to my story. And must it, after all, have a title? My publisher says yes, and I submit. This then is the most proper place for it; namely, after No Chapter, and before Chapter the First.

THE FLORENTINES,

OR

Secret Memoirs

OF THE

NOBLE FAMILY DE C**.

By BENJAMIN THOMPSON,

TRANSLATOR OF THE STRANGER, GERMAN THEATRE,
&c. &c.

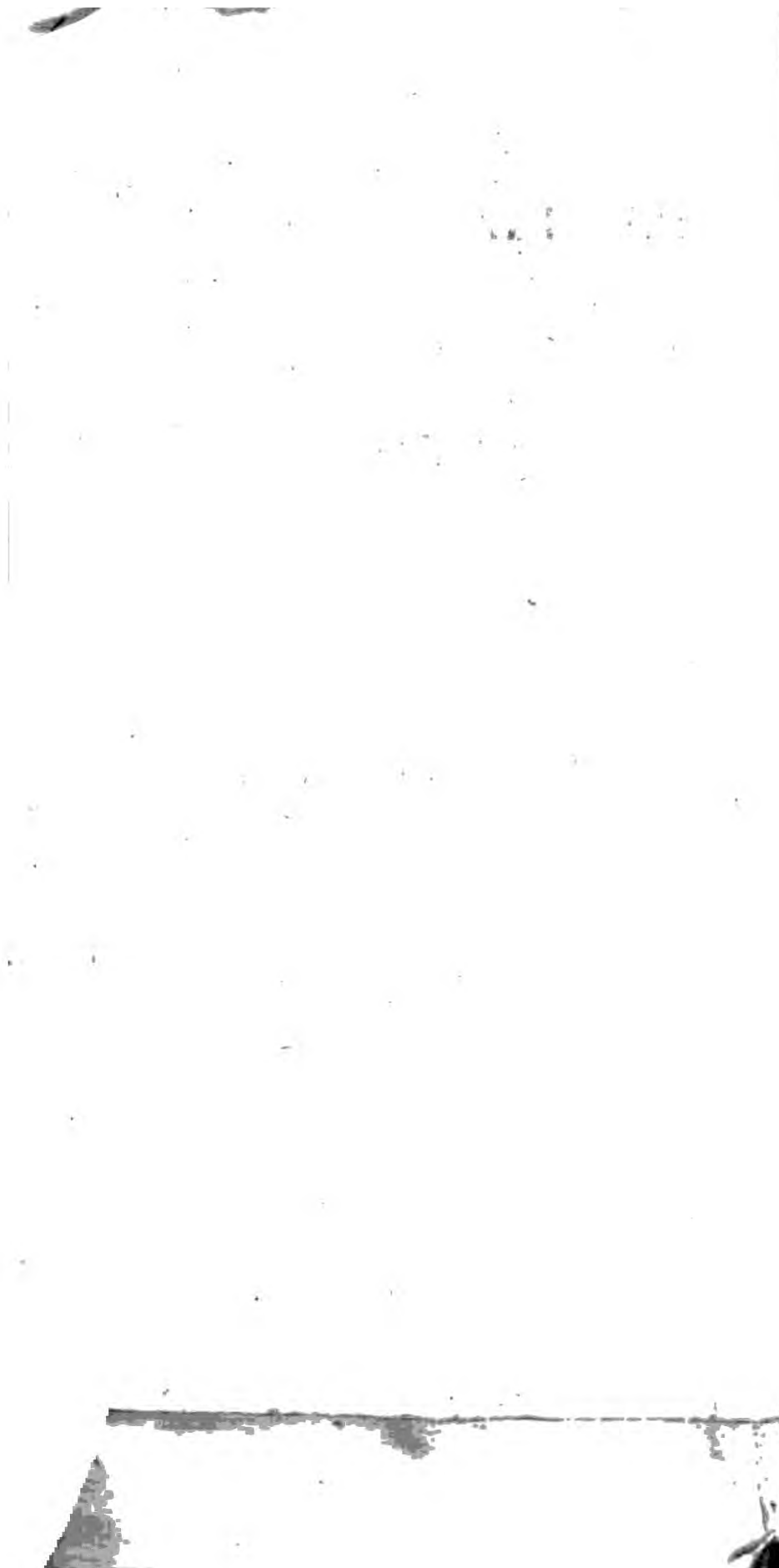
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FOR J. F. HUGHES, WIGMORE-STREET,
CAVENDISH-SQUARE.

1808.

2



CHAP. I.

The Story commences.—Alberto takes Leave of his Friend, and departs for his Regiment with blupt Michael—gains the Favour of Count X—accompanies him to England.—Hint at an Amour in that Country.—Promotion.

It was soon after the period that Tuscany became subject to the House of Austria, when Alberto quitted the academies of Florence, at which he had been educated, and where he had acquired no superficial knowledge of the various arts and sciences, for which those seminaries had made themselves remarkable. They did not, however, solely engage his attention, for he had,

c 3

from

from his earliest years, felt an ardent inclination towards a soldier's life, and was now determined to share in the renown which so often followed the Imperial banner. Alberto was the younger brother of the Marquis de C**, a Florentine nobleman, who had lately succeeded to the title and estates of their illustrious family, who approved of his intentions, assured him that he might at all times rely upon fraternal protection, and procured through the Grand Duke an immediate attention to his wishes. He received a commission in a regiment of Austrian hussars, and prepared for immediate departure from his native country. But one day did he tarry to interchange the vow of everlasting friendship with Salviati, a rich merchant of Leghorn. One day was

no

no long time, for *their* intimacy had subsisted many years, and many years might be expected to revolve before they met again. Salviati was at his estate in Pisa, and had received notice of Alberto's intention. They met with their usual cordiality; but was it possible that they should meet with their usual cheerfulness? Ah, no! 'Tis true they attempted it; but the unbidden tear and trembling grasp betrayed what passed within: not that Salviati disapproved of the project, far otherwise; he too had been consulted: he had given it his fullest acquiescence and support: he fondly anticipated its probable success: he already beheld the companion of his youth surrounded by victory and honours. But still, had all these been certain, the present mo-

ment would have been painful, for it was the moment of separation.

Talk not to me, ye frigid moralizing proser, of "It's all for the best---we shall be so much the happier when we meet again." This is very proper as death-bed consolation, or may do well enough for boarding-school misses, who leave home at Christmas to return at Midsummer; but I hate such paltry threadbare comfort, and would willingly run twenty miles at any time to avoid it.

"And never shall I look on this," proceeded Salviati, pointing to the portrait of Alberto, "without calling to mind the solemn promise which I to-day have made. Your wife, though

below

below the rank, from which custom had ordained (I pretend not to say how wisely) that you should choose a companion for your bed, was still your wife."

"Oh that I could say she is still my wife," exclaimed Alberto: "not all the dread of my brother's resentment——"

"Of this no more," observed Salviati, interrupting him, "you cannot recal her from the grave. I charge you," continued he, taking the hand of his friend with a look of benignity, which none but those possessed of a good heart can assume, "I charge you, Alberto, when far from Italy, to recollect my words.—Disturb not your
c 5 peace

peace of mind, and injure not your health by unavailing regret. Your son, however the pride of family may make it necessary that his birth should at present be concealed, will not be in my eyes the less your son. Providence already smiles upon my union with the idol of my heart, and I trust that but a few months will elapse, ere she will bless me with a playmate for your Theodore. He shall be educated with my child. I am certain that to make you easy I need say no more."

"True, true!" cried Alberto, his utterance half choaked with tears.—
"Write often."

"I will," replied Salviati, "that I may with greater right expect to
hear

hear often from my friend. Fare-
wel!"

"I shall remit," said Alberto, with
more firmness, "whenever a cornet's
pay——"

"Nonsense!" exclaimed Salviati.

"Write often," repeated Alberto,
deeply affected.

"Nay," stammered Salviati, "let
us not part thus. Remember your he-
roic destination."

"Farewel!" said Alberto, still
more agitated; and "Farewel" would
Salviati again have said, but that he
felt he should be still more inarticulate.

They embraced, and parted.

Oh, friendship! next to love the greatest blessing upon earth, he, who has ever felt thine influence in its purity, will understand what passed within the generous souls of these two worthy men. But see! Already are Alberto, and his faithful servant Michael, proceeding over the borders of Tuscany: let us accompany them.

The sun had scarcely tipt with gold the spires of Florence; yet had our travellers left a full league behind them. Alberto cast a glance at the surrounding scenery long familiar to him, yet perhaps never to be so again.

“Adieu! dear native fields,” murmured

mured he. "Peace be to you, while
I hasten to the wars."

And now they had reached the summit of a steep ascent—but a few yards further, and the fertile vales of Tuscany were to be entirely hidden from their sight. There is scarcely an animal in creation, as I think, which is not in some degree sensible of that same quality called by us rational beings *Amor Patriæ*. Alberto checked his horse, that he might cast another "lingering look behind." The horse turned as it were instinctively, and in this would have been directly followed by his four-legged companion, but that Michael forbade it by a smart jirk of the bridle, and pushed to the rear of his master, that he might not intercept
the

the view. Here he drew forth, and uncorked, a large leathern flaggon. The sight of it reminded him of many a merry hour—he paused for a few moments, lost in thought. Alberto heaved a deep sigh, wiped away another tear, and was proceeding, when the ludicrous solemnity of his servant's appearance fixed his attention:

“Right, Michael!” said he, “drink, honest fellow. 'Tis the last drop of Tuscan vintage which thou wilt taste for many a day.”

“Good,” answered Michael, as his master galloped off. He raised his bottle and chin together, poured down a pint of comfort, pocketed his leathern companion, and applied his spurs.

Had

Had the God of Love lent wings to Alberto's impatience, he could hardly have proceeded with greater rapidity. Michael trembled for the *cattle*; but knowing his duty, and having at all times a propensity to be sparing of his words, he kept his station at his master's heels, secretly praying to all the saints in the Almanack, that some one of the numerous houses of entertainment which they passed would at length induce him to rest awhile. The prayers, however, did not prevail, till his master's horse began at length to shew symptoms of fatigue. The animal, at other times so nettlesome and eager, gradually reduced its pace to a short trot. A wretched apology for an inn presented itself—they alighted, but only for an hour—no time was lost—the young

young soldier panted to behold the confines of Bohemia.

War had been awhile suspended by winter; but all the troops, belonging to the House of Austria, were ordered to hold themselves in readiness. This was the time for the hero to earn laurels—this was the time for ardent youths to gain promotion by their merit.

Not far from Lintz Alberto met travellers, who announced that various regiments were already in motion—his heart was with them.

“Michael,” said he, alighting at the Black Eagle, “order a post-chariot, and follow with the horses leisurely, according to directions, which I shall leave with you.”

“Good,”

“ Good,” answered Michael.

The regiment to which Alberto was appointed, had not yet left a fortified town of Bohemia when he joined. It was commanded by Count X—, a nobleman, who had made himself conspicuous as an upright penetrating statesman, and a cool intrepid warrior. He was, moreover, a particular admirer of learning and the arts; and never failed to patronize those who possessed the excellent qualities, for which he himself was so eminently distinguished. Nor were opportunities wanting, in which he could do this to some purpose, from his high situation in the favour of the Empress-Queen, who frequently condescended to ask his opinion upon national

onal questions, as well civil as military.

That Alberto should have been accidentally placed under such a commander was to him a most fortunate event. Scarcely had a week elapsed after the cornet's arrival ere the count began to suppose him a proper object of regard. Being, however, not in the habit of forming hasty conclusions, his lordship employed several months in calm investigation. The young Florentine was employed in many skirmishes, and on several expeditions of enterprise, all of which redounded much to his honour, and procured him the increasing esteem of his patron, who mentioned him at Vienna in terms of the highest encomium, and in the
course

course of the same year obtained for him promotion.

About this time the Austrian government began to fear that Great Britain would form a treaty, which might essentially militate against some project of the former. To ascertain whether the conjecture was well founded, it was resolved that Count X— should go to England, not in any ostensible public capacity, but apparently as a German nobleman upon his travels. For this purpose he assumed the name of Baron F——, and being desired to take with him a secretary, appointed Alberto to that office ; who, however, during their residence of three months in London, bore the same name, and was introduced as his nephew to
the

the numerous families of distinction with which he there became acquainted. Alberto was in every respect well qualified for the office to which he had been appointed. He was perfect master of the English language, and likewise possessed a countenance and manner highly in his favour, so that he the more easily gained access to those who could best supply him with authentic intelligence as to the object of his patron's mission.

This being accomplished, the *soi-disant* Baron and his nephew returned to Vienna, soon after which the former was appointed to an extensive command, and the latter received a troop, accompanied by an assurance of entire satisfaction on the part of the empress.

Attentive.

Attentive, however, as Alberto had been, during his abode in *this country*, to the interests of the power by whom he was employed, yet had he not failed to recommend himself in a great degree to the favour of the fair-sex. On this subject I could here lay open a few particulars, which are little suspected, and which have an intimate connexion with my story. My only reason for not doing it is, that I am quite sure most other authors would. Do not suppose, reader, that I mean to disappoint you altogether; you shall know all in time; but I must introduce it in my own way—not according to regular progression, like cotemporary bunglers, but unexpectedly—by a literary *coup-de-main*. I despise a mechanical march in ordinary time, at the
rate

rate of so many paces per minute.—
No, I belong to the light irregular
troops, who skirmish, scour, and scam-
per over the country just as inclination
leads them.

But I should attend, at present, to
the hussars. I have brought Alberto
back to his regiment, crowned with
honour and approbation. There let us
leave him awhile in his rapid progress
towards the rank he afterwards ob-
tained.

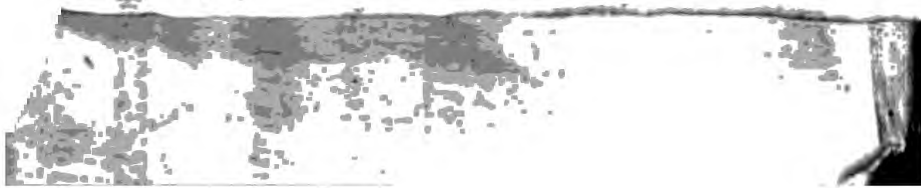
CHAP. II.

Scene returns to Italy--great pantomimic Changes there.---A kind of Harlequin's Leap, by which magical Deception Children suddenly arrive at full Growth.---Earlier Love in warmer Climes.----A Horse that kicks plays dangerous Tricks.---Michael Monosyllable come again.---Tender Adieu.---We travel northward.

MEANWHILE Alberto's son encreased in growth as well as knowledge; and held forth the most favourable presage of becoming an ornament to any situation of life, which he might be destined to fill. Salviati's hopes had been happily realized. Soon after his friend's departure, he beheld with rapture

ture the first smile of his son Ludovico. Scarcely had two years more elapsed ere a daughter hailed the light; but his happiness on this occasion was immediately succeeded by a calamity, which threw a gloom over all his future prospects. Amelia, the faithful companion of his joys and cares, became dangerously ill: a raging fever triumphed over her delicate constitution, and she expired in the arms of her adoring husband. Perhaps no letter of heartfelt affliction was ever yet perused than that which Salviati, when reason had resumed her sway, addressed to Alberto. Happy,—yes, even amidst misfortunes, happy is the man, whose head and heart can, by reciprocal assistance, dictate lines like those. They lie before me, and I feel a strong inclination

to



to transcribe them—but why at so early a period dwell upon a melancholy subject? Trust me, I have sorrow enough in store.

From the small portion of my narrative yet introduced, it is probable that Alberto may be considered as the hero of it, than which no supposition can be more erroneous. It is requisite that fathers should exist before their children can be brought upon the tapis. The truth is, I have no particular hero; yet I shall probably introduce as many as ever Homer did. In the number of heroines I shall beat the old Grecian hollow; and in order to set about it seriously, I here make a flying leap of more than a dozen years.

D

Alberto's

Alberto's rapid promotions in the army naturally induced him to wish that his son Theodore should adopt the same profession, and in the same service, where he had so many opportunities of aiding a young man's *entré* into life.

