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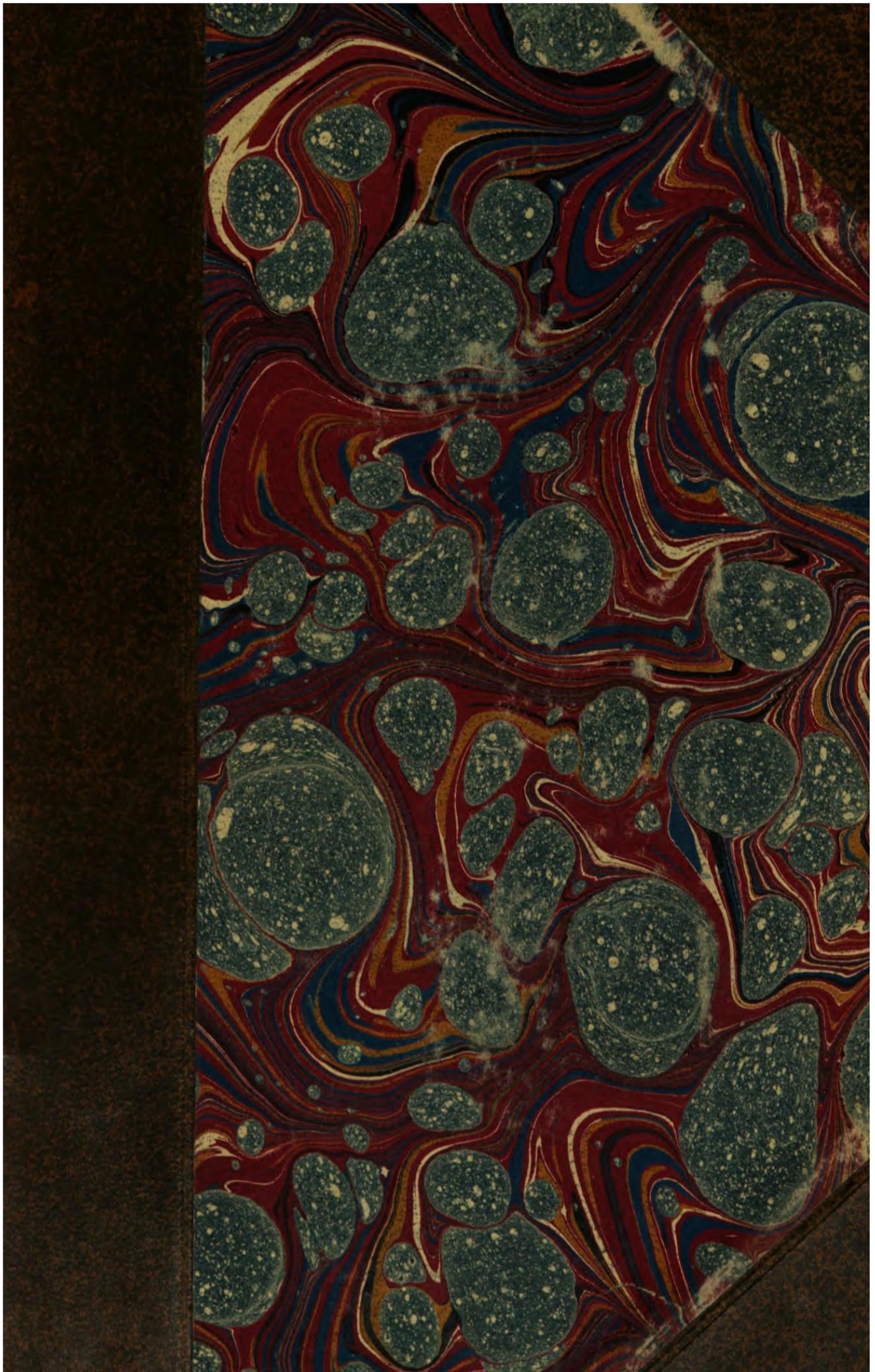
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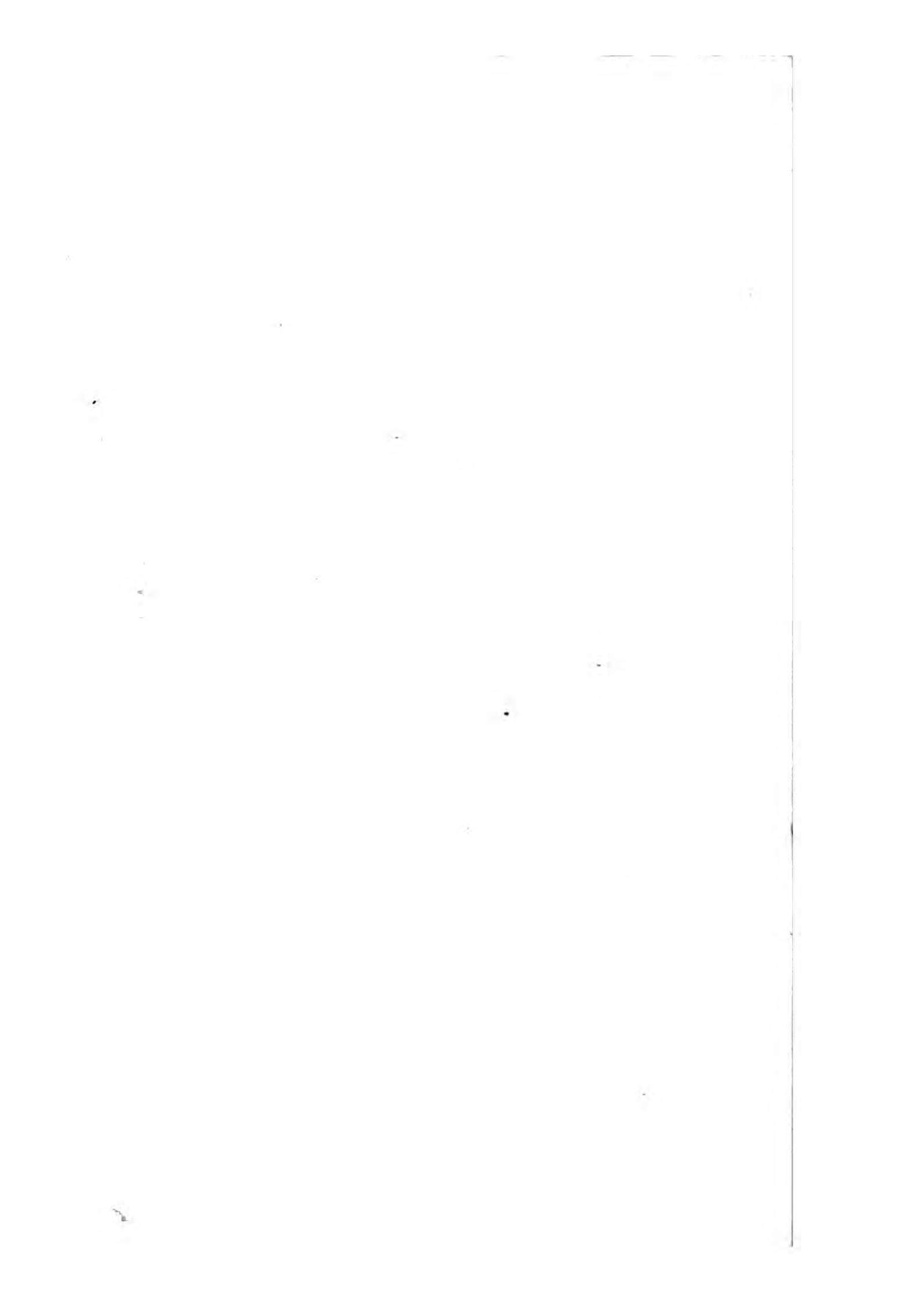
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ALMACK'S REVISITED

"The proudest of them all shall hear of it."

IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

LONDON:

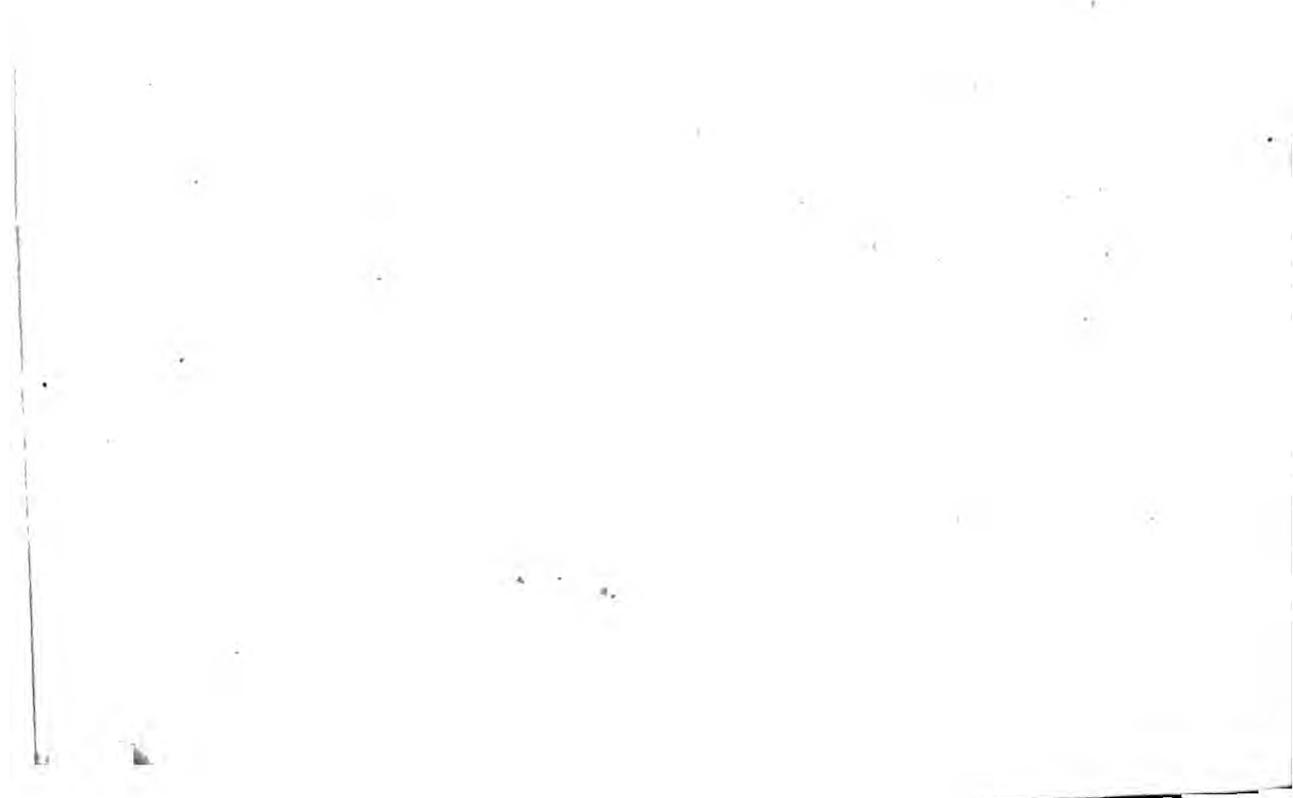
SAUNDERS AND OTLEY, CONDUIT STREET.

1828.



ADVERTISEMENT.

IN consequence of the singular coincidence of another Work having appeared almost at the same moment with the present, under a title so similar as to occasion each to be mistaken for the other, the Editor under whose care this Work has been conducted through the press, not having the opportunity of consulting the Author, has thought it necessary, as the only course left open to him to prevent confusion, to restore to it its *original* title, with such a distinction as will, he hopes, prevent the possibility of all future misapprehension.



IT may be proper to state that the following Work was originally written under the title of "ALMACK'S," and before the Publication of that popular Novel, in order to account for any resemblance which may be discoverable between the two productions; though the Author has endeavoured to obviate the probability of such, by making some changes in his scenes, familiar from observation, and by purposely abstaining from the perusal of the Work which has so ably preceded him in the use of the title referred to.

It seems only farther necessary, to disclaim all idea of personality in the following pages, the object intended having been to pourtray manners, rather than individuals, and to connect with real occurrences such sketches of character, as might not prove wholly useless in their tendency and application.

ALMACK'S REVISITED ;

OR,

HERBERT MILTON.

CHAPTER I.

AT that period of the year, when the western part of the metropolis again receives to its bosom the gay and eager votaries of fashion—when numerous well-packed and heavily-laden equipages may be seen in continual succession disgorging their contents in the vicinity of the squares—when hotel-keepers, who, during the dead season have been comparatively poor, and consequently proportionably civil, now commence the bustle of their business, and with it the extent of their extortion and impertinence—when the gentle nightingale, the

Pasta of the grove, and pirate cuckoo, the Schinder wannes of the woods, enliven the dale and woodland with their early notes—when the first glad sunbeams of spring call from its winter prison each tender bud and fragrant blossom, robing the forest and the field in all the vigour of virgin foliage and vegetation, having, at the same time, the singular effect of scaring from the country every individual who can afford even a lodging in London; as if the sight of bare hedges, leafless trees, and withered herbage, alone possessed any picturesque beauties, or offered any rural charms to their eyes—when mothers and mantua-makers, alike interested in the important operation of match-making, (the principal occupation of all classes at this conjunctive moment,) pass in speculative review the list of youths who, since last season, have attained the emancipatory and nubible age of twenty-one; the former mentally appropriating to their daughters the actual possession, or future reversion of coronets, bloody hands, or at least ample land-

ed property; whilst the others content themselves with the prospect of furnishing lace veils, costly dresses, and all the other momentous ingredients of the *Trousseau*.—Splendid and enchanting visions! how often are ye formed, and, alas! how often do a few short months dissipate the bright illusion, and destroy the goodly and maternal dream!—

At that gay period, when Peers, Meltonians, or green peas, are neither ashamed, the one to be seen or the other to be eaten in town—when the celebration of anniversary dinners, political meetings, and pious unions, cause the walls of Freemasons' Hall to ring alternately with the sounds of boisterous toasts, merry songs, often-repeated and tedious speeches of reform, or still more tedious and saintly hymns, —when charity balls and charity concerts, under the patronage of some fair decoys of Fashion, extract from the pocket of the unwilling beau his one pound one, and offer to his eager sisters or cousins their only chance of even inhaling the same air respired by the elect

of the day—last sad resource of Almack's discarded applicants;—when White's bow-window, once more crowded with its phalanx of critics, obliges many a "would be," to prefer the shady side of St. James-street, who has not courage to encounter the passing sarcasms which are shot from that fashionable battery, with the effect and celerity of balls from Mr. Perkins's steam-engine.—

Distressing moment! when many an important personage, who before Easter lounged in all the ease and grandeur of a double Opera-box, embosomed in his well-furred coat—now yielding to increasing prices, descends to join the common ten-and-sixpenny herd, who choke the pit, contenting himself, like a fallen angel, with sighing and looking up from the depths of the black abyss upon the brilliant galaxy where erst he himself appeared a conspicuous and envied luminary; or perhaps by way of revenge retires to the sea-side, for the benefit of his wife's health, lets his house for the season at an extravagant price, and lives rent-free

for the remainder of the year. But I have already extended my catalogue of *whens* to an unnecessary length; and as I conclude my readers have by this time *pretty well* ascertained the season of the year to which I allude, and are anxious for me to commence my narrative, I shall without farther delay enter upon my subject.

At the period then to which I have referred, in the year 18—, a heavily laden post-chaise was seen to ascend Berkeley Square, and at length to draw up at the door of Mr. Thomas's Hotel. From the outward appearance of the equipage, its luggage, and attendant, there was every reason to surmise that the traveller had lately arrived from one of our Eastern possessions.

On the roof of the vehicle were fastened sundry boxes, parcels, and packages, of foreign and anomalous appearance; at all events, looking like any thing rather than the neatly-polished cases and convenient imperials of Messrs. Hudson; and what man with any taste or regard for his own comfort would either

trust his coats or his boxes to the boots or springs of any other coach-maker?

A curiously-formed cage, in which an enormous cockatoo dangled to and fro, was attached to one of the front windows, whose shrill screams outnoised even the rumbling of the wheels or clattering of the horses' hoofs. A large yellow chest, which might on the banks of the Ganges have served as a load for a full-toothed elephant, was secured behind; whilst a native servant—his head enveloped in the ample folds of a snow-white turban, rings in his ears not much inferior in size to a fourth-form boy's hoop, and the mark of *caste* on his forehead—sat perched on the summit of two or three portmanteaus in front, endeavouring, with one hand grasping the bar and the other clinging to the leather of a spring, to preserve his equilibrium on this novel, and, to judge by the distortion of his countenance, not very agreeable palanquin, when every jolt or jostle threatened to dislodge some of his fine set of

teeth, or dislocate limbs which had very much the curve and inclination of Saxon arches.

It was, however, evident, that the inmate of the machine was not only a personage of some wealth and importance, but that his arrival had been anticipated, and preparations made for his reception.

No sooner had the vehicle halted at the door than two or three tall footmen, with more than the usual proportion of powder, fringe, and lace, headed by a man out of livery, having the portly bearing of a butler or steward, and followed by a string of waiters and porters, rushed into the street, whilst the master of the hotel and the very important personage his wife, advanced as far as the landing-place, and, without compromising their own dignity, proceeded to make their obeisance and offer their welcome to the new comer as they ushered him up-stairs to the suite of apartments prepared for his occupation.

Upon the first landing-place, the stranger,

who was a man rather advanced in years, but of lofty carriage, dignified, and particularly gentlemanlike though stern appearance, was eagerly met by a still beautiful and interesting-looking woman, many years younger than himself.

At the sight of this fair personage the traveller extended his arms and quickened his pace, which hitherto had expressed more of Indian dignity and official solemnity, than any of that warm-hearted English anxiety when one is about to meet some dear loved object. A moment, however, sufficed to lock the couple in each other's arms.

“My dearest Sir Herbert,”—“My dearest Laura,” was heard mutually to escape their lips as the door of the saloon closed upon them.

A tremendous uproar had, however, arisen down-stairs in consequence of a quarrel between Singée, the native servant, and one of the other domestics. The former, accustomed for many years to hold absolute control over the stranger's household in India, and to superintend

the packing or unloading his master's elephants and travelling equipage, felt extremely indignant at the simultaneous rush made by the different assistants to remove into the house the varied contents of the carriage, not only without his orders, but even without the compliment of a single *salam*. After rolling his dark eyes with the look of a demon, and grinning like an enraged tiger, he uttered a thousand curses in his native tongue, now and then breaking in with, "He Massa Gorormighty leab him, Cackadoo up him Palakin! Why for debil, Gobernor no kick him, damn tiebs, at a bottom up a stairs? Och, Gorra! Gorra no touch him. Rajah Palaum! ok a bite him blood op a finger!"

The domestics, however, continued their operations, utterly regardless of the poor man's anger, and took no other notice of him than now and then saying, "Here, catch hold, Blacky!" as they handed out a parcel, which of course added to his fury and their amusement.

Singée had, however, borne all this hitherto, without coming to any overt act of violence, until he saw one of the footmen take possession of his master's writing-case, which the faithful native knew contained the traveller's most valuable papers; then losing all command of himself, he roared out, "Houka, raskill, no steal him, Srarbert pepper box!" and then feeling for his handjar, which was stuck through the fold of a shawl girdle, he made a rush at the servant, and would inevitably have put an end to the man's farther servitude in this world, had not his arm been fortunately arrested, and the dagger wrenched from his grasp by another domestic.

Deprived of his native weapon and bursting with fury, Singée, who was a man of immense muscular strength, now turned his rage against the well-dressed and highly powdered foe who had providentially saved his neck from the gallows. In an instant he darted at the footman, seized him by the waist with both his arms, whilst he fastened like a bull-dog with

his teeth on the lacquey's well-studied tie; and then ensued a most terrific struggle between them, which none of the by-standers at first attempted to interrupt.

Whilst the two combatants were straining every nerve for mastery, Rajah Palaum, who was no other than a peculiarly scarce and rare monkey of a large size, which the traveller intended as a present to the King, and who had hitherto remained a passive spectator, upon seeing his friend and companion Singée in danger of having his lungs rendered useless by the vice-like grasp of the brawny footman, after showing his teeth, and gabbling a short declaration of war, now sprung from his corner on the back of the latter, and seizing the but-end of the postilion's whip, commenced a tremendous attack upon the bare and powdered head of his friend's antagonist. Unable to resist this fresh reinforcement, the footman began to relax his efforts, whilst his foes redoubled theirs; and in an instant the two were seen rolling and floundering in the kennel, where the

two foreigners, unaccustomed to the mode of British fighting, and utterly regardless of the law of honour, which forbids striking a fallen foe, continued to batter the vanquished enemy without feeling or mercy ; and where I am under the necessity of leaving them to the care of the spectators whilst I proceed to render some account of Sir Herbert and Lady Milton.

Sir Herbert Milton was the cadet of a junior branch of an ancient and distinguished family in the West of England. His father, who was himself a younger son, and had a large family to provide for, had been happy to accept for his boy a writership at one of our Presidencies in the East, in exchange, and as a sort of remuneration, for some important electioneering services rendered to the member of a neighbouring borough ; his two elder sons being already provided for in the army, in which service they both terminated a short and early career.

Consequently, at the age of sixteen, with an order for fifty pounds per annum on an agent

at —— in his pocket, the usual quantity of shirts and stockings in his trunks, a liberal allowance of parental advice in his heart, and a tolerable proportion of Hindostanee and Bonnycastle in his head, the young Herbert was shipped off for India, either to make his fortune or die of bile, as Providence in its wisdom might afterwards direct.

Next to the convenient assistance which that very useful, healthy, and efficient colony of Sierra Leone affords to the War Office and Colonial Department, in disposing of and safely providing for a host of troublesome applicants, who infest the Duke's levee, or that of the President of the Board of Control, there is nothing that can be compared to a writer or cadetship in India, for a father anxious to provide for an enterprising son, especially if the station have the advantage of being a little unhealthy; for, in that case, advancement and promotion are on the one hand more rapid, and fortunes more speedily amassed, whilst on the other, if the jungle or any other fever should unfortunately

prove fatal to the neophyte, a few tears, and a black coat, save a wonderful deal of care, trouble and expense.

Herbert Milton had been from his earliest years a boy of cold, uncongenial, and reserved disposition, coupled with the most firm, unbending resolution, and the most ardent desire for improvement. His unwearied application to his primer had early given great delight to the village pedagogue entrusted with the commencement of his literary pursuits; indeed it might have gladdened the heart of the worthy Mrs. Barbauld herself, as much as his propensity to economise his weekly pocket-money enchanted that of his father, from whom he regularly, it is true, asked for his gingerbread allowance, but never spent it. There were, however, occasions when he evinced the greatest liberality, amounting to profusion: this trait, (which was one of his leading characteristics through life,) added to a spirit of chivalrous honour and integrity, and an abhorrence of falsehood, excited

the surprise and admiration of every one from his youngest days.

Indeed, to such a point did Milton carry this high and noble sentiment of honour, that from the period of his first introduction into the world, until the moment of my introducing him to the acquaintance of my readers, he was proverbial for never having uttered an untruth, even in jest, as well as for never having broken a promise, however trifling and insignificant.

Many years had not passed over the head of the young adventurer in India, ere his unwearyed attention to his duties, and his reputation for punctuality and integrity, attracted the attention, not only of the Government abroad, but that of the Court of Directors at home. For once, merit met with its reward; and his advancement and success were unusually rapid. He was appointed to fill employments, in which, had he followed the advice or example of his co-employés, he might speedily have amassed a colossal fortune, and converted the confi-

dential situations he held into mines of wealth—even as his predecessors had done before him.

Possessing not alone the good opinion, but the unbounded confidence of the Governor-general, every opportunity was afforded him of increasing his fortune, by means which has hitherto been considered perfectly excusable. But Mr. Milton's appointment, as a high public servant, at once formed a new era, an absolute revolution in the administration of affairs. Instead of giving an indirect sanction, by winking at the common system of peculation, and of rendering himself, whenever the occasion offered, the ready medium of bribery, which had so long been carried on with impunity between the native chiefs and government officers, he was resolved to strike at the root of the evil, and if possible to put an end to a custom so detrimental to the justice of the laws, and so prejudicial to the interests of the Company.

It was Mr. Milton's wish to give to our offi-

cial employments on the Indian Continent the same character for integrity and probity which they possess at home;—in short, to establish for them a reputation far different from that which they had hitherto merited and enjoyed; and it was to be expected, with such views of reform, openly professed and acted up to, and of which Mr. Milton gave the strictest example in his own conduct—joined to the cold, and unsocial manners which were natural to him,—that he should become rather an object of fear and respect, than of friendship and regard, to the different gentlemen who formed the society at the seat of Government.