One evening Salviati was enjoying the breeze in his garden at Pisa—his daughter Amelia was harmlessly plucking a rose-bud here and there, while Theodore and Ludovico were engaged by more manly employment. A servant appeared, and delivered to Salviati what was at all times one of his highest gratifications—a letter from Alberto. It treated of the subject just alluded to; but let it speak for itself.

My

My dear friend,

I no longer need assure you with what sincere pleasure I read every line which is traced by your pen. This day, after a portion of fatigue, which would play the devil with some of our less hardened countrymen, I found at the guard-house your welcome letter. Yes, my good Salviati, you are right as to Theodore—he is now sixteen years of age, and it is time that he learnt to wield a sabre. What a delight it affords to me, that his propensities so exactly accord with my wishes as to his future life! It cannot be long before I have an opportunity of procuring for him a desirable post—expect, therefore, a sudden signal. I would not for the

D 2 world

world that he should leave your roof, and lose your invaluable counsel, till summoned to a camp, and to a father's fond embrace. I know what will be your feelings, and you, who were so well acquainted with the eager impatience, which you used to laugh at in former days, may guess at mine—expect, therefore, a sudden signal. Would that your mercantile concerns might allow you to be the companion of my Theodore! Can you not contrive it? I have some stronger reasons for the wish than I now can mention; they particularly relate to the future destination of your own son, towards whose welfare, if in my power, I should be the most ungrateful of mortals if I did not endeavour to provide. Salviati, observe my words. I form
this

this opinion partly from your own letters.

Immense as are the riches you have acquired by commerce, and enviable as is your pre-eminence among that respectable body of the community, which have been at once the chief props and ornaments of Florence, I mean its merchants—he is not destined to be one. Theodore's letters also convince me that such is the case; for his companion Ludovico's frolics are a constant topic of them. But no more of this at present. We must give the matter a fair discussion over a bottle of hock in my tent—were it possible, I would say in your house. We take the field at day-break to-morrow. God bless you! Shake hands with

the young warrior for me. I send you inclosed a draft for a thousand rixdollars.

Your's till death,

ALBERTO DE C**.

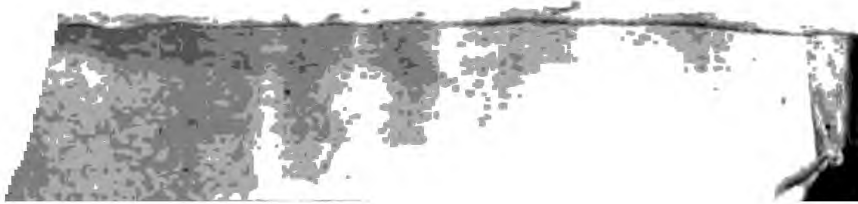
Colonel of the Fifth Austrian Hussars.

“Boys!” called Salviati, as soon as he had read this letter. Theodore and Ludovico approached from an adjoining arbour, each carrying a foil.

“At your old favourite pastime I see,” said Salviati, with a smile. “Theodore, I have good tidings for you. We shall soon part.”

“Part,” cried Theodore, “and good tidings, Sir! Can I believe intelligence which contradicts itself?”

“How



"How so?" rejoined his foster-parent. "Have you deceived both your worthy father and me? Are you satisfied with the harmless weapon at present in your hand? Are you contented with this calm retreat?" Theodore listened with surprise and expectation. Ludovico's glowing look seemed to reproach his silence.

"*Explain—I pray, explain,*" said the former.

"That will I," answered Salviati. "Colonel Alberto, alike illustrious by merit and by rank, gives notice that you every hour may hope his summons to the Austrian camp."

"To the camp!" exclaimed Theo-
dore,

dore, "this alone, if any thing, would reconcile me to the parting. But, oh Sir, let me not leave you—yet my father—my country—could I but serve my country—could I, without losing you——"

"Check this conflict of your inclinations," said Salviati, "and hear me. It is true that I have supported you through the tender years of childhood. Friendship towards Alberto, induced me carefully to sow the seeds of virtue in your heart. It is well: I reap at this moment a full harvest in those tears of gratitude. I see you find it painful to forsake me."

"Painful indeed!" exclaimed Theodore. "My brother and sister too, for
such

such I ever must consider them. Oh, Sir, I beseech you, write again; let me remain here; let me remain where my heart——”

He hesitated; a faint blush overspread his cheek. Ludovico turned away, and retired to a short distance—his arms were folded, and his eyes riveted to the ground. Amelia placed her hand upon her father's shoulder, and rested her head against it. Salviati proceeded:

“But you quit the guide and companion of your early youth to embrace a parent. Think, Theodore; to kneel at the feet, to fly into the arms of him that gave you birth. To fight at his side. To conquer the enemies of the Grand Duke under his eye!”

D 5

“It

“It is, it is a glorious prospect!”
cried Theodore.

“Glorious and irresistible!” shouted Ludovico, rushing forward, and seizing the hand of his companion. “Oh, had your lot been mine!” His breast heaved high; ardent desire appeared to fill his soul.

“Ludovico,” said the worthy merchant, “restrain these sallies of an impetuous spirit. The upright peaceful citizen is as praiseworthy as the hero who defends our rights. Enough at present! We do not separate to-day; perhaps not even this week, or month. Resume your sports, while I retire to answer my brave friend”

He

He went, but far away had fled all inclination to amusement. Amelia retired to her chamber, there to sigh in solitude for the loss of her brother Theodore, while Ludovico, not less unwilling to be parted from him, almost forgot the sorrow such an event would occasion, in envy of his great and glorious destiny.

"Forgive me," said he, taking Theodore's hand, "I seem, no doubt, ill-humoured towards you; but were the enemy at this moment aiming a death-blow at your head, I should convince you——"

"Dear Ludovico," interrupted Theodore, "I understand you. Would that we had been associates in my new career!"

D 6

Ludovico

Ludovico seized his hand. "Ha!" exclaimed he, "remember what you at this moment say: promise me that you will, if possible, prevail upon your father to intercede with mine."

"That I do sincerely," answered Theodore.

"Enough, enough!" cried Ludovico. "Often have I heard my father say he could refuse Alberto nothing. Now I am well—now I am happy, and can breathe freely. Come, Theodore, take up your foil. Another hit before we go to supper."

But know you, fair lady, why a blush tinged Theodore's cheek, while he conversed with Salviati, and inadvertently

vertently made *mention* of his heart?
Could love so soon have touched it?
Possible, and even probable; for,
strange as it may seem, the nymphs
and swains in Italy are still sooner vic-
tims to the little urchin's power than
in our colder climate; though many
are with us the youths and damsels,
who, before they reach their seven-
teenth year, at least *fancy* themselves
in love.

Amelia, then, you look upon as the
object of Theodore's regard?---
"Wrong!" as his father's servant,
honest Michael, would have briefly
said. It becomes not me, however, to
remain so brief.

Near to Salviati's villa at Pisa, a
widow

widow had for several years resided upon moderate means. She and her only daughter, Maria, were frequent visitors at the good merchant's house, when he retired thither from his occupations at Leghorn. She had attended at the death-bed of his still much-lamented wife---she too had lost in early life a husband, on whom she doted: and as they sat in the shade, recounting to each other sufferings understood by none so well, their tears would drop in unison.

Maria was, on these occasions, the playmate of the other children. Her placid mind and gentle temper suited Theodore: he always selected her as his companion---he always felt a sweet unknown pleasure when Salviati sent him

him to request that her mother would bring her to pass the evening without ceremony. He himself knew not, however, till the period at which we are now arrived, that he should find it so difficult to leave her. It was with astonishment he felt, that to quit his benefactor was almost easier than to quit Maria; and it hurt him even to think of announcing the separation, as if innocently certain that any thing, disagreeable to himself, must be unwelcome to Maria.

Two months had passed since Salviati received the letter of his friend; and yet the sudden signal, he was led to expect, had not arrived. The words in it, which related to his own son had, however, made a deep impression on
his

his mind; and, together with his affection for Theodore, as well as a wish to shake Alberto by the hand, had determined him to arrange his affairs in such a manner, as would allow his absence from home.

Theodore and Ludovico were returning from a ramble, and had almost reached the villa, when their attention was arrested by a vicious horse, which suddenly plunging from one side of the road to the other, not only threatened destruction to its rider, but to every neighbouring passenger. The animal, as if conscious of, and glorying in, the terror he inspired, foamed with fury, reared high in the air, and redoubled every effort to disengage himself from the constraint of the curb. This he at length

length effected, and *the traveller was thrown at the feet of our young friends. Theodore instantly stooped to assist him, while the fiery Ludovico sprung forward at the same moment, seized the bridle of the prancing beast, and vaulted upon his back.*

Amazement struck the numerous spectators, who were now assembled on the spot; and *this amazement increased as they beheld the skill and resolution with which he combated the efforts of the furious animal; at one time holding him in tight subjection, at another suffering him to waste his strength by unavailing plunges.*

“Strange!” said the original rider, as he stood by the side of Theodore,

dore, and coolly eyed his intrepid friend.

“ You are not much hurt, I hope,” observed Theodore.

“ No,” answered he.

“ I don't like your horse at all,” rejoined Theodore.

“ I do,” replied the stranger.

“ What! after trying by all the means in his power to kick your brains out?” exclaimed the youth.

“ Yes,” said the traveller.

Ludovico now rode up to them, and alighted.

“ There's



“There’s your nag, my honest fellow,” exclaimed he, *delivering the bridle*: “he’s rather more *quietly disposed* than when I took him in hand.”

“True,” replied the man.

“What’s your opinion of my manage?” demanded Ludovico.

“Good,” answered Michael, for Michael it was who came with the promised summons, and who, being more merciful to his horse than Alberto formerly was, when hastening to the borders of Bohemia, had on the road *thought oftener about the food than the speed of his beast*; and had several times nearly fallen a victim to his mistaken kindness.

“Follow

“ Follow us, friend, said Ludovico,
“ the crowd will only be troublesome
to you.”

“ Can't,” answered he, rolling his
eyes around.

“ You seem to be looking for the
house of some particular person,” ob-
served Ludovico. “ We can direct
you.”

“ Salviati,” said Michael.

“ Indeed!” cried Theodore, with a
look of sudden anxiety.—“ And your
foreign habit! Come you from Ger-
many? Whom seek you?”

Michael turned towards him at the
question,



question, and beheld at once every feature of his master, as he well could recollect them many a year before.

“ You, you ! ” exclaimed he, clasping his hands together in wonder of the likeness.

Michael had lived considerably more than half a century, yet this was the first time he had ever been known, by word or look, to express any token of surprise.

“ Why stay here ? ” demanded Ludovico, in a tone approaching to dejection ; “ let us take you to my father . ”

They proceeded, and Michael delivered

vered his credentials to the friend of his master.

“Welcome thou wouldst have been at all events,” said Salviati, after perusing Alberto’s letter; “but thou art trebly so from the character I here read of thee.”

Michael bowed, and made no reply. Ludovico stood near him—the downcast altered look of the youth, who but so lately, in the face of hundreds, with bold determination tamed his horse, did not escape his notice.

“Thou art no doubt fatigued,” continued Salviati: “retire, and my best fare be thine. To-morrow Theodore and I proceed with thee to Austria.”

“You

"You too!" exclaimed Ludovico, wildly raising his eyes—they met his father's, and again sunk. Michael felt as if he ought not yet to go.

"Why start, my son?" demanded Salviati; but Ludovico was silent; his burning wishes seemed to swell in every vein. "Well, well," proceeded his father, "I see how it is. You too shall accompany us. You will be a consolation to me as I return, after leaving my dear friend Alberto, and our good Theodore.

"He return!" muttered Michael to himself.

"Indeed, indeed!" cried the transported Ludovico. "Shall I, may I, oh,

oh, my kind father, how shall I find words——”

“Good,” said Michael, and left the room.

“So soon!” observed Theodore. “To-morrow did you say, Sir?”

“It is your father’s wish,” answered Salviati.

“Then far from me,” returned Theodore, “be the idea of opposing it. Oh, how my heart will throb when pressed to his! But Amelia, who is with her aunt at Leghorn; and the good widow Signora Ursula—and—and—Maria; and may I not bid them farewell?”

Salviati

Salviati smiled: "I will condole with my daughter for your departure, when I return. She is too far off, but if you wish to take leave of Signora Ursula, and, and Signora Maria, why go; they live hard by. Mark me, however," continued he, raising his forefinger, "I expect you here again in an hour at the furthest."

"Depend on it," exclaimed Theodore, and rushed out of the apartment.

"How gradual," thought Salviati, "yet how complete is the alteration in almost every human being's nature! How will this boy, when ripened into manhood, smile at the romantic notions by which he at this moment is inspired!"

E

Theodore

Theodore had, in the mean time, flown across the hall, had thrown open the front-door, and had reached the bottom of the steps at a single spring, before he perceived that there stood Maria.

“Dear Maria !” cried he, “you here! I was going to call on you.”

“And I on you,” answered the trembling girl: “we just now heard, from several neighbours, that you had been thrown, and much hurt by a bad restive horse. My mother bade me haste to learn the truth.

“Come in, then,” said Theodore, “it is like all other foolish stories. I never crossed the horse. But dear
Maria,

Maria, I have something to tell you—something of consequence.”

They stepped into the library, where they had before often met. It was private, and in an afternoon seldom or ever visited by any of the family.

No sooner had they arrived there, than Theodore felt himself completely at a loss.

“*Maria,*” stammered he, “we are to be separated. My father has sent for me.”

“*Indeed!*” answered she, and the colour, which marked her as the daughter of Beauty and of Health, forsook her cheek. “*Oh, I shall be so lost without you!*”

"I am going to the wars," continued Theodore.

"The wars!" exclaimed Maria, "then we shall meet no more. Those cruel, cruel wars! I wonder any one could be so wicked as to invent them."

"I am going to my father," proceeded Theodore.

"That would be very right," answered she, "but might he not come here? Has he not been fighting, as I have heard Signor Salviati say, almost ever since you were born?"

"Not quite so long as that," said Theodore; "other employments have also occupied his attention."

"It

"It is a long time," rejoined Maria, "I hope he won't teach Theodore to do the same."

"The honour of a Florentine," answered the noble youth, "bids me fight the enemies of Florence."

"Yes," said she, "I did not mean that—I only hoped that you would not be so long a time away."

"Kind, dear Maria," exclaimed Theodore, "wherever I may be, the recollection of you never can forsake me. See! here is the ring upon my finger, which you gave me. Here it is, and here it shall remain till I return to Pisa, and claim you as——"

He paused.—Maria was confused.

“As my bride,” said he, with a proud look into futurity, “as the bride of an intrepid soldier.”

“Was not the present mutual?” demanded Maria. “Did you not place this upon my finger in return? Oh, Theodore, indeed I did not wish that we should ever part; but it must be so. Here then is *your* ring, and here it shall remain till you return to Pisa.”

“Sweet heavenly angel,” exclaimed Theodore, “be then our vows exchanged unalterably, and be they at this moment sealed by a holy kiss!”

But

But what happened at this moment? Salviati entered. He had remembered a book, which he knew would be interesting to his friend Alberto, and came to take it from his library.

“Don’t disturb yourselves,” said he, with perfect good humour. “My object will be attained in a minute—for your’s I have already allotted an hour.”

Theodore and Maria stood abashed. Salviati took his volume, and without further notice left the room.

And let us do the same. I like fair-play on all occasions. We have witnessed the attachment between Theodore and Maria—we see that it has

E 4

every

every appearance of being sincere—we believe that it is so. What right have we to pry further?

The church clock struck four. Michael, like our great orators in parliament, was the first *upon his legs*. Ludovico and Theodore were not long after him. Salviati appeared at the hour he had appointed.

“Michael,” said he, “is every thing ready?”

“No,” was the reply.

“What’s wanting, honest fellow?”

“Breakfast!”

This

This was soon adjusted, soon finished—and forth proceeded Salviati in his chariot with Theodore and Ludovico, followed by Michael on his rampant horse.

“Friend,” said Ludovico to him in high spirits, as he stepped into the carriage, “if you find that beast vicious summon me.”

They had reached the frontiers—they had climbed the mountain. Michael had already drawn forth the same leathern flask, which, sixteen years before, had in the same place afforded consolation.