His temperate and frugal habits, the spirit of economy which he had so early imbibed, and had continued to practise with the greatest severity, together with his love of study and taste for retirement, in a great measure secluded him from the parties of amusement and diversion, which most other residents were eager to enjoy.

Wrapped in the duties of his station, and

permitting himself little recreation, Mr. Milton had hitherto remained a bachelor; indeed, he had allowed himself few opportunities of indulging in the society of the other sex, who, when they did meet, looked upon him, in despite of a very handsome person, as a man sworn to celibacy, and as utterly impenetrable as the Fort of Bhurtphore—and consequently gave up all idea of laying siege to the large fortune, which, though untruly, he was said to have accumulated. Having, however, nearly attained his fortieth year, Mr. Milton himself began to consider, that if ever he intended to marry, it was high time to look out for some fair person who might take upon herself the interesting functions of scolding his servants, spending his money, contradicting himself, and rearing half-a-dozen children to assist in getting rid of his savings. Casting his eyes over the contents of the Indian female bazaar, Mr. Milton fixed his choice (for even here the men are privileged to throw the handkerchief) on Laura Crosbie, one of the most beautiful and amiable creatures that

had ever been exported from the mother country for the speculative purpose of what is called "hooking a Nabob."

There is something peculiarly characteristic of the commercial spirit which pervades the people of this country, in thus converting the daughters of a family into mere articles of barter and exportation: it is strange to hear of whole cargoes of these fair consignments, migrating by every outward bound fleet, with a view of seeking husbands and establishments on the shores of Malabar, or the coast of Coromandel, where they are forwarded to the care, and consigned to the disposal, of some practised resident's wife, who herself had been shipped off, landed, and put up for sale in a similar manner, some years previous. On their arrival at the destined mart, hundreds of eager eyes await them, and they are quickly bargained and provided for according to their own merits, or the bill of lading despatched by the paternal merchant.

The success of these damsels is, however,

rendered much more certain, and their hopes of advantageous matches considerably heightened, if they possess good manners, a few accomplishments, and, above all, if they can claim connection, though in a distant degree, with the peerage, or if they happen to be niece or granddaughter to a baronet, or cousin-german to a member of the lower House. What is called good connection is the first of all requisites; and a young lady possessing this advantage, may almost make her own selection, and even go as far as to refuse one or two of the first bidders.

Amongst these rare personages, this select band, Miss Crosby, the daughter of an ancient and respectable family in one of our most beautiful midland counties, had the good fortune to be numbered; and she had therefore scarcely recovered from the effects of the voyage, or been introduced into the society of the lady to whom she had been remitted, who was the wife of the highest official personage, ere she became an object of rivalry and admiration

amongst the gentlemen of the settlement, whose legitimately or illegitimately acquired fortunes permitted them to enter into the hymeneal market. A short time convinced Mr. Milton, who to the astonishment of every one now entered more into society, that Miss Crosby was the being of all others most calculated to ensure his happiness; whilst the young lady, on her part, flattered at the idea of being the first person who had ever been able to draw him from his retirement, or excite any other passion in his breast than the love of his official duties, or perhaps from one of the motives hereafter alluded to, appeared to receive his attentions with satisfaction, and at length yielded to the proposal conveyed to her through the lady of Mr. Milton's chief. In less than six months, then, after her landing in India, Laura Crosby became the wife of Mr. Milton; and although the disparity in their years was considerable, yet every possible happiness appeared likely to be the result of their union.

In the course of three or four years the

marriage of Mr. and Mrs. Milton was rendered still more happy by the birth of two children: the eldest a girl, who lived but to attain its third year; the second a boy, the hero of the following narrative. From unremitting attention, during many months, to the care of the little girl, who had been a weak and sickly child from the period of its birth, and from subsequent grief at its loss, combined with the effects of climate and her second *accouchement*, the health of Mrs. Milton received so severe a shock, and became affected to such a degree, that the greatest apprehensions were entertained for her safety. It was therefore urgently advised by the physicians, and strongly recommended by Mr. Milton's friends, that measures should be immediately adopted for her return to Europe, as the only chance of saving her life.

Painful as this alternative must have been to both, Mr. Milton did not hesitate a moment in submitting to the opinions of the medical men, and was anxious to accompany her, but

found it impossible to do so without serious loss, and the chance of marrying for ever his now rapidly advancing career.

Every preparation being completed, which could afford comfort or pleasure to Mrs. Milton during the voyage, and arrangements having been made for her future establishment (in England) on the most liberal footing, with a sorrowful and almost breaking heart she bade adieu to her husband and infant boy, whose extreme delicacy rendered it impossible that he should accompany her.

It was not until the departure of his beautiful wife,—until he found himself alone with his infant child, that he discovered how dear Mrs. Milton was to him, and how necessary to his happiness; while he felt in its full force all the bitterness of her loss. His grief, it is true, was not expressed in a violent manner, but it was not the less deep and sincere. His former inclination for seclusion now increased to such a degree, that what was before a love of retirement, now almost appeared converted

into misanthropy. Devoting himself to the care of his child, who was also destined in a short time to be taken from him, Mr. Milton shut himself up as far as his official duties permitted, and became almost inaccessible even to his few friends.

Many months had not elapsed ere the young Herbert, who had struggled on to his second year, evinced such symptoms of debility, that the only resource left was change of climate. It was therefore determined that the infant should be despatched forthwith to England. To this also Mr. Milton was obliged to consent; and when the child was taken away for embarkation, the grief he had felt at the departure of his wife was renewed, and rendered doubly painful by his being deprived of his only remaining comfort or consolation.

In the mean time Mrs. Milton, whose strength gradually improved as she approached the shores of her native land, arrived safely in England, and was received with open arms by her delighted parents and friends. Care, skil-

ful advice, and judicious treatment, quickly wrought a favourable change, and restored her constitution to its wonted tone. Indeed, so completely was she re-established, that she anxiously looked forward to the idea of again proceeding to join her husband and child, or at least to hear of their speedy return to Europe; a possibility which Mr. Milton, in his letters, hinted might not be far distant. By the same vessel, however, which conveyed the young Herbert to England, Mr. Milton communicated to his wife not only the anxiety he felt to be again united to her, but declared his intention of not delaying his stay in India beyond a period of three or four years. He therefore recommended her to renounce all idea of returning to India, pointed out the system he wished to be pursued with his boy, in the event of his life being spared, and urged her to the enjoyment of society and amusements, to which she was entitled from her connections, her personal attractions, and the liberal allowance which he had made for her establishment. Year after

year, however, rolled on, unforeseen delays occurred, and circumstances arose which induced him to procrastinate the period of his return, of which he still spoke, but with less eagerness. Time, that admirable corrective for all passions, griefs, or joys, not only softened his sorrows, but habituated him more firmly to the secluded and laborious life which he had adopted; at the same time, the many important affairs with which he was intrusted, the multiplicity of business, and with it the honour and credit which fell to his share, (a baronetcy having been conferred upon him,) in gratifying his ambition, in a great measure not only diverted his mind from those ties which otherwise would solely have occupied his thoughts, but entirely banished from his mind all idea of retiring from public life; insomuch, that a period of more than twenty years had elapsed between the departure of Lady Milton from India, and that of Sir Herbert's return to his native country, from which he had been absent upwards of forty-five years.

CHAPTER II.

IT is now time, having rendered some account of his parents, to introduce my hero to my reader. I will not pursue his progress from the top-spinning urchinry and diet of the lower Greek, through the incipient despotism and miniature dandyism of the fifth form, to the final majesty of the supreme and liberty-giving sixth. Suffice it to say, that on his transplantation to the land of his forefathers, he grew as rapidly in grace, strength, and beauty, as the heart of the tenderest and most anxious mother could desire.

The preparatory process of his education was intrusted to the charge, and rapidly ad-

vanced under the paternal care and profound learning of a most pious and amiable individual, who, at this present hour, sheds the utmost lustre and dignity on one of the higher offices of the church. The name of our hero, carved in deep and well blacked letters, (by the Cerberus of his time,) a few yards below the right-hand side of Doctor Keates' desk in the upper school, still gives a sufficient proof that he was entitled to spring to the rescue at the sound of the well-loved and never-forgotten battle cry of "Floreat Etona." Having attained the age of sixteen, a commission was obtained for him in one of the regiments of Guards.

Here I conclude it is necessary to give some account of his person, which I shall do, not merely from the most distinct recollection of the features and form of Herbert Milton himself, but from a recent inspection of the beautiful full-length portrait in the possession of his family, which many of my readers may have seen and admired in the Exhibition, as

one of the happiest and highly-finished productions of the masterly president. He was rather above the common stature in these degenerate days: his person, though wrought in the finest proportion, was more remarkable for its grace and activity, than for its muscular strength. His high forehead, and finely rounded head, was shaded by a redundancy of dark brown hair, waving in natural curls, which required not the assistance of the human comb or the five fingers to raise it from the occiput, but merely demanded the assistance of Mr. Truefit's periodical scissors to check its luxuriance, whilst it disdained the fostering warmth of the curling-irons, which now-a-days are so constantly employed in converting the lank and pendant thatch of our beaux' heads into the best possible imitation of an Astrakan lamb's-skin, or a pet poodle dog's frizly jerkin.

A pair of brilliant hazel eyes, and an open, manly countenance, bespoke the candour and integrity of a heart which through life was alive to the finest sentiments of nature. His

▲ skill and success in all the manly games and exercises so peculiar to our country, were as proverbial as his grace and gentlemanly manner in the agile movements of the ball-room, as well as his address in the more serious knowledge and use of arms; a science, however, of which Herbert never was known to take advantage, but in espousing the cause of the weak, or in defending his own person, when every other method of honourable adjustment or conciliation had failed: an example worthy of imitation by some of the *spadassins* of the day, who, relying on their skill at hitting an ace, snuffing a candle, or knocking over half-a-score of *poupées* at Le Page's and Manton's, not only exult in the number of affairs they have had, or exhibit their pistols scored with the mementos of their prowess, as country cricketers mark their notches on a stick, or gamekeepers their masters' shots in a battue; but, in addition to this unnatural pride, seek every opportunity they can meet with of put-

ting into practice their odious and inhuman accomplishment.

Herbert's taste for the fine arts, at first natural, and afterwards matured by travelling, and, above all, that for music, aided by a fine, clear, and mellow tenor, a true *voce di petto*, for the sweetness of which he was more indebted to nature than art, rendered him a welcome and most acceptable addition to the *parties fines* of the most distinguished amateurs; whilst his good humour, absence of all conceit and affectation, and, above all, his most gentlemanly manners and handsome person, caused him to be an object of general *recherche* in the highest and best society.

No sooner was it buzzed about that he was son of the handsome and fashionable Lady Milton, not a *scorpion*, (*Anglicé* a younger brother,) but the apparent heir of a large fortune, than cards for dinners and parties overflowed upon him. Fifty provident mammas begged to be introduced to him, and

carefully inscribed his name, and, above all, his prospects, in their tablets.

After due inquiry, this respectable band of female Guerillas resolved to confine their attacks to the suburbs of the young *debutant*, merely giving him every encouragement to flirt *a little* with their elder daughters, in order to keep alive the acquaintance, until his years, and those of some younger "bread and butter" damsel, not yet escaped from the watch-tower of the governess, might render their nearer attacks more justifiable, and more productive. The only son of a baronet, a peer eventually perhaps, and that baronet a rich and old East Indian, whose life the most enterprising Insurance Office in London would not guarantee for more than eleven years, (bile, liver, climate, and subsequent Bath waters included,) being a lure which these speculative jackals never can resist. It being looked upon with them, in such cases, as much a matter of duty which they owe to their families, to mark down and transfix the young embryos of fashion in their

shells, as with Dorsetshire farmers to kill the young rooks in their nests, or to convert the produce of the old ones, during the process of incubation, into plover's eggs for the London markets.

It is needless to say, that, with these advantages, Herbert Milton's success in society was complete; and if I add, that his head was a little turned with the flattery and attention he met with, no one can be surprised. Nothing had been omitted by Lady Milton to render her son not only one of the most accomplished men of the age, but every care had been taken to impress upon his mind the purest sentiments of morality and religion, and he had hitherto given every reason to believe that these essential lessons had not been thrown away.

He left Eton with the reputation of high classical acquirements, and with a character for integrity and honour, not inferior to that of his father; he was noted in his regiment for his generosity and bravery; in short, no young man ever held a commission in the Guards with

brighter prospects of success, or was more generally beloved by his comrades and esteemed by his commanding officers. If Lady Milton had every reason to feel satisfied with her son's progress in the world, she had still more reason to be gratified with the reception he met with at Court, and the remarks made upon him by his venerable and revered Sovereign. As the beautiful mother, leaning on the young soldier's arm, approached the Royal Presence, the good old Monarch, turning round to his illustrious consort, observed with his usual kind and benevolent manner, "Young Milton, young Milton, fine recruit—a credit to the Guards—as handsome as his mother, no doubt as good—highly spoken, highly spoken of by his regiment;" and then addressing himself to Herbert, he added, "Glad to see you, glad to see you, honour and character hereditary in the family."

There was something so flattering at such a moment in the kindness of his Majesty, that Lady Milton was for a time extremely affected, and indeed could hardly command her feelings,

as she gracefully knelt down to make her obeisance to the Royal pair; and what mother, idolizing an only son, would not have betrayed some emotion on such an occasion? Who is there that would not have felt gratified at the praise proceeding from such a source? I do not address myself to those who with boasted affectation pretend to despise, or disregard the influence of a Court, and if they do not openly endeavour to insult, at least refuse the decent homage due to their Sovereign,—a proof neither of their sense, foresight, or consistency. Many of these independents being the first to grasp with eagerness any place or appointment which they can procure for some member of their family not yet provided for, and eventually becoming, in their own persons, the most assiduous converts to courtiership—if their King, forgetting or despising their conduct, should command them to be invited to dinner, and their wives and daughters to a ball or party “frocks.” I speak not to such as these, who with abuse on their tongues, and envy in their hearts,

choose not to draw a distinction between the man as a private individual and the man invested with the arduous burthen inherent in his illustrious and elevated situation; who can make no allowance for the weakness of human nature, and for the errors and failings incidental to his difficult position, often arising from the counsels and representations of his servants, to whose opinions he is often obliged to yield, in despite of his own judgment or the dictates of his heart and feelings. But I speak to those who do not, in their condemnation of any public measure, indiscriminately blind themselves to private and domestic virtues, but, above all, I address myself to those whose hearts must still warm, whose eyes must still glisten, at the memory of the venerable and virtuous Monarch, to whom Lady Milton had the honour of presenting her son.

It has fallen to my lot to be introduced, I have bent the knee and bowed the head, to most of the crowned heads, the mightiest potentates of the earth, I have seen them on occasions

and at moments the most calculated to excite the liveliest emotions and leave the strongest impressions on the mind; at the solemn and awe-inspiring funeral, when arrayed in the garb of humility and mourning, they have accompanied to the silent tomb the mouldering bodies or re-collected bones of their predecessors; at the gorgeous and splendid altar, when surrounded by gold-clad ministers and treasure-sparkling emblems of religion, they have first received the sacred unction, or bent their brows to accept the nuptial diadem; on the field of war, amidst the thunder of battle, amidst the horrors of carnage, and the devastation of combat, when their presence has alone sufficed to excite with maddening enthusiasm the fury of victorious columns, or their word to arrest the retreat, and reanimate the courage of defeated and broken hosts; I have seen them in all the splendour and magnificence of their Courts, in all the brilliancy of dress and decorations, amidst the glittering attributes of their power, surrounded by honour, dignities, and grandeur;

the greatest, the most beautiful of the land bending in homage before them ; I have seen them under every circumstance most suited to leave upon my memory the strongest traces of their persons and their greatness—but of all, nothing remains but a faint and indistinct remembrance, confused as the fading image of a dream, or the recollection of some theatric pagantry. Whereas, though years have rolled away, though time with its engulfing power has weakened and obscured the vigour of my memory ; still those days of my boyhood are fresh—still do I see before me, as if it were but yesterday, the image of the good, the aged Monarch, as, in his simple dress, and with unassuming appearance and modest retinue, he stayed his hunter, in passing through the College, to address some more fortunate and envied schoolfellow. I see the benevolent smile, and hear the hurried question, as he accosted some of the numerous happy urchins, who with delighted faces and joyous hearts crowded the low wall—above all, the sounds still ring in my

ears of the heartfelt "Hurrah!" the deafening shout, and earnest "God bless the King!" roared and re-echoed from a host of loyal hearts. I see the beam of pleasure which glanced across the countenance of the venerable Prince, as, gently raising his hat from his head, he heartily returned the compliment, and whilst he uttered a kind "God bless you all!—be good boys—be good boys, and I'll ask for a holiday from the Doctor," he then put his horse into a gallop, and resumed the pleasures of the chase, apparently well pleased with the genuine proof of his infant subjects' love and loyalty. Brave hearts! how many of you since that period have proved the sincerity of your attachment! how many of you since then have whitened with your bones, and irrigated with your blood, the field of honour! how many of you have perished for the glory of your King and Fatherland! Honour and peace to the virtuous ashes of the best of kings, glory to the souls of the heroic dead.

At the end of two or three years, which had been one succession of pleasure, an interruption

took place in the amusements of Herbert, in consequence of his regiment being ordered on foreign service ; an event which was as ardently desired by Herbert, as it was dreaded by Lady Milton.

My readers must pardon me if I take the liberty of not following him on the Continent. Every person is now well acquainted with the gallant deeds of our brave armies : so much has been said and written on the subject of their campaigns, marches, bivouacs, and combats, that it would be both tiresome and presumptuous to render this story a vehicle for panegyric, either on the heroic troops, or eulogium on the mighty chief, who led them from victory to victory, from the shores of the Tagus to the palace of the Capets. It is not my province to encroach upon the privileges of the wide-margined, exceeding military, and rather somniferous quarto of the Knight of St. Anne, or the more agreeable, though not less soldierlike octavo of the author of " Recollections : "—besides there is not a glen, rivulet, village, or petticoat, from the Pillars of Her-

cules to the confines of the Don, which has not been described by some military, clerical, or medical tourist. To attempt a romantic description of battles, shells, positions, dead men, horse *patées*, glory, and frozen fingers, after Monsieur de Segur's terrific melodrame, which congealed the very breath in one's nostrils, or the inimitable retreat from Moscow of Astley, would be as great a proof of rashness and imprudence as that very expedition itself. I shall therefore merely state, that Herbert went through the various campaigns with great credit to himself, performed no particular act of extraordinary valour, because it was difficult for any officer to particularize himself when all were equally brave—escaped even without a wound, and at length returned home on his promotion, once more to take his place amidst the pleasures of fashionable life, and to become himself the willing victim of a conquest, of which he had already sown the seeds before his departure from England.

A few months prior to Herbert Milton's pro-

ceeding with his battalion to join that small but gallant army, which was afterwards destined to plant their victorious banners on the heights of Monmartre, he received orders to proceed to Harwich on the most irksome and painful service on which an officer or man of feeling could be employed. His duty here consisted in superintending with other officers the landing from Walcheren, the immense numbers of sick or rather dying men, whose aguish and emaciated bodies already crowded the hospitals almost to suffocation, or in receiving those who hourly arrived in whole detachments on the quay, from that fatal and accursed swamp, whose pestilential vapours had sent to a premature and unhonoured grave so many hundreds of England's bravest and most chosen soldiers.

Herbert, whose personal courage and disregard for himself had always been conspicuous, had the good fortune to escape infection; and by his kindness and humanity to those who fell, and the little comforts and luxuries which he

procured for those who were lucky enough to overcome the malady, he not only had the mournful satisfaction to receive the last homely blessing of many of the dying, but bound to him for ever the hearts of the survivors.

When these brave fellows rejoined their regiments, they communicated to their comrades, in terms of exaggerated gratitude, the kindness of Captain Milton; his name was handed from one to another until it became familiar to every man in the corps. At a future period, upon service, it was almost a subject of contention amongst these grateful fellows, to see who could be the first to offer to him any little assistance in their power. After the longest and most harassing marches, regardless of their own misery and fatigue, they would eagerly proffer their services to fetch water, hew wood, pitch the tent, or construct the bivouac. When suffering themselves from thirst and hunger, the old and hardy grenadiers, with a toss of the shoulder and a hand thrust into their havresac, would modestly come forward and offer

to "his honour" their last mouthful of biscuit, or the last contents of their canteens. Whilst in the hour of battle the oldest veterans would watch his eye and follow his movements with the docility of children, but the courage of lions. However hazardous the service, however tremendous or unequal the attempt, whether at the foot of the deadly breach, or amidst the hurrah of the deafening and appalling charge, where he led, all were forward; and upon more occasions than one he owed, if not his life, at least his liberty, to the self-devotion of the men, who, upon every occasion of peril, were ready to sacrifice their existence for his safety.

It occurred one day, as Herbert was standing on the beach, watching the arrival of the boats as they conveyed to the shore fresh cargoes of emaciated and ghastly wretches, that his attention was particularly excited by the appearance of a young and beautiful girl, accompanied by an elderly lady and an aged man-servant. There was something so strik-

ing in the graceful form and manner of the younger female, so singular in her continued presence at such a moment, as well as in her remaining a spectator of the melancholy and sickening scene which was passing around them, that Herbert could not avoid feeling some degree of curiosity to ascertain the motives of their remaining on the spot. It was evident, from the deportment of the ladies, that they were strangers; and to judge by their countenances and the agitation of their manner, duty, some painful duty, had drawn them to the shore. Herbert observed that they appeared to watch with deep anxiety the arrival of the boats as they touched the strand; and as the miserable objects were placed on biers or bearers to convey them to the hospitals, the old domestic was despatched by them to examine the uniforms of the attendants, or, if possible, perhaps to gain some information respecting the person for whom it was evident they were awaiting.

“Some poor creatures, most probably,” said

Herbert to a brother officer, "who are expecting the return of a father and a husband from this wretched expedition."

"Some fiddlestick!" replied his companion: "I'll bet you a rouleau, Herbert, that the old one is no more acquainted with the marriage ceremony than Saint Fiacre himself, and that the filly knows as much who her father is as I can guess who will win the Derby."

"I think I never saw so expressive a countenance, retorted Herbert, unmindful of his companion's remark. "Poor creatures! I wish we could be of any service to them."

"Oh! oh!" exclaimed the other, "what *para servir usted*. I'll soon settle that difficulty for you, my boy. Here, come along; I'll introduce you. Why, bless your innocence, I remember them perfectly. Not a word about a maquerade at the Opera House! Do you understand, Herbert?"

"Why my comprehension is not quite so dense," answered Milton, "as not to under-

stand your meaning ; but as your memory and judgment do not always keep pace with your modish assurance, I shall take the liberty of saying, in the first place, that you must be mistaken; and in the next, of querying if you could carry your impudence so far as to go and address two ladies who are evidently highly respectable ?”

“ D—n their respectability !” retorted the officer ; “ so much the better. My maxim is, to use all my endeavours to make all women so ; and, upon my soul, I could never discover any difference between them, whether wife or widow or maid ; they are all alike, all perfect, until you hold them up to the light : and as for that, I do not see why a woman who happens to have half-a-dozen masters should be a bit less respectable than a man who has a dozen mistresses. I do not see what right all the world have to exclaim against a poor girl because Nature gave her a susceptible heart, any more than their cutting a woman because half-a-dozen old prigs in huge wigs

decide that she repented having married her husband and preferred some one else."

"If I thought you were serious, Sidney," replied Herbert, "I should be ashamed of your acquaintance; but, for the sake of contradiction, I believe you would accuse yourself of highway robbery or murder."

"Serious!" rejoined the other; "I never was more so in my life; and, whatever you may think of my modesty, I'll soon put that of the young tit there to the test."

"My dear Sidney," answered his friend, "let me beg of you to consider what you are about. It is evident that the object of the lady's presence here is connected with this dreadful service, and that they are women of distinction, if not of rank: besides, if they were even worse than you suppose, surely this is neither a time nor place to interrupt or insult them; besides, Sidney, you know I can be as obstinate as yourself; and I'll tell you plainly, fair or foul, good or bad, I never yet saw the man who dared to insult with im-

punity a woman in my presence, and so now do as you like, though you will only oblige me to apologize to the ladies for your conduct in the first place, and the next to make good my words with you."

Captain Sidney, who had the greatest regard for Herbert, and, with all his show of profligacy, was a kind-hearted, though a wild and extravagant young man, had as little real intention of annoying the fair strangers, as he had of quarrelling with Herbert, whom, however, he took no small delight in tormenting, and what he called "Orlandoing." Not satisfied with his success in having already excited Herbert, he exclaimed, "Bravo, most perfect and loyal Preux! Why, I verily believe you would not mind breaking a lance with the Knight of Guyenne himself, though the horn hung at his saddle-bow (ominous enough for a married cavalier,) if he dared deny that the loosest of Mrs. Fry's collection from St. Giles's or the Magdalen was not as tight-laced as Titania herself; or that the vilest rogue, who ever

learned the Moulinet from Jack Ketch, was not as virtuous as Socrates!"

"Thank God, Sidney," answered Herbert, "I am not such a disciple of that arch-egotist La Rochefoucault, as you are,—since you choose to make comparisons; nor do I think with Solomon on his throne, or Diogenes in his tub, that a petticoat is but the emblem of frailty, and that all mankind are housebreakers. In fact, I wonder, with such sentiments of mankind in your heart, that you ever move without a constable at your elbow, and a pistol in your pocket. I would sooner fly the world and the sex altogether, and turn hermit!"

"Indeed, I love the world and the sex a great deal too much, to think of abandoning them to such sly sinners as you, Master Herbert. And as for a hermitage! unless indeed some little Angelicas came to keep me company, I should die of the dismal in two hours. Besides, the horrors of roots and the limpid! when I hate even a potatoe, unless it is *à la Maître d'Hôtel*, and always disguise the water for my very teeth

with a little veritable cognac. But, I say, Herbert, if you are surprised at my trusting myself without a police-officer and a pistol, I am equally astonished at your attending our profane parades, without a pocket-bible in your hand, and a field-preacher at your elbow. But look, Herbert! look at her foot! it's a bijou. Oh, I cannot resist any longer." And then quitting Herbert, pulling up his cravat, and arranging his curls with his fingers, and humming the general, he pretended to put into execution his threat of introducing himself to the ladies.

Herbert now, however, laid his hand upon his arm, and said very quietly, "Do you recollect, Sidney, the battles I had at Eton with long Sturton and big Marmaduke?"

"Well do I recollect," replied his companion, stopping short on his march, "the most immortal thrashing you gave those two insufferable bullies!"

"Well, then," answered Herbert, "you may also remember the cause of our quarrel?"

“Oh, oh! I see,” rejoined his companion; “first the fable, then the moral. So, my slayer of giants and protector of unfortunate fair ones! inasmuch as you thought proper to commence your career by throwing your hand as well as your glove in Sturton’s eye, because he ran away in a frolic with little Miss Cob, the old fellow’s daughter, you would put an end to mine for wishing to be the first to introduce you to those ladies; who, by the by, you are dying to speak to yourself.”

“You may put what construction you please upon my motives,” answered Herbert, who began to feel himself a little irritated at the resolution of his comrade, “but I can only warn you that I am not a jot less quixotic than I was at Eton; and I am just as ready now to break heads for any person whom I see defenceless and insulted, as I was at Eton to enter the lists for Betty Cob. However,” added he good-humouredly, “I am a fool for feeling vexed at your nonsense; for, with all

your faults, Harry, I know you have a good heart, and that you are incapable of an ungentlemanly action."

"“ Ah !” as old Tasso says, ‘ *con soave licor porgiamo gli orli del Vaso,*’” answered Sidney. “ Well, well, Herbert, though your talk savours more of the hatchet of war than the calumet of peace ; yet, as I love thee, with all thy morality, passing well, and myself, with all my wickedness, much more, I shall beg to decline having my ill-tempered interior visited by your well-tempered *Solingen*, for the sake of a long-nosed girl, whom to tell you the truth, I ne’er set eyes on before ;—so take up thy glove, brave knight, and give me your valiant hand.”

“ Willingly, my dear Sidney,” answered Herbert. “ You will find I am just as right in my estimation of the character of those two ladies, as I was in my opinion of yourself.”

The friends now approached the landing-place. Sidney continuing to ejaculate, “ Oh,

what a foot! Oh, Herbert, what a *taille svelte*! Hold me fast, or I shall run and throw myself at her feet!"

During the latter part of their conversation, several boats approached the shore, in one of which were seated some soldiers of the — regiment, escorting sick men,—one of whom was evidently an officer. On the arrival of this party, the ladies, who had hitherto remained at some distance from the crowd, now eagerly attempted to approach the beach, and with the assistance of the old servant endeavoured to press through the soldiers, sailors, and boatmen, who were busily employed in their respective duties. Upon addressing themselves to some of the soldiers, whose nature it is not on any occasion to show particular civility, but who were now harassed and engaged in their present service, the ladies received in reply a gruff "I don't know," or a surly "Can't tell;" accompanied with "Come, come, Misses, by your leaf, stand back, we baent here to stop answering questions;" and before the fair strangers could retire, both

were nearly precipitated from the platform of the quay into the sea, by a party of the soldiers who suddenly advanced with a bier. Herbert and Sidney, who had both approached close to the spot, rapidly and providentially sprung forward in time to rescue them.

Herbert, and his companion, who in reality yielded nothing to the former in point of gallantry, apologised to the ladies for the rudeness they had met with, and after rebuking the soldiers for their brutality, proffered their assistance.

“If there is any thing, in which we can be of service to you,” said Herbert, addressing the two trembling females—“if my friend and myself can be of the least use, pray command us.”

“Oh, Sir!” replied the elder lady, “my young companion has been for some hours awaiting the arrival of her father, (Herbert cast a significant glance at Sidney,) who we have ascertained is among the sick. Upon seeing that uniform, we thought that our dear

friend might have been among the unfortunate people now landing."

"Madam," replied Herbert, "if you will have the kindness to retire from this disagreeable spot, and if you will do us the honour to communicate the name of the officer whom you expect, we will immediately make every inquiry, and I have no doubt that in a few minutes we shall be enabled to ascertain all you desire."

With a profusion of thanks from the elder female, and a look of gratitude from the younger lady, whom agitation and terror at her recent alarm had almost rendered speechless, Herbert was informed that the officer was Major Manby of the — regiment.

"Will you permit me, madam," said Herbert, addressing himself to the younger lady, "in the event of the Major not being already landed, which may perhaps be the case, to proceed on board the transports? and should we find him embarked in any one of those now at

anchor, I shall be most happy in tendering the assistance of myself and companion to convey him to you."

"Indeed, Sir," rejoined Miss Manby, "I feel ashamed at the idea of intruding upon your kindness; but my suspense is so dreadful, my anxiety to receive some intelligence of my poor father so agonizing, that I cannot hesitate in accepting your obliging offer."

"Come, Sidney," exclaimed Herbert, "will you call one of our sergeants to attend the ladies, whilst I run down to order a boat; and if you, Miss Manby, will await our return, in less than half an hour you shall receive every information you can desire."

Sidney, who felt little inclination to separate himself from the beautiful stranger, to whom accident had introduced him, as he said, in despite of Herbert, was now reluctantly obliged to follow his friend. In a moment, an orderly sergeant was desired to attend the ladies, and in another the two officers were on the water.

Having visited several transports, they at last discovered that on which Major Manby was aboard.

On going below, they found the object of their search, reduced by fever and exhaustion almost to a state of insensibility, his malady having been aggravated by the effects of the voyage, the impure air of the vessel, the want of comforts, and the noise and confusion incidental to that most miserable invention,—a transport.

Upon consulting the medical officer as to the expediency of removing the sufferer immediately, Herbert was told that it signified little whether the Major remained where he was, or whether he was conveyed into the town, there being little probability of his ultimate recovery. Upon finding, however, that the officer's removal, though it might not retard, could not, at all events, accelerate the sad event, Herbert, with the assistance of his friend, directed the poor Major to be carried on deck, in his bed, and then, seeing him

carefully lowered into the boat, proceeded to shore with his dying charge.

As they rowed towards the landing-place, Sidney endeavoured to obtain some information of the soldiers in attendance upon Major Manby, both respecting him and the ladies on shore; but the men said, they knew nothing about either,—they had only been two or three days acting as nurses to “his honour,” whose servant, having caught the fever, had died before they entered the harbour.

No sooner did Miss Manby perceive the return of the two officers, and discover by the signs which Herbert made, that her father was under his charge, than she rushed to the water's edge, and, regardless of the surrounding spectators, threw herself in a state of frantic grief upon the bearer, on which Herbert had placed the almost inanimate body of the Major. At the sound of his daughter's voice, roused by the loud exclamations of “My father! my dear father!” which the sobbing girl wildly screamed out, the poor

man, who had hitherto appeared unconscious of every thing which was passing around him, now opened his glazing eyes, and making an effort to speak, though the words almost died upon his lips, faintly articulated, "My poor child!" and then feebly clasping his daughter in his arms, sunk back, to all appearance dead, upon the shoulder of Herbert. At the sight of this hasty but melancholy scene, even the gay Sidney could hardly repress his tears; whilst Herbert, who was extremely affected, could scarcely raise his eyes from the ground, to ascertain if indeed the poor officer was no more.

Partly from the acuteness of his own feelings, partly from delicacy to those of the beautiful being who lay before him in a state of complete insensibility, Herbert continued for some moments perfectly silent, until he was warned to proceed by the cries of the naval officers, who were superintending the disembarkation, and who ordered the party which was obstructing the passage, to clear the way. Directing the men to proceed with the bearer,

on which lay the body of both father and child, and calling to some of his own regiment to keep back the crowd which had collected around them, Herbert continued to advance some distance with his charge, without considering or thinking where they were to be conveyed. A moment's reflection was however sufficient. "Sidney, my good fellow," said he, "the Major breathes; it is evident that he has only swooned from exhaustion; shall we give up our lodgings and convey him there?"

"How unnecessary to ask such a question," replied his friend; "of course. Forward, men, to Captain Milton's quarter."

By this time, from the efforts of the elder lady, and by the assistance of some bystanders, Miss Manby had recovered from her swoon; and as soon as she was able to comprehend that her father was still alive, Herbert ventured to propose to her the plan he adopted of conveying the Major to his own lodging.

"Oh, Sir," replied the poor girl, "we can-

not think of becoming such an inconvenience to you. We have already engaged apartments at the inn, therefore pray give directions for my father's conveyance there."

After pointing out to Miss Manby and her friend the inconvenience attending such an arrangement, the former consented to his proposal with the most grateful expressions of her feelings for his kindness.

"If you will permit me, madam," said Herbert, "I will hasten to the house; and by the time you arrive, every thing shall be prepared for your father's reception; in the meantime, I will despatch an orderly for our own medical officer, whose well-known skill and ability you may rely on: and will you, Sidney, have the kindness to go to the inn to order Miss Manby's rooms to be prepared for us, and direct the luggage of these ladies to be carried to our lodging."

There was a delicacy in the latter part of Herbert's directions which was not lost upon Miss Manby; and if a look of the most

expressive gratitude from the most beautiful eyes in the world could repay a man for an act of kindness, Herbert had no cause to be dissatisfied; and in the course of an hour the poor patient was comfortably installed in Herbert's lodgings, and by the assistance of the physician was so much restored, as to be enabled to address a few words to his daughter.

After ordering that every possible comfort and luxury which could be procured, should be carried to the Major's lodgings, and requesting that he might be sent for at any moment, if assistance of any kind was required, Herbert and his friend returned to the inn to discuss the events of the morning; where I must for the present leave them, whilst I narrate the events which brought the unfortunate Major before my readers—circumstances so intimately connected with the events of Herbert's life, that I must for a time request their patience, whilst I recount the adventures of the father and his child.

CHAPTER III.

MAJOR MANBY, who was now in his fifty-fifth year, had been a gentleman of moderate but independent fortune, and claimed connexion with several distinguished and wealthy families. He had been originally educated for the bar; had gone through all the brain-teazing squares, cubes, and rhomboids of collegiate instruction; he had waded through all the drudgery of chamber-study in the Temple, and pored over Coke, Littleton, Blackstone, and all the other mighty worthies of the Robe, until his face, by dint of intense study and reading, assumed the hue of a blank sheet of parchment, and his eyes became as red and bloodshot as the Sunday letters in Moore's Al-

manack. After passing his days in attending behind the bar, to the never-ending, incomprehensible chicaneries of that frightful Charybdis of time, fortune, and health, the Court of Chancery. After licking his lips at the silk gowns of the senior counsel, and spending his nights in digesting reports, and his moderate allowance in following briefless circuits, he discovered that he had neither taste or inclination for the dry theories of his profession, nor sufficient assurance, or too much modesty for the practice of them. By the death of his father, which occurred about this period, Mr. Manby came into possession of a sum of money, the amount of which was precisely the most dangerous portion which can possibly be bequeathed to a young man; especially one who requires no inducement to abandon a profession, whatever be his calling, for which he feels distaste or aversion;—I allude to that very unsatisfactory ten or twelve thousand pounds, on the one hand too much, on the other too little, but which many a young be-

ginner in the world has considered quite sufficient provision for his future life, and with which he flatters himself he can enjoy all the good things of this world, without the necessity or drudgery of either reading, writing, pleading, preaching, or fighting for his subsistence. No sooner, therefore, had Mr. Manby, who was precisely of this opinion, received the intelligence of the event which placed at his disposal the moderate income of about five hundred a year, than he gave way at once to the invincible dislike he had formed for his profession, and in despite of the advice of his friends, who urged him to continue at the bar, resigned all future pretensions to the seat of his Honour the Vice, or to the more splendid and still more toilsome grandeur of the woolsack. Abandoning his dull chambers in Garden-court, Temple, he took leave of Lincoln's Inn, tore in a thousand fragments the almanack on which Terms were marked with long and broad black lines, tossed his gown into the porter's face, and then making a bonfire of his wig, which he had

christened "*Ulema Pacha*," he bade adieu to law, lawyers, clerks, briefs, and returns, and wishing them all at the devil, sallied forth to enjoy himself in all the fancied anticipation of pleasure and independence.

A few years were consumed by the *ci-devant* barrister, partly in travelling, partly in the most consummate enjoyment of the *dolce far niente*, during which, in fits of ennui, (ennui, inevitable persecutor of every individual who has neither pursuit, occupation, or profession, let his station in life be what it may,) he had wished himself back at his chambers in the Temple, at least an hundred times. During this period the *beau-ideal* of domestic happiness had more than once crossed his imagination: the enchanting dream of being united to a lovely and amiable wife, the father of two or three pretty children, the master of a capital establishment, and if a good cook and good shooting be added, of course the fortunate possessor of many dear friends, had often deceived his nightly slumbers—but he awoke, alas! to the conviction that five hundred

a year was not likely to be the medium of procuring him the last mentioned ingredients of happiness, though he might easily procure himself the former portion of the composition, and find his small fortune divided at his death among a dozen children, in portions about as small and unprofitable as minced veal. Chance, however, was about to befriend him in a manner he had no reason to anticipate. Being invited to a party at the house of a friend in the country, he there met with the sister of an eminent and wealthy merchant, who had not long arrived from the Continent, whither she had been sent for the purpose of completing her education in a convent; where, in defiance of all the persecutions, threats, inducements, and humbug which were levelled against her, she continued firm to her religious sentiments, and considerably disappointed more than one pious individual, by her determination to return to England as soon as she attained her majority.

This epoch was arrived, and as, in addition to considerable personal charms, great accomplish-

ments, and most engaging manners, she was mistress of fifty thousand pounds, it is natural to suppose that she had already become a matter of speculation to more than one city beau, though hitherto without any success on their part. 'The idea of an advantageous marriage now for the first time seriously struck Mr. Manby; it was the first time, that is to say, with his eyes wide open, and his senses perfectly awake, that he thought it possible to realize the fond object of his dreams. For a day or two, (during which he lost no opportunity of making himself agreeable to the fair citizen,) he turned his projects over in his brain, and at last communicated them to his friend, who not only approved of his design, but promised every possible assistance.

“ She is going to remain with us a month, Edward,” said his host, “ and I see no reason for your leaving us before that time; and if thirty days are not sufficient for you to carry your plan into execution, a year, my good friend, will be of no service to you. God bless you !

Why I saw Lady Anne for the first time at the beginning of one Almack's subscription, and before the third ticket was presented, we were regularly affianced. It was like having our banns called three times to little Colinet's best set of waltzes, instead of being given out between the prayers and sermon in the church."

"Yes, Dropmore," replied Mr. Manby, "and with all due honour and respect for your person, I suppose if you neither had asked or been "asked," you might have thrown the handkerchief and been snapped up in less time than it takes to play an overture; for *you* had twenty thousand a year, and Lady Anne was the youngest daughter of a poor nobleman."

"Come Manby," rejoined his friend, "you are rather severe upon my merits; but the fact is, *you* are right. I saw myself hunted like a wild beast by half a score of speculating mothers, and as Lady Anne's mamma bored me less than any other, why I married her to protect me from farther plague, and a very happy fellow I am; and may you be as fortu-

nate: *J'ai tiré le Gros Lot*, and should recommend all my friends to follow my example. A short courtship gives one more time and subject for conversation after marriage, than exhausting all one's topics of small-talk beforehand."

"But joking apart, Dropmore, I think Miss Brixton is a most delightful girl!"

"And I assure you that you think her fortune will amply repay you for the loss of a silk gown," retorted Mr. Dropmore; "well, all I can say, my friend, is that I wish you '*Glück zú,*' and it shall not be my fault if you do not succeed."

He had soon the happiness of making a very sensible impression on the heart of the fair and amiable object of his views. In due time these first tender impressions gradually ripened into a more serious and durable attachment; and, as Miss Brixton's sentiments increased in full proportion to her admirer's attentions, his first proposal, which was fairly and honourably made through Lady Anne Dropmore, was accepted with equal candour and satisfaction by the

young lady. In the course of a few weeks, and in despite of the obstacles thrown in their way by her brother, as it appeared afterwards from the worst motives, Miss Brixton continued as firm in her resolve, as she had previously been stedfast to her religion, and placed her fortune and the destinies of her future life at the disposal of her lover.

Four or five years were passed by Mr. Manby and his charming wife, who had borne him one son, in the realization of all that domestic happiness and conjugal felicity which had formed the *beau-ideal* of his former thoughts and hopes. In possession of a moderate yet respectable income, which permitted him to enjoy all the comforts and most of the luxuries of life, and above all, to indulge himself in constantly receiving at his house the society of agreeable and well-informed friends, the greatest of all pleasures to a man of rational mind. Beloved by the neighbouring nobility and gentry, whose residences were contiguous to the beautiful village which he had chosen as his abode in

the country, respected by the middling classes, the idol of his own establishment, and adored by the poor, who were the certain objects of his unostentatious benevolence, he felt that he had not a wish or thought ungratified. But these halcyon days were unfortunately not destined to be of long duration, for a series of calamities following in quick succession, first deprived him by an afflicting accident of his only child, and afterward of the greater portion of his property, owing to the failure of Mrs. Manby's brother, in whose extensive mercantile concern it had been suffered to remain; events which compelled him to reduce his establishment, and to remove to a more secluded situation.

Scarcely had Mr. and Mrs. Manby established themselves in their economical retirement, when a letter from their amiable and attached friend, Lord Lyvington, conveyed to Mr. Manby, in the kindest and most flattering manner, the offer of a situation of considerable trust and emolument at one of our Presidencies

in the East. This they could not, under their present circumstances, long hesitate in accepting; and being furnished with letters of introduction to many distinguished individuals, and among others, to Sir Herbert, from Lady Milton, in less than six months they had bade adieu to the white cliffs of their "Fatherland," and with prosperous winds were advancing towards the place of their future abode.

Little occurred to interrupt the monotony of their voyage, until one morning the captain was aroused by the lieutenant of the watch announcing a distant sail, which, on nearing, proved to be a boat containing part of the crew of an Indiaman, who had escaped from the vessel soon after it had taken fire, and whose miserable condition was increased in interest, by the discovery of its containing a female infant, which had been almost miraculously preserved by the humane attention of a sailor, who yet survived to relate its story.

Every assistance was immediately afforded to the almost exhausted sufferers, and Mrs. Man-

by, whose maternal feelings were strongly excited towards the helpless infant, instantly took charge of it, observing, from the remains of its dress, which had evidently been of the most costly kind, as well as from a gold locket bearing the initials E. M., that it must have belonged to wealthy parents; she was happy to gather from the narrative given by the sailor to the captain, the following account of its rescue.

He stated, that as one of the Indiaman's boats, with the passengers on board, had overturned, he and his companions rowed to the spot, but from the distance they were at, and from the sea running so high, they had only been able to save a few of the poor creatures. He added, "Your honour, the black woman who seemed to have charge of the child, remained waterlogged from the moment we hauled her aboard, and slipped her cable the first night; and as the little craft was adrift, I thought I'd try and take her in tow myself, seeing as how as her convoy had parted com-

pany. So I rolled her up, your honour, in my watch-coat, and covering her with a piece of sail-cloth, stowed her snugly away in a small empty cask, what happened to be hove aboard. Well, your honour, there I kept her afloat, by wetting bits of biscuit in the water what I squeezed from a blanket, and by giving her every now and then a fleabite of grog. Then d'ye see, your honour, as my shipmates were capsized, why I took a part of their rigging before they were thrown overboard, until I laid in sufficient stock to caulk my little messmate till her seams were as tight as your honour's ship."

In this manner the brave fellow had prolonged the child's existence, and indeed appeared so attached to it, that it required all the influence of the captain to induce him to renounce his claim. "Well," said he, after twitching up his trowsers with his elbows, turning the quid in his cheek, which protruded like a camel's haunch, and twisting the remnant of an old cloth hat in his hand, "since your honour be'ant pleased to give judgment in favour of

the salvors, mayhap, if I may be so bold, you won't have no objection to give me a birth aboard the frigate, and make me your honour's coxswain, if so be as there 's a vacancy, by way of double head-money."

"Double head-money!" replied the captain; "what do you mean by that, my good fellow?"

"Why," retorted the seaman, with a knowing leer of his eye, "mayhap, your honour don't remember one Bob Painter, what stowed your honour under his hatches, when you got a shot in your bows, and the Dons had laid open your bulwarks, and were carrying you off a prize, the night when the boats of the little 'Wiper' cut out the Spanish frigates from under the batteries in Wigo harbour. But, splice me! how should your honour have a thought upon such an old weather-beaten hulk as I am, when you was but a bit of a swab of a reefer then! Howsomever," added the brave tar, jirking up his shoulders, and giving a sort of mechanical clinch to his broad brawny hands, "you sarved it out like the boatswain himself;

and who was it but your honour and I what cleared the Don's fore-castle, afore they could chop quids?"

The captain, who had stared with a mixture of surprise and pleasure at this curious discovery of his old shipmate and preserver, was about to reply, when the old sailor again broke out with—"Oh! your honour, you may indeed look all no-how, for after twenty years' sarvice, and my last three weeks' voyage, why I arn't no more like Bob Painter what was boatswain's mate in the 'Wiper,' nor a d—d French Mounseer's like a British man o' war's man."

The captain, who indeed was thunder-struck at the extraordinary providence which had, in a certain measure, rendered him the saviour of his former preserver, was not backward in recognizing poor Bob, and with great kindness shaking him by the hand, made the brave fellow happy by acceding to his humble petition. The condescension of the comman-

der had the effect of bringing the tears into the hardy seaman's weather-worn cheeks; however, as soon as he recovered his momentary emotion, he said, "Well, I always thought your honour would pay off my reck'ning some day or other; I only saved your honour from a taste of the d—d Spanish bilboes, and now you have saved me from being grub for the sharks. It is my turn now; and, please God as we meet with an opportunity, though I arn't had no practice since I've been swabbing in the merchant's service, like a lubber as I was, your honour shall see that old Bob arn't forgot how to lead on the boarders."

On arriving in India, and taking possession of his office, Mr. Manby endeavoured by every possible means to discover some intelligence respecting the relatives of the infant, to the care of which Mrs. Manby had so kindly devoted herself, but in vain; nor could they obtain the slightest information tending in any way to interfere with their final determination of re-

garding her as their own fondly cherished and adopted child, under the name of Emily Manby.

Having delivered their introductory letters, Mr. and Mrs. Manby were delighted to receive from Sir Herbert Milton the most decided proofs of attachment and regard ; and continuing for several years in the honourable discharge of his official duties, Mr. Manby had at length the gratification of finding himself in a situation of comparative opulence, and in the enjoyment of the most pleasing prospects, until a circumstance occurred, the consequences of which proved most painful and disastrous.

Mr. Manby's office requiring the aid of numerous assistants, it became necessary to commit the different receipts to the care of several persons, Mr. Manby, however, reserving to his own custody the coffers containing the largest sums. It was in these, precisely, that a large deficit was discovered, and as no one but Mr. Manby had access to them, a suspicion of the most dreadful kind, in which his superior, Sir

Herbert Milton, appeared but too readily to join, fell on Mr. Manby. This was a stroke almost too heavy to be endured, either by Mr. or Mrs. Manby, and in fact, the latter sunk under it, having died from a fever produced by her agitated feelings, a short time after.