“Let us step out,” said Salviati.

E 5

“Thanks,

"Thanks, thanks," returned Theodore, following him, "I wished it, but thought you would look upon the request as foolish."

"Excuse me," observed Ludovico, "I have seen all Tuscany before." He wrapped himself in his mantle, and remained in the carriage.

Theodore, leaning on the arm of his foster-father, surveyed the prospect for some minutes without making a remark.

"Beautiful, most beautiful," exclaimed he at length. "That chain of hills—those curving vales, through which the Arno——"

"True,

"True, my good Theodore," interrupted Salviati; "but let us not stay too long. Michael," continued he, as they turned, "does not native Tuscany inspire thee too?"

"It does," answered Michael, taking the bottle of true Tuscan from his lips, and transferring it to his pouch.

They proceeded into the wood.

CHAP. III.

An Adventure.---Ten to one are dangerous Odds.---A military Review.---The Meeting, and subsequent Arrangements.

“NEVER!” cried Ludovico, throwing open the carriage door, and leaping out with a pistol in each hand.

The four robbers stood amazed—Salviati and Theodore had joined him.

“Thou art a valiant stripling,” said one of them, “and worthy of a better fate than that which now awaits thee.”

The villain, seeing three determined men before him, was raising a whistle
to

to his lips, when a shot from behind, deliberately directed by Michael, levelled him with the earth, while at the same moment Ludovico, with unerring aim, dispatched his man. The other two attempted flight, and fired at Michael as they passed; but Salviati and Theodore followed the example set them.

“How art thou, Michael?” inquired Salviati, anxiously.

“Sound,” answered he, coolly returning the ramrod of his re-loaded pistol.

The robbers lay writhing in the dust, soon to end their guilty career; and the travellers, now unmolested, had resumed their seats, when suddenly they perceived

perceived themselves encircled by more than forty banditti, all accoutred like those by whom they had been previously attacked.

"We are lost," said Salviati.

"That we are not," cried Ludovico, and again bursting through the door, stood in the midst of the confederates, who were before casting a look of sorrow towards their fallen comrades, but now turned one of vengeance on their devoted victims.

"Fatal, fatal will be the end of this," exclaimed Salviati leaping out, followed by Theodore.

**At the same moment a bugle-horn
was**

was heard, and evidently not far from the spot. The robbers started—their chief perceived the alarm, and understood it well. Distinguished in some degree by his dress, but still more by his ferocious looks, and the deference paid to him, he stepped forth, and called, in a voice of thunder: “Your money, and instantly, or die!”

Salviati calmly presented his purse to the robber—*Ludovico* calmly presented his pistol, and the robber fell.

Immediately his followers rushed forward—inevitable death seemed to be at hand—the bugle sounded close to them—confusion took place among the banditti—a troop of cavalry appeared in full march—the thickets could

could alone afford protection--they fled. Ludovico snatched a pistol from his father's belt, and discharged it among them, not without effect.

"Good," quoth Michael, following his example.

The dragoons rode up, and Salviati recognized in their commander an old acquaintance.

"Heyday!" exclaimed the officer. "You here, my worthy friend! I thought your travels had been confined to the high road between Leghorn and Pisa. Whither bound?"

"To Hungary," replied Salviati,
"with

“ with this young cornet (pointing to Theodore) and my son.”

“ Indeed !” answered the officer.
“ Then in good faith I must tell you that you seem to be possessed of too much courage, or too little information, else could you never think of journeying through this wood, dependants only on yourselves for safety. It is infested by a gang the most determined and blood-thirsty upon earth, whose infamy can only be exceeded by their cunning. The Pope has offered rewards and benedictions without number, to any one who will discover or betray the secret caverns in which the miscreants conceal themselves, but in vain. Three hundred infantry are now and every day penetrating into the recesses

cesses of the forest, while I, in obedience to order, scour the public roads. By my soul, this horde is like the Hydra. A score or two have fallen victims to my troop, yet every time I gain a sight of the rascals they appear more numerous than before.—I see, however, that I am detaining you.”

“Accept my warmest thanks,” answered Salviati. “We shall meet again, I trust, and that ere long.”

“Farewel for the present, then,” said the officer. “Corporal, take three file, and escort this carriage to the border of the forest, then join us at the upper gibbet.”

They separated.

On

On having returned to the carriage, **Salviati** expostulated with his son, pointing out how wide was the *distinction* between rashness and true courage; and endeavouring to convince him that but for the timely interference of the troop (which he could have no right to hope for), the lives of himself and those dearest to him, would probably have fallen a sacrifice to his determination of refusing to part with a paltry purse.

“Aye, but the disgrace!” cried **Ludovico**. “Saints of Heaven! shall two or three villains, nay, even two or three hundred, compel a man to acknowledge himself defeated, which they do, when he resigns what they demand?”

“But

"But is not this resignation," asked Salviati, "preferable to death?"

"No," returned Ludovico; "in my mind death is far preferable to disgrace."

"The observation is correct," answered Salviati, "but in our present argument it is founded upon wrong principles. Here, however, let the matter rest; for see, the fertile hills are already appearing at a distance above the wood."

Soon after, the horsemen took leave, and nothing of material interest occurred till the travellers had almost reached Presburg.

On

On a plain, over which lay their road, a legion of hussars were employed in their manouvres. The general was stationed on a gentle rise, from which he might the better command a view of the extensive line. He was surrounded by his aids-de-camp, and various officers of distinction belonging to other corps.

The carriage passed within a few yards—his eye accidentally caught Salviati's, and the eager fire of friendship shot from each. Alberto spurred, but at the same moment checked his horse, and immediately whispered to one of the young officers, who, galloping to the carriage, presented the warm regards of Major General the Count de C, with an assurance that duty alone forbade**

forbade him to leave his post at present, but that in an hour he should expect to find the travellers at his quarters. "Soldier," concluded he, turning his horse, "leap up behind this carriage, and direct the postillion to his lordship's barrack."

"Needless," said Michael, trotting forward.

"The appearance of the young officer was most prepossessing. They followed his directions, and took up their abode in the general's quarters.

The hour elapsed. Theodore's heart beat high with filial anticipation of the approaching interview. His foster-father paced the room with an anxiety
little

little inferior; while Ludovico, seated in a corner, was ruminating on the martial appearance of the numerous officers who formed Alberto's staff, and still more on the commanding look, and happy lot of Alberto himself.

The sound of horses in full speed was heard; the sentinels prepared for the salute; the servants in waiting at the door stepped forth; the general and his suite rode up; he threw himself from his charger; he rushed into the house. Theodore and Salviati hastened to meet him, in speechless ecstasy he pressed to his heart the offspring of affection, and the well-tried faithful friend.

Oh, why attempt further description?

tion? Can words convey even a feeble outline of such an interview? I throw down my pen. He, who can truly feel, will easily supply the chasm.

Swift flew the week away, which the friends passed together. The general's cheerfulness, proverbial through the army, was not likely to suffer abatement in his present society. But once did his countenance betray symptoms of inward grief. It was when he related to Saviati the unfortunate connexion he had formed in England, since they parted, and his resolution, whenever his country's service would permit the step, to journey thither, which his friend approved.

But now to matters of more immediate moment.

“I shall

“I shall fill it up as I please,” said Alberto jocosely, “so away with your objections, for I’ll not listen to another.”

He was sitting at table, opposite to Salviati, talking over occurrences of former days, and arranging plans for the future. Before him lay the two vacant commissions in his own favourite Fifth Regiment of Hussars. Theodore’s name was already inserted in one. The present discussion respected Ludovico; and many were the arguments which the general had used, before he could prevail upon his friend to sanction the measure. Theodore had not been unmindful of his promise, but had strongly solicited his father to intercede that he and Ludovico might not be separated.

F

“The

"The boy must follow the bent of his genius," added Alberto.—"I know all about it.—I see plainly what the dog is. 'Sblood, fire, and thunder! why, he's as fit to live with your placid Florentines as a salamander among the bears in Greenland."

"Well, well," said Salviati, "you will have it so."

"To be sure I will," rejoined Alberto, immediately filling the commission, and then ringing.

Michael entered.

"Are the young men within?"

"Yes."

"Send

"Send them hither."

"Engaged."

"How so? With what?"

"The armoury."

"Right—just as it should be. Here Michael—*this to my son—this to Cornet Salviati.*"

"Good," said Michael, and left the room.

And now, who so happy as Ludovico? He had gained the very object which his glowing mind had looked upon as the first, the most desirable step towards the renown which he coveted.

Letters demanded the return of Salviati; and on the very day preceding his departure, the count received marching orders. Mournful presages seemed to oppose the spirits of the worthy merchant; but Alberto laughed at them.

“Nonsense!” exclaimed he. “Our sons will rise in the army, and prove the boast of our old age. ’Sblood, batteries, and bombshells! I was melancholy too, when I left you, but what am I now? Cheer up—your hand! Lift high the glass! You too, young hussars—Conrad, Theodore, Ludovico! May we meet our enemies face to face in a week, and our friends at Pisa in a year!”

We

We have had partings enough, reader—so Salviati is gone, and we are now marching with the legion. But first, let me more nearly introduce to you this young Conrad, the Lieutenant, who, as you remember, took Alberto's message to the carriage. The general, in imitation of Count X—(through whose penetration he had been so rapidly and properly advanced, as we have before seen) had an eye ever wandering in search of merit. In the youth now spoken of, he had discovered and cherished it.

“From my extensive duty,” said he, to Theodore and Ludovico, “I cannot be always at hand to assist you with my advice. Look on Conrad as your military tutor, and you will both soon

learn to look upon him as your private friend."

Conrad was by birth a Bohemian—but slenderly gifted by the blind goddess, but of amiable disposition, strict integrity, and undeniable valour. A young man, in whose mind gratitude towards his patron was indelibly implanted; and who had never been known to assume a look bordering on displeasure or chagrin but once, which was when the count, advancing towards him after a severe battle, said in a voice purposely loud, "To you, Sir, I am this day indebted for my life."

Here we must for the present take leave of the warriors. Suffice it to say
in

in brief, that, during three campaigns, they shared the danger and glory of the field. Alberto, with heartfelt pleasure, saw the dauntless resolution with which his three favourites endeavoured to acquire practical knowledge in their profession—the cheerfulness with which, when necessary, they yielded to every privation. Victory succeeded victory. Immortal fame appeared to crown the Imperial Eagle.

CHAP. IV.

The Head of the Family, and his Private Secretary.—Gracious condescension.—One Fox may scent the Haunts of another.—A Love-Letter—its Natural Consequences.

It should be recollected that Alberto was the younger brother of the Marquis de C**, who enjoyed by inheritance immense estates in Tuscany. The Grand Duke, as a member of the imperial family, was, in these perilous times, almost always in the Austrian camp or cabinet. His dominions were consequently under the direction of some Florentine nobleman, appointed for that purpose, and assuming vice-regal

regal importance. Who could seem, in his eyes, by property and consequence, so fit for the station of his representative as the marquis? Yet, alas, who in reality could have been less fit for it? Educated in the lap of luxury and flattery, by a weak dotting mother, and a submissive crafty priest, who humoured and sanctioned his every wish—what was to be expected of such a man, when, at the age of twenty-one, he found himself the first grandee in the land?

For several years had he now oppressed his hapless country. Taxes and burthens annually increased to swell his coffers, that with the greater pomp he might support his dignified situation, that with the more unbridled licentiousness he might pass his time

in revelry, and follow his infamous propensities. No two men on earth could be more opposite in character than he and his exalted brother—the one by birth opulent, and of high rank, who never had been known to do a good action—the other a count, and a general through his individual merit. The marquis could boast of his conquests; for he was a man of insinuating manners, and finished *politesse*—but Alberto's victories were those of a brave soldier and an honest man—his brother's were the mean triumphs of successful villainy over deluded innocence.

Families, which had for centuries been resident in Tuscany, were now seen to emigrate: this had, however, no effect on the voluptuary. His parasites

parasites were ever ready with the incense of flattery, and the hardened wretch persisted in his measures.

He had a palace at Pisa; and here it was that he first observed Amelia walking on the terrace. She had now attained her eighteenth year—her face and form were loveliness itself. He was struck as she passed, and, with his eye following her steps, demanded who she was.

“ My lord,” replied his Secretary Cosmo, “ her name is Salviati. She is the daughter of a wealthy merchant, who retires hither occasionally from Leghorn.”

The minions of the court exchanged

F 6

a smile,

a smile, for well they knew that her fate was at this moment decided.

“Enough!” observed the marquis, “let us proceed. Cosmo, attend me in my cabinet to-night.”

The next morning Salviati was informed by the secretary, at an early hour, that his excellency the marquis intended to honour him with a call, as he proceeded to hunt in the adjoining forest.

“Indeed!” exclaimed Salviati. “To what do I owe this unlooked for and unmerited distinction? I never before was ever personally introduced to his lordship. ’Tis true, I know his noble brother well. Perhaps the visit bears reference to him. If so——”

“I believe

“ I believe not,” interrupted Cosmo:
“ I conjecture that it bears reference
to a subject which is much dearer to
his heart.”

“ Than his brother !” exclaimed
Salviati.

“ Even so,” replied the courtier
with a courtier’s smile. “ His lord-
ship has views of a nature which will
be still more welcome to you.”

“ Impossible !” cried the unsuspect-
ing merchant.

“ Oh, pardon me, good Signor,”
proceeded Cosmo ; “ it seems you un-
derstand me not. I have the proud
felicity of ranking high in the confi-
dence

dence of his lordship. What if I tell you that his intentions descend even to a family alliance?"

"Descend! Alliance! You speak in parables," said Salviati.

"Let me be explicit then," returned the fawning sycophant. "Some three weeks since, or perhaps a month, the marquis by mere accident beheld your amiable daughter on the public terrace."

"Impossible!" interrupted Salviati, "she was, till within the last three days, at a considerable distance."

"I have merely mistaken the place, then," answered Cosmo, "and now I recollect

recollect it was at some distance from
Pisa that the marquis first saw her."

Salviati eyed him firmly, but with
calm demeanour.

"Proceed Signor, said he.

"To behold her," continued the secretary, "was to adore her. Long as I have known his lordship, never have I seen him thus affected. Day by day he summons me—for hours we sit together, and not a word can escape him, but of Amelia Salviati. Tell me, friend, he says, tell me, what is our Venus de Medici now? Those angelic features! that bewitching figure! that transcendent grace in every movement! and above all, the bashful look, unconsci-
ous

ous of perfection! that timid fascinating look, which appertains to purity alone! Oh, Cosmo, I could fancy her a being sent to restrain my wandering thoughts, and teach me constancy. Oh, were our holy church to make her the partner of my bed, then, then indeed, should the world learn, which of the different characters I bear most properly belongs to me."

"Signor, said the no longer unsuspecting merchant, who had never heard but *one* character of the marquis, "you much amaze me. And this is the object of his lordship's visit?"

"Hold, I don't say that," answered Cosmo. "His lordship merely commanded me to announce his visit. I
have

have no authority from him to prepare you thus—I do it from friendship.”

“ And yet,” retorted Salviati, “ it does not occur to me, Signor, that I ever had the honour of seeing you before. A visit from his excellency must, however, be considered by me as a compliment, and condescension.”

The secretary retired bowing, and requesting that Salviati would do him the justice to believe that no one occupied a higher situation in his regard.

“ There is something in all this which bodes no good,” murmured the good merchant to himself, while ruminating on the strange occurrence. “ The libertine has cast an eye upon
my

my daughter, and his minion is sent hither to hoodwink me. But softly, my lord marquis, you yourself shall be for once outwitted. You shall not to-day even see Amelia; and if my care can provide against it, without cruelty to her, you shall never see her more."

He proceeded to make the arrangements necessary for his purpose, and without further explanation to his daughter, which might perhaps only sow the seeds of disquiet in her young bosom, he requested that, till summoned by himself, she would continue in her chamber.

Ere long the marquis appeared with a splendid retinue. He alighted, and, together with his suite, was shewn into
the

the saloon. Salviati immediately appeared, and humbly bade him welcome.

“ Friend of my brother,” replied the hypocrite, “ I lament that affairs of state, which daily multiply upon me, have so long prevented an acquaintance between us. But why not come to court ?”