Torn by a grief too violent to be controlled, Mr. Manby referred his case to the Board of Directors, and took his passage, with his adopted child, who had now reached her eighth year, for England; where he had scarcely arrived and commenced his statements, when dispatches were received, announcing the real delinquents having, unable to bear the recollection of the misery he had occasioned, confessed his guilt, and with his own hand terminated his existence.

During, however, the investigation of Mr. Manby's case at the India House, some overzealous and most intemperate friends amongst the proprietors, persuaded him to address a statement of his case to the Court. This statement contained, amongst other things, a

violent diatribe against Sir Herbert Milton, and even hinted that the Baronet himself was in some measure connected with the robbery, and that he had suddenly ordered an inspection of the treasure, merely with a view of fixing upon a victim, already marked out by him for destruction, and upon whom the culpability must rest, without the chance of his being able to defend himself.

Smarting under all the bitterness of his situation, conscious of his innocence, and almost maddened by his sufferings, in an evil moment Mr. Manby's good sense and moderation forsook him. Yielding to the pernicious advice of his injudicious supporters, he acquiesced in their intemperate proposal; and a memorial of his case was made public. This highly-improper composition was known to have proceeded from the pen, not of Mr. Manby, but of a proprietor, whose violence and intemperance were proverbial, not alone at the meetings of the General Courts, but alike in commercial, political, and private life;

and who had already induced other individuals, whose real or supposed grievances brought them in contact with the Directors, to adopt measures equally reprehensible, and generally more fatal to themselves.

Sir Herbert Milton, of course, received a copy of this Memorial, which, with a dignity becoming his rank and character, he treated with contempt, nor did he condescend to make an answer. But whatever might have been his previous grounds for coolness towards Mr. Manby, Sir Herbert's hatred to his very name now became irreconcilable, and ended but with his death.

Mr. Manby was not the only person who regretted having listened to the advice of evil counsellors ; but it was now too late to repent : and as the public at home were pretty well acquainted with the source from whence arose the improper remarks on Sir Herbert, Mr. Manby also hoped that the Baronet would eventually make allowances for his peculiar and existing situation.

Determining to devote the remainder of his existence and fortune to the care and education of his adopted child, Mr. Manby accepted the offer made to him by the Court of Directors, of retiring upon a pension, as the idea of returning to India, although triumphant, was now too painful for his feelings.

It was Mr. Manby's desire, in the event of his meeting with a person who united all the different qualities which he considered requisite for a governess, that she should be regarded as not alone the instructress, but the friend and companion of Emily. He considered, that the best plan to render the governess respectable in the eyes of the pupil, was, that she should be treated with every degree of deference by himself and his household ; and, that there could be no better method of attaching the governess to the pupil, than by rendering the position of the former as happy as possible, and by behaving to her himself with the greatest kindness and urbanity. At the houses of many of his friends,

he had frequently been much hurt at seeing the manner in which ladies in this temper-trying situation were treated. After being confined all day to that horrid den of fools'-caps, tears, sulks, Logier's systems, back-boards, and dumb-bells, called "the school-room," subject, not alone to the densities, ill-humour, and caprices of three or four misses, but to the contradiction and eternal interference of mammas; after having devoured an uncomfortable meal at one o'clock with the children, amidst kicks, screams, boiled mutton, toast-and-water, and other proofs, both of fraternal love and parental frugality; after drinking weak bohea at six with the same horde of infantine Cossacks, the poor woman generally retires to her bed, worn out and exhausted, with the pleasing prospect (*par dessus le marché*) of recommencing the same process on the following day. Sometimes, indeed, the mistress of the mansion would, after dinner, send up to Mademoiselle, or Miss, saying she might come down to tea; an invitation, by-the-

by, not to be disobeyed. Upon the appearance of the victim, (who, if ill-dressed, was told she really might make herself decent; and if decent, was sure to be rebuked for dressing as if she were going to a ball,) she was generally received by the lady with cold, formal, and haughty civility; and by the master, disturbed at his whist, with a "Pray, Miss What-d'ye-call-'em, do not make such a noise." The unfortunate creature then usually slunk into some cold corner, where, without being farther noticed, she took up a book, or sat shivering without daring to speak a word, unless, perhaps, she ventured an occasional whisper to one of her élèves. At her entrance no one rises, no one offers a chair, nor does a single man remove his back from the fire, or quit the comfortable "elbow" by the chimney-side, as if the poor woman were a Russian settler, habituated to twelve degrees below zero, and as little accustomed to a chair as Ibrahim Pacha himself.

The plan pursued by Mr. Manby had the

happiest results. The regard of both governess and pupil for each other became mutual. The confidence of the former in Emily was equal to her affection, whilst the regard of the latter by degrees ripened into the sentiments of a child for a beloved parent. Nor was it less gratifying to Mr. Manby to see that the progress Emily made under her respectable instructress, promised in due time to render her talents and accomplishments, and above all the purity and rectitude of her mind, not inferior to the graces and beauty of her person.

It was about this period that Mr. Manby received a note one morning from his bankers, requesting he would do them the favour of calling at their house at his earliest convenience, as they had business of importance to communicate. He had been the victim of so many misfortunes, his nerves had received such repeated shocks, that he was again fearful of some new disaster, therefore he attended the summons of his friends almost in trembling. Upon his arrival, his surprise and curiosity

were excited to the utmost degree; one of the partners of the house placing before him a letter received that morning, which contained ten thousand pounds.

The anonymous and munificent writer of the letter, directed that this sum should be immediately vested in the funds in the name of two trustees, for the whole and sole use of the child called Emily Manby, to be paid to her upon her attaining her twenty-first year; and in the event of her demise before that period, the above sum was to be presented to the guardians of the Orphan Asylum, for the benefit of that Society. A third of the interest of this sum was directed to be paid by half-yearly instalments to Mr. Manby, for the purpose of the child's education. The writer farther entreated two of the partners to take upon themselves the office of trustees, and entreated them to see the wishes of the donor strictly carried into effect. The letter ended by saying that all attempts at discovery would be fruitless, that the writer being rich and child-

less, he had chosen to please himself in the disposal of this sum. The hand-writing of this letter was unknown to every one in the house ; and although every effort was employed for the purpose of detecting the writer, no clue whatever could be obtained.

This munificent addition to the fortune which it would eventually be in Mr. Manby's power to bequeath to Emily, relieved his mind from much of his future anxiety respecting her, as, in despite of any misfortune which might still befall him, she would be not only independent, but comparatively rich. For a time he had imagined that his friend Dropmore, or the Earl, might have been the writer of the letter, and the kind benefactor of his adopted child ; but both Lord Lymington and Mr. Dropmore solemnly and positively denied all connexion with it.

Lord Lymington, the friend to whom Mr. Manby was indebted for his appointment in India, had not diminished his kindness to him on his return, nor for one moment doubted

his perfect innocence of the disgraceful charge brought against him. Indeed, such was the high opinion and esteem of that worthy nobleman for his friend, that he not only consulted his opinion on many important political subjects, but farther proposed to bring him into Parliament, and to insure him an official situation in one of the ministerial departments at home. These offers were, however, declined by Mr. Manby, though at the same time he was obliged to yield upon another point, which came almost as a command from the highest source.

His Majesty, who had heard, through the medium of Lord Lymington, Mr. Manby's history, graciously expressed his intention of promoting him, in the event of his exchanging on full pay. The exchange was soon effected, and in the course of a few weeks Captain Manby found himself gazetted to a Majority in the — Regiment, from which, however, he obtained six months' leave of absence. It was hinted to him, at the same time,

by his noble patron, that if he served a few months with the corps, at the expiration of that period he would be farther promoted, and then, having obtained the rank of lieutenant-colonel, he might again retire on half-pay. It had been his determination to take this latter step at all events, as he felt most unwilling to be separated from Emily, and had moreover, at his age, not the slightest relish for the vicissitudes and wanderings of a soldier's life.

Emily had now attained her seventeenth year, and was about to make her appearance in the world, under the auspices of Lady Lymington, and her sister, Lady Anne Dropmore. Lady Lymington, not less attached to the Manby's than the Earl himself, had kindly undertaken to present Emily at Court, and to act as her *chaperon* in the gay world. The reception Emily met with on her presentation to their Majesties, was sufficient to have turned the head of a less modest and sensible girl.

Her happiness was now complete, and it re-

mained uninterrupted, until Major Manby announced that he was about to quit her for a short period, his regiment being ordered to join the grand expedition then forming for a descent in the Scheldt. An order for every officer to join his regiment forthwith, obliged Major Manby to make his immediate preparations for hastening to his corps; and, however reluctant he might have been to quit England, of course at such a moment his honour forbade all idea of his retiring on half-pay, at least for the present.

The intended expedition, which was composed of the *elite* of the British army, promised the most glorious and speedy results to the arms of his country. Flattering himself with the hope of sharing in the glory, which not he alone, but all England, had anticipated from this magnificent armament, he bade adieu with cheerfulness to his darling Emily. How fatally, alas! were his hopes, as well as those of his country, in a short period wrecked and annihilated. The disgraceful and unhappy

results of that expedition are known, too well known! to the world. It remains only to say, that ere the Major had been three weeks amongst the Flemish Polders, he was attacked by the dreadful fever of the country. A slight convalescence was followed by a more severe relapse; and, as the only prospect of saving his life, he was ordered to be embarked for England. Intelligence of his illness, and of his intended return, had been forwarded to his foster child, who arrived at Harwich, accompanied by her friend and governess, Mrs. Walden, and a faithful servant, on the evening prior to that on which she had been first seen by Herbert and his friend.

CHAPTER IV.

WITHOUT farther apology for the length to which the foregoing episode has been extended, I shall now return to Herbert, whom we left with his friend Sidney, enjoying the delight which always arises from the performance of a good action. Herbert received a message from his medical friend, informing him that the Major had passed an extremely restless night; that the fever had returned with redoubled violence; and that the symptoms were of such an unfavourable nature as to preclude all possibility of the patient's recovery, which distressing intelligence it now

became Herbert's painful duty to communicate.

On receiving this afflicting intimation, for which Mrs. Walden was in part prepared by her own painful fears, she informed Herbert, that during the night Major Manby had repeatedly spoken of his kindness and attention, in terms of the utmost gratitude; and that, although his name, when he had discovered it, naturally affected him——

Here she was interrupted by Herbert, who exclaimed, "My name! Good God! Can it be possible? Is this the Major Manby of whose misfortunes I have heard so much, and whose enmity to my father was so openly declared?"

"The same, Sir," answered Mrs. Walden, who had imbibed all the prejudices of her friend; "the same, and it is thus that Providence has thrown you, Sir, in the path of the man who was so unjustly persecuted by your father, that you might in some measure

atone, by your humane conduct, for the injuries Major Manby sustained at his hands. It is, perhaps, ordained by the Almighty, that the last moments of the persecuted shall be soothed and consoled by the tears of the persecutor's only child; and Heaven forbid! Captain Milton, that your humanity should draw upon you the vengeance of your father!"

"Madam," replied Herbert, hurt at the insinuations against his parent, "whatever might have been the reasons for my father's enmity to Major Manby, of which even my mother is utterly ignorant, you do him the utmost injustice in supposing that he would rejoice in the sorrow of an enemy. Sir Herbert Milton, madam, may have been a severe judge, but his justice, his generosity, and honour, never have been questioned."

"Forgive me, Captain Milton," replied Mrs. Walden, "forgive me if the warmth of my regard, and my remembrance of Major Manby's sufferings, should for an instant have induced me to utter a single syllable which could

hurt your feelings. Oh, believe me, Sir, we all feel, deeply feel, your unparalleled kindness." And Mrs. Walden concluded by requesting him to communicate to Major Manby the painful intelligence, to which he immediately consented.

On entering his apartment, Herbert found Major Manby in a state of extreme exhaustion, apparently awaiting, with calm resignation, the period of his approaching dissolution. Seeing, however, Herbert, he made a last effort to express his gratitude for the kindness he had shown him, and to inform him of his having left to his beloved Emily whatever he possessed; adding, as he took a ring from his own finger, which he placed on Herbert's, his earnest request that he would convey to Sir Herbert his entire forgiveness for all the misery he had occasioned him.

Before the close of the evening, Major Manby had ceased to breathe; and when the first bursts of grief on the part of Emily and Mrs Walden had in some degree subsided, arrange-

ments were made, with the aid of Major Manby's solicitor, for the funeral, which was performed with military honours, the solemnity of which made a deep impression on the sensitive feelings of the afflicted Miss Manby.

After having assisted in the discharge of these last duties towards the remains of Major Manby, Herbert felt little inclination to enjoy the pleasures of a large dinner, to which Sidney and himself had been invited by the officers of the Legion in garrison at Harwich. Herbert begged his friend to make his excuses to the mess, on the plea of illness. "Illness! By George! Herbert, that won't do;" said Sidney: "what '*dores do Coracao*,' as the Valerosos have it. They'll smoke you, to a certainty, Berty; but never mind—though, of course, I comprehend—I'll swear, if you like, not only that you are ill, but that you are as dead as the Major, and as all the Capulets into the bargain. But, I say, Herbert, you are going to work betimes! What, not give her

a moment to tie up her hair, and put on a little rouge?"

"I really do not understand what you are aiming at, Sidney," replied Herbert; "but, if you allude to Miss Manby, I shall merely observe that your jest is excessively out of season; so good bye to you."

Herbert had already reached the door, when his comrade, whose *sang-froid* was imperturbable, and whose greatest delight was in tormenting his friend, again attacked him, with "Come, Herbert, I say, don't be angry. Surely, you'll agree with me in one thing,—she's a devilish fine girl. Somewhat grenadierish; but, on my word! I never saw a back more prettily *cumbré*, nor a head better set on a fine pair of shoulders: that is to say, from the glance I got of it when the hood fell off, by accident, of course. *Ay, que Donayre!*"

"Well," answered Herbert, "and what should induce you to imagine that it was not accidental, since you lay a stress on the word?"

“Doubt, my good fellow!” rejoined the other, “I never doubt in such cases. I am too good a Christian to think that events ever occur by haphazard, in this world, — but I say, old man, do not frown so grimly, and look so dismal! Why, Herbert, you only want a label to make you twin-brother to a black dose.”

“For God’s sake! my dear Sidney,” answered Herbert, do not let loose that tongue of your’s, which requires no laxative to ridicule every soul you meet; friend or foe, it matters not which. You make a mockery of every action, every sentiment, which is not in perfect accordance with your ideas of fashion. If Lady Dossington, or Lady Alderney, or any of your patterns, as you call them, had been in Miss Manby’s place, you would have been on your knees, and prayed more audibly than the clerk.”

“Amen,” was the only reply Sidney made to this remark.

“And so say I,” continued Herbert; “but as

you never felt sorrow yourself, how can you judge of it in others?"

"Begging your pardon," retorted Sidney, "I am an admirable judge of grief and loss; for when Featherby and I were floored at the Leger, I lost 3000*l.*, and he his wits into the bargain, and I assure you our hearts and our banks were nearly breaking together; but, joking aside, Herbert, for I am going to be very serious"——.

"If you intend being reasonable," answered Herbert, "I will remain; if not, I must leave you, for at present I do not feel disposed to merriment; yet, to see you for a moment without a jest on your tongue, a sneer on your lips, is something so unusual, that it is worth staying for."

"Well, then, most grave Signor," retorted his incorrigible comrade, "I'll tell you fairly: that my opinion of Miss Manby would have been more in unison with your own, had she not made such an exhibition of her sorrow: there was something, you must allow, which

looked, merely looked, like affectation in her display."

"Affectation!" answered Herbert; "I could see nothing affected in the natural and heart-breaking grief which the poor girl showed at the loss of her unfortunate parent."

"Come, come, Herbert," rejoined his friend, "confess that there was a small *souçon* which savoured of theatrical exhibition; it put me in mind of the death-scene in a melodrame. Little Miss Kelly would have given her head and shoulders for the scene of the hood."

"What right," retorted Herbert, "have you to judge Miss Manby's conduct, in a manner that, were there any foundation for it, would render her more than despicable? How can you, Sidney, who care for no human being but yourself, and never felt any sorrow or annoyance, except at the loss of a race or a heavy stake at Macao; how can you pretend to enter into the feelings of a child, deprived for ever of the only being in existence in whom were centered all her joys and hopes in this world?"

“ Which you intend she shall transfer to you, eh ?” observed Sidney, “ but you are right, most reverend father, in one thing. I have had small practice, thank God ! in proceedings of this nature, having been saved the trouble of all these sorrows ; inasmuch as my father died ere I was able to walk, and my mother followed his example before I could speak, leaving me sole heir to whatever timber little Reuben and the rest of his tribe still permit to flourish on the family acres ; and as I was the only one of ‘ that ilk,’ and consequently horridly spoiled by my aunt, and allowed to run riot by my guardians, you must make some allowance for my ignorance in all such lachrymatory matters, and attribute it to the want of a proper field to exercise upon.”

“ Since you have no feelings yourself, which, I do not believe, Sidney,” replied Herbert, “ it is no excuse for your accusing all the rest of mankind with affectation, because they happen to shed a few tears, or evince that natural grief to which your heart has ever been a stranger.”

“ For the matter of that, Berty,” answered

his companion, I care not who weeps, providing I may laugh. *Ægritudinem laudare*, as my jolly old tutor used to say, is but slow work; but seriously, I think we manage these things better in London. You know, no decent creatures could think of exposing themselves in that sort of way: conceive the horror of being seen paddling up St. James's Street, *au beau milieu* of all Mr. M'Adam's mud *purées*, with a long black cloak, red eyes, and a white pocket-handkerchief, blubbering like a lower schoolboy, on being fagged at cricket. You can't do it, my good fellow, without becoming an absolute Paria; you would be blackballed at every club in town, or get the name of the Sentimental Undertaker, or Dismal Dandy, or Black Job, or some such never-dying nickname. It's all very fine moralizing, my respectable proser; but one cannot live in the world and fly against custom and fashion."

"Fashion!" rejoined Herbert: "thank God! I am not one of those, who, in despite of every tie, in defiance of common decency, will ever

render myself a slave to fashion or custom—a custom, above all, which bids one almost consign the last moments of the death-bed to an act of cowardice and desertion, or a fashion which directs one to fly from the still-warm body of one's friends or parents, whilst yet the falling lip, the distended jaw, and glassy eye, are still quivering in the grasp of death; and ere yet the once active limbs and fond arms which have so often pressed you in tenderness to their hearts, are enchained and fixed for ever in the marble stiffness of eternity; a custom," continued Herbert, "which bids one yield unto mercenary hands the performance of those sacred duties, which are dear even to the bosom of the untutored savage!"

Sidney, who had been beating his foot all this time against the ground, turning up his eyes, and expressing every possible symptom of impatience, now exclaimed, "*Tout ça est bien beau, superbe même*; but as I am neither a Cherokee, Pawnee, or Kickaway, I have no relish for horrid sights, and disgusting one's self with dying

groans, death rattles, skulls, and marrow-bones ; though, to be sure, I once made an uncommon pleasant party to see the people hung at Newgate, and got a capital place ; but then, you know, every body does that. As for your natural deaths, I think it is much better to leave all that to the nurses and people ; and then, if you give the defunct a splendid funeral, why, what the deuce more can the most *exigeant* corpse in Christendom require ?”

Herbert, disgusted with the levity of his companion exclaimed, “ A splendid funeral ! and do you sincerely think *that* is sufficient ? Does the pageantry of the gorgeous procession, which attends to its home of nothingness the remnants of the dead, with its crowd of grinning, drunken mutes, its nodding forest of plumes, which, waving in the winds, dance over the hearse as if in mockery of its senseless burthen ; do the gaudy banners, and escutcheons, emblazoned with all the pomp of heraldry, awaken a feeling of sorrow in the hearts of the spectators ? Does the line of mourning

coaches, filled with the physicians, servants, or solicitors of the deceased, who, like wreckers on the Cornish coast, are revelling in the spoils which they have plundered from the coffers of their late client ; does the endless file of splendid, yet empty equipages, empty as the sorrow which directed them to follow in the train ; does this, for a moment, chasten the soul, or excite emotions in the heart ? No ! The simple tear of the villager, as he follows to the humble church-yard the still more humble coffin of his wife or friend, must be more acceptable to the Deity, more gratifying to the spirit of the departed, more impressive on the minds of the assistants, than all the noisy pomp and grandeur of the former."

“ ‘ A very good song, and very well sung, ’ ” exclaimed Sidney with the greatest coolness, though, during this apostrophe of Herbert's, he had been clinking his spurs, and beating time with his hands, with the most consummate ridicule and mock attention,—“ an admirable *ex-tempore*, composed during a six weeks' sojourn

in the hospitals, 'Milton's Conversion of the Heathen;' but as I am too wicked to be worth having such excellent morality thrown away upon me, I shall go and dress for dinner."

"You are, I fear, incorrigible," replied Herbert:—though, in fact, Sidney, I do not believe you are half such a reprobate as you wish to appear."

"I'faith," retorted his comrade, "I must first become worse, to be made better; that is to say, *imprimis*, be a horrid sinner, before I commence being a saint, which I believe is the usual routine; though, upon my honour, Berty, I think there is none of that humbug in you which one generally meets with in your over-righteous people; I believe you perfectly sincere in all you say; and he who says you are not the best fellow in Christendom, in despite of your little spice of goodness, why he lies, that's all;" and then, without waiting for Herbert's reply, he walked out of the room, whistling variations to the Dead March in Saul.

On the morning subsequent to the funeral,

Miss Manby and her friend left Harwich, and proceeded immediately to Park-lane, where it was necessary that they should be present, with the solicitors and trustees, at the opening of the will. By this document, which appeared to have been written immediately prior to Major Manby's departure for Flanders, Miss Manby became heiress to the whole of her late foster-father's property; which, added to the sum presented to her by her anonymous friend, would, upon her attaining her twenty-first year, place her in possession of an income exceeding two thousand pounds per annum. The testator also directed an annuity of two hundred pounds to be paid to Mrs. Walden; and earnestly intreated her to continue to reside with Emily as her friend and adviser, and strictly enjoined the latter to continue to treat Mrs. Walden as a mother. For the first time, Emily was made acquainted with the secret of her not being related to Mr. Manby; a circumstance which had been concealed from her by the Major even to the

last moment. This discovery, though of course it gave rise to the most painful sensations in her mind, yet only served to increase her affection for the memory of the excellent man who had so bountifully provided for her. Were her parents and relations all dead? Had she no connexions still living? Had all her kindred perished by the fatal accident which gave her to Mr. Manby's care? These were questions which agitated her mind perpetually. She thought, if there yet remained any of her relations in existence, that now, at least, when she was rich and independent, there could be no cause for concealing themselves. Self-interest, whatever it might have done before, could not now prevent them from coming forward. That she was of respectable parents, and probably people of fortune, was evident from the relics which were still preserved amongst Mr. Manby's papers at his solicitor's; but who they were, or what was even her real name, continued a mystery, which it was impossible to unravel. She felt, indeed, ashamed

of bearing a name to which she had no title; and could hardly be persuaded by her trustees, Lord Lymington and Mr. Dropmore, to retain possession of the house and fortune which had been bequeathed to her by her beloved foster-father.

Before their departure from Harwich, Herbert Milton wrote a few lines to Mrs. Walden; to inquire after the health of Miss Manby; excused himself from calling, lest he should intrude upon their sorrows, and concluded by expressing his hopes that Miss Manby would permit him to renew their acquaintance at some future period, and that she would not allow her dislike to Sir Herbert to influence her feelings in regard to himself. To this note he received a very flattering answer; and from this period he began to cherish that feeling which had been so suddenly awakened from the first time he had seen Miss Manby. A few weeks more, and Herbert was relieved from the disagreeable service which had required his presence at Harwich, and he found

himself once more immersed in all the gaieties of London, from which he had been absent from the period of Miss Manby's first introduction. It was soon observed, however, that Captain Milton was not so fond of dancing or going out as usual; that he looked more melancholy; in fact, something must have happened thus to have deprived him of his former gaiety. "Herbert Milton's horridly in love with somebody!" said one woman. "He looks as if he were going to be married!" exclaimed another. "Who to?" eagerly demanded an interested third. "He has lost a large sum at Watier's," said one man. "I wish I had won it!" added another. "I know he has been raising money," continued a third. But as the first could never detect him flirting, or even paying more attention to one than to another, they of course settled that he must have some low attachment; whilst the latter, who never could convict him of play, at once decided that he was either writing a book, or that he had been bitten by the Saints.

Herbert, however, completely put all their curiosity to the rack, by keeping them in the same state of ignorance as he was in himself. He felt, it was true, less pleasure in society; he was become more indifferent for the dinners and parties which, as usual, were showered upon him, yet he was unable precisely to account for this change in his inclinations. He could not, however, attempt to deceive himself as to the degree of interest he felt in the fair orphan, though he had no idea to what an extent those feelings had taken root in his heart; nor, indeed, was it until he had proceeded on foreign service, that he discovered that he was sincerely and devotedly attached to her. He had hoped, before he left England, that his *penchant* for Miss Manby was known only to himself; he might, in some measure, perhaps, have betrayed it in his manner to her, on one of the few occasions which he had of seeing her in Park-lane; but he trusted that the world, and, above all, Lady Milton, were utterly unconscious of the real

state of his mind; yet he felt himself rather taken by surprise, when, upon meeting Sidney and his cousin Alfred Milton one morning on horseback in Grosvenor-square, the former accosted him by saying,—“ Rather a quaintish nag of yours, Master Herbert. What the deuce always makes him turn sharp down to the left when Grosvenor-gate stares him in the face? *Apropos*, so your little damsel of Harwich, is no more or less than the Miss Manby, who has been all the thing this spring; and they say she is to marry Lord Henry Thursby as soon as she gets rid of her weepers. By George! old man, we shall have ‘slugs in a sawpit’ before long; but if ever you do fight, Herbert, as I know you can split a bullet, use my pistols; as pretty a pair of Staudenmeyer’s as ever helped a man to six boards and two little ones, as Bürger calls it: I’ll back them for a pony against any Manton’s or Kuchenreiter’s in England.”

By this time they had arrived at Grosvenor-gate, when, to the no small annoyance of

Herbert, and the amusement of his cousin and Sidney, the hack he rode turned sharp round, and before Herbert could pull him up, had cantered at least fifty yards down Park-lane; where, for the present, I shall leave the one party laughing loud enough to bring Mr. Fozard from his attentions to his equestrian pupils, and the other sawing away at the mouth of his astonished horse; which, from his diurnal canter in the same direction, had naturally expected the usual hint from Herbert's spurs on his arrival at the corner of the street.



CHAPTER V.

AMONG my readers there may probably be found some few of those mature ball-going individuals, who have attained that mellow period of existence, when inflexible joints, dilapidated legs, and exuberant ankles, warn them that it is high time to confine their amusements in a ball-room to the simple gratification of their eyes or ears, nor longer to expose their stiff gambadoes in the evolutions of the dance. Many of these, probably, there are, who, for more than a third of a century, have danced with every "new thing" as it was offered to the best bidder on the grand exchange of Fashion, until, in its turn, it had become as

stale as themselves, or was swept off the boards by death, marriage, or the spirit of grace. Of these, many must have been witnesses to the last expiring sigh of Ranelagh, and assisted at the first coming to light of the modern Almack's—Almack's "*du second lit*" issue of the marriage of the well-powdered and substantial Willis, with the brick-and-mortar relic of the defunct worthy of that name. Poor souls! deeply do I sympathise with them if they are reduced to the enjoyment of that enviable, that flattering distinction, which is in fact tantamount to a *lettre de cachet* to Terpsichore's Bastille, or, at all events, is an open announcement of their inoffensive decay—I mean the pleasing compliment uttered by some fair creature, who, with great apparent *naïveté*, says,—“ Oh, Sir John, you are so good-natured, and I know you do not dance, do let me say I am engaged to you, if a bore asks me to waltz.” Enviable lot! where one finds himself with more nominal partners at one moment than half the young men in an hour,

where half-a-dozen pretty innocent mouths are fibbing through thick and through thin on the strength of one's infirmities, and from which one derives no other advantage than the necessity of helping them out in their fable, or, perhaps, the pleasure of bringing a duel on one's shoulders; for I have known more than one rejected youth become extremely troublesome on these occasions, and endeavour to revenge themselves on their fair refusers, by venting their anger on the worn-out hack who is saddled with these phantom engagements, and who must, at all events, either fight, lie, sit down, or beg pardon. I address myself more particularly to this respectable band of "Captain Sentries," because, in the first place, they have more time on their hands, or rather on their feet, to walk about and make their observations at balls, and are more at leisure to take strict notice of the charms or defects of the various fair personages who crowd, what the Morning Post calls, "the Nobility's grand assembly at Willis's Rooms;" where, in

the olden time, they have paraded a minuet with the grandmothers, walked country dances with the mammas, and are now reduced to the simple criticism of the daughters, as they whisk round the room in a waltz, or slide through a *Française*.

I now, therefore, challenge any of these critical worthies to declare, if either in the golden period of their youth, or the more leaden epoch of their maturity, they ever saw a more lovely being than the *protégée* of Lady Lymington, or if ever they witnessed more decided admiration amongst the men, or more undisguised envy among the women, than that created by Emily Manby upon her first appearance at Almack's. Never were more exclamations uttered of "Who can that be with Lady Lymington?—Nobody one knows!—One of her nieces?—Oh dear no! some country *protégée* of old papa Lymington—Do you know she's rather good-looking.—Too tall.—Charming foot!—Horrid shoe!—Sweet trimming!—Too scanty.—What a pretty dress!—Affectation of sim-

plicity.—Expressive countenance.—Too tragic.—But look, my dear, do you know, I do not think she is so very plain.—Lord Henry is just going to dance with her—It's very funny!—Well! I declare, Colonel Acton is talking to her! really she is rather handsome!—How strange! the Duke of Buxton is being introduced; she must be somebody!—He has asked her to all his parties!—How very fine her figure is! what beautiful eyes!—Oh! she must be some foreigner of rank: I shall go and ask Lady Lymington to bring her to my ball!”

These and a hundred more observations were made on the blushing Emily as she was led to the dance, and placed in the set by the gay, handsome, and *recherché* Lord Henry Thursby, whom all the mothers coveted for his fortune, and most of the girls a little for his person, and a great deal for his estates; whilst the kind-hearted Lady Lymington, delighted at the effect produced by her young friend, placed herself on one of the sofas to enjoy the pleasure of witnessing Emily's successful *debut* in

the dance, where she acquitted herself in a manner that might have made her instructress, the graceful Bigotini, somewhat jealous.

It has ever been such an established rule in all works of this nature, to give a species of portrait of the heroine, that I cannot find it in my heart to deviate from the acknowledged custom; but if the pencil of our first painter failed in giving to his canvass the grace, sensibility, and animation of the original, I trust some indulgence will be granted to me, if I produce but a feeble outline of the beautiful Emily. If there was any fault in the appearance of Miss Manby, it was in her stature, which was certainly a little above the common height of the fair persons around her, yet this trifling excess was completely neutralized by the inimitable contour of her figure, and the matchless roundness and just proportions of her form. Her hair, which was of the finest texture and most glossy black, shaded with its rich and luxuriant masses a complexion which vied in clearness and brilliancy with the

purest crystal; her eyes were lighter, much lighter than her hair, though of a dark and brilliant hazel, with that soft and tender expression which Leonardo da Vinci has given to the Belle Feronnière, and were fringed with long and silken lashes, which almost united at their extremities; whilst two eyebrows, traced as it were with a fine pencil, curved in gentle arches above them. Her profile had more resemblance to that of the effeminate Antinous, than to the bust of any nymph or goddess which I can remember, though the formal outline was broken by a slight indenture at the base of the forehead. Her ear was remarkable not only for its delicacy, but for being *set on* with that peculiar grace which is rarely to be met with, save in ancient gems or intaglios, which is generally the characteristic of the finest antique heads. Her mouth was small; and her smile disclosed a set of teeth, whose whiteness and regularity, had they been more in fashion, might have sent poor Waite, naughty Waite, to a much poorer and perhaps more premature grave. Her left

cheek was indented with one of those little wells, those "*pozetti che forma un dolce riso in bella guancia*," so prettily described by Petrarch or Guarini, I forget which. The form of her head and neck was peculiar, and from its position on her shoulders, gave to her appearance that blood-like look, which one could only compare to the gaze of the race-horse, or the noble erectness of the deer when suddenly aroused from his lair. Add to this, a bust slightly inclined to *embonpoint*, an arm that might have served as a model for that of Canova's Hebe, the most delicate and beautiful hand, and a foot which did not yield in perfection to that of the Princess Pauline herself, and you may form some idea of what Emily Manby was in her eighteenth year, when first presented by Lady Lymington in the fashionable world. To many this portrait may appear too highly coloured and exaggerated; but I can assure them, if I have erred, that it has not been on the side of flattery.

Not only the personal charms, but the gen-

tleness and unaffected manners of Lady Lymington's *protégée*, became the theme of general praise, and attracted the attention not only of all the young men, but, in despite of jealousy, constrained the women also to avow that Emily was a charming creature. The encomiums and assiduities of half-a-dozen particular men, who are, in fact, almost the arbiters of all young ladies' destinies in the highest circles, are quite sufficient to bring any young woman into fashion, and to establish her on the very pinnacle of fashionable glory. The example of such a select jury, who are themselves the chosen deputies of fashion, is sure to be followed by their admirers or imitators, and inevitably entrains the opinions of all the rest of the London world; for who would dare to find a spot or discover a blemish in any young lady, whom a few of the crack members of White's have condescended to notice by their praise or attentions?

The Countess of Lymington, who was no longer young, but still retained all the vivacity

and gaiety of her youth, in addition to the most dignified and graceful manners, used often to rally Emily upon her success in the world. "Really, my dear," said the Countess to Emily, one night at the Opera, "some kind fairy must have taken me this season under her special protection, and gifted me with the power of attracting the youth and fashion of London about my person. I have sat in this box for half-a-dozen years, and have rarely had my attention diverted from the music by visitors, unless, indeed, some old lords and beaux *passés* took pity upon me, or perhaps wanted a good place to see the ballet themselves. But now we are crowded almost to inconvenience by all the smart men in town; whilst one hears nothing else in the passages but 'Box-keeper, which is Lady Lymington's?' or 'Box-keeper, open Lady Lymington's box.' And then, my dear, we have a continued battery of glasses directed at us from the pit."

Emily could only blush, and half serious, half smiling, reply to her kind protectress—

“ My dear Lady Lymington, I know little of the world, but I am aware that it will fly in crowds to see a new melo-drame or spectacle of any kind, which, after a short season, when its novelty is past, is cast away and forgotten for ever ; whilst, year after year, it will return with renovated delight and pleasure, to the good, the beautiful, and noble works, which for ages to come will continue to amuse and instruct.”

“ Yes,” replied Lady Lymington, not displeased with Emily’s compliment, “ the works you allude to grow more valuable from their age ; even a musty parchment cover and tattered frontispiece, add merit to them in the eye of an amateur ; but this is not the case with us poor women ; youth, novelty, and smart dresses, are absolutely necessary for us. When once these horrid wrinkles make their appearance, adieu to admirers ; for now-a-days, we do not meet with those amiable Counts de Nivernois, who could appear to feel as much affection for my grey hairs, as their royal master might

have expressed for your raven locks: but," continued the Countess, laughing, "I should much like to know how this marvellous change has been effected? What is the reason, that had I now as many arms as Briareus, I should still require more to occupy all those that are projected for my acceptance when I go to my carriage; whereas, last year, I was generally obliged to trust to the assistance of my footmen to carry me through the crowd; now, the lungs not only of all Mr. Ebers's people, but those of half the young men in town, are exerted in calling my servants? I am certainly grown very seductive, or else the cunning personages are making love to me, in order to obtain more easy access to you; but, I shall disappoint them all, my dear, as I intend to reserve you for myself."

There was more meant in the latter remark of Lady Lymington than Emily could understand; and, indeed, she felt so confused and grateful to her kind friend, that she paid little attention to an observation which might

have awakened hopes and expectations in the mind of most young girls, of a very flattering and agreeable nature — hopes which, in the present instance, were not entirely in the power of Emily to realize.

The affection and kindness of Lady Lymington for her young friend had indeed been strongly marked from the period of her first arrival in England; and, if possible, these attentions were increased after the death of Major Manby, Emily becoming almost a constant visitor and resident in St. James's Square. In fact, Lady Lymington, from her affection for Miss Manby, had long fondly cherished the hope of bringing about an union between her young friend and her Ladyship's second son, Lord Henry Thursby, whose marked attentions to Miss Manby were becoming every day more evident.

In the mean time, Herbert, whose attachment for Emily had been gradually increasing from the period of their first interview at Harwich, watched with extreme anxiety the assiduities of Lord Henry Thursby, and even doubted the

possibility of his attaining the object for which he had ventured to hope ; while Emily, on her part, evidently appeared, notwithstanding, to manifest stronger feelings towards Herbert than could easily be accounted for, even by the kind attentions he had shown to her during the distressing circumstances of her late severe affliction.

Of all the young women Lady Milton had ever met, Emily was essentially the person whom she would have preferred as a daughter-in-law, had Herbert been independent of his father, or had she herself sufficient influence over her husband to soften his resentment, or obtain his sanction ; but she dreaded the unbending nature of the Baronet, and the anticipation of his displeasure made her tremble for the effects of the disappointment on the mind of her son.

It was at this period that Herbert received orders to hold himself in readiness for foreign service, an event which Lady Milton hoped would drive all remembrance of Emily from

his mind, and thus prevent the possibility of a rupture with his father.

The moment at length arrived when it was necessary for Herbert to proceed with his battalion to the place of embarkation. For some days prior to his departure, he had summoned sufficient courage to abstain from visiting in Park-lane, wisely considering that the agitation of his mind might have led him to commit himself by avowing his sentiments, an avowal which he imagined could only have the effect of distressing Emily, and by revealing the truth to himself, drive from his heart that hope to which it still clung, in despite of the dictates of reason and circumstances. To leave London, however, without either speaking or writing to Mrs. Walden or Miss Manby, was more than he could bring himself to consent to; he therefore chose the latter. After, however, writing a dozen notes, some of which he found too long, others too laconic, some too formal, and others too sentimental; after pacing up and down his room for an hour, and re-

copying what he had already torn, he at last abandoned all hope of being able to produce any thing which exactly suited his purpose; and as the time had now arrived within a few minutes for the assembly of his battalion on the parade at the Horse Guards, he again embraced his disconsolate mother, and, in despite of all his resolutions, found himself once more in the presence of Emily.

Fearful of avowing his sentiments, he hastily bid Miss Manby and Mrs. Walden adieu, with a voice almost inarticulate from emotion, and springing on his horse, and putting the animal to its utmost speed, endeavoured for a moment to dissipate his grief by the rapidity of his motion, nor did he slacken his pace, until his progress was impeded by the crowds which were assembling to witness the departure of the troops. And shortly after, amidst the sobs and tears of their relatives, the brave men commenced their march towards the Spanish frontier.

It was not until the last sound of Herbert's

footsteps had died upon her ear; it was not until she had the conviction of his being gone, perhaps for ever, that Emily discovered to its full extent, how intensely her heart was interested in his welfare, and how completely her own existence was interwoven with that of the young soldier. Now, however, the truth rushed upon her mind in all its verity; and giving way to the force of those feelings which she had hitherto endeavoured to repress, and, indeed, of whose extent she had been until now ignorant, she burst into tears, and throwing her arms round the neck of Mrs. Walden, confessed to her indulgent companion the real state of her sentiments.

Aware of the insuperable objection which would in all probability exist in the breast of Sir Herbert Milton to their union, Mrs. Walden endeavoured, by every means in her power, to prevail on Emily to discountenance the idea, and to receive in their true character the attentions of Lord Henry Thursby, the real nature of which she now, for the first time,

thought it necessary distinctly to communicate, but in vain ; no argument, no statement of the probable consequences, could induce Emily to remove Herbert from her view as the object of her lasting attachment ; nor did she afterwards hesitate, when conversing with Lady Lymington on the subject, to make known to her Ladyship the real state of her feelings, and firmly, yet gratefully, to decline the honour intended her, in the union proposed between herself and her Ladyship's elegant and accomplished son, Lord Henry Thursby.

CHAPTER VI.

NOTWITHSTANDING the mystery with which Herbert Milton had endeavoured to envelope his attachment for Emily, in despite of his determined secrecy, and the coolness with which he had constantly repulsed every effort on the part of Sidney to dive into his thoughts, the latter was not long before he discovered the real situation of Herbert's mind; and with the usual ardour and good-nature of his disposition, he resolved to lend Herbert every assistance in his power, during the absence of the former in Spain.

Scarcely had Lord Henry Thursby's refusal by Emily been made known, than Sidney com-

communicated the whole circumstance to his friend, accompanying this intelligence with a few remarks upon the probable motives which had induced Miss Manby to reject a marriage so brilliant: adding to his letter the following postscript:—“I have hitherto, Master Herbert, been making advances on your account; but, let me tell you, it is a very dangerous service; and as I feel a wonderful propensity to fall in love myself, I hereby give you fair and honourable warning, that unless you declare your intentions, and throw off the mask, I shall look upon myself as freely entitled to carry on the siege for my own particular profit and advantage.”

Won by the frankness and friendship with which Sidney had repaid his own reserve and distrust, and perhaps feeling that his interest might be materially advanced, by securing the co-operation of such an active and kind-hearted ally as Sidney, as well as the conviction he felt of the inutility of farther attempting to mislead his friend, Herbert no

longer delayed opening his whole heart to him; earnestly intreating him to consider this confession as sacred and inviolable; and urging him, out of delicacy to Miss Manby, and regard for him, not to divulge his secret to any human being.

Pleased with this mark of Herbert's confidence, and furnished, as it were, with full powers, Sidney not only lost no time in exerting himself, but showed much more skill, delicacy, and management in the cause he had undertaken, than could possibly have been expected from one so wild and thoughtless: but, as we before observed, he had an excellent heart, and was sincerely attached to Herbert; in whose behalf, he said, he thought he could even sacrifice a Newmarket meeting.

For the purpose of better ascertaining the nature of Emily's sentiments, Sidney called more frequently in Park-lane, threw himself, whenever the occasion presented itself, in her way, and lost no opportunity of conversing with her in society, when the expiration of

her mourning for Major Manby permitted her once more to participate in the amusements of the world ; where, however, she appeared much more rarely, and evidently with much less inclination or enjoyment, than formerly.

At first, Sidney contented himself with merely mentioning Herbert's name, as if accidentally ; but, at the same time, he failed not to scrutinize every look, every expression of Emily's features. At one time, he spoke of his absent friend with all the enthusiasm of the warmest attachment, and then he observed that the countenance of Emily beamed with pleasure and satisfaction. At another, he pretended to criticise, or rather quiz in a good-natured manner, some of those little foibles, to which Herbert, in common with others, was more or less subject ; and these remarks, he plainly saw, were received with evident displeasure. Then, again, he would endeavour to retrieve his error, by touching a more agreeable chord, and recounting some deed of kindness—some act of charity performed by Herbert, unknown

to all but himself, and the objects of his bounty. The tear which glistened in Emily's eye, the animation of her beautiful countenance, glowing with the blush arising from the emotion of her own thoughts, sufficiently proved the interest she took in the recital of these anecdotes.

Sidney would often talk to her of the army in the Peninsula; and, by way of probing her feelings, would dwell upon the dangers, the miseries, and hardships, to which both officers and men were exposed, until he was warned to desist, by the agitation of his fair audientress; then he would change the subject, and describe the pleasures with which they were sometimes repaid for their sufferings; the balls, the fêtes, and gaieties which were offered them by the natives; nor did he omit to mention the fascinations of the Spanish ladies, the raptures in which all the officers spoke of them, and the numbers of English whose hearts had been enthralled, and whose constancy had given way to the charms of the

dark-eyed daughters of Iberia. When this last subject was touched upon, the wary *chargé-d'affaires* carefully noted down the little marks of uneasiness, and even jealousy, evinced by Emily. In short, Sidney was enabled, in due time, to forward such satisfactory reports to Herbert, as afforded the latter, without vanity, just reasons to hope that he had excited more than a common interest in the heart of Miss Manby.

Herbert now thought that he might venture to put into execution his intention of writing to Mrs. Walden, merely a letter of common civility; a plan which he had long projected, but had been prevented from adopting by his ignorance of Emily's sentiments.

His letter, though addressed to Mrs. Walden, was evidently intended for the perusal of her young friend; and while he most studiously avoided making any declaration of his real sentiments, he yet ventured to say, that one of the greatest pleasures he looked forward to, on his return to his native land, was that

of seeing Mrs. Walden and *Miss Manby* again. He touched upon every subject which he thought could interest or amuse Emily. With some degree of art, and, perhaps, not without doing violence to his conscience, he expressed his disappointment at the vaunted beauty of the Spanish damsels; an opinion which, he took care to observe, differed, as it did, in fact, from that of almost all his brother-officers. He dwelt, however, with rapture on the magnificence of the Spanish scenery, the grandeur of the mountains, the fertility of the plains, and the picturesque variety of the costumes. He spoke, with the greatest admiration, of the richness of the literature, the majesty of the language, and the charms of the national music. Then he observed the contrast between the spirit, intelligence, and activity of the Spaniards of olden times, and the apathy and indolence of its present race of inhabitants, to avail themselves of the manifold benefits which nature has conferred, with lavish hand, upon that lovely, unhappy land,

where man, alone, seems unworthy and indifferent to the blessings of Providence.

He described with enthusiasm, those glorious days when her numerous and invincible fleets triumphantly swept the surface of the ocean, and carried the terror of her name to the remotest quarters of the globe; when the genius of her statesmen, the talents of her generals, and the unrivalled discipline of her soldiers, laid Europe trembling at her feet; when the burning desert and frozen glacier, or the dangers of unknown and distant seas, presented feeble barriers to the enterprise and ardour of her adventurous subjects, by whom vast and hitherto unheard-of regions were explored and conquered, and new and inexhaustible mines of wealth, power, and prosperity, poured into the bosom of the mother-country. He called to mind that epoch when the banner of Spain floated in almost universal and proud dominion; when the immortal compositions of her artists, the brilliant and varied productions of her literary men, the splendour and politeness

of her courtiers, and the purity of her idiom, rendered her as admirable in the school of arts, science, and politeness, as she was formidable in the field and terrible on the ocean. Herbert compared all this with her present abject and fallen state:—arts, science, literature, military and political glory, had fled before the demons of ignorance and superstition; and from being in a measure mistress and lawgiver of almost the whole civilized world, she was now become the prey of a faithless and cowardly monarch, and the degraded victim of a crafty, avaricious, and fanatic priesthood.

To make amends, however, for all this tiresome tirade, Herbert inclosed in his letter some of the most beautiful specimens of Spanish airs and Portuguese Modinhas; and he was not a little pleased to hear, in due time, that Emily was taking infinite pains to learn the Spanish language, and that the music he had transmitted was the endless subject of her study and amusement. Herbert, however, was still more delighted to receive an answer from Mrs.

Walden; and his heart bounded when the drum-major of his regiment, with his usual formality and unbending stiffness, addressed him with that kind of freedom which his long services induced some of the senior officers to suffer, and which the youngsters encouraged from the quaintness of the man.

“ A litter for your honour, Captain Milton. One shilling and *too* pence. A lady's hand. Hope your honour is not going to be married. Them weddings has robbed the regiment of many a good officer!” And then raising his hand to his gold-laced hat, he turned to the right-about, and marched off with his cane towards another party of officers, and left Herbert to meditate upon the epistle, which, before he attempted to read, he turned over in every direction, to see if by chance Emily's name, or, perhaps, her handwriting, appeared in any part of it. This answer produced, as might be anticipated, another letter from Herbert; and in due time a regular correspondence was established.

A battle having at length taken place, Herbert's name appeared in the Gazette as successor to a company in his regiment, caused by the death of an officer who had fallen in the affair: and his immediate return to England, in consequence of this event, when announced to Emily, filled her heart with joy; though Mrs. Walden could not avoid looking upon this return with dread, as she foresaw the crisis must now arrive which must decide for ever the happiness or misery of Emily.

As soon as Herbert received the intelligence of his promotion, accompanied by an order to return forthwith to the head-quarters of his regiment, he made preparations for his departure; but however delighted he might have been at the idea of again revisiting his native land, and of again being united to those who were dearest to him in existence, yet he could not quit his brave companions in arms, who were still destined to perform so many glorious exploits, (and many of whom he might

never see again,) without a deep sensation of regret.

It was not without the utmost emotion that he entered the cabinet of the great chieftain, whose kindness to himself had been particularly marked. In vain he endeavoured to give utterance to the feelings of gratitude which he wished to express; and as the hero extended his hand to bid adieu to the young soldier, the thrill which it imparted to the whole frame of the latter seemed to animate his soul with a portion of that immortal fire which flowed in the veins of the conqueror himself. Had not the image of Emily swept before his sight, he would have renounced home, friends, and promotion, rather than quit the commander whom he almost worshipped.

Herbert had ever felt the same enthusiastic admiration for the man before whom he stood, which, fortunately for England, animated the breasts of the lowest soldier in her small but valiant host.