“ My lord,” answered the merchant, “ I much doubt whether the court would suit my turn for retirement; besides which, I have been often told that your lordship had prohibited the appearance of any one there unless of noble origin, which I am not.”

“ No rule without an exception,” answered the marquis, taking his hand
with

with an air of familiar condescension.
“ To see you will at all times give me pleasure. You have a daughter too, I understand, who would (if I might judge from a mere transient view) make beauty more in fashion among us at Florence. She should be introduced.”

“ Oh, by all means !” cried Cosmo.

“ My daughter,” replied Salviati with gravity, “ has no desire for such a change, nor has her father.”

“ But, my good Signor,” answered the marquis, “ you should consider the probable result.”

“ I do,” said the merchant.

“ You

“ You should look forward,” continued his excellency, “ to the happy establishment of your family in life.”

“ Happiness dwells not in cities,” returned Salviati.

“ But it is in cities chiefly,” proceeded the marquis, “ that young women make their fortunes.”

“ Her’s is already made, my lord,” said her father.

“ Nay, Signor, understand me,” observed the libertine. “ I mean as to connexion. Beautiful and accomplished as she is, even a noble of the highest rank might——”

“ Seduce

“Seduce my child,” interrupted Salviati: “I know it---nothing more common.”

“How!” exclaimed the arch-hypocrite with perfect mildness, “Can you have formed such notions of the court? I grant that in great cities the profligate are often to be found; but do you never see them in the country?”

“Sometimes,” replied Salviati with a distant and respectful bow.

The marquis understood him, but it did not suit his purpose to appear as if he did.

“The fair signora,” proceeded he, turning the conversation with an assumed

sumed air of indifference---“ shall we not have the gratification of seeing her ?”

“ I am sorry, my lord,” said her father, “ that she cannot appear---she is somewhat indisposed.”

“ It hurts me much,” answered the marquis. “ Only a trifling influenza, I hope?---Well, I shall be more fortunate when chance brings me this way again. Meanwhile, I hope to know you better, my good friend. Do me the honour of dining at the palace to-day.”

“ Excuse me, my lord,” replied Salvati, “ my mercantile affairs demand my presence.”

“ Your

"Your excellency!" said Cosmo, stepping forward and pointing to the window.

"True," returned the marquis, "I perceive the sun is high. I had almost forgotten the chace, in conversation with this worthy man. Farewel. Be pleased to present my respectful wishes for the recovery of the fair signora. When I can be of any use to you, command me."

"Your lordship has done me much honour."

The unwelcome guests took their departure, and Salviati wandered into his garden, there coolly to determine on the surest means of counteracting the

the

the plot, which these shallow foplings had so palpably betrayed.

Alas! who can look into futurity? Fatal to himself were the resolutions at this hour formed by Salviati. Fatal to himself were the resolutions at this hour formed by the marquis.

It was the ultimate determination of her father, that Amelia should be placed under the protection of her aunt, whom she often visited, and who lived in genteel but not ostentatious style at Leghorn, where indeed Salviati passed far the greater portion of his time. He explained every circumstance to his sister; but still carefully withheld all information from Amelia, knowing full well that female virtue

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is

is a frail bark, which, during the years of inexperience, is too often engulfed by that dangerous quicksand, female *vanity*. To tell her that the first grandee of Tuscany was her adorer, and then to tell her that she must not listen to him, was, in the honest merchant's mind, an experiment of folly and of peril: better that she should for ever remain ignorant of what never could be brought to an honourable issue.

But the marquis was not to be deterred from his purpose by trifling difficulties; for in pursuits of this nature he had always been ultimately successful. Cosmo was employed, as usual, to wait upon the aunt, and endeavour to lull all suspicions. He
found

found her, however, well prepared for his reception, and the proffered visit of his excellency, when she next meant to receive company, was politely but coldly declined.

“The company which frequents my house,” said she, “would be unfit for his lordship’s society. Unpleasant rumours too might be the consequence, and these I must avoid both for my own sake, and that of my relatives. I wish this, Signor, to be conveyed to the marquis in the language of deference and respect due to his exalted station, and here beg leave to close the discussion.”

With these words she rose from her chair. What could the secretary do? Go he must—but before he quitted the
6 2 house,

house, he contrived to whisper into the ear of a footman, whose looks seemed to indicate that he would not whisper in vain.

“Call at the Great Hotel to-night,” said he, “at nine o’clock, and your fortune is made.”

A sly nod convinced him that his hint was taken, and at the appointed hour the wretch attended. He received a liberal present and assurances of many more, with instructions how to act his part in the plot, which was laid against the chastity of Amelia, and the precautions of her family.

The impatience of the marquis admitted but of short delay. A few days
after

after, as Amelia had just stepped down stairs, and was crossing the hall, her attention was arrested by a servant in gay livery, who passed her, with Paulo, the footman of her aunt. His air seemed far above his situation, and as he walked forward, he bowed with a look of mingled admiration and respect. For the moment she thought no more of this; but Paulo coming ere long into the breakfast-room, she asked with indifference who the tall stranger was.

Paulo looked round to be certain that his mistress was not near, and then said, in a low tone of voice, "The highest man in the state, Signora, yet the humblest of your admirers. I told the marquis that his only chance of seeing you was by attending early; as

G 3

you

you always came down stairs before my lady. This letter will explain the rest; but his excellency hopes that you will, even if cruel, not expose a man of honour to the derision of the illiberal."

"That I shall never do," answered she.

"For in a case," proceeded the footman, where the regent of the grand duchy is concerned, delicacy makes it necessary to keep a secret of this nature even from the nearest relations."

"As far as my feelings of propriety will allow it," returned Amelia, "I shall do nothing which can be unpleasant to the feelings of a gentleman. But hark! My aunt——"

Paulo,

Paulo, as she entered the room, appeared to be arranging the breakfast table. Amelia hid the letter in her bosom; for, exclusive of the request which had been mentioned, old maids are seldom fixed upon to be the confidants of young ones.

No sooner could she find an excuse for quitting the apartment, than she hastened to her own. A secret tremor crept through her veins as she drew forth the letter—she knew not what it meant. In her “mind’s eye” she again beheld the handsome servant—“for that he is handsome,” said she, “who can deny?”—She blushed—she broke the seal with a fluttering heart, and read:

64

Adored

Adored Signora !

A captive of your beauty, who glories in his chains, can no longer conceal the passion which for some months has preyed upon his spirits, and robbed him of repose. Unconscious as you are of that perfection which exalts you above all your sex, it is possible and even probable that you have not, in your walks, distinguished the humble follower of your footsteps, through the various disguises which his rank has compelled him to assume. By means of a servant in the family, I hope to-morrow morning I may at least be allowed to see you for a moment. And must this moment be the only one? Can frigid cruelty inhabit the gentle bosom of Amelia?

Will

Will you treat with scorn the ardent affection of an honourable lover? Will you, after all the tears, and sighs, and sleepless nights, which you have innocently caused me—will you, can you refuse me the gratification of an interview? Ah no! compassion towards one, who never, till he saw you, felt the force of love, will not allow you to deny me. No danger can ensue. Be the hour fixed by yourself—be your servant, or any friend, your companion; be the place of meeting close to your home, in the pavilion, to which Paulo will supply me with access. He too will convey to me your answer.

Divine Amelia, let it be favourable. Crush not the humblest of

6 5 your

your slaves—drive not to distraction

Your's while he shall breath

DE C**.

Marquis and Regent of the Grand Duchy.

Amelia sunk into a chair---contending emotions shook her frame. To admit the addresses of a man whom she had scarcely seen---to appoint an assignation with him, unknown to her relatives---duty and female diffidence forbade it. But then, to be adored by the first nobleman of Florence---to have the marquis, and regent of the Grand Duchy suing for her hand!---Tell me, fair reader, would there not have been something grateful to your bosom in all this?

But

But Flora must, of course, be consulted; for who so capable of managing these matters as a lady's maid? Flora had already received her instructions, and a purse through Paulo; so her advice may be easily guessed.

A few more *ifs* and *buts*, and struggles between propriety and inclination on the part of Amelia—a host of arguments, persuasions, and “Only think how every one will envy you,” on the part of Flora—the assignation is determined on.

CHAP. III.

Deception!----Duel!----Death!

THE appointed time arrived—it was an hour before Salviati's sister was wont to rise. Amelia repaired with Flora to the pavilion, and had not yet crossed the threshold, when the door communicating with the street was opened, and, hastily throwing off his mantle, at her feet knelt the marquis.

It is true that his lordship was the elder brother of Alberto, and the uncle of Theodore. It may, therefore, be supposed that his appearance would border on the *antique*—but the contrary was the case. Alberto entered
the

the army, when nineteen years old, and his son had now reached the same age. The marquis was not yet forty; and no one better knew how to make the most of his personal attractions. On this occasion he wore a habit of costly magnificence, and the air, with which he now gazed at Amelia, was that of an enthusiastic idolater.

"May I believe my disordered senses?" exclaimed he. "Do I indeed lie at the feet of Amelia? Oh bliss ineffable!"

"Indeed, my lord," returned the blushing maid, "you much confuse me. Rise, I beseech you."

"Never, oh, never!" cried the marquis,

quis, "till with that trembling and bewitching accent you tell me I may hope."

"Pardon me, my lord," answered she, "this is too much. Reflect how little we as yet know each other."

"True! true!" replied the hypocrite. "Forgive—forget the rash request which love, riding on the wings of anticipation, had suggested. I obey—I rise, trusting that Amelia will at least take a seat, and listen to my faithful vows."

He led her to a chair, and proceeded.

But why should I do this? Almost every one knows how interviews of this nature

nature are conducted—almost every one knows that they never end till another is agreed upon.

Salviati was right. Amelia's vanity was excited by the attentions of the marquis: his insinuating address gradually found its way to her heart—his well-disguised flattery worked on her credulous nature—and it was not long before he found himself complete master of her affections. He often talked of their approaching marriage, and stated that he was making arrangements for Salviati to be properly acquainted with their mutual attachment, for on this point she constantly dwelt.

“ You may think, my dear Amelia,” said he one day, “ that it might have been
been

been done sooner; but sure I am, the ardour of my attachment must shew how unwillingly I submit to any delay which even necessity creates. I need not tell you how apt detraction is to aim her dart at those who are most elevated in society. She has not missed me. Slanderers have traduced my character in the opinion of your upright parent. By time only, and the adoption of proper measures, can I dispel the mist which at present clouds his judgment."

Such were the excuses which the villain brought forward at intervals, when they best suited the diabolical purpose he had in view. The presence of Flora had already been dispensed with at their meetings, which were
far

far more frequent than at first ; and the marquis had seemed, for so many months, to have turned his attentions another way, that suspicion ceased to occupy the minds of Salviati and his sister.

It was spring. The sun shot his genial rays from a sky the most serene ; the olive, the myrtle, and the orange-tree were wafted by a gentle zephyr ; the birds were carolling on every branch ; the flowers spread a perfume through the atmosphere. Love seemed to be felt---Love seemed to be inspired by universal nature. Amelia gave way to the soft sensations which the surrounding objects caused—her hand had been for some time locked in that of the marquis—her burning lips had

had repeatedly been pressed by his—her tumultuous heart had beat against her lover's. The opportunity, so long anticipated by the miscreant, was arrived—Amelia's innocence was lost for ever.

Unfortunate deluded fair one! was there then no guardian angel near, to protect thee from this monster? Did no kind genius whisper through the breeze "Beware, Amelia?" Did no compassionate sea-nymph raise her head above the waves, which washed the base of yonder pavilion, and call, "The tempter is sitting at thy side?"---Alas! no.---All animated creation seemed to unite against thee. Devoid of guile thyself, far was it from thy generous nature to suspect it in another. Oh,
that

that my pen could erase the record of thy fate—but it may not be! The tear of genuine compassion drops upon thy wrongs---accept the heart-felt tribute, and repose in peace.

Triumphantly the marquis summoned Cosmo to his cabinet--a Satanic smile proclaimed the ruin of his devoted victim.

"I see how it is," observed the secretary. "I congratulate your lordship."

"You are right," answered the marquis. "This day has made Amelia mine. The tables now are turned, and henceforth our secret meetings must be solicited by her."

"Of

"Of course," returned Cosmo.

"But the little prude in the city here?" enquired his employer. "How do you proceed as to her?"

"Slowly," answered the infamous pander, "but not on that account the less securely. In about a week I shall have procured access for your lordship. Her governante is already won."

"That is a giant's stride," exclaimed the marquis. "Ever while you live, gain over the duenna, or my lady's maid, and I laugh at the measures which the most subtle relative can take against me."

And poor Amelia? She wandered
every

every morning to the pavilion. The marquis had promised that in three days at furthest he would return from Florence—yet still he came not. A week elapsed—yet still he came not. She reflected more and more upon the cause of his continued absence—doubts crept into her mind—suspicions followed them—till at length the whole horrors of her situation lay open to her view. With tears of bitter anguish and severe repentance, she threw herself into the arms of her aunt, and confessed her weakness.

The virtuous matron drew back a step—but could she do more? On her neck hung the sobbing girl, whose infantile prattle had so often interested her in former days, and who, till this moment,

moment, had done nothing to displease her.

“Let us sit down, Amelia,” said she—“let me reflect—you have surprised, and hurt me much.”

“Oh, do not, do not abandon me!” exclaimed her unhappy niece.

“Never!” answered she, without hesitation. “But your dear father!—I must not, dare not, conceal the fatal tidings from him. What will he feel?”

“Alas!” cried Amelia, “the very thought almost drives me to distraction. The best, the kindest parent!”

“That

“That he has been indeed,” returned his sister, “and now, when he was looking forward to his reward in seeing you well settled—Oh Amelia, what have you done?”

She again received the trembling penitent into her embrace, and endeavoured to console her.

Speechless with horror stood Salviati, when he had perused the letter just received from his sister. The servant asked if any answer would be sent—he saw—he heard not. The vengeance of an injured father was brooding in his soul, and occupied his every thought. He seized his pen, and in terms of glowing indignation offered to the marquis a choice of immediate marriage with
with

with his daughter, or a meeting, which would satisfy his injured honour. For two days this letter was unanswered, during which Salviati had leisure more coolly to reflect upon the unfortunate event. If the marquis should accede to either of his proposals, all was right—if not, a plan had occurred to him by which he felt certain to attain his end.

The answer came—it was worded as follows:

“I am commanded by his excellency the Marquis de C**, to state, that the conviction of your labouring under the pressure of mental derangement, when you wrote the daring letter which he has received, can alone induce him not
to

to commit you to prison, and subject you to the punishment which the law inflicts on those who threaten the life of His Imperial Highness the Grand Duke's Representative. Unless your penitence be proved by future silence, this punishment yet awaits you.

COSMO.

Secretary to the Regent."

"Tis well, tis well!" cried Salviati, taking his hat. "Now to my daughter!"

Amelia was resting her head upon her hand, the silent prey of penitent dejection. On the opposite side sat her aunt, inwardly wondering at the cause of Salviati's absence. The door

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was

was suddenly thrown open, and he entered. Amelia turned, and with a loud shriek fell from her chair. Both flew to her aid, and bore her to the sofa. Proper remedies were instantly applied—ere long the injured sufferer raised her eyes, and again beheld the parent, whose good advice she had in an evil hour, so fatally forgotten, whose fostering care she had so ill requited. Yet his features were devoid of sternness—it was “a countenance more in sorrow than in anger.”

“Fear not, Amelia,” said he, in a tone of tenderness, “I come not to upbraid, but to avenge thee. Obey what I direct, and not a syllable, bordering on reproach, shall now, or ever, escape my lips.”

“Oh,

“Oh, you are too good!” exclaimed she. “Demand of your wretched daughter any thing you will.”

“Enough!” answered he. “Summon your strength and resolution; let my arm support you; take this pen and write as I shall dictate.”

Amelia obeyed. With quivering hand she addressed the marquis—lamented in terms of innocent affection how much his continued absence had distressed her—appeared however, not to suppose but that unexpected avocations were the cause—besought him by their mutual love, not to make her endure further misery—but earnestly and ardently implored that he would the next morning meet her at the usual time and place.