The few campaigns Herbert had made, had

taught him how to estimate the chief; who himself so well understood how to appreciate the rising merits, and reward the courage and devotion of the young warriors under his command. Disdaining the ordinary trammels which had, generally speaking, enthralled the minds and impeded the actions of former British commanders, the hero at once burst through the shackles of antiquated systems, and mathematical technicalities, and, above all, had shown himself indifferent to the pretensions of favour, interest, and fortune. Promptitude and decision marked his commands, and victory his progress. With an equal hand and unerring judgment, rewards were bestowed on the youngest subaltern, when his bravery attracted the notice of his superiors; whilst punishment was meted to the highest in authority, when misconduct or incapacity called for censure or disgrace. Disregarding the absurd pretensions of parade-tacticians, and orderly-room heroes, whose pens had alone given proofs of their military existence, whilst their virgin swords had

slumbered in their scabbards; he founded, as it were, a new practical military school, and formed for his country an army, such as England never had hitherto possessed; an army, which not only gave daily proofs upon the enemy, of their commander's skill and consummate judgment, but which enabled him to throw himself in security upon his couch, with the gratifying feeling, that the confidence between it and himself was mutual and well-deserved; and that he had but to rise and give the signal for the onset, and the victory was his own, however unequal the numbers, arduous the service, or disadvantageous the circumstances.*

* It may not be inappropriate to record an anecdote, communicated by an officer of high rank, which, had the subject of it occurred in the French army, would probably have furnished a trait as worthy of the pencil of the inimitable Horace Vernet, as it is deserving of the illustrious days of his classic namesake. "Late on the evening of the battle of Albuera," (it is the General who speaks,) "I rode forward to examine the positions occupied by the enemy during this murderous conflict. On passing a hillock, where a British brigade

Herbert had now reached Lisbon, on his way to England, where he determined to

had charged and driven from the field a battery of the enemy's guns, I perceived four bodies lying separate from, and considerably in advance of, the remaining slain. Three were French, and the fourth a private of the Third Foot. It was evident that a deadly and mortal struggle had taken place between these men, which had ended in the death of the whole. Observing, however, by the convulsive movements of the English soldier, that life was not yet extinct, I dismounted, and raising the poor fellow, poured a small portion of spirits down his throat, and then, imagining that he might recover, and that he was only exhausted from loss of blood, I directed my attendants to place him on a horse, and convey him to the bivouac. The poor fellow, who had not entirely lost the use of his senses or voice, now raised himself a little, opened his eyes, stared wildly about him for a moment, and then fixed an inquiring look on me, and said, "It's of no use, your honour, it's of no use to move me, I am a dead man!" Then, clenching his teeth, and casting a ghastly and triumphant look on the other bodies, he added, "but there lie three for one." We were still proceeding to lift him on the horse, when he again exclaimed, "Leave me, leave me to die quietly, your honour! but first tell me, who won the battle?" "We, to be sure," was my reply. Then, starting upon his legs, with a violent and almost supernatu-

remain a short time, in order to await the sailing of a ship-of-war, in which it was his intention to embark. When returning one night, with two other officers from a late party at Janellas Verdes, the palace of the British Ambassador, which was at a considerable distance from their hotel, Herbert remarked that they were followed by three individuals, who appeared studiously to track their movements. In proportion as the officers accelerated or relaxed their pace, or whenever they stopped to look around, they perceived that they were imitated by their pursuers, who also carefully kept their persons concealed beneath the shade of the houses, or the projecting porticos of the numerous churches. The first impulse of the friends, who were in uniform, and consequently armed, was at once to turn

ral effort, he huzzaed, or rather shrieked aloud, "Thank God! England! England! the Old Buffs for ever!" and then bounding three or four yards, as if he had received a shot through his heart, he rolled over, and fell dead beneath the horse's feet."

upon the men, and either to insist upon their proceeding before them, or force them to explain their motives for following in this suspicious manner; but as the fellows contented themselves with keeping at a distance, and as they had shown no decided symptoms of committing any act of hostility, the officers forbore to interrupt them; contenting themselves with preserving the middle of the streets, and closely watching the movements of these suspicious persons. In due time, the gentlemen reached the *Praca de Soudré*, in which was situated their hotel, and as the men who had followed them to this spot, continued their progress towards the Arsenal, without taking any farther notice of them, they mutually rallied each other at the folly of their apprehensions, and were now inclined to admit that it was impossible the fellows could have entertained any sinister intentions against them. The party felt the more ashamed of their suspicions, when they considered that such an event as an open

attack upon British officers in the streets, was not only unusual, but unheard of; and in this instance there was still less probability of such an outrage being meditated, as they were unconscious of having given offence, and had not been long enough in Lisbon to have excited any personal animosity against them. The idea of a common robbery was out of the question.

The night was calm and sultry, and of that peculiar clearness and brilliancy which is only to be met with in southern climates, where, in fact, the transition from the meridian glory of the sun to the tranquil loveliness of the night, appears to have been produced by the suspension of a magic curtain of the purest ultramarine before the rays of the mighty luminary, rather than by its total disappearance beneath the horizon. Herbert, who felt little inclination to retire to rest, directed his servant to place his writing materials on the table, and after dismissing him, drew his chair near the open win-

dow, and occupied himself in making some additions to his journal.

While he was thus engaged, he had heard the splashing of oars, the grating of a boat as it touched the shore, then the sound of footsteps, and voices as if conversing in a whisper beneath his window; but of this he took no notice, though his attention was much excited by the uneasiness and singular irritation of his favourite dog. This noble animal was of that scarce and beautiful breed of mastiffs, or bloodhounds, which is sometimes, though rarely, to be met with in the Sierra Morena, and other southern parts of Spain. They are said to be descendants of that ferocious race, which were trained and employed by the old Spaniards for the purpose of hunting down and exterminating the original inhabitants of their newly acquired American possessions, and were at a later period made use of by the planters in Cuba and other islands of the Spanish Main, to track the Maroons, or runaway slaves, who had escaped from the dreadful tyranny of their masters, and

secreted themselves in the fastnesses of the woods or mountains. The beautiful and sagacious beast (who was Herbert's constant companion, and of whose vigilance and courage he had already had ample proofs) no sooner heard the noises beneath the window, than he uttered a long and low growl, then raised himself on his fore-legs, and bristled up the hair of his back, whilst, from the shade by which he was enveloped, his eyes seemed gleaming with fire. With violent symptoms of anger and irritation the huge animal rushed into the balcony, where for a while he snuffed the air, moaned, growled and scraped the floor; then he came to Herbert's side, placed his paws on his knees, licked his hands, and looked with almost human expression in his master's face; he then ran to the different doors of the room, again snuffed, scented, and scratched, and with increasing uneasiness again returned, wagging his tail, to Herbert's side. To humour his favourite, Herbert took up his candle, opened the doors, and examined every corner of his own room, as

well as the adjoining apartment. Nothing, however, appearing to warrant the extraordinary proceeding of his four-footed friend, Herbert fastened the doors, and endeavoured to coax his dumb favourite to rest, by spreading his cloak on the floor, and by addressing to him the usual caresses of "Come, old man! *Majo! Chucho querido!* down!" but in vain; the animal only wagged his tail, rubbed his nose against his master's hand, and then obstinately placed himself in the balcony, where he continued growling, whining, and bristling his back, until Herbert, tired with his interruption, called him into the adjoining room, bolted the door, and angrily ordered him to be quiet, which command the noble beast appeared to have obeyed, after pawing the lock of the door several times, and expressing his anger by a succession of growls, whines, and sharp barkings. More than an hour had elapsed, and as the greatest stillness reigned in the hotel, and the reflection of the lights on the river had gradually died away as they were successively extinguished in the

house, he prepared to retire to rest ; still, however, attracted by the beauty of the night, Herbert remained for some time leaning on the balcony, in silent admiration of the lovely scene which lay before him.

At his feet, and within a stone's throw, the golden Tagus, on whose surface the starry map of heaven was reflected by myriads of dancing and glittering spangles, flashed its rippling eddies in monotonous succession against the walls of the quay. On the right as far as the eye could span, hundreds of vessels shot upwards towards the heavens the dark outlines of their masts, like some bleak forest of larch disrobed of its foliage ; whilst the Tower of Belem rearing its black battlements above the tide, either frowned in solemn and clouded majesty, or glistened for a moment as the rays of the moon glanced on its bristling cannon, or lighted the angles of its turrets.

In the centre of the stream, the indistinct and sombre masses of the ships of war, as they rode quietly and sluggishly at anchor on the

bosom of the current, appeared like some huge monsters of the deep reposing on the flood.

On the opposite side, the shores of Almada, with their craggy steeps and vine-clad banks, its summit crowned with villages and quintas, its groves of orange, myrtle, and pomegranate, —cast its dark shades across the river in a thousand fantastic and varying forms, and filled the air with the fragrance of its flowers.

On the left, the grey and formal bastions of the Castle rose in majestic grandeur above the slumbering city; whose thousand steeples, minarets, and spires, glittered like pyramids of pure silver through the veil of night. Before him extended the broad and splendid bay, across whose dark blue waters, unbroken by a single wave, the moon cast her light in one long, undivided, and brilliant stream, from the very strand of Aldea Gallega to the wall of the city. The tranquillity and stillness of the night was unbroken, save by the casual apparition of some Blankanese boat as it rapidly descended the river on its course to the fishing-ground,

or by the monotonous though not unpleasing chant of the fishermen, as they rose and sunk to their oars.

Herbert was on the point of retiring from the window, when his attention was attracted by the shadow of two figures which were emerging from beneath the shade of a wall, at a short distance to the left of the hotel. He immediately perceived that one was a strong and gigantic-looking man, who appeared to be dragging after him a female, and, from what he could discover, not a woman of an inferior class.

A moment sufficed for Herbert to distinguish, by the faint cries and intreaties of the woman, and the ferocious threats of the man, that robbery or murder was the object of the latter; and he plainly perceived that it was the ruffian's intention to force his victim down to the margin of the stream, and, having accomplished his purpose, to cast her body into the tide. The situation was admirably adapted for a deed of this dreadful nature, being one of those secluded

issues, or rather passages, sloping down to the Tagus, constructed in by-streets, for the convenience of the muleteers and carmen to water their mules and oxen ; being enclosed on one side by the lofty and blank walls of a convent, and by the masonry of the quay on the other, whilst scarcely a single house or window, save that of Herbert's chamber, overlooked the spot.

To see a woman in danger, or ill-treated, and to fly to her rescue formed but one act in the mind of Herbert. It was evident no time should be lost : springing, therefore, from the window, he seized his sabre, rushed down the stairs, tore open the door of the house, ringing the house-bell at the same moment, and then flying round the corner, in another instant he was at the head of the slope. When he appeared, the ruffian, who had already dragged his victim to the very brink of the river, relaxed his hold, and, drawing his sword, awaited Herbert's approach ; whilst the female, to whose rescue Herbert had hastened, no sooner per-

ceived herself at liberty, than she fled past him with the speed of a deer, and, without even thanking her preserver, disappeared in an instant.

Not satisfied, however, with having providentially snatched this woman from the very jaws of death, Herbert determined to seize the ruffian himself, and then to deliver him to the police: for this purpose he continued advancing; and desiring the fellow to throw down his sword, commanded him instantly to surrender. To this the villain made no reply but by uttering one of those hissing noises so familiar to every one who has visited Lisbon, and in an instant Herbert saw two other men rapidly emerge from the shade of a buttress.

Our gallant countryman immediately perceived that his rashness and imprudence had drawn him into one of those *guet-apans*, into which he heard (but did not believe) that other British officers had fallen. The precipitate flight of the woman, the sudden and preconcerted appearance of the two men, left no

doubt upon his mind of the fact ; and although he condemned his own folly, there was now no time for repentance, and he determined at once to make a desperate push to secure his retreat, or at all events to sell his life as dearly as possible, if the ruffians should attempt to interrupt his progress, or have the audacity to attack him.

Before he had time to secure the cord of his sabre firmly round his wrist, all doubts of the intentions of the villains were put an end to by their hastily advancing towards him, headed by the tallest and most ferocious of the three, who, with a pistol in one hand and a long rapier in the other, was already within a few feet of his person. With the decision and promptitude of lightning, and with the strength and activity of a tiger, Herbert sprung forward upon the foremost ruffian, and before he had time to discharge his weapon, it had already flown into the Tagus, dashed from his grasp by a stroke of Herbert's sabre ; whilst, at the same time, a tremendous blow from the left hand of the

latter, laid the wretch prostrate and senseless on the pavement.

Herbert's coolness and undaunted courage were only to be rivalled by his perfect skill in the use of all offensive and defensive weapons ; and most fortunate was it for him at this tremendous moment that he possessed these advantages in the highest degree, for never had a man more urgent necessity for the employment of his valour. Undaunted by the fall of their comrade, the two remaining bravoës, who were armed with a long knife in the left, and a sword in the right hand, advanced with still greater impetuosity, and commenced a most furious and simultaneous assault upon Herbert, who had placed his back against the wall of the quay, and continued to parry their blows with consummate coolness and dexterity. It was evident that the two villains were perfect masters of their weapons ; and therefore Milton saw that his only chance of victory was by continuing to act upon the defensive, and to preserve his strength until a favourable moment should

present itself of wounding or disarming one of his assailants, and then of making his escape from the other.

This unequal contest had already continued for some minutes, when Herbert, who had received three slight wounds from the swords of his adversaries, felt that it was time to make a violent effort, or the loss of blood, which flowed from his arm and thigh, might render him too weak to offer farther resistance. Being himself in the shade, and his opponents being exposed to the full rays of the moon, he was the better enabled to watch their countenances, and to evade or parry their blows. Seizing the instant when the eye of one of the ruffians appeared to be diverted to some object upon the wall, Herbert sprung in, and with well-directed aim almost severed the villain's sword-arm from his shoulder, whilst the weapon it wielded fell harmless to the ground; then, observing that both his antagonists had retreated two or three steps, Herbert collected his remaining strength, and was about to make an effort to rush by

them towards the hotel, when he found himself suddenly pinioned as it were, and pulled back towards the wall, by what he quickly discovered to be a rope cast over him from the parapet of the quay. His situation was now, indeed, truly critical, and it appeared as if nothing but the immediate intervention of Providence could rescue him. By a violent exertion he contrived, however, to liberate his right arm, and still in some measure he was enabled to defend himself with his sword, but every effort to disengage the rest of his person was fruitless. These vain exertions, however, could not last long; his violent struggles, caused the blood to flow more rapidly from his wounds; whilst at the same time he felt the treacherous noose tightening every instant round his person, and his strength and courage proportionately decreasing.

With mixed sensations of rage, despair, and horror, he saw the moment was fast approaching when he must yield himself an unresisting prey to the mercy, or rather blood-thirsty inten-

tions, of his ruffianly assassins. His mother—Emily—his friends—life, with all its gay and happy prospects—death, a degrading, horrible death, swam before his eyes;—above all, a pang of repentance at the rashness which had drawn him into the power of these ruffians, caused his heart to beat with extreme agony and bitterness. Every moment he was becoming weaker; the blood from the wound on his forehead trickled into his eyes, and dimmed his sight; the point of his sword, which he had hitherto held so as to guard his person, now gradually sunk towards the ground; already one of the ruffians had rushed in upon him with his knife, and he felt the cold steel penetrate his flesh; all appeared lost, his head became dizzy, his eyes were swimming in the faintness of death; the gleam of the moon shone upon the knife of the assassin, lifted to renew the stroke—when suddenly the noose which bound him was relaxed, and he reeled forward and fell upon his knee at the foot of the villain, whose blow not only missed its aim, but, by the violence with which

it was driven, the knife itself was shivered to fragments against the wall. He then heard a rushing noise, accompanied by a sharp, deep, growl; then followed a curse, a struggle, a groan, and the noise of a body falling; and wiping the blood from his eyes and disengaging his hand, he saw his faithful dog immovably fixed on the throat of his assassin, whom the noble animal had hurled prostrate to the ground, and held down, with his mouth and claws, as securely as if he were impanelled in a vice. In the mean time, a female voice was heard exclaiming in Spanish, "Fly, fly, Perez! to the boat for your life! Here come English!" distant cries of "Milton, Milton, speak! Where are you?" struck his ear; and he saw the third ruffian, accompanied by a woman, rush by him towards the river, spring into a skiff, and then disappear.

In a few seconds, several officers arrived to the assistance of their brave countryman, whom they found extended on the pavement, senseless and faint from loss of blood. Whilst

some of the party occupied themselves in removing Herbert to his apartment, others proceeded to secure the two ruffians, one of whom still remained apparently motionless from the blow he had received, whilst the other was vainly endeavouring to extricate himself from the grasp of the blood-hound: indeed, it required the united efforts of the whole party to disengage the villain, whose throat and breast were dreadfully lacerated by the teeth and claws of the faithful animal.

Though the brave young officer had lost much blood, and was at first extremely faint, he quickly recovered sufficient strength to be enabled to recount the circumstances which had so nearly proved fatal to him; and, as may be well imagined, his gallantry and heroism became the theme of general praise and admiration. At the same time, he was informed that he owed his eventual safety to his dog, who had now taken his station near his master's bed, and could not be induced to quit his side for a moment.

It appeared that Herbert had no sooner rushed down-stairs, leaving the animal fastened in the adjoining room, ere the courageous beast commenced howling and barking most furiously; and, in his eagerness to accompany his master, had overthrown tables and chairs, and, in short, created such a disturbance that the whole house was speedily aroused, and many of the officers hastened to the spot. Upon finding Herbert's door open, the scabbard of his sword in the passage, and upon observing that the dog was no sooner liberated than he rushed down-stairs and flew after his master, the officers concluded something extraordinary must have occurred, and immediately sallied forth in pursuit of the animal, when they arrived, just in time to rescue their friend.

Upon a careful examination of Herbert's wounds, they were declared to be trifling; even that which he had received from the knife of one of the ruffians, had fortunately only cut through the outward flesh of his left

arm, and glanced across his ribs. In short, in a few days he was enabled to attend the first examination of the captured bravoës,—the affair having been taken up with infinitely more promptitude and decision than was at all usual with the Portuguese authorities.

During the hurried and fearful moments of Herbert's struggle with his cowardly assailants, he had been much struck by the singular resemblance between the features of one of the wretches, and those of a Spanish servant whom he had dismissed from his service a few months previous. But he had heard of the man's being in England, and indeed, the fearful necessity of watching their movements and parrying their blows, had left him no time to make comparisons, or observe more nearly the villain's countenance. His suspicions were, however, not only revived but confirmed by the deposition of the prisoners, who, upon being promised that their lives should be spared, at once made every necessary confession, and, farther, gave every assistance

which could aid in the detection of their confederate.

By their confessions, the mystery was cleared up; and it was evident to Herbert, that revenge for having been driven from his service (the reasons for which will be explained hereafter) had excited the monster to seek his late master's life. The prisoners, in answer to the questions put to them, stated that they were natives of Xeres, in Andalusia; that they were by profession bull-fighters, and had quit- ted, or rather fled from Seville, in consequence of a disagreement with the police; they had only been a few days in Lisbon, whither they had come to obtain employment, or exhibit themselves in the Arena.

They added, that they were totally unacquainted with the Colonel, and bore him no malice; but that they were met one evening at a wine-house, by an individual named Antonio Perez, commonly called El Zorro, whom they had formerly known as a *Majo* at Seville, and who, they understood, had been some

years in the service of the English. After treating them to several quartillos of wine, and showing them a pocket-full of money, Perez proposed to them to lend him their assistance in dispatching an Englishman, for which service they were to receive a thousand reals each. They had accepted the offer, and received their instructions how to act.

During several days they had followed the Colonel on his return home, but were unable to attack him, either from his being in the company of other officers, or from the number of persons still in the streets. Five or six times they had endeavoured to entice him from his apartment by the same scheme which had so fully succeeded on the night of the ambassador's party, and in which the mistress of Perez, who was a Gitana, performed so dangerous a part. They had traced him from the house of the ambassador, and having mounted the parapet of the quay, observed he was employed in writing: and as Perez, who planned the scheme, well knew his for-

mer master's gallantry would cause him to descend to the assistance of any woman in danger, he adopted the measures already described.

The villains added, that the mistress of Perez, who had been in South America, proposed throwing a noose, or *laço*, over the head of the victim, should his bravery and well-known skill prove too much for the united efforts of the party; and that it was their intention to carry out the body of their murdered victim in a boat, and to have sunk it in the Tagus.

Notwithstanding a most active and minute search by the police, assisted by the disclosures of the prisoners, every attempt to arrest Perez and his paramour proved abortive; and it was soon discovered that they had both escaped on board a vessel which had sailed from Setubal for Val Paraiso. The usual forms having been gone through, the two prisoners were condemned to perpetual labour in the galleys, and to be branded on the forehead.

Delighted as Herbert must have naturally felt, and thankful as he was to Providence for having rescued his life from such imminent peril, still the circumstance left a deep and lasting impression on his heart, and caused him a degree of uneasiness which he could not control or account for. The base ingratitude and treachery of the villain Perez, whilst it excited the utmost disgust and indignation, gave rise to the most painful and contradictory surmises in Herbert's mind. He could scarcely believe that the man whom he had saved from the pains of an ignominious punishment, to whom, during four years, he had shown the utmost liberality, and treated with unbounded confidence, could thus basely repay his generosity, or carry his spirit of unholy vengeance so far as to return to Lisbon purposely to seek the life of his benefactor.

If this man Perez was the agent of another, who could be his employer? Herbert was unconscious of having wilfully offended any hu-

man being: he had caused no quarrels, had formed no female *liaisons* in the country, consequently could have no rivals, and was not aware that he had a single enemy in the world.

The whole affair appeared to be involved in an impenetrable mystery, and he endeavoured to calm the anxiety of his thoughts, by attributing the whole matter to the infernal design of Perez.

For many years prior to Herbert's departure from England, Perez had been employed as *valet de chambre* to his cousin, Alfred Milton; and when the former was about to leave London with his regiment, Alfred hinted to him this man might be of great use in the Peninsula, not only from his knowledge of the language, but from his activity, talents, and moreover from his being an excellent cook; no trifling recommendation (let it be said) to a campaigning servant. In short, Alfred kindly offered to transfer the fellow's services to his cousin, and Herbert gladly accepted the proposal.

During nearly four years, Perez continued to

give the greatest satisfaction to his master ; and although he had observed that the man appeared occasionally to possess more money, and to live more expensively than his station justified, yet as he never missed any sums himself, he had not only no grounds to doubt his honesty, but permitted him to enjoy his utmost confidence.

Herbert's suspicions of the man's fidelity and honesty were however at length awakened, by hearing from England that letters which he remembered had been intrusted to Pérez's charge to convey to the post, had either not reached their destination, or had arrived with evident marks of having been opened.

He had also remarked that the letters and papers in his own letter-box were often disarranged and some were wanting. He had latterly, also, missed several pieces of gold, which were inclosed in the same case. Unwilling to tax Pérez at once, and being aware that these robberies could only take place when he was asleep, he determined to be upon his

guard, and watch in the hope of detecting him in the fact.

He had particular occasion to observe that the disarrangement of his papers, and his losses of money, were more frequent when his regiment was in bivouac, where it was more easy to enter his tent than a room without disturbing him. Calling an English servant, of whose honesty he could have no doubt, he communicated his loss, mentioning his suspicions of Perez.

The soldier bluntly replied, "Why, Sir, it's that d—d Spaniard; and I could have told you so long ago, only you seem'd so fond of the fellow; but if you'll just let me loosen the Corporal when you're gone to bed, he'll catch him I'll be bound."

The Corporal was no other than the noble dog before mentioned, and whose attachment to Herbert was as strong as his apparent hatred to Perez; indeed, the animal had shown such determined antipathy to the Spaniard, and had so often attempted to fly upon him,

that Herbert was obliged to order him to be fastened up with the horses and mules, to prevent accidents.

Following the soldier's advice, Herbert took no farther notice of his loss or his suspicions, but dismissing Perez as usual, retired to his bed, and in a few moments his favourite crept through the opening of the tent; and, delighted at his unusual liberty, jumped on his master's couch, and almost stifled him with his awkward but affectionate caresses.

Herbert had watched for a couple of hours, and was at last falling asleep, when he was aroused by the dog springing under the tent; and jumping up, he discovered Perez on the ground, where the Corporal had fastened on him. In a moment, two or three soldiers came to Herbert's assistance, and they discovered the keys and box on the ground outside the tent; from which it was evident he had been in the habit of purloining, and afterwards replacing them.

Suffice it to say that the fellow was immediately dismissed from Herbert's service.

He heard afterwards however, from Sidney, that he had seen the rascal in London, and added with some degree of indignation and surprise, "I met him entering Alfred Milton's house."

CHAPTER VII.

AMONG the different young men who had been most particular in their attentions to Emily, no one was more remarkable in his assiduities than Alfred Milton, the cousin of Herbert. Indeed, the busy and insatiable tongues of London gossips had already destined him as the successor of Lord Henry, and the consequent and very probable cause of his Lordship's rejection. A trifling scrutiny, however, of Emily's manner would have sufficed to convince any careful observer, that she evidently suffered rather than encouraged his attentions; and although she often appeared to listen to his conversation, it was clear that

the interest he excited proceeded from motives and causes foreign to himself, and in which he had personally no share. But it is high time that we should introduce him to our readers.

Alfred Milton was the only child of Sir Herbert's elder and deceased brother, and had inherited nearly the whole of the paternal property. Alfred was some years senior to his cousin. He was a young man of extreme fashion, and as much *repandu* in society, as the utmost and most exigent coveter of London celebrity could desire. His character and disposition were, it is true, pretty well known, yet no man was so completely *bien-venu*. He was of course a member of White's, Watier's, and the clubs at Newmarket and Melton; whilst the table at the Union was never complete without him. The dressing-rooms at the Opera, the secret committees at the theatres, the porter's private list in every fashionable and difficult house, as well as the dining-rooms of our most renowned Amphytrions, were alike open to him. He was, in short, of that oft de-

scribed set, before whom all minor beaux (we detest the hacknied word "dandy") sink into insignificance, or among whom they eventually obtain a subaltern *grade*, by the sacrifice of a due portion of their fortune, and by permitting themselves to become the butt of the Grand Croix of this most extraordinary order of human beings. He was of that privileged set, who having nothing earthly to do the whole day but dress themselves, with an admirable *Breguet* in their pocket, make it a point of always coming an hour too late for dinner, and in black neckcloths and boots.

Indeed, the natural tendency to imitation which exists in the human race, has had a singular effect on the appearance of our citizens and tradesmen. One might imagine that the whole nation was bitten with a military mania, an inclination to war (at least outwardly) hitherto unknown in the annals of our country. If we enter the house of our banker, up start a dozen clerks, headed by the junior partner, who, were it not for the peaceful pen in

their hands, one might well mistake for a council of war, judging by the enormous size of their whiskers, the tightness of their blue great coats, the clanking of their spurs, and the stiffness of their black-stocks. If one happens to have occasion to consult one's attorney, one might well suppose that he stands in the presence of the Judge Advocate General, from his ultra military exterior; whilst one cannot purchase a pair of gloves, or barter for a watch-ribbon, without disarranging the creases of half-a-dozen soldier-like looking shopmen, who, from the dreadful rigidity of their *ties*, have not even the usual advantage possessed by their military originals, of now and then standing at ease.

The greater portion of the fortune bequeathed to Alfred Milton by his grandfather, had already been swallowed by Jews, or dissipated in some other way. He had, it is true, attained the very pinnacle of fashion, but his elevation had cost him dear; and as he lived in considerable style, having an excellent small house in Upper Grosvenor-street, several hunt-

ers, his carriage, and sundry other indispensable *necessaries*, it was evident he could have but one method of supporting his expenses.

His great skill at whist, which amounted almost to a point in every rubber in the course of the season; his cool calculating skill at making a good book for Newmarket, the Derby, and St. Ledger, and his general good fortune at macao and hazard, were the principal, though precarious and often fatal props, on which he relied for the means of meeting his engagements, in which, we must do him the justice to say, no man was ever more punctual. This species of uncertain and fluctuating rental, however, frequently threw him into difficulties; from which, upon more than one occasion, he had been extricated by the kindness of his cousin, who had been security for him to a large amount, with some of those harpies, whose cypher-signed invitations to the necessitous and inexperienced, may be constantly met with in the daily journals: and yet there are those who, by removing the only restric-

tion which now, in some measure, prevents these monsters, would willingly let them loose unmuzzled on the public. Wretches! who in nine cases out of ten, live to see the victims they have ensnared, either end their miserable days amidst the horrors of a prison, or become the subject of a coroner's verdict; whilst the wide domain, the noble timber, and fertile property which the industry and affection of their ancestors had amassed and bequeathed to them, often become the prey of some vile attorney, of whom, in most cases, these wretches are the infamous lurchers.

Added to a very handsome person, Alfred Milton possessed the most artful disposition and consummate knowledge of the world. He could adapt himself to any situation and to every society. He could discuss Cereal laws with the political economist, morality with the virtuous, be serious with the sad, romantic with the sentimental, gay with the lively, and profligate with the vicious;—in short, no one so completely brought to mind

the words addressed by Cicero to the treacherous Catiline:—"Cum tristibus severè; cum remissis, jucundè; cum senibus graviter; cum juventute comiter vivere." His skill in intrigue and success with the fair sex, was as proverbial as his utter want of faith and insincerity in all matters of this kind. The victims of his seduction (the wives and daughters, *as usual*, of friends,) were tracked, toiled, destroyed, and then cast off, with a degree of patience, ingenuity, and cold-bloodedness, surpassing all imagination. He had neither morals, principle, nor feeling, in such cases: and his maxim was, if he could not immediately effect his purpose, to threaten the poor resistant with the loss of her reputation, by merely insinuating, as a secret, that he had been successful, to half-a-dozen friends; or, if she had committed the folly of putting her pen to paper, by publishing her letters: which, by-the-by, in either case, of success or defeat, was sure to ensue.

On seeing his quiet, demure, and downcast look as he entered a room, a stranger was natu-

rally inclined to pity his diffidence and want of self-possession. On observing that he scarcely raised his eye towards the face of the person to whom he addressed himself, and, with head inclined, spoke almost in a whisper, one regretted that so fine a young man should be overwhelmed by such invincible shyness. But his progress was like that of the wily, noiseless, and crouching step of the tiger, when, advancing by imperceptible gradations, and with half-averted head, it prepares to spring with remorseless and deadly gripe upon its victim.

Alfred had early succeeded in obtaining an extraordinary influence over the mind, and possessing himself of the entire friendship and confidence of the open-hearted and unsuspecting Herbert; who, in despite of the caution he received from Lady Milton, (whose eyes had been long opened to her nephew's real character,) and sundry innuendoes conveyed to him by his friends, considered every syllable uttered against his cousin as the effect of envy.

The contrast in the dispositions of these two

young men could not be more strongly defined than the effect produced on each other's mind by their reciprocal behaviour and mutual interchanges of kindness. Every little act of attention or civility, every trifling present received by Herbert, called forth in his heart the warmest sensations of gratitude; and he thought it impossible that he could ever do too much to repay his cousin. On the other hand, Alfred detested his relation, not alone because his prospects in the world were so brilliant, but he envied him his personal and mental qualities, and hated him because he foresaw that his rapid success in society would soon not only render him independent of his assistance, but probably lead to some family connexion, to which he felt that his own circumstances never would permit him to aspire.

From the first period of Herbert's introduction in the world, his cousin had endeavoured, by every means in his power, (and from motives which will appear hereafter,) to lead him artfully into all kinds of expense and extra-

vagance: he introduced him into every place and into every species of society the most calculated to corrupt his mind and drive from his heart those admirable principles which it had been the constant study of his excellent mother and virtuous tutor to graft upon his mind; and this was done under the specious pretext of deterring him, by force of example, from those errors which his wily cicerone was so anxious he should fall into. But his plans were fortunately rendered abortive by the steadiness and firmness of Herbert, who luckily took his cousin at his word; and learning to profit by the examples of profligacy and vice which he met with, to the annoyance of Alfred, increased his prudence and circumspection, and completely escaped the snare.

Alfred Milton had too much calculation and knowledge of the world, not to foresee the perilous situation into which he had been gradually drawn by his own extravagance; he felt assured, that if he continued his present expensive style

of living, a crisis must sooner or later take place, and he had neither strength of mind nor inclination to attempt a reform.

It was in vain that he exercised his genius, fertile in resources, to provide means to avert the approaching evil. To raise much more money would be impracticable: he had been compelled during a succession of years to make enormous sacrifices: he had already often submitted to the infamous, though not uncommon, exactions and insatiable cupidity of the Jews, to whom he was obliged to have recourse. Already he had been driven to the alternative of failing in his engagements, or of receiving a portion of the sums he raised, either in paving-stones, Roman cement, whales' blubber, or antiquated piano-fortes; which valuable commodities were of course taken off his hands by the accommodating Israelites, at a loss of forty per cent., and these sums, in addition to the usurious interest, immense premium, and not less exorbitant and villanous law charges, were shared

between the rascally attorney and the not less infamous principal.

Alfred's aversion and contempt for this *industrious* class of individuals was invincible ; they were useful, it is true, and necessary to his existence, and he detested them the more from this circumstance ; and consequently treated them with the most sovereign insult and disdain. It mattered little to him whether he behaved with politeness or brutality towards them ; he knew that rank, manners, promises, or feeling, were alike indifferent to these fellows, and that he must pay, dearly pay, for their services.

His conduct upon one of these occasions, though it gave rise to a ludicrous incident, excited the surprise of Herbert, who, fortunately ignorant of the nature of these men and their proceedings, accompanied him to the residence of one of these individuals, situated in a dark and obscure street in the vicinity of the Adelphi.

The natural inclination of the younger Mil-

ton's mind was to be courteous and polite to every one ; and as he followed his cousin up the dismal and dirty stairs which conducted them to the Jew's office, he ventured to suggest to Alfred that it would be but civil to ring the bell. Without taking any notice of this remark, the latter merely kicked with his foot against the door, flung it open, and walked up to the table with his head covered ; whilst Herbert, following with his hat in his hand, felt his blood chilled when he found himself in the black and ill-lighted den, surrounded with musty parchments, deeds, calculations of interest, three or four half empty tin-boxes, worn out rush chairs, leaden inkstands, and all the paraphernalia of the man's calling. Nor was he less struck by the artful, sombre, and avaricious expression of the countenance of this moving philosopher's stone ; a countenance which might have rendered that of Shylock a very model of charity and benevolence.

Rapping the desk where the man was sitting with his umbrella, Alfred exclaimed without

farther preface: "Schwartz, I want some money!"

"Ach, mein Gott!" rejoined the little German Israelite, "dat is vat all die young gentlemen vants."

"D—n the young gentlemen!" returned Alfred; "I must have a thousand pounds on Monday, before twelve o'clock."

"Vat zegurities can you gif mir, Mr. Milton? Is it landed or vunded vat you can gif?"

"Neither, you leech," answered Alfred; at the same time quietly tossing the papers by which the man was surrounded, in every direction round the room, with a jirk of his glove.

"Neider," rejoined the other, quietly and methodically picking up the scattered documents; "neider! den it is marrige seddlemenz, or leazhold, or gopyholt, or your banker's agzeptance."

"You are out still, you vampire!" was the reply of the borrower.

"Bampires or not bampires," answered the

Jew, " I vish you vouldn't use dem ogly names, Mr. Milton ; we can't do noting mitout some zegurities."

" My bill at three months, will that do ?" demanded Alfred.

" Pills," answered the money-lender : " Gott pless you, my dear sir ! pills ! vy vat'is pills ? Mere vaste papers. I've got as much of dem tings here as vould fill a vagen. Upon my word, pills is not wort two-pence ; die pest pills, die most resbectable agzeptance is not wort a farding ; dere's such a sgarcity of monies in die marget. But dere's your freund, if he's a man of property, can't he go joint zegurities ? von't he have got some blate, some bictures, or someding vat's dangible ? Upon my zoul, I vish to aggomodate you, but I have not got a farding my own selfs."

" I am come here for money, little Schwartz," now observed Alfred, " and not to listen to your stale cant and stupid humbug ; therefore make no difficulties, I know what *you* are at ;

but money I want, and money I must have—the bill must be done.”

“Gott pless you ! my dear Sir,” replied the Israelite, with a hypocritical voice, “if I was to gif fifty per zent, I could not yet monies mitout de zegurities.”

“Nonsense !” exclaimed Alfred, “you know I never failed in an engagement in my life, and my cousin here will accept my bill ; you know he backed my last piece of paper, and was my security for the sums I raised.”

“Hugh !” answered the Jew, “*das ist was anders*, dat is a very worty gentlemans ; dat is very good zegurities, as coot as die Pank. But wat shall you gif for the pizness ?”

“Fifteen per cent.” rejoined Alfred, “and I should think that is sufficient to satisfy the blackest raven of all your brood.”

“Fifteen per zent.” returned the other after a little consideration, “by Gott ! I wish to sarve you ; but den you know you most dake some of the monies in goots.”

“Goods! you little villain,” exclaimed Alfred, “not a penny in any thing but bank notes; no, no, I have already lost enough by your log-wood, steam-engines, and patent coffins. I must have the whole in money; I will therefore give you a bill at three months for eleven hundred and fifty pounds, and you must deliver me the remaining thousand on Monday.”

“Vat, you dink I carry Mr. Rothschild’s gelt in my pocket,” answered the Hebrew,—“by Gott! I wish to sarve you—but you must have die goots. I said I had no gash myself—I wish I had, by Gott! Well, you make it twelve hundred, and I will see my brincipal; a very warty gentlemans, but he is not in town.”

“Hang your principal!” exclaimed Alfred, “I should like to cane you both together. If it were possible to find a greater rogue than yourself in the world, he is the man. I know him; I know the usurer—your principles and your principal are worthy of each other.”

During this speech, the little Jew evinced

evident symptoms of uneasiness, he rolled his black glimmering eyes around, coughed, hemmed, and endeavoured to drown the sound of Alfred's voice by his exclamations of "Gott almightiz, don't apuse my brincipal, he is a very excellent gentlemans, a very werty gentlemans, a very good gentlemans !"

A slight noise, which appeared to proceed from behind the skreen drawn across the angle of the Jew's office, now attracted the attention of the young men; and Herbert, who had witnessed with astonishment the dialogue between the two high contracting parties, was not less surprised to see his cousin coolly take up the large well-filled leaden inkstand, and merely crying, "A rat!" pitch the implement over the skreen, where it was heard first to resound, as if it had come in contact with some hollow substance, and then bounded upon the floor. Schwartz, who perceived Alfred's object, hastily attempted to arrest his hand, but in his eagerness he stumbled over one of his tin boxes, and

throwing down the skreen disclosed the *principal*, who had been during this time concealed in the corner.

To the amusement of Alfred, this personage, who was no other than Sir Jarvis Jacob, now appeared, his white hair stained and drenched with the ink, which, trickling over his face and waistcoat, poured down upon his well-cleaned leathers; whilst spitting, sputtering, and wiping his mouth, he was endeavouring to clean his face from the fatal dye.

Upon the discovery of this individual, who looked as foolish as he was filthy, Alfred calmly approached close to him with his hands behind his back, and then looking him in the face with the most consummate contempt exclaimed: "So, you, Sir, are the honourable gentleman, you are the worthy principal that is out of town! eh! You detestable usurious listener, leave the room as you are. Fly, you mean spy,—fly!" and taking up the Knight's shallow coachman-like hat, he flung it in his face, and pointing to the door added, "Not a word,

Sir Usurer!—march ; and think yourself fortunate that your insignificance protects you from my cane. If you were a gentleman, you should answer for this elsewhere, but I shall content myself with exposing you to the regiment to which you are a disgrace;”—and without permitting the abashed Sir Jarvis to utter a word, he followed, rather than pushed him towards the door, and, slamming it in his face, returned with the greatest calmness to complete his negotiation.

The money-lender, who in the mean time had expressed the greatest perturbation and alarm in his manner, and expected that Alfred's anger would next turn upon himself, no sooner saw the door closed upon his very worthy “brincipal,” and that Alfred was perfectly calm, than he burst out into a long and loud fit of laughter, and exclaimed: “Sarve him right, by Gott! Ach! die screens was no zegurities! Oh, he is a tamn Jew! Dere is no doing nothing mit such a man!”—and then, after numerous *pour parlers*, at length yielded to Alfred's

proposal. The stamp was provided, the acceptance given, and the money promised at the appointed time, whilst the two young men, as they retired down-stairs, heard him still laughing and repeating to himself: "Sarve him right! vat a tamn Jew! vish he vas hos-vipt."

Alfred was well aware that he might rely upon his cousin's assistance, as long as the latter had any security to offer; but this resource must soon fail, since the kind-hearted Herbert had already mortgaged for this purpose the greater portion of the reversion settled upon him by his maternal grandfather.

Alfred had frequently turned his thoughts towards matrimony; he looked upon marriage as the sheet-anchor by which he purposed to ride out the gale, and repair the dilapidations of his fortune.

No one could be more eminently successful in the higher circles, but here, unhappily, the fortunes of the daughters were not in any degree commensurate with the ambitious views of their

parents, and still less in accordance with those of the suitor; therefore he turned his eyes towards a less brilliant but more substantial class, flattering himself that it would be always in his power to introduce his wife into the same fashionable society he himself frequented. He, however, found himself constantly repulsed by the cold formality, overpowering civility, but steady protests, of the sugar-bakers, soap-boilers, or scriveners, (for thus he christened all the respectable merchants and bankers,) a large portion of some of whose fortunes he determined, through the medium of their daughters, to appropriate to himself. These worthies permitted him to drink as much of their champagne, and eat as many of their dinners as he thought proper, but they were uniformly firm in defeating the object he had in view.

Emily Manby had for a time been marked out by Alfred as a valuable prize, but upon calculating the amount of her income, and upon finding it secured against all dangers, he renounced his project upon her as unworthy of

his ambition and unequal to his wants; circumstances had moreover come to his knowledge, which would render her infinitely more serviceable to him in another view. Having been defeated in his project of marriage, he now turned his thoughts towards India: a gleam of light burst upon him, and he prepared himself to play a desperate game, which, if successful, would crown his utmost desires, and in the event of failure, could not render his position more unfavourable than it was already. He knew well that Sir Herbert Milton's fortune was entirely at his own disposal, and that, with the exception of his cousin, there were no immediate connexions to whom the Baronet was likely to bequeath his large property. For some years he had carried on a correspondence with his uncle, and he resolved to adopt this interchange of letters as the medium for his operations. With that consummate artifice and duplicity which had already found so many victims, Alfred determined to put every engine into play to obtain a firmer footing in

his uncle's confidence, and to insinuate himself into his esteem, hoping eventually either entirely to ruin and supplant his cousin, or, at least, to share largely in his future fortune. It required no small degree of calculation, cunning, and method, to attain this object. It was necessary to indispose the father against the son, and to excite the son to adopt such a line of conduct as must infallibly ruin him in the opinion of his father. The enterprize presented no few difficulties, but he was not to be discouraged, and he considered his scheme infallible; especially as the distance which separated him from his uncle would preclude the possibility of Sir Herbert's obtaining a true insight into his character, and prevent his ascertaining the real state of his affairs, and the veracity of his assertions. His operations were commenced by throwing out obscure hints and insinuations respecting his cousin, which he thought could not fail to awaken suspicion, and excite a certain degree of distrust and irritation in the mind of the austere father, against a son

whom he only knew by reputation. Alfred, however, at the same time artfully affected to excuse Herbert's faults, and the extravagance which he had the assurance to attribute to him as the errors incidental to a young and inexperienced man, arising more from the flattery and temptations of the world, and from the indulgence of his mother, than from any defect in his cousin's disposition. His letters were the most perfect models of morality, prudence, and disinterestedness, and he had the satisfaction to discover, in due time, that his uncle had completely fallen into the snare.

Deceived by the honourable and prudent sentiments which these letters displayed, as well as by the zeal and respect shown for himself, and the interest he appeared to take in his cousin, Sir Herbert warmly expressed his satisfaction to his nephew, and urged him to a continuance of his observations on his son, to whom, as well as Lady Milton, he conveyed indirect hints of dissatisfaction. More he could not venture to

do, as he had been earnestly intreated by Alfred not to make any disclosure of his sentiments to Lady Milton or her son, as it might lead to coldness, and want of confidence on the part of his cousin, which might render Herbert averse to listen to the prudent counsels which he was so anxious to bestow upon him. Alfred was also well aware that ambition was one of the leading features in his uncle's character, and that Sir Herbert had frequently hinted at his disinclination to retire entirely from public life. The Baronet considered himself certain of a seat in the Court of Directors, but he wished, through the medium of the House of Commons, to obtain a place also at the Board of Control.

Alfred eagerly seized upon these distant hints of his uncle, and resolved to lay a snare for the Baronet, which, if it succeeded, must produce the result of placing Sir Herbert under heavy obligations to him; at the same time, he was not unmindful that, although Sir Her-

bert was often extremely liberal, yet the idea of squandering money, even for his own political advantage, was looked upon by him as a crime. It had long been Alfred's anxious desire to obtain a seat in Parliament, more with the view of securing his own person from the *desagremens* of a spunging-house, than from any other advantage which he expected to reap; but the matter now appeared to him in a very different light, and fortune favoured his projects in a manner totally unlooked for.

After a night of deep play at the club, Alfred (when the party broke up) found his bowl and pockets overflowing with *pony* and *rouleau* counters, and upon squaring his accounts down stairs he discovered that the principal sufferer was a young nobleman, his particular friend. This was a circumstance the more fortunate, since the peer, though he possessed a noble estate, and, above all, considerable borough interest, was as much in want of ready money as himself. Pocketing the counters, instead of delivering them as

usual to the steward of the house, he returned home, where, before he rose in the morning, he received a note from the loser, earnestly requesting a few weeks delay. Alfred immediately answered this note in person, and, with the air of a man who is conferring the utmost obligation, proposed at once to cancel the debt, if his noble friend would consent to return him, or any person he (Alfred) might nominate, to Parliament for two successive sessions. This proposition was gladly and even thankfully received by the peer; the whole of the counters were delivered into his possession, and a mutual and solemn engagement of secrecy, under a heavy penalty, entered into by both.

No sooner did Alfred feel himself secure of being returned at the ensuing and almost immediate dissolution, than he forthwith wrote to his uncle; acquainted him that he had for several years been endeavouring to obtain a preponderating influence in the borough of ——, situated in the family county; that at length the purity of his political principles, his at-

tachment to the constitutional but monarchical rights of his country, and the independence of his sentiments upon several most important questions, had placed him in the proud and flattering situation to which he had so long directed his views. He also added, that he had taken advantage of the fortuitous circumstances which presented themselves, because he had observed the indifference and apathy of his cousin upon the subject, and concluded his letter by saying: " My great object in effecting this important measure has been solely for the purpose of securing a seat for a man whose genius, talents, integrity, and political knowledge, would render his return to Parliament a real blessing to his country; I shall, therefore, merely look upon myself as my respected uncle's *locum tenens*: I have, in fact, made this stipulation with my constituents, and I shall consider myself as a benefactor to the nation, if, on your return to England, you permit me, in your favour, to accept the ' Chiltern Hundreds.' "

The plan succeeded beyond his most sanguine wishes. Sir Herbert not only accepted his offer with every mark of gratitude and esteem, but accompanied his letter with more substantial proofs of his regard; and Alfred could not help smiling when he unfolded his uncle's order for a thousand pounds, which the worthy Baronet hoped would not offend the delicacy of his nephew.

Whilst, however, Sir Herbert was delighted with the zeal, activity, and enlightened views of his nephew, he felt hurt, and even deeply irritated, at the indifference and apathy of his son, who, in fact, was utterly ignorant of his cousin's plans until the very eve of the election, when Alfred had the audacity to entreat Herbert to assist him in raising a sum of money, which sum was destined to play the most treacherous part against himself.

There existed in the mind of Sir Herbert Milton a most singular contrast,—a contrast which rendered him a much easier subject for the success of Alfred's machinations. With

the most profound judgment, consummate good sense, and perfect knowledge of finance, diplomacy, and history, he was as ignorant as an infant of the usages and intrigues both of private and political life at home. This ignorance was in a great measure the result of his having quitted England at an early age, as well as from his retired habits, the limited number of his correspondents, almost all official, and the particular bent of his own character. His rules of conduct for private and public life were grounded on the most rigid and austere principles, and drawn up with the most mathematical precision. The slightest deviation from the established line was considered by him as an unpardonable crime; judging the world by the rectitude of his own honourable principles, he made no allowance for the failings of others, and felt still less inclined to pardon the corruption of the age.

Sir Herbert's attachment to the monarchy, and his admiration of the government of his

country, were not inferior to his respect for the members of our two legislative chambers ; and he looked upon a knight of a shire as a being not to be exceeded in merit, except by an individual of the Upper House. The little initials M.P. attached to a man's name, were, in his ideas, the distinctive attributes of probity, independence, genius, and patriotism ; and, in his mind, the opinions and characters of a member of Parliament ought to be considered by the world as immaculate as his person was in fact sacred. He did not conceive it possible that the enlightened gentlemen and yeomen of England could ever honour with their suffrages, or elevate to this flattering distinction, any man whose virtues and talents were not of the first order.