In the course of the day, Amelia by her father's instruction, privately commissioned Paulo (whom she confessed to have been thus employed before) to deliver the letter; and it safely reached its destination—for Paulo had always found it suit his purpose to convey the dispatches faithfully, his lordship being on such occasions most liberal in his rewards.

“Another hour of bliss awaits me,” said he. “Till my little prude is rendered more tractable by Cosmo I might as well enjoy it.”

The period arrived: he entered privately as before, and looked around for Amelia; but at this moment Salviati sprang into the pavilion, secured the
door

door towards the street, and placing his back against it, exclaimed, "Villain, thou escapest me not. Draw, and defend thy life."

"What!" said the marquis, endeavouring to conceal his confusion and alarm under a look of menace and authority, "I hold no wars with maniacs. Retire, Signor, or dread my power."

"I defy thee and thy power," cried Salviati. "Thou hast reached the goal of thine abandoned career. Draw, coward! or by my wrongs I'll plunge this sword into thine undefended breast."

The determined eye of Salviati shot terror and dismay into the heart of the

miscreant; but there was now no choice---the weapon was already raised to dispatch him.

“Nay then,” said he, reluctantly drawing forth his sword——

Salviati made the attack with furious vehemence---death glittered on his blade---destruction flashed from his eye. The marquis parried feebly---conscious infamy palsied his arm, and quenched the little spark of courage he possessed. Twice was Salviati's sword plunged into his body---he fell.

“We are revenged, my child, we are revenged,” cried the exulting merchant as he rushed into the room where his sister and daughter were sitting. His sword,

sword, reeking with the blood of the marquis, was still in his hand.

Rash, inconsiderate father! was it possible that the delicate frame of Amelia, already undermined by the perfidy of him on whom she doted, and by unceasing remorse, could endure a spectacle like this?---Ah! no. Full well she knew from the letter she had written what a tragedy was acting--full certainly she felt that she too should be included in the catastrophe. Broken-hearted, and bowed down with sorrow, she awaited the result. Salvati entered as described---and lifeless, she sunk upon the floor, like a fair lily crushed by the storm, never to rise again.

H 4

Oh,

Oh, what were the sensations of her hapless parent, when the exultation of revenge subsided! In vain did his sister press him to fly—in vain did she point out that inevitable destruction awaited him—he courted it. The infamy brought upon his house had been washed off—but his darling daughter was no more. To the protection of Heaven and his own undaunted soul he confided Ludovico, and death was now most welcome.

Orders were given by his sister that the body of the marquis might be removed; but to her great astonishment the servants did not find it in the pavilion. Traces of blood were left upon the floor, they said, and no further discovery could they make.

A report

A report also now prevailed through the town, that the marquis had been conveyed on a litter to the Great Hotel, having been severely wounded by some unknown person.

This needs little explanation. Cosmo, finding that the lovers remained together much longer than usual, ventured to give a hint that danger might ensue, by tapping at the door through which his lordship always entered. In a feeble voice, the marquis called to him by name. He burst the lock, and seeing what had happened, ran for assistance.

The surgeons who examined the wounds reported that the weapon, by which they were occasioned, had al-

most miraculously missed every vital part, and that the danger, if any, consisted in his lordship's exhausted state from loss of blood. His natural strength of constitution soon began to operate against this, and he was at length, to the universal regret of the duchy, declared by the public bulletins to be in a state of convalescence.

No sooner did he feel a gradual return of strength, than his malignant soul was bent on the destruction of his enemy, which he first thought of bringing about by public trial; but this plan was soon dismissed, for Salviati's connexions were extensive, and no one more universally beloved. The marquis felt that such was far from being his own case. The vexatious burthens
under

under which every class of the community had so long laboured, were now beginning to excite a spirit of discontent in more than one part of Tuscany, which might be stated to border on rebellion. By running the risk of public exposure he would only be encouraging this tendency—besides, a more easy and expeditious mode of attaining his end was always in his power, and often resorted to.

One night, Salviato's country seat at Pisa was discovered to be in a blaze at different quarters. The domestics gave the alarm—every one ran towards the point at which escape seemed most probable; and in the general confusion the unfortunate merchant was dispatched by the hands of bravoës, hired for

that purpose. His body was consumed by the flames, and buried in the ruins of his villa.

Fountain of justice ! was this inhuman monster still allowed to breathe the vital air ? Was not the thunderbolt of heavenly wrath launched forth to blast him ?..... But let me not arraign thy wise inscrutable decrees. It was thy will that the measure of his crimes should be filled even to the brim, that the more terrible might be his death, the more awful his example.

CHAP.

CHAP. VI.

A Trip to the Capital.—The All-accomplished of Austria—The Theatre—the Court.—Love, love.

IT is time we return to the Florentines in Germany. The tide of affairs had taken a turn; the great Frederick had been on several occasions victorious. The empress-queen deemed it necessary to make every use of the winter in consultation for the ensuing campaign, and had, therefore, summoned to Vienna all the officers of rank, whose judgment was deemed of value. Among these was, of course, Alberto, who brought his son Theodore

dore with him, in order to be introduced at court.

On the count's arrival at the capital he waited upon his old acquaintance Baron H—, formerly in the War Office, now promoted to a rank hardly beneath that of prime minister. The baron was engaged by affairs of importance; but no sooner heard the name of his guest than he sent a message of the most friendly nature, requesting that the general would take a seat in any room without ceremony, and the first vacant moment should be devoted to him.

Alberto requested they might be shewn into the picture-gallery, where he passed a pleasant hour in examining
with

with his son several works of the most eminent Italian masters, which he had been instrumental in procuring towards the improvement of this valuable collection.

“But this modern painting,” observed Theodore, “is this by any countryman of our’s?”

He pointed to a full-length female figure of most interesting appearance. She was depicted playing on the harp; her face was beautiful and delicately expressive; her form tall and elegant.

The count was examining the *chef d'œuvre* of Leonardo de Vinci, which his eye was unwilling to forsake. On being asked the question by his son, he
cast

cast a glance towards the painting, and Leonardo was forgotten.

"I don't know this," said he, "it is fixed here since I was last at Vienna. Be it from what pencil it may, Theodore, we must both agree that the execution does honour to the artist. The drapery is admirable," continued he, as he proceeded to examine it more minutely.

"Yes," replied his son, gazing with rapture, "to what advantage does it display the figure! The attitude when playing on the harp too, is always engaging in a handsome woman."

"What is not engaging in a handsome woman?" demanded Alberto with a smile,

a smile, and placing his hand on his son's shoulder.

"The countenance, too," observed Theodore, lost in admiration, and regardless of his father's joke—"the countenance too! What angelic fascination dimpling in that cheek! What sportive animation laughing in those eyes! I wonder, Sir, whether this be a fancy-piece or a portrait."

"The latter, Sir—the portrait of my daughter," said the Baron H—, with a bow, hearing the question as he entered. "My dear General, welcome to Vienna," continued he, shaking Alberto's hand with generous warmth—

"Your's too, Lieutenant! We shall
soon

soon be better acquainted, I hope. But come—you can wander hither at some other time when I may be engaged. Let me introduce you to Seraphina—I dare say she has outgrown your recollection, Count.”

They stepped into an adjoining saloon; and Theodore, who had before extolled the artist, was now ready to reproach him for his faint representation of the lovely Seraphina. The usual introductions took place, while he who had always been reckoned at headquarters of the most easy polished manners, felt an embarrassment, which he in vain endeavoured to account for, even to himself.

The reader will not be so much at a
loss

loss. What! perfidy again! Are not his sacred vows pledged to Maria? They are--- and never will Theodore knowingly be guilty of a dishonourable action.

Still he gazed at Seraphina with sensations before totally unknown to him. Her very name inspired romantic notions, and he could almost have fancied himself in the society of one who belonged to a superior race of beings. The impression which she made on him was by no means uncommon. He had heard of her before, for through the whole Imperial dominions she bore a proverbial appellation: "The All-accomplished of Austria." Courtiers, nobles, princes of the empire, had solicited her hand in vain; for she had re-
solved

solved (and the resolution was sanctioned by a wise parent) that nothing should induce her to bestow it but with the entire consent of her heart.

“ This Prussian Frederick keeps us all on the alert,” said the baron, turning to Alberto.

“ 'Sblood, carnage, and cannon !” answered the general, “ he does indeed. But let my legion meet his boasted Death's Heads---that's all I wish.”

“ Your wish may probably be obtained then,” returned the minister ; “ for yesterday your name was inserted by order of the court as a prominent commander in the spring. There are other changes too---draw nearer.”

The

The two friends now proceeded to more private discussion, while Theodore lost the well-known skill of his profession in what has been sometimes denominated *small-talk*, and felt, for the first time with a lady, incapable of entering into conversation. He had totally forgotten that there were such things as pleasant weather, bad roads, and so forth. His eye, at one time, was for a moment raised to look at Seraphina, and again, as if fearful to be met by her's, directed to the ground.

Affairs of state are not discussed in half a minute, nor in half an hour. The parents were deeply engaged in conversation. What were the young folks to do? Both began to feel the situation somewhat awkward.

“ Perhaps.”

“Perhaps,” said Seraphina, at last,
“you will take some refreshment,
Sir?”

“None whatever, Ma’am,” replied
Theodore---“that is---I beg pardon---
I---not any.”

“I should ask your’s for my neglect,” observed she, glad of an opportunity to quit the room, “it shall be sent directly.”

She hastened away, and left poor Theodore. If I were compelled to describe his looks by a single epithet, I should venture the term *sheepish*; and yet nothing was so unlike his general character.

“More

“ More of this at another time, my good friend,” said the baron, drawing out his watch, “ one of the foreign ambassadors is waiting for me. On Friday I shall be proud of presenting your son at the levee. To-night we go to the theatre. Emilia Galotti is performed. Will you join us?---Merely my daughter and a few friends.”

“ With all my heart,” answered Alberto, “ it is my favourite play.”

They returned to the hotel, and Theodore felt, as it were, another nature. He was, for the first time, peevishly inclined. The bustle of those who passed the windows in the street annoyed him---the waiters were remiss---the chocolate was bad---the ringing of
bells

bells insupportable. He took the earliest opportunity of retiring to his own chamber, threw himself into a chair, and lost in thought sat with folded arms, till at the expiration of about an hour, honest Michael entered.

“Ready,” said Michael.

“Ready!” exclaimed Theodore, starting out of his reverie; “does the play begin so early at Vienna?”

“No,” answered Michael.

“What’s ready, then, blockhead?” demanded Theodore, not in the best humoured tone.

“Dinner,” answered Michael.

“True—

"True---I had forgotten," observed Theodore. "I'll dress immediately. Tell my father I shall be with him in five minutes."

"Good," said Michael, and left the room.

Theodore now joined the count, who jocularly expressed a hope that, as the servant had found him in a nap, he had slept away his whims, and that the ragout would be more palatable than the chocolate.

They sat down---the hock passed freely---the general was in high glee; and Theodore's spirits were not only revived by the wine, but by the anticipation of again seeing Seraphina that evening.

evening, when he hoped for an opportunity of removing the unfavourable impression, which his strange conduct in the morning must have made.

They enquired for the baron's box, and were shewn into it.

"The young folks in front!" said the old nobleman, yielding the place next his daughter to Theodore. "Let me turn critic in the back-ground with my friend Alberto."

"I thank you, my lord," answered Theodore with immediate acquiescence, "but it is rather hard, that you compel me either to be unpolite by accepting the seat you offer, or ungallant by declining the neighbourhood in which it places me"

"Vastly

“Vastly well, young man,” rejoined the baron—“a good beginning. That’s exactly the language which suits the women. I see I’ve placed you where you ought to be.”

“I trust that Lady Seraphina,” said Theodore, turning towards her, “will at all events believe that no one can more sensibly feel the enviable distinction.”

“Upon my word, Captain de C**,” answered she, with a smile, “these are very pleasant compliments.”

“Compliments to any other female,” answered Theodore, “become simple truths when addressed to Lady Seraphina.”

“ Better and better,” exclaimed she. “ You break silence to some purpose. You were not quite so liberal of your pretty speeches in the morning.”

“ True,” said Theodore, “ nor were you then so severe as this evening.”

“ The one depended on the other,” answered Seraphina. “ Had you flattered, I should have retorted. I am glad you call me severe, though; for I am sure at least that I should have held a much lower place in your opinion, had you found me silly and vain enough to accept such compliments as my due.”

“ I sit corrected,” replied the young officer; “ I admire such principles, be-
cause

cause as far as my experience yet has shewn——”

“They have novelty to recommend them,” interrupted Seraphina, archly. “Well, then, evince your penitence by talking rationally. Do you know the tragedy which is about to begin?”

“I have read it,” answered Theodore, “and with great pleasure.”

“It is the master-piece,” said Seraphina, “of our empire’s favourite author, Lessing, and enviable in my mind was the person who could write it. You will see it admirably acted too.”

The play began, and of course the conversation ceased.

Theodore was as attentive to the stage as could reasonably be expected of any one in his situation, or to be more explicit, he did not attend to it at all. He felt the force of the author without hearing his words, for he felt at second-hand. He caught the emotions of Seraphina; and the tears of sympathy, which she was unable to suppress towards the conclusion of the tragedy, made her appear to his mind a thousand times more lovely than before.

The curtain having fallen, their discourse naturally turned at first on what had been represented. With a mixture of pleasure and amazement did Theodore listen to the admirable observations of Seraphina. Never had he
met

met with one of her sex who possessed this acuteness of reasoning, and solidity of judgment. They were led on to other discourse. Never had he met with one of her sex who could so completely mingle genuine good humour with sly severity. The carriage was announced. Theodore led Seraphina to it---his hand for the first time held her's---and his heart---alas! he knew not that it went home with her's.

Still, reader, accuse him not. Some years had elapsed since he saw Maria: their attachment might almost be termed the attachment of childhood. They had ceased to interchange letters---he wrote the last. It was possible that she looked upon an engagement, entered into at so early an age, with a youth,

14

whom

whom she might not see for years, if ever, as no longer binding---it was possible---but we will argue no further. Theodore had pledged to her his vow--- Theodore still wore her ring.

On the Friday, Count Alberto and his son appeared by appointment at the house of Baron H---, for the purpose of proceeding with him to court.

Theodore was dressed in the full uniform of the Austrian Hussars : his mien bespoke the manly warrior and the polished gentleman. Seraphina was, from her father's rank and station in the government, a frequent attendant at the drawing-room. She witnessed the reception of the general and his son--- she witnessed the admiration which the interesting

interesting appearance of the latter universally excited.

The baron had invited his friends to dine with him *en famille*, after the ceremonies necessary at court. Theodore saw more of Seraphina---Seraphina more of Theodore. And was it wonderful that two beings, so like each other, yet so unlike the common herd of mankind, should feel the gradual influence of reciprocal regard? Was it wonderful that, when from the intimacy of their parents, an almost daily intercourse took place, they more and more perceived how much their ideas were in unison? Disturbed were the dreams of Seraphina; but distracted were the thoughts, and sleepless were the nights of Theodore. "Valuable,"

and

15

was

was he wont to say, when trying involuntarily to deceive himself, "valuable indeed is to me the esteem of Seraphina, but how different is love--how different the regard I feel for Maria--how different every scene I have witnessed, every conversation I have read, as passing between lovers! Seraphina and I talk of the *belles lettres*, the arts and sciences. We can pass a whole morning in the gallery, pointing out to each other the beauties of the most successful masters—we can wander on the promenade, and without noticing the busy crowd, direct our attention to the lake and its surrounding scenery---we can sit together for hours, while Seraphina plays upon the harp, and my voice joins her's as an accompaniment. Is this like the constant vow of love,
the

the reiterated pledge of unalterable fidelity, which we read of, as forming the certain basis of affection, and universal conversation of those who feel it?—No, affection I do not feel for Seraphina, but esteem the most unbounded.”

Mistaken Theodore! in vain art thou searching for excuses. Dearer to thee is Seraphina becoming every hour, whatever may be thy attempts to lull thine own suspicions. Dearer too, alas, art thou becoming every hour to Seraphina, while she fondly relies upon an undivided heart.

Nor is it to be supposed that the growth of this attachment escaped the penetrating eyes of such men as their

parents. They witnessed it with pleasure. When the empress-queen ennobled Alberto in reward for his meritorious services, she also bestowed upon him estates commensurate with his rank; and to these the grand duke added, as a testimony of his concurrence in the general approbation of the Austrian court, a grant of various lands in Tuscany, hitherto belonging to the Grand Duchy. The estates of Baron H--- were very extensive. In point of rank, wealth, and age, there could be no objection to the alliance between Theodore and Seraphina.

CHAP.

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CHAP. VII.

*Unwelcome Tidings from Hung
A Family Fracas.—The Self-
er Undeceived.—Farewel, Vien*

THUS were matters situated
the count and his son were one d
ting without other guests at their
Alberto was about to enter on th
ject lately alluded to, when M
entered with a letter.

"From Conrad," said the g
eagerly breaking the seal. He
Theodore perceived the alteration
features. The letter told him
without any previous notice, na
a quarter of an hour after par

CHAP.

high good-humour, he had received from Ludovico a scrap of paper, containing these words:

*To my three dear friends, the General Count de C**, Theodore, and Conrad.*

Destiny parts us—probably for ever.

The letter added that no orders had been given to his servants with respect to his baggage, that he had taken no clothes but those which he wore, and that he had passed the guard on his favourite charger, in full gallop and unattended:

“‘Sblood, death, and the devil!’” exclaimed the general, after he had read these particulars to Theodore. “What can be the meaning of all this? Ludovico

vico

vico quit his post! Ludovico forget his duty as an officer!"

"Had not the hand-writing been familiar to me as Conrad's," answered Theodore, "I would not have believed it."

"'Tis strange," proceeded Alberto, altering his tone, "but when I consider that for three months I have not received a line from Salviati!—a mystery hangs over all this. Should my friend have paid the debt of nature—should he—but have I then no other acquaintance in my native country? My brother must feel how poignantly such a loss would affect me; and therefore, though on other occasions I have never heard from him, yet on this he would surely——"

“My dear father,” interrupted Theodore, “perhaps we are not fully acquainted with the particulars of Ludovico’s departure. There is still a considerable part of Conrad’s letter which you have not looked at.”

“Let me hear the rest, then, from you, Theodore,” answered the general, “I have no inclination to examine further.”

His son obeyed, and read as follows :

“I am, my dear benefactor, as you know, never willing to speak of myself; nor would I at present, were I not certain, from the interest you take in my welfare, that silence would be displeasing. Several of my wounds
— have

have lately opened a fresh, and the one on my right knee assumed so serious an aspect, that I yesterday submitted to amputation of the leg. I am still, however, well. I have still an arm to wield a sabre in my country's cause; and believe me I have still a heart to acknowledge with unbounded gratitude the favour and protection of my noble patron."

"Generous Conrad!" cried Alberto, **"I pity thee sincerely."**

"Generous indeed!" returned Theodore. **"It was after his horse had been shot under him, and while he stood in front of me, as I lay stunned upon the earth, that he received the wound, which has now robbed him of a limb."**

"We

"We are both," observed the count, "indebted to him for our lives. But now to a subject which, if it be possible, still more nearly operates on my feelings. 'Sblood, howitzers, and ambuscade! this intelligence has so unhinged me—but I have given my promise to the baron. Listen, Theodore. I have observed the growing attachment between you and Seraphina."

"Attachment, Sir!" exclaimed his son

"No haste!" returned the general, "I have observed it with *pleasure*."

"Attachment, Sir!" repeated Theodore.

"Why,

“Why, yes,” answered Alberto, “that’s my name for it. You may adopt any other, which seems to you more proper.”

Theodore was confused. “Undoubtedly,” replied he, “Seraphina has inspired me, as she must every one, with esteem for her virtues, and——” He hesitated.

“And the devil, Sir!” exclaimed his father. “What! are the baron and I blind? Are we thwarting either of you? Are we not willing to promote your mutual happiness? Do you want to imitate other blockheads of this age, and run away when you may be quietly coupled at home?”

These

These words pierced the very heart of Theodore—his feelings were in violent contention, and not to give way to them was impossible. He seized his father's hand—with faltering accent he described the early days of happiness, which he had spent at Pisa, in the society of Maria—the early love which he had imbibed—the irrevocable vow which he had pledged.

Alberto heard him calmly. No man was more inclined to warmth of disposition on ordinary occasions; but seldom, very seldom, was he seen in the field, or when any thing of moment required his attention, to lose the coolness which is then so necessary.

“But,” said he, “you have now
been

been four years absent from Pisa. What are the sensations which you now feel towards Maria?"

"Those of affection," answered Theodore.

"And towards Seraphina?" demanded the count.

"Those of admiration," replied his son.

"Dangerous logic, Theodore," observed Alberto, "or in plainer terms, sophisticated nonsense! You have deceived yourself, but I am sorry to say that you have also deceived Seraphina. Could she know your previous engagement? Did any word escape you that
could

could lead to such a supposition? Have not your attentions been manifest to all the world?"

"Seraphina thinks like me, Sir," returned Theodore, "she has never dreamt——"

"No, she thinks far otherwise, interrupted the general, "and she has, poor girl, been long dreaming. The baron and I thought it time that matters should be brought to a conclusion. We yesterday agreed that we would each speak to our children, and, as we fondly thought, crown their wishes by our joint consent. He passed this hotel as I entered it just now—he seized my hand with cordiality, and said, 'All's right. With dutiful ingenuousness

ness my daughter has confessed no other man can make her happy."

"Gracious Heaven!" cried Theodore, hiding his face.

"Well may you feel ashamed," said the count, "you have proved yourself towards my friend what I never could have suspected you to be—a snake in the grass. You have instilled notions into the mind of his daughter, which will rob him of domestic comfort, and make her the prey of——"

"Cease, cease!" exclaimed Theodore. "Oh, all my conduct now appears to me in its true light! I could not lose the fascinating society—I endeavoured to persuade myself. Oh, I am a rank, rank villain!"

He

He rose from his seat, and paced the room in a state bordering on distraction.

“And now,” said Alberto, “now that your attentions had given to Seraphina every fair right of conclusion—now that the alliance was agreed upon by her father and your own—now you tell me of an engagement, binding on your honour. Your honour, Sir! Where has it been slumbering, then, since our arrival in Vienna?”

“Say any thing,” cried Theodore, in agony, “I can bear any accusation, and without defence. I am a wretch, who have intailed misery on Seraphina, and everlasting disgrace upon myself.”

“You

“You are,” said Alberto, sternly.
“False as may have been your assurances to her, you at least now speak the truth. In one hour, then, I have learnt the issue of my prospects. Conrad has lost a limb and lies in his barrack, covered with gaping wounds. Ludovico has fled—has deserted the proud standard of my own regiment. Theodore, who might, in some degree, have made amends for such an affliction—Theodore, my own son, has undermined the peace of the first family in Austria, and with it his father’s. Ungrateful boy!—But I have deserved it all. The ways of providence are just. Oh! England, England, had I never seen thy shore, I should not have been doomed to know a day like this.”

With

With these words he rushed out of the apartment. It was the first time that Alberto had frowned upon his son, and the latter felt how justly. The full extent of his imprudence stared him in the face; and he almost wondered how he could have been so blind or base as to draw Seraphina into such a snare. To gain her affections, when his own were engaged! To lead her, step by step, to the hope of happiness, and then to appear as in her eyes he must, a hypocrite! The oppression of his mind was dreadful. His eye wandered to and fro without fixing upon any certain object, till it caught the ring which had been given him by Maria.

“Better to die,” exclaimed he,
“than

“than live in torment such as this!
**Better to be the outcast of society than
guilty in the eyes of Seraphina!**”

He immediately left the hotel, determined on opening the very inmost recesses of his soul to her whom he had so deeply injured; but the baron's porter informed him that he could not be admitted.

“Why so?” inquired Theodore, with surprise.

“That I don't know,” replied the porter. “Count Alberto de C** passed about ten minutes since, and directly after his arrival I received orders that to you the gates must be closed. You can't enter, Sir, I only do my duty.”

K 2

Theodore

Theodore returned to the hotel with a dejected mien, and sensations indescribable.

“It is cruel,” said the baron, “it is a dreadful blow, and heavy will it fall on my poor daughter. Yet let us hope——”

“Friend,” answered Alberto, “the Prussian Frederick has taught me to hope, when, a dozen years ago, I should have despaired; but towards our present purpose we have this grand obstacle in the way—the honour of a soldier is almost a soldier’s God. Theodore is fettered. Still you and I will do our duty. They must not meet again. Comfort your good Seraphina——”

Another

Another grasp of friendship, and he hurried away.

“My carriage instantly!” called Alberto as he entered the hotel. “Michael, pack up every thing. In a quarter of an hour we quit this place.”

“Good,” said Michael, and went.

“Theodore,” continued the count, “all is adjusted. You have acted imprudently,—improperly. I too have been hasty in some of my expressions. I never used an angry word to you before. I am myself not guiltless, and should look with charity upon the guilt of others. Be our difference forgotten. Your hand!”

“Dear Sir,” said Theodore—

к 3

“Well,

CHAP. VIII.

A visit to Conrad—More bad News—Gratitude—The Juvenile Invalid proceeds to his Estate.—The War ends.—Alberto and Theodore return to their Native Country—Unexpected Discoveries there.

“To the barracks of hussars!” called Alberto from the carriage, as it drove into Buda. “To Captain Conrad of the Fifth!”

Michael galloped forward to shew the way.

They found the brave Bohemian reclining on a couch—he raised himself
κ 4 with

with pain, which he in vain endeavoured to conceal. The general and his son, each taking him by the hand with friendly warmth, forbade exertion. Both were hurt at the evident alteration in his looks since they parted. Conrad perceived it, and on that account assumed the gaiety which had, on usual occasions, belonged to him. "A trifle!" said he. "In the infantry a leg is of consequence, but to an hussar the loss is next to nothing. *One spur can bring my charger into battle.*"

"Right!" exclaimed Alberto. "Blood, croats, and carbineers! I should like to see it. But Ludovico?"

"No further tidings," answered
Conrad,

Conrad, "except that I find a person, apparently just arrived from a journey, asked of the sentinel directions where to find him. In a quarter of an hour he was gone. I deemed it right to fix my seal upon his door; for the uniform he wore was all he took."

"Inexplicable!" said the count. "I dread the next tidings from Italy. Salviati, the companion of my youth, the protector of my son, is no more."

"Oh Heaven forbid!" exclaimed Theodore.

"It must be so," returned Alberto; "yet let us not anticipate misfortunes; they come of their own accord often enough."

K 5

"They

"They do indeed," observed his son with a sigh.

"Conrad," said the general, "we shall pass the evening with you. No invitation to others—no party—merely a little friendly chit-chat, and cold meat. Solitude is not good in your case, as I know by experience, company is worse; but a brace of friends are a bracing medicine. For the present, your hand—and infamy overtake the imperial soldier, who is not proud of having it presented to him!"

"So say I too, with all my soul!" exclaimed Theodore, following his father's example.

Scarcely had the count time to exchange

change his travelling dress for a military one, ere the officers of his staff and the commanders of the corps, belonging to his legion, waited on him with congratulations on his arrival. Seldom, very seldom, do ceremony and sincerity go hand in hand; this was one of the few occasions in which they united. Had their duty, on the part of these officers, not required it, their inclinations would have led them to evince the respect which every man in the army felt towards the general. He received them all with his usual urbanity and good-humour. To one he explained what were supposed to be the plans of the Prussian monarch for the ensuing campaign; of another he inquired how all had been proceeding during his absence; with a third he

cracked a joke. On their departure, he was informed that the surgeon of his own regiment solicited a private interview, which was immediately granted. The communication was most unpleasant---no other than that, in the opinion of all the medical men attached to the legion, Conrad could not, from the nature of his wounds, again attempt actual duty, without injury to the service, and almost certain death to himself.

“ I feared as much from his appearance,” said the count, much hurt. “ I thank you for your communication, I thank you for the attention which I am sure you have paid to him. Theodore,” continued Alberto, when they were left together, “ I foresaw all this, and have digested

digested matters accordingly. It will be the means of procuring us information as to Ludovico, and our dear friend, his father."

"Indeed, Sir!" answered Theodore, surprised.

"You know my little estate on the Arno," proceeded the general. "It is part of the property bestowed on me for my services. Conrad is mutilated by defending the possessor of it, and his heir, at a moment, which would otherwise have proved fatal. Can I act more properly than by assigning it to him?"

"That you cannot indeed," replied Theodore; "we owe every thing to him."

"I go

"I go then," proceeded his father, "to look for the papers, which are necessary. You, in the mean time, cannot be better employed, Theodore, than in explaining to him my intentions. I should not like to witness his chagrin at being returned incapable of service, and his expressions of gratitude towards me, who owe gratitude to him."

The great hall of justice had been allotted for the occasion, in order that all the officers of the regiments quartered in Buda, and the magistrates of that city might meet the general at dinner, to hail his welcome return. Five hundred persons sat down to a sumptuous entertainment. Alberto expressed how sincerely he felt the compliment---he joined in the festive hilarity, and promoted

moted it ; but he did not forget his engagement with Conrad, and left the company with Theodore, as soon as they properly could.

“ No downcast looks ! ” said the count, as he entered. “ The surgeons won't let you drink a bottle of old Hungarian, or you would feel as I do. ”

Conrad almost wept.

“ Leave tears for women, my brave friend, ” proceeded Alberto. “ I hope Theodore and you have arranged every thing. You know I am not fond of these little discussions. Here is a small packet---it explains my wishes. Your country, like myself, will lose your services with regret ; but remember

ber that you bear about with you the proudest honours which a soldier can obtain---the wounds received in defence of our good monarch, and his realms."

"I never felt them till this day," answered Conrad, much dejected.

"Be it our endeavour to heal them," said Theodore, "both in mind and body. You must not leave us till we receive marching orders."

"Right, my son," observed the general. "'Sblood, cannonade, and carnage! the enemy shall pay dearly for this. Cheer up, Conrad?"

On the following day Alberto reviewed

viewed the whole legion, and expressed himself highly satisfied with the attention which had evidently been paid to discipline during his absence. He devoted his immediate and constant attention to the completion of every man's proper appointment for the field, as it was well known that Frederick had determined to avail himself of the first open weather for the renewal of hostilities.

Conrad gained daily strength, and was soon to depart for Tuscany. Theodore had, therefore, an opportunity of saying through his friend all he could wish to Maria. His father never alluded to the subject. A lover's heart had never, to his knowledge, borne control, and interference, he was certain, would only produce dissimulation.

Yet, strange as it may seem, Theodore too never alluded to the subject. A year ago he *feared*, but now he *hoped*, that Maria had looked upon their almost infantile engagement as frivolous. In vain did he endeavour to forget Seraphina. Waking she occupied his thoughts—sleeping, when he *could* sleep, she reigned in his dreams. Too late he found how much he had deceived himself—how inseparable were his happiness, and the possession of Seraphina.

Yet she, at whose feet a thousand adorers sighed in vain—she, who preferred him to all, had been by him basely deceived. Oh, what were his feelings when he reflected on all this! Sometimes hope would cast a gleam of
sunshine

sunshine on his fate; but conscience could only allow it to be transient, and summoned to his pillow the avenger of Seraphina's wrongs, the demon of despair.

Thus situated, Theodore made no confession to Conrad—he almost prayed for loss of memory—he panted for the hour of battle, that he might drown the recollection of his sufferings in the blood of Prussia.

Notice arrived from Vienna that the enemy was in motion; and Conrad took his departure, after receiving from Alberto the strongest injunctions to communicate without delay every information he could obtain with respect to Ludovico. He was not unmindful

mindful of them ; for no sooner had he reached the estate, forced upon him by his grateful friends, than he repaired, by their direction, to the sister of Salviati in Leghorn, from whom he learnt, with horror indescribable, that the brother of his patron, under whose government he was about to reside, was a *murderer*.