He had no more idea of the intrigues, corruptions, feastings, and exactions, put in motion previous to an election, than he had of the mines of wealth, perjuries, and threats, employed during its continuance. He never dreamt of the animosities, jealousies, and dissensions, the

expulsion of tenants, the oppression of tradesmen, the unnatural hatreds engendered between near relations, or of the still more unholy abuses of religion, called forth by this periodical though necessary pest. In short, the man who obtained a seat in St. Stephen's, was in his opinion of a superior class of beings, and, consequently, his nephew at once rose in his estimation to the highest possible level.

Not satisfied with his previous success, Alfred took immediate advantage of another circumstance. He knew his uncle's hatred to the Manbys, though most unjust, was invincible; he knew that Sir Herbert would immediately take fire at the bare mention of his son's attachment to Emily; consequently, the first fleet to India conveyed hints and surmises on the subject, accompanied with a thousand hypocritical expressions of regret and surprise. Although Herbert had not made any confidence of his attachment for Emily to his cousin previous to his departure, Alfred had enter-

tained strong suspicions of the fact: and, for the purpose of ascertaining the truth, transferred Perez to the service of his cousin; through whose agency the matter was at once revealed to him,—the whole of Herbert's correspondence being delivered into his hands by the treacherous Spaniard, which circumstance led to the results we have before described. At the same time, it is but justice to Alfred to state, that he was utterly ignorant of the man's murderous intentions; and although he had supplied him with money on his return to England, as some compensation for the loss and degradation he had sustained in executing his orders, yet the idea of so atrocious a crime had never presented itself to his imagination; and this appeared, without doubt, to be the real truth, from the confessions of Perez at a later period. In short, before Herbert returned from Spain, Alfred had fully succeeded in obtaining, not only the confidence and esteem of his uncle, but in poisoning the mind of Sir

Herbert against his son, which was evident from the style of Sir Herbert's letters to Lady Milton, who was utterly unable to account for this evident displeasure on the part of her husband, as the name of Emily never once was mentioned in his letters, though he hinted at his son's having formed acquaintances with individuals, whose intimacy must eventually bring ruin upon him, and disgrace upon his family.

Thus far every thing had succeeded to the utmost wishes of Alfred, and nothing now remained for the completion of his scheme, but, on the return of Herbert to England, to persuade him to marry Emily, without consulting Sir Herbert, and to induce Miss Manby to consent to such a proceeding. It was necessary, however, that he should appear neutral in the affair, and that he should contrive to effect this matter by the assistance of other persons, upon whom neither the anger of his uncle, nor the vengeance of Herbert, could have any effect. For some time he balanced in his

choice, but at length selected two individuals, upon whose assistance he thought he might securely rely: both were different in their characters and dispositions, but both equally useful. The one was intimately acquainted with Emily, and entertained the greatest regard and friendship for Herbert; the other was equally devoted to himself. The first possessed the most kind and feeling heart, and was as incapable of a dishonourable action as she was remarkable for her wit, humour, and good-nature; but she was thoughtless and volatile beyond measure,—always eager to afford pleasure and amusement to others without considering the results. The second was replete with artifice, ambition, intrigue, and want of heart, rarely inclined to acts of kindness unless they should prove beneficial to herself, and coolly concocting mischief with the most calculating forethought. Over this latter personage Alfred possessed the greatest control; she was his confidant, and had often lent herself to schemes which redounded as little to the

credit of her morality and sensibility, as they did to his honour and principles. The one was the Baroness Geigenklang, the other the Lady Catesby, whom we shall beg to introduce to our readers in the following chapter.



CHAPTER VIII.

MADAME DE GEIGENKLANG was an English lady of large fortune, of the most amiable and fascinating manners, and of the highest fashion ; her balls, parties, and musical *soirées*, being the rendezvous of the most select and distinguished society, both native and foreign, and the object of every young man's ambition. Next to Almack's, these treats were more *recherché* than any thing of the same nature in London, where the Baroness herself contributed not a little to the pleasure and amusement of her guests. She was the only daughter of a rich and eminent merchant, who, having amassed a splendid fortune, yielded to the intreaties of his child,

and, quitting the sombre and dismal alleys of the city, purchased a noble estate, a seat in parliament, and a capital mansion at the west end of the town. Miss Cranbourn,—who was well connected on the maternal side, possessed a beautiful face, lovely figure, and was as remarkable for the grace of her dancing, as for her skill in music,—gradually obtained a first-rate position in the fashionable world. In those days, fortunately for many aspirants of both sexes, this elevation was a matter of greater facility than at present. That awful and powerful inquisition, that holy office in King Street, from which there is no appeal, had not yet sprung into existence ; consequently the merits and progress of each forthcoming youth or damsel did not depend upon the capricious judgment of half-a-dozen female Charons, in case of whose refusal to ferry a man over the Styx of Fashion, he had much better *plier baggage*, and content himself with the rustic amusements of Russel Square and its vicinity, or trust his success to the Beaux Nash of Cheltenham and Bath.

Suitors of all ranks had presented themselves for the hand of Miss Cranbourne, but hitherto her thoughts had been more intent on the gaieties and amusements of the world, than on the serious cares of domestic life. Her hour of subjection, however, at length arrived, and she found herself suddenly attacked by some of those twitches and twinges, that species of *tic douloureux*, or rather *aigre-doux*, which are some of the infallible symptoms of a love fever.

The cause of these sensations was the young and handsome Baron de Geigenklang, a *Tyrolean* nobleman, who had been introduced at her house, where might always be seen the most distinguished and illustrious foreigners whom speculation, politics, or curiosity attracted to England. The Baron, whose attachment for Miss Cranbourne was not at all diminished by the charms of her large fortune, found it a matter of much greater facility to obtain the fair lady's consent than that of her father, who continued unmoved, in despite of the prayers and intreaties of the lovers.

Mr. Cranbourne, like many other of our countrymen, had imbibed among other *vulgar* national prejudices, the most rooted aversion to his daughter's marrying a foreigner ; he lost all patience at the idea of his hard-earned consols and the produce of his broad acres passing into the hands of a stranger. Submitting to, rather than uniting in, the wishes of his daughter, he consented to his drawing-rooms being converted into a species of Babel, where he had some difficulty, from the mixture of tongues around him, and his ignorance of every language but his own, to communicate with any of his guests ; but he looked upon all this assemblage of princes, dukes, counts, barons, marquises, and chevaliers, clothed with high-sounding and never-ending names (which clothing is often the extent of their wardrobe) as a set of adventurers, who flock towards our island, with the very disinterested purpose of picking up some of those immense fortunes, which they have heard it merely requires a little dancing, a little singing, a small proportion of flirting, curly

hair, and an affectation of constitutionalism and anti-catholicism, to carry off and appropriate to themselves. No man had more perfect esteem and deference for the hereditary nobility of our own country than Mr. Cranbourne, and he would have rejoiced to have found his name engrafted on some noble genealogical tree of indigenous growth; but nothing annoyed him so much as the thought of his child being disguised under a name that nearly dislocated his jaw to pronounce, and he sickened at the prospect of the fruits of his labour and economy being at some future period expended in clearing out the moat of some German prince's *schloss*, rebuilding the pigeon-house of some French count's rambling *château*, or in defraying some of the carnival expenses of an Italian marquis.

Mr. Cranbourne well knew that England was considered, in many parts of the Continent, as a never-failing resource, a species of El Dorado, for the junior branches of that superabundant nobility, which, in many instances, is so Iudi-

crously numerous, so far exceeding the nomenclature of any Christian calendar, that it is absolutely necessary to have recourse to numbers, like the bridegrooms in "*Les Petites Danadiés*," in order to distinguish them from each other. He was aware that, in defiance of their eternal *jactance* and praise of the purity of their climate, the brilliancy of their native sun, and the merits of their kitchen, that they would gladly endure the hardship of beefsteaks, the scorchings of port wine, and all the trachial and catarrhal miseries of our fogs, damps, and cloudy skies, if they could but bask in the glowing reflection of some of those golden mines, which have excited their cupidity, and of which, in their own country, they have such very limited and contracted notions.

Mr. Cranbourne was determined, if possible, that his daughter should escape the miseries which the sentimentality, or rather the unnatural fondness for every thing foreign, whether it were a man or a mantua-maker, had entailed upon other of her countrywomen; and his pre-

judices were strengthened by witnessing the unfortunate results of many of these unions. He had nobly given his thousand pounds towards the Portuguese subscription, he had added a large sum to collections for the sufferers by Swiss avalanches, Hanoverian inundations, conflagrations in Canada, explosions in Flanders, fevers in Holland, and no one ever was more active in his efforts to afford relief or assistance to the Society for Foreigners in Distress; but his blood curdled at the thoughts of his house being converted into a receptacle for all the needy relations of his daughter's husband, who, to evince their gratitude for the kindness, hospitality, and almost ludicrous generosity they have met with, return to their country and forthwith either publish the most libellous and disgusting works against the land where they have been received with so much hospitality, or make it a point of uttering the most abominable falsehoods and calumnies against individuals whose only error consisted in lending them money never to be re-

paid, or in giving them food and raiment when they were penniless and starving. In fine, until the hour of his death, nothing could induce Mr. Cranbourne to yield upon this point, and his daughter, who had too much respect and sincere attachment for her parent to permit her taking any steps without his consent, resolved to sacrifice her own affections, and to await the period when she should be her own mistress.

This event occurred sooner than she expected or desired ; her worthy parent having unfortunately taken a cold in returning from the House of Commons, which ended in his death, and in due time, in the marriage of Miss Cranbourne with the young Baron.

With few exceptions, the Baroness was now perhaps one of the happiest persons in the world, and had no other drawback to her felicity but occasionally some little fits of jealousy, when her husband remained too long behind the scenes at the Opera, or when she herself was too ill to attend at a public break-

fast at Buxton House, or when some *prima donna* who had promised to sing at her concert, chose to be indisposed, and sit provokingly silent in a corner. She was excessively fond of what she called "bringing people together." Nothing afforded her so much pleasure as a flirtation; as she was convinced that it made the individuals themselves perfectly happy (though not less ridiculous) during its existence, and afforded her no small amusement in watching its progress, and shooting forth her own little satirical remarks on the occasion.

To this lady, Alfred made up his mind to intrust that part of his plan which merely embraced the marriage of his cousin and Emily, without of course divulging his motives. Not so, however, with Lady Catesby, whom he destined as his principal agent, and to whom he meant to recount all his plans boldly; whether he acted prudently, may be judged from the difference between the character of his two friends. Her Ladyship had been much less

scrupulous than the Baroness in pleasing herself, and although without any of those advantages of fortune, had risen by a concatenation of circumstances, to a place not less distinguished in society, though far different in public opinion.

She was the daughter of a clergyman residing on the north-western coast of England, and had completed her education abroad, where she imbibed that laxity of principle, which, on her return to her native country, exposed her to the machinations of a military officer, to whose arts she fell a victim; and who having neglected her, she eventually succeeded in marrying his superior, who left her at his death, soon after, in the possession of a very considerable fortune.

Her weeds sat lightly on her brow, and at the age of twenty it was evident that the future occupied a greater portion of her thoughts than the past: ambition, and the desire of advancing herself in society, had taken the place of every softer sentiment, and she looked

forward with confidence to some new alliance, which should place her in that sphere of life in which she was desirous of moving. In short, her cards were so admirably played, that she quickly turned the head of Sir Laurence Catesby; and, in the eighteenth month of her widowhood, once more entered into the solemn engagement to love, cherish, and obey a man whom in fact she determined to rule, command, and hate, as soon as she found herself established at the head of his household.

Sir Laurence was a man of high character, holding an important situation under government: so far Lady Catesby's desires were gratified, but she soon gave evident proofs to her fond and doating husband, that the thoughts of domestic happiness were not among her calculations, and that she married him for any purpose rather than that of ordering his dinners, or nursing her children. Her aim was to shine in the highest circles of fashion, and she little cared what methods she adopted to obtain this object. Chance, however, threw

into her path an ally and assistant whom she little expected, and although the result proved the unceasing theme of discord at home, and in a certain degree the loss of reputation abroad, yet she endured the one with becoming resolution, and was utterly indifferent to the other.

A short time after her first appearance at the Opera, where her striking countenance, and, above all, her novelty, attracted considerable attention, she remarked a young and evidently very fashionable man observing her with particular earnestness, and not less decided symptoms of admiration : this was the food in which her vanity delighted, and she therefore made no attempt to withdraw herself from the fixed gaze of the stranger. Her satisfaction was, however, converted into alarm, when, in a few seconds after Sir Lawrence had quitted the box, the door opened and the same gentleman whom she had seen in the pit presented himself before her. This personage, who was no other than Alfred Milton, very coolly commenced

addressing her, with his usual look, " It is evident from Lady Catesby's surprise, that she has entirely forgotten the individual who had the pleasure of once seeing her in a less agreeable situation."

The colour forsook Lady Catesby's face as she recognised in the person before her, one who had been intimately acquainted with all her former history, and she could scarcely articulate a single word in reply.

" Do not be alarmed, Madam, I beg," continued Alfred, observing immediately that he was right in his conjectures, " though some years have elapsed, yet have I not forgotten the beautiful face which I once saw under different circumstances; and my only object in thus introducing myself, is to offer you my congratulations at your change of fortune, and to promise you, under certain conditions, the most profound secrecy."

It would be impossible to describe Lady Catesby's sensations at Alfred's declaration of his knowledge of her former situation: she

was taken too much by surprise to permit her to deny the fact ; and she at once saw her reputation and hopes of advancing in society, at the mercy of a man whose character she had already heard painted, not in the most favourable light, and already she fancied herself cast down from that place in society which it had cost her so much time and effort to obtain. Agitated and almost fainting with vexation and alarm, she could only answer, whilst tears of passion filled her eyes :—“ I am at your mercy, Sir, and have no right to expect that you should not betray me.”

It is unnecessary to repeat the dialogue which ensued ; we shall merely state that Alfred almost immediately succeeded in pacifying Lady Catesby, and in allaying her fears lest he should divulge the secret which threatened her with such degrading consequences.

Ere the return of Sir Lawrence to the box, his wife had regained all her previous serenity, and she at once introduced Alfred

to the Baronet as an old acquaintance, whom she had known intimately at Malta. From this period there arose the strictest intimacy between her Ladyship and Alfred. Not only did they enter into a species of defensive and offensive alliance, but sentiments were awakened in her heart to which it had hitherto been a stranger; and it was evident to Alfred that he had inspired her with an attachment, if we may be permitted to designate by this name the unhallowed passion which now took possession of her breast.

By the influence and exertions of her new ally, joined to her own intrigues, Lady Catesby gradually succeeded in mounting the slippery steps of fashion; and, at the period we are describing, had nothing farther to desire, though her jealousy of Alfred, and her constant fears of being betrayed by him, rendered her life a continued scene of anxiety, and gave to her manners and countenance an expression of wildness and irritation, which was attributed

by the world to the originality of her disposition. Indeed, Alfred had long been tired with her importunities, and plainly showed that he kept up the intimacy with a view of making use of her on those occasions where he found it necessary to employ a confidante who was completely in his power, rather than from any feelings of regard to her. This she was aware of, and had often broken out into reproaches, which required all the influence Alfred possessed over her to calm and allay. Being latterly engaged in a new intrigue, he had been for some time particularly inattentive to her, and, in fact, had for some weeks neglected to call; but as he now required her services, he made two or three attempts to see her at her own house, where she had the firmness to deny herself to him. However, as Alfred made it a standing rule never to commit himself by writing letters, though he carefully preserved those addressed to himself, he determined to await the *fête champêtre* at Madame de Geigenklang's villa, which was to take

place in a few days, and where he knew he should meet Lady Catesby, and he doubted not he should soon obtain her co-operation, either by flattery or threats; which latter was a weapon he never employed but as a last resource: for he knew that Caspar was not more inextricably bound to the Demon, than the guilty but unfortunate Lady Catesby to himself.

CHAPTER IX.

THE day of the Baroness's *fête*, which was to give Alfred the opportunity of seeing Lady Catesby, and which was so eagerly expected by those who were bidden, and so galling to those who were not invited, at length arrived: Hyde-park, St. James's-street, and the windows of the Clubs, were as forlorn and deserted as if it had been the month of September; a few beaux were alone to be seen skulking along, as if ashamed of their loneliness. The road leading to the goal of pleasure was in the mean time crowded with gay and splendid equipages, hurrying with all the rapidity of life and death towards the spot; their respective owners having put forth all

the force of their stables, and all the splendour and neatness of their households. Here might be seen the semi-modern ducal coach, solemnly rolling after its train of six ponderous black Normans, their tails carefully gathered up, and confined by a profusion of massy buckles and well-polished straps, and their flanks fuming under the weight of their trappings; the box at the same time appearing to groan under the pressure of the huge and important body of the coachman, his vast circumference apparently bursting through the bonds of purple or silver lace by which it was confined, and his round and rubicund visage glowing in all the rosy demonstrations of unlimited October, from beneath a quaint three-cornered hat, and a triple battery of curls; his respectable deputy on the leader, ebbing and flowing in his saddle with the gravity of a senator, now and then mechanically casting his eyes back at the throne of his patron, his head decked with a gold-fringed velvet cap and his body enveloped in a *coatée*, having more the appearance of an ancient tabard than the light and airy jacket

of a modern postilion ; whilst an escort of three outriders, not less remarkable for the retrospective formality of their costume and the formidable size of their holsters, rose and sunk on their horses in front, with the regularity of the pistons of a steam-engine. Next might be observed the neat and fashionable britcka of some wealthy banker's lady, "following" with such lightness and ease as scarcely to require the exertion of the four thoroughbred greys, (apparently attached to it more as a matter of show than necessity,) whose neat and simple black harness, light and compact postilions, with their well-cleaned gloves and leathers, admirably-polished boots, white hats, and striped jackets, preceded by the dapper groom, and guarded by two spruce footmen on the hinder dicky, showed the modern taste and fortune of the owner, and was perhaps emblematic of the rapidity of the lady's elevation in the world. Farther on, the attention and alarm of the spectators were awakened by four or five young men in an

open calcche who were endeavouring to urge their conductors, by dint of extra payment, to take as much as possible out of four of Mr. Newman's posters, paying back with the hurry and importance of cabinet messengers, and urging their blue or yellow jacketed drivers to risk their own necks and the limbs of the passing passengers, by the unnecessary and cruel rapidity of their speed. Then might be seen the simple but exquisitely-built chariot of some Peer, who, with affected contempt and indifference for all the pomp of heraldic bearings, exhibited no other symbol of his rank than a small and almost imperceptible coronet on the dark-green pannel; whilst a pair of high-stepping roans, driven by a coachman in a plain dark-grey frock, unadorned hat, and attended by a footman not less unassuming in his attire, gave sufficient proof that this simplicity had cost the noble inmate more intense study and calculation, and that there was no less vanity in the getting up of this laboured simplicity, than there would have been in the display of

splendour more in union with his rank and fortune. Intermixed amidst a string of cabriolets, post-chaises, and vehicles of various descriptions, one might easily distinguish the equipage of some second-rate foreign minister, by the large, coloured cockades, the glazed hats, and the mixture of filth and finery of the servants — not to forget the countless display of crosses, crests, mottoes, and quarterings emblazoned on the pannels of an ill-built chariot, the raw-boned jobs disguised in dull harness, together with that complete want of neatness and *ensemble* which is so perfectly characteristic of a foreign “turn out.” In short, the road to ——— and thence to the Baroness’s villa, was one continued cavalcade of animated splendour; and ere the guests had arrived at Beau Regard, and had been welcomed by the respectable Townshend, they had already enjoyed to repletion all the prefatory dust, hair-breadth escapes, scratched pannels, and admiration, which are the usual forerunners of these entertainments.

Every accessory which taste could devise or wealth procure was put into requisition by the Baron and his Lady to render this fête one of the most distinguished of its kind; nothing was omitted which could afford amusement or gratification either to the eyes or palates of the guests; whilst Nature, who so often evinces her caprice and ill-humour on such occasions, was kind enough to withhold her wonted accompaniment of rain. The walks and greenswards presented no danger for the thinnest shoe or most delicate constitution; and the hair of the fair guests continued as "crisp" and compact on their brows as though they had that moment been liberated from the hands of Plaisir or Truefit. Smiling faces and a cloudless sky, laughing eyes and bright sun-beams, might be seen in all directions, and it appeared as if every individual of the party had shaken off their sorrows and chagrins for the day. Corn Bills and Catholic Questions seemed to be forgotten by the senator; the stiffest and most myste-

rious diplomatists unbent their brows, and ceased to occupy themselves with the thought of Carbonaris and Constitutionals. Bankers kept their hands out of their pockets, and even the great Golden Bull of the city appeared pleased at exchanging for a few hours the sight of the black and mammon-like visages of his Israelite brethren, for that of the lovely countenances of the Christian damsels who were smiling around. The situation of Beau Regard, and the fine views which it commanded over the distant country, were well worthy of its name, and augmented in no small degree the beauty of the scene in the eyes of those who could spare a few moments from the serious operations of flirting and eating, to admire the prospect.

The mansion was built about midway on the gentle declivity of a range of hills, which, sinking gradually to the right and left, formed a species of sylvan amphitheatre round a portion of the park and grounds, and then lost themselves in the neighbouring vales. It was

completely skreened from the eastern and northern winds by massive clumps of forest trees, or belts of thriving plantations, which fringed the ridges of the eminences above, or feathered the gullies and undulations which intersected their flanks. A large sheet of water, so well contrived and disposed as to represent a natural river, flowed at the farther extremity of the park, where several head of cattle, half immersed in the stream, were seeking coolness and refreshment from the heat of the day; whilst a herd of deer were reposing amidst the fern which clothed its banks, tossing their antlers and agitating their ears to protect them from the flies. The beautiful and admirably distributed flower-gardens and pleasure-grounds, which extended in an easy slope to a considerable distance on either side the house, were laid out with the most perfect taste and science, and were divided from the park by a light invisible fence. Every species of indigenous or exotic plant which could attract the eye by the brilliancy of its colours, or delight the sense by the fra-

grance of its perfumes, were classed in distinct masses, or blended together so as to give relief and variety to each other. Here baskets formed of light bark, and suspended by sylvan chains made from the fruit of the pine tree, were filled with several kinds of the most rare and costly geraniums; whilst wreaths of convolvuli, cobæas, and other parasitical plants, twisted their light fibres around their fragile supporters, and gave them the appearance of garlands woven by some fairy hand. Parterres of the most graceful and informal shape intersected the lawns, and were interspersed with marble pedestals supporting classic vases filled with daturas, oleanders, or orange trees in full bloom. On one side, beds of many coloured larkspurs, varying as the tints of the rainbow, or masses of heliotropes, and carnations, were confined by a net work of iron; around which the variegated ivy, creeping jasmine, or eglantine, interwove their slender stems; whilst the passion-flower and papyrus, twisting themselves round the arching handles, flung their light blossoms around

at the mercy of the breeze. On the other hand, baskets of odoriferous tube-roses shot their white and scented blossoms from amidst a mass of dazzling *cardinalis*, whose brilliant crimson flowers concealed the long and barren stems of the tender exotic. Shaded by the pendant branches of the tulip-tree, a statue of Diana caught the spectator's eye, as she stood half concealed amidst a mimic grove of the most costly camelias. Upon an elevated bed, planted with the most rare and brilliant roses, enclosed by a trellis-work of osier, and raised above the surrounding flowers, the God of Love, with quiver full of arrows and bow already bent, stood prepared to lance his weapon from amidst the blossoms.

In the centre of the parterres flowed a cool and bubbling fountain, whose oval basin was composed of spars, crystals, and fragments of various minerals, clothed with flowering lichens and other alpine plants, which had taken root between the interstices; whilst its waters were half concealed by the broad and glossy leaves

of a tribe of nymphaea, whose snow-white blossoms, or yellow buds, were now and then agitated by the gold and silver fish which frisked beneath their shade. Beneath the sweeping branches of an immense cedar, the band of one of the regiments of guards excited the admiration of the guests by the brilliancy and execution with which they performed several morsels of martial music. Farther, within a fantastic pavilion, a troop of musicians, in the habits of Italian virtuosi, called forth shouts of applause, as they accompanied some pieces of music arranged for the occasion, with the sounds of penny trumpets, rattles, bird whistles, and cuckoo calls, which produced a degree of harmony, comic it is true, but inconceivable to those who have not witnessed the effect. Colinet and his minstrels, stationed in a rustic ball-room, attracted those who felt inclined to exercise themselves in the dance, if they did not prefer to remain spectators of a ballet performed by the principal artists of the Opera, in a sylvan theatre erected for the pur-

pose, or to listen to a concert in the mansion, where the most distinguished foreign vocalists were putting forth all the vigour of their science. Beneath a temple dedicated to Pomona