This worthy woman, upon the death of her brother, had dispatched a trusty messenger to Ludovico, acquainting him with the unhappy fate of his relatives, and leaving it to his own discretion whether to acquaint the general with it, or not. Ludovico adopted the latter plan, because he feared that fraternal affection, on the part of Alberto, might frustrate his designs—or
rather

rather because he did not think at all. Vengeance, bloody vengeance, was his only resolution, when he wrote his brief farewell, and fled from Buda.

But what was Conrad's surprise when he heard that Saviati's sister had received no answer to her communication, and that Ludovico had never made his appearance at Leghorn. Not wishing to distress his friends, he employed almost a month in inquiries; but no trace of the fugitive could be found. He learnt, from every quarter, the black malignity which reigned in the breast of the marquis. He, therefore, by bribery, and under the pretext of curiosity, searched all the state prisons—but in vain. He feared that the miscreant, whom he could scarcely believe

believe to be the brother of his revered and upright friend, had through his bravos way-laid and dispatched the unfortunate Ludovico.

In this situation how was he to address the general? Painful as the truth must be, Conrad was resolved, as hitherto, never to adopt the cloak of deception. With open sincerity he told Alberto that his brother was a wretch, whose infamy was horrible—he feelingly described the base seduction of Amelia, the dreadful murder of her father, the mysterious absence of her brother.

The King of Prussia seemed to be surrounded by misfortunes: one disaster pressed upon another. The imperial

rial troops were flushed with their successes—the Austrian cabinet almost saw the name of Prussia erased from the map of Europe. But the genius of the great Frederick never forsook him. Like Anteus, he rose more vigorous from defeat, and at the very moment, which his foes had looked upon as his last effort, drove them back with dreadful slaughter to their intrenchments. Seven times did Alberto rally his legion—the Prussians mowed down all before them—the legion was reduced to a regiment, but, to use the present French phraseology, it was covered with glory. Theodore seemed to court death—he rushed with fury into the thickest of the fight, and dealt destruction round him with terrible certainty. It was seen by his father
with

with inward satisfaction. Three cuirassiers pressed upon him together—he attacked them all—he fell from his horse—Alberto rushed forward, but in a moment his son leapt up, and sweeping with his sabre on both sides, left only one of his antagonists to fall by the hand of the count.

“ I was but stunned,” said Theodore with a smile, which at once relieved his anxious father.

Marshal D--- ordered a retreat, and the enemy, exhausted by fatigue, had no objection to hear the signal, and avail themselves of it, for night had already come on.

“ Let the embrace of a parent and a
soldier

soldier tell you what I feel," cried Alberto to his son. "Had every imperial officer fought like you, 'sblood, death, and desolation, we should not have given way."

Several battles ensued---success was now on one side, now on the other---but why detain the reader by further accounts? Suffice it that, at the close of this campaign, Austria and Prussia found themselves equally exhausted, and were, therefore, equally inclined to end a seven years war.

Alberto had, during the busy months, received with severe affliction, the intelligence communicated by Conrad. The friend of his early years was no more, and peace being now concluded,

he

he felt it his duty, in the first instance, to use every means towards discovering whether Ludovico was an imprisoned victim to his brother's cruelty.

“Michael!” said he. “My carriage at seven o'clock in the morning! Pack up---for Tuscany!”

“Good!” said Michael, and left the room.

“For Tuscany, Sir!” exclaimed Theodore, with evident confusion, “I understood last night that you were going to Vienna—you had affairs to discuss---I mean state affairs—that is to say—with Baron H—”

“I had,” replied the general, affecting

fecting not to observe his son's embarrassment, "but dispatches from him have made my errand needless. First, then, to Tuscany, for the purpose of satisfying *your* honour—then to England, for the purpose of redeeming *mine*."

Theodore had often heard his father allude to England before, and had once inquired why, in his unhappy moments, a reference to that country always escaped him; but he was answered by a gentle rebuke, and never again ventured on the subject. The journey, now fixed upon, distressed him, and yet he was ashamed to confess even to himself that such was the case. Was he not going to see Conrad? Was he not going to learn tidings of Ludovico?

Was he not going to claim Maria as his bride?.... Oh, agony! He loved Maria still—but five years had elapsed since he saw her. How different the sensation to that which.... Oh, had the horses' heads been turned towards Vienna!

Alberto took a route, in some degree, deviating from the usual road, for the purpose of paying a visit *en passant*, to two illustrious military friends. Without molestation they arrived at Conrad's estate, and found him well. Of Ludovico he still knew nothing—incessant had been his inquiries---uniform his disappointment. The general and Theodore heard too, with poignant sorrow, the infamy which from every mouth was attached to the marquis.

With

With pleasure, however, they listened to Conrad's declaration, over a bottle of true Tuscan, that he had even found their generous gift of an estate not a sufficient gratification, and had, therefore, resolved on matrimony.

"'Sblood, fury, and fire-bombs! you're right," exclaimed Alberto. "I'll place the girl's hand in your's before I sail for England."

"And where dwells your fair bride elect?" inquired Theodore jocosely.

"In Pisa," answered Conrad—"perhaps you may recollect her name: she lived not far from Signor Salviati.—
Maria P——."

Had the artist who was the most attentive observer of human nature, wished for an occasion to exercise his pencil, he could not, in the whole range of his studies, have discovered better subjects than the countenances of Alberto and Theodore. The latter was incapable of utterance---surprise and joy overpowered him---joy, not only at the happiness which awaited his friend, but at the release from his vow which this alliance must evidently cause. The general's ideas flew towards Germany with those of his son: he felt that he had been the cause (though most unwillingly) of interrupting the harmony, which, till the introduction of his son, had prevailed between the baron and his daughter---for in vain had the anxious care-worn father endeavoured

deavoured to convince Seraphina that the connexion was impossible---in vain had he pointed out to her notice one or the other of high birth and fortune, who aspired to her hand. She treated every offer with contempt---she avoided the court---she withdrew, as much as possible, from all society, and in secret nourished the hopeless passion which consumed her.

The estate, given to Conrad by the grateful general, was but three miles from Pisa. Conrad saw Maria, and admired her---admired her the more he saw her. "She loved him for the dangers he had past, and he loved her that she did pity them." Yet was she mindful of her vow. Conrad, however, proved he was the bosom friend of Theodore,

L 4

but

but he asserted, and truly too, that in their frequent meetings he had never heard her name. What conclusion, as to Theodore, must she deduce from this? The very one which he ascribed to her---that absence, and maturer judgment, made him probably consider the pledge of almost childhood nugatory. Letters had miscarried during the war; it was lucky that they had. But a circumstance just now occurred which demands more minute explanation.

When Alberto, Theodore, and Conrad had, by mutual explanation, shewn to each other how peculiarly they were situated, it was agreed that all three should end the disagreeable impediments by visiting the good widow and her daughter.

They

They passed the ruins of Salviati's villa--no human hand had dared to move a stone, for it had been plainly hinted that by such conduct the displeasure of his excellency the regent would be incurred. Buried beneath the ruins lay the ashes of Alberto's friend, and Theodore's second father.

The pang, as they hurried on, was overpowering.----But now they had reached the dwelling of Maria. The visit had been previously announced---her mother, who was prepared for it, entered the room into which the servant had shewn them.

"Signors," said she, "you are most welcome."

Alberto was rising from his chair to meet her---a faint exclamation issued from his lips---he placed his hand to his forehead, and sunk into the arms of his son. The mother of Maria saw his features---they were too well known, too well remembered---she endeavoured to summon strength, but in vain---Conrad observed it, and supported her into another room, where he delivered her into the care of her daughter.

Oh, conscience, here was thy victory! The brave Alberto, who had fearless faced a hundred times the artillery of Prussia---the intrepid warrior, whom no danger in the field could appal, fell by thy certain blows.

"Where

"Where is she?" demanded he, raising his head. "Theodore, the chastising hand of the All-Just lies heavy on me. Thy father is a villain."

"Impossible!" exclaimed his son.

"None but himself dared say it," observed Conrad.

"Hear, then," rejoined Alberto; "let me at least ease my mind, in some degree, by a confession of my guilt."

He now proceeded to relate the particulars of his amour in England with the mother of Maria.

"She was on a visit," said he, "to
L 6 a relation

a relation in London, at whose house I lodged. I robbed her of her innocence under the sacred promise of marriage, a hundred times repeated; but having gained my end, the false pride of birth forbade me to fulfil the engagement. I knew that such an alliance would be considered as degrading, would militate against my future prospects in life, and expose me to the derision of my brother officers. Count X--- and I lived in England as the Baron F--- and his nephew. I left that country without having given Ursula any notice of my departure, but not before I had confided my real name to a friend, who undertook the payment of my remittances for her support, and that of the infant which was soon to see the light. Her relation, however, had died,

died, and left her a small property. The first letter which I received from my correspondent informed me that she had spurned my proffered gift with honest indignation, and his next that she had disappeared. I nevertheless continued to send over the annual thousand dollars, directing that they were to be vested in the public funds till she or her daughter were heard of, which has been regularly done. Be this sum the dowry of Maria---and oh! if Ursula would accept the only reparation now in my power to offer!--but impossible."

Amazement was depicted in the countenances of Theodore and Conrad during this recital.

" Maria

“ Maria is my sister, then,” said the former---“ Conrad will be my brother.”

“ And my son !” exclaimed the general. “ Your hands, my children ! I have much need of consolation, but I am unworthy that it should be offered.”

“ Yet say not so,” returned Conrad, “ all will yet be well. I hasten to explain your penitence, and may I had, your willingness to prove it ?”

“ You may, you must,” cried Alberto. “ In vain, in vain !”

“ I will not keep you long in suspense,” said Conrad as he went.

Great

Great was the agitation of the count during his absence. On the resolution of Ursula depended his tranquillity of mind, or never-ceasing remorse.

A quarter of an hour elapsed, which Theodore had employed in endeavouring to comfort his distressed father.

Footsteps were heard---supported on one side by her daughter, on the other by Conrad, appeared the pallid injured Ursula. Alberto flew to meet her.

“ Can you, can you forgive a wretch like me ?” demanded he, attempting to kneel.

“ Forgotten be every thing !” replied the generous woman, and sunk into his embrace.

CHAP.

CHAP. IX.

*A Ditty.—Two Marriages—a third
in petto.—A Letter.—And a long
Journey.—Do not all these com-
bined furnish sufficient Matter for
a Chapter?*

FADED is the lustre of that eye---
chased are the roses from that cheek.
Oh, powerful love, is this dejected
beauty the universally adored Sera-
phina? She struck the harp with
trembling hand and sung:---

How sad the note of yonder faithful dove,
Robb'd by the cruel fowler of her mate!
With plaintive murmur thro' the silent grove
She breathes the story of her hapless fate.
Join,

Join, bird of sorrow, while I touch the chord,
 Too well can Seraphina feel thy woes ;
 For she has lost, like thee, her bosom's lord,
 Like thine is fled, for ever, her repose.

Oh! fatal hour, when first I was misled,
 When first these eyes beheld the blooming
 youth,
 When first in his I read, or *thought* I read,
 The vows of love, of constancy, and truth!

But check this strain--no more let me repine
 While he, the dearly-lov'd inflicts the
 smart.

Still, Theodore, is Seraphina thine,
 Still Theodore alone can fill her heart.

And when approaches death to quench the
 flame,

With rapture will I greet the welcome guest,
 Still Theodore my falt'ring voice shall name,
 While soars my soul aloft to regions blest.

Hark,

Hark, Seraphina ! Let the little God convey the sound from Pisa even to Vienna. The tabor and the pipe already summon the villagers to dance upon the green. Hark ! the bell in the great tower calls two happy couples to the altar---Alberto and Ursula, Conrad and Maria.---Theodore is free.

“Go,” said the general to him, as they left the church, “deliver this letter with your own hand.”

Michael was waiting with the carriage. Theodore read the superscription : “To Baron H---, Vienna.”

“Best of fathers !” exclaimed he, and sprung into the chariot.

CHAP.

CHAP. X.

Rodolpho the Merciful.

ABOUT this time the gang of robbers, which infested the woods near Florence, was become in number more formidable than ever. A detachment, which had been sent against them by the marquis, found, to their astonishment, above three hundred men of steady discipline, sometimes depending on the covert for protection, at others even ready to face them on the open plain.

But the alteration in the conduct of these free-booters was a general topic of conversation through the Grand Duchy.

chy. Their new leader had established a code of regulations, before unknown in such fraternities. One ordained that on no account, except in cases of desperate opposition to their demands, should murder be committed, and an authenticated infringement of this law subjected the offender to the punishment of death. Another decreed that those only, whose general appearance indicated their circumstances to be at least tolerably good, should be objects of attack; but that the poor wanderer should pass unmolested.

Both these mandates were scrupulously obeyed—nay, it had even been known, in more than one instance, that a considerable portion of the spoil taken from a wealthy traveller, had, on the
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same day, been distributed among bare footed mendicants, happening to pass through the forest.

Such was the conduct, by which the robber-captain Rodolpho had obtained amongst his followers, and the neighbouring peasantry, his appellation of *the Merciful*. Deep in the recesses of the forest four public roads united. It was here that the general rendezvous took place, the robbers bringing their booty from all quarters to this central point, where their commander was always to be found.

With folded arms and gloomy countenance sat Rodolpho at the foot of an aged oak, but lately rent by lightning. Scenes of past pleasure crowded on his mind ;

mind; but dark was his view into futurity.

“ A prize! a prize!” cried Spalatro, while he and his comrades accompanied a carriage from the northern road.

Rodolpho rose, and advanced towards it with an air of authority, which at once displayed the rank he held in the association.

“ A star on his breast!” whispered Spalatro. “ The Imperial Eagle hanging from his neck! A rich day’s work, I’ll be sworn.”

“ Alight,” called Rodolpho, and instantly every robber presented his carbine at the carriage.

The

The travellers obeyed. Rodolpho started, but immediately resumed his former deportment.

“Direct my followers where to search for the property you carry with you,” said he.

“I pledge to you my honour that I will,” replied the one of whose dignities Spalatro had spoken; “but if humanity be not extinct in your breast, allow my almost fainting daughter to withdraw, if even for twenty yards. This young man will assist her. The trifling sum which their purses may contain they will deliver up---their lives, from what you say, I trust are safe; but to a female of delicate frame these countenances——”

“No

"No reflections on my brave comrades," interrupted the robber-chief. "This was unnecessary. I am not marble-hearted. Retire, young people. That winding path will soon conduct you to my favourite seat. There wait my summons."

Theodore led the trembling Seraphina from this dreadful scene, and the baron immediately caused his servants to take out of the carriage every thing which it contained.

"Whence come you?" demanded Rodolpho.

"From Vienna," answered the minister.

"Whither

"Whither go you?"

"To Pisa."

"Your object there?"

"A visit to my friend General Count de C**."

"Are both those your children?"

"I trust they soon will be so. The youth is the son of my friend just mentioned, and betrothed to my daughter."

"You are, of course, acquainted with the elder brother of your friend, the marquis-regent?"

"Not so," answered the baron, "I never even saw him."

M

"Yet

“ Yet intimate with his only brother ?” exclaimed Rodolpho, as if doubting the minister’s veracity.

“ My intimacy with the general took place at Vienna,” returned he.

“ Enough !” said the banditti-captain. “ Spalatro, select what suits you and your comrades, but disturb no papers.” He turned into the adjoining path which led to Theodore and Seraphina.

“ Fair Lady,” began he, in a tone divested of all harshness, “ I crave your pardon for this interruption of your journey, and beseech you to banish every fear. My followers are uncouth, but obedient to my orders. Fe-
male

male innocence, when in my power, is safe. I am Rodolpho the Merciful. Support your timid bride, Signor---the carriage is by this time ready."

Theodore and Seraphina followed him to the party, and joined the Baron.

"Take this," said Rodolpho to the latter. "It is possible that some other of my parties may stop you."

He presented a ticket, and hastily walked away.

The travellers pursued their journey. On the ticket was written, "*Pass free! Rodolpho.*" No further molestation, however, made it of use.

"I don't mind that!" cried Marco, "You are poaching on our captain's manor, and must render account to him."

Marco's division now came forward, conducting a person of genteel appearance, who was attired like a sportsman.

Rodolpho again started, and again endeavoured to conceal it, but by no means with his former success.

"Captain, we've brought you a straggler," said Marco. "The report of his gun fired at some game close to our ambush, betrayed him to us---so a dozen brave lads rushed forward and disarmed him. Here's his fowling-piece---a flimsy concern---and he

the
Tru

he himself is but a poor catch---only this lean purse."

"A sportsman seldom takes a load of gold abroad," observed Alberto. "All I had you have received. Sir," continued he, addressing Rodolpho, "I am in your power. What is your further will?"

"You are free," answered the robber-captain, with evident emotion. His followers gazed on him in speechless wonder—never had they before seen him thus affected.

"I thank you," returned the count. "But what means all this? Are these the feelings of a hardened robber? Trust me, I pity you sincerely. The

M 3

downcast

downcast look of sorrow and confusion betrays that Destiny has treated you severely."

"Cruelly cruelly," exclaimed Rodolpho in a tone of agony, while he clasped his hands together with vehemence. "But I submit to her decrees. I follow blindly where she leads the way."

He turned aside—he breathed with difficulty—the big tears chased each other down his sallow cheek into his matted beard.

"Is there then to your mind no attraction in more honourable pursuits?" demanded the count.

"Death

“Death and hell! cried Spalatro,
“call you our profession dishonour-
able?”

“Peace!” exclaimed Rodolpho, in
a tone of anger and authority. “By
no other pursuit,” continued he, ad-
dressing Alberto, “could I attain the
great end I have in view—by no other
pursuit could I fulfil my dreadful mis-
sion. Yet even in my present vocation
I am seldom criminal. ’Tis true, I
seize the treasure of the wealthy, but
my coffers are ever open to the poor.
’Tis true I encourage plunder, but
I counteract all tendency to murder.
Never has the blood of an unresisting
foe stained my sword, or that of my
followers, since I commanded them. I
am Rodolpho the Merciful.”

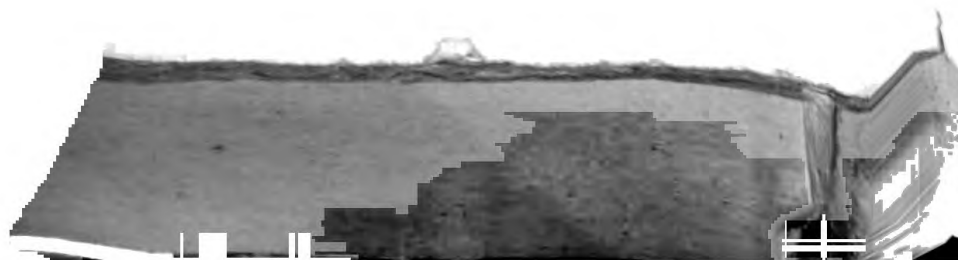
M 4

His

His voice, which had more and more betrayed his sensibility, was, towards the conclusion of this address, almost choked by tears.

Shrill whistles were heard to the south—many shots were discharged—another carriage approached, and with it a large detachment of the gang. Nigretti, knowing that Rodolpho's first demand would be an explanation of the firing so strictly prohibited, unless for self defence, called out, "Captain, we have only done our duty. Had the escort of dragoons not resisted, some fifteen of them would not have fallen. Three of our comrades were dispatched before we drew a trigger."

Rodolpho turned his dejected look towards



towards the carriage—-instantaneous and terrible was the change of every feature. A glow suffused his whole countenance—fury flashed from his eyes—the sword leapt from his scabbard, and with frantic violence he exclaimed, “ Double the out-posts—send forth fresh scouts to every point, that interruption may be made impossible.”

While he spoke, he rushed towards the carriage, tore open the door, and dragged the marquis through the overawed remnant of his guard

“ Gracious Heaven !” exclaimed Alberto, “ my brother !”

“ At last I have thee, villain,” cried Rodolpho, drawing him along the road

M 5

with

with an athletic grasp, and dashing his body with furious indignation on the ground; at last I have thee."

"And can this wretch call himself the merciful?" thought Alberto as he hid his face, and leaned against a tree.

"Form a circle," cried the robber-chief—"the hour of retribution is arrived. Oh! I was wrong when I complained of my destiny. This hour shall make amends for all I have endured. Ay, tremble miscreant, for to thee the sun shall rise no more---tremble, violator of innocence, and assassinator of integrity---tremble when I tell thee that before thee stands *Ludovico Salviati!*"

Oh,

“ Oh, horror ! Do I live to see this ? ” exclaimed the count.

The voice of Ludovico had already sounded as if familiar to his ear, but the shaggy locks, the sun-burnt visage, and the wild accoutrements he wore, had an effect so disfiguring, that it was hardly possible for friends of former days to recognize him.

The marquis raised himself upon his knees, but could not plead for mercy—his head hung upon his breast, and in fearful agony he awaited his death.

“ Comrades,” said Ludovico, “ you are about to see me deviate from the law which I myself established. This day I am ordained by all aveng-
ing

ing Heaven to rid the earth of a monster. Hear my reasons, for they will justify the blows.—My only sister was infamously seduced by him whom you see here—she died the victim of his perfidy. My honoured father was murdered by bravos in his pay.—Can you deny this, trembling coward?”

The marquis was silent.

“Too long,” proceeded Ludovico, “has my country submitted to thine iron sway. Crime has succeeded crime—still remorse was never known to creep into thy bosom. I am the exterminator. By my hand be tyranny annihilated.”

He raised his sword, and the fatal
blow

blow was already falling, when Alberto rushed between him and the marquis.

“ Here wreak your vengeance,” cried he, “ if implacably resolved on vengeance; but if memory can supply you with any right which I possess to claim a favour at your hands, oh spare my brother, and prove yourself worthy of the appellation you assume.”

The robbers rested on their arms, and silently surveyed a scene so uncommon to them.

“ Count Alberto,” said Ludovico, with dignified solemnity, “ the recollection of innumerable favours conferred by you intails on me eternal gratitude;

tude; but stretch not out your hand again to counteract my purpose. It is in vain. By him that guides the universe, this villain dies..... Spalatro, come hither—close to me.”

They whispered. Rodolpho gave his orders, and universal obedience was certain.

“ Allow me,” said he to the count, in a calmer tone, and leading him away, “ the conversation of a few short minutes. I trust that I can justify my conduct even to you, whose breast, as well I know, has ever been the throne of honour.”

Alberto followed him down the winding path to the seat which had so lately

lately been occupied by Theodore and Seraphina.

“ My lord,” continued he, “ you were the friend of my upright, injured father. Often did he point you out as an example of every thing, that was worthy of imitation. Can you, then, defend tyranny—seduction—murder ?”

“ I cannot---I do not,” replied the general.

“ Can you blame me,” continued Ludovico, “ as a Florentine, a brother, and a son, if I fulfil my threat ?”

“ That were to make yourself a murderer,” answered the count.

“ Were

“Were you, my lord,” demanded Ludovico, “guilty of this crime, when you ordered a soldier to be shot for his third desertion?”

“No,” returned Alberto, “the service required that an example should be made.”

“My wrongs require it too,” cried Ludovico—“all groaning Tuscany requires it.”

He blew his whistle---a hundred carbines were discharged at the same moment---the marquis fell, covered with wounds, and instantly expired.

“Huzza!” shouted the robbers,

Ludovico

Ludovico sunk upon his knees, and raised his arms towards Heaven.

“It is accomplished,” said he. “Great judge of right and wrong, I soon shall stand before thee to receive thy condemnation or acquittal for this act. Oh, let the spirits of my dear father and Amelia approach thee at my side, and plead my cause.—Count,” proceeded he, rising, “I deliver myself up to the laws of my country—I am your prisoner. This was the only step, by which I could avenge my wrongs—I have attained my purpose, and can mount the scaffold firmly, even at the present hour.”

“Never through me,” returned the count in violent agitation, “never shall
the

the blood of Salviati's house be shed by Alberto."

" 'Tis well," answered Ludovico. " One resource is always open to me.--- Farewel, friend of my father! The Baron H--- with his daughter and your son, have already passed this way, and your return will be looked for with anxiety. This ticket will secure your passage through the forest. Farewel---for ever!" He said, and hurried from the spot.

" Stay, oh stay, Ludovico!" called the general.

Ludovico turned---the look of genuine benignity, and inward grief, which possessed the countenance of his noble patron, fixed him to the spot.

" Son

“Son of the upright Salviati,” proceeded the count, “I see your purpose. You are about to end a career of guilt by suicide—you are about to rush into the presence of your maker, defiled with the blood of a fellow creature, and your own.—Oh reflect, ere it be too late.—You say that the object, which induced you to assume this disgraceful calling, is attained. Let the injuries, then, which roused your vengeance, make me forget that my brother was its victim. I will not hear of taking you hence as my prisoner; but if you still are willing to regain the station, which you held in honourable society—there is the hand of Alberto. To procure your pardon from the grand duke be the joint object of Baron H--- and myself.”

Ludovico

Ludovico rushed forward, fell at the general's feet, and bathed his hand with tears.

"No more!" said the latter. "You consent?"

"I do, I do," exclaimed he.

"This, then," continued Alberto, "is a scene ill suited to the rugged souls of your companions. They may begin to think us long."

"True," returned Ludovico. "Follow me---in half an hour a secret path will bring us to the border of the wood."

They went, and the time just mentioned

tioned had nearly elapsed, when another division of the robbers rushed from the thicket, and exclaimed: "Surrender!" Instantly, however, recognizing their leader, all lowered their arms in token of obedience.

"Your pardon, captain," said one of them, "we supposed you to be at our general rendezvous. We've heard a sharp volley that way, and were on the look-out for stragglers."

"To your post!" cried Ludovico in a tone of authority, and all immediately disappeared.

"You seem to maintain strict discipline," observed the count, as they walked forward.

"Yes,"

“Yes,” answered Ludovico, “I myself first learnt it in the school of honour, and, thanks to Heaven, have used my knowledge to effect. Strange as it may seem, I have found among these daring outlaws, men, who were worthy of a better fate, and these not a few---still there are others desperate and abandoned. Generous count, *you* are an uncommon man---*you* will feel that to have suppressed assassination, hitherto so usual in this forest, was one good step towards the reformation of this gang---*you* will feel that my heart was not completely misled, my persuasion not totally misapplied, when I tell you that but yesterday, after fatigue and disappointment, a general conversation on the difficulties, dangers, and disgrace of our pursuit was brought

brought about by me. I explained to my followers that the courageous man would always find a sure remuneration as a soldier, and pointed out how comparatively mean was our employment, who attacked the defenceless. I spoke with fervour.—I knew not, then, how to account for the feelings which impelled me---but now I do. I was the instrument of Providence to reclaim these wretches, who, like myself, have wandered from the path of rectitude. Will you believe it, count? Out of three hundred and three score, all, save two, leaped up, and cried: A soldier! the captain's right! a soldier! a soldier!--I checked their eagerness; for till my great revenge——of that no more.---A hint from me to-morrow rids this forest of its dangerous inmates.

mates. At a signal from Rodolpho, they shall be seen, kneeling, disarmed, and waiting your decree in the market-place of Florence."

"Ludovico," said the general, taking his hand with parental cordiality, "you are one of nature's mysteries,---the slave of imperious passion, but mindful, even in the erroneous path you chose, of honour's dictates---Behold my dwelling. Your uncouth appearance can soon be removed. At present, trust me it will be disregarded here; for you walk at the side of Alberto."

CONCLUSION.

“ PROTECT me, heavenly powers !”
exclaimed Seraphina, throwing herself
into the arms of her father.

The assembled family had been every
minute hoping for the count’s arrival ;
and at this moment he appeared with
the dreadful robber-captain leaning on
his arm.

“ I cannot,” cried Ludovico, much
oppressed—“ I cannot—spare me.”

“ Better at first, and then all’s over,”
replied Alberto. “ ’Sblood, batteries,
and bombshells, it shall be so.”

N**They**

They entered the saloon.

“Rodolpho!” said the count, introducing him.

Ludovico, overpowered by his sensations, fell prostrate on his face.

“Raise him, Theodore—raise him, Conrad,” exclaimed the general, “I did not mean this. Recognize your long lost friend—Ludovico Salviati.”

The letter which the count and baron jointly wrote to Vienna was answered by the Grand Duke, announcing pardon to the banditti-chief, and to all who, through his influence, should adopt a military life. At the same time it named Alberto the Regent
of

of Tuscany, an appointment full of happy presage to the country.

Ludovico summoned his late comrades to the border of the forest—he addressed them in glowing language, and they unanimously entered into the Austrian service. He was present at the nuptials of Theodore and Seraphina—he took possession of his father's large estates—he enjoyed the intercourse of friends the most sincere, and but seldom did a retrospective view deprive him of the gratification afforded by the present hour.

Adieu, noble Florentines! Groupe of happy friends, adieu! With alternate pleasure and regret have I detailed your joys and sufferings. Closed

is the sepulchre upon the worthy Salviati, and his ill-fated daughter—the whirlwind of vengeance has swept from the earth her infamous seducer.—Peace to the ashes of the dead, and undisturbed be the felicity of their survivors !

DEDICATION.

“I PERCEIVE your object,” said he, “but you will not attain it. Those sly rogues, the critics, are acquainted with every manoeuvre in the art of literary warfare. No sooner shall they have discovered your design, than they will outflank you and give no quarter.”

It was a rainy-day—I had been reading the manuscript to my friend Timothy Sadboy Snooks, the original donor of the papers on which my story is founded, and had proceeded no fur-

ther than the title-page, when he made the above observation.

“Design!” repeated I, surprised.

“Come, come,” proceeded he, “no evasion. You remember an old story in Joe Miller about an Irish servant, whose master desired him to pay away a bad shilling, which he contrived to do by slipping it between two half-pence at a toll-bar. You are an exact imitator of Pat; for you have evidently slipped your title-page among the leaves, in order that it may escape observation.”

“Not I in good faith,” was my answer.

“Psha!”

“Psha!” cried he, “the thing is palpable. Read the natural history of the Ostrich. It pops its head into a bush, and foolishly fancies that its body is concealed—up come the hunters, and seize their prey. Oh, you will be precious game for these literary Nimrods—they are mounted—run, fly, ’tis all in vain. Then throwing himself upon a sofa, he sung from Bluebeard: “I see them galloping, I see them galloping,” in a voice which will not, I think, procure him an offer of engagement at the Opera-house. In fact, my friend Snooks sung very ill, and the subject was one not quite congenial with my feelings.

“Well,” said I, “we must all take our chance. To the candid and impartial

partial critic, whether he encourages our feeble efforts, or lashes our numerous defects, we owe deference and respect; and though there are *many* who have an undoubted claim to this character, yet does this fraternity, like all others, include *some* who are only worthy of sovereign contempt. Nothing is more easy than to distinguish them, even when both are exercising their severity on the same subject. They may be compared to the canine race; one attacks you with the true spirit of a British bull-dog—the other snarls like a base-bred cur from his kennel. The one declares that he thinks your work intrinsically bad, and contents himself with fairly proving this. The other asserts no more, and generally proves less; while he, at the same time,

time, gratifies a malignant disposition by staining the page of criticism (which should, of all others, be most pure) with gross invective and language unbecoming any gentleman, or man of learning.

“I agree with you exactly,” answered my friend; “and were I a votary of Apollo, I would rather that my work should be an object of the keenest severity on the part of these fair-dealers, than that it should be extolled as one of the happiest productions by the ignorant and illiberal. But enough of this—proceed with your story.”

I obeyed, and was glad that Mr. Snooks did not think it had lost any interest in my hands.

“There

“There is only one thing wanted,” said he, when I had finished. “As you placed a title-page toward the middle of your book, I thought it probable that, upon your new principle, you would sport a dedication at the end of it.”

“A dedication is an unnecessary appendage,” answered I.

“Not so on this occasion,” replied he, presenting a paper. I read it—I join with him in opinion, and I at once meet his wishes.

*To LEOPOLD DE C**,*

The brave son of Theodore and Seraphina, who, on the eventful day at
Austerlitz,

Austerlitz, trod in the glorious path of his progenitors, and drenched his sword in the blood of Austria's foes, I inscribe these authentic records of his family.

THE END.


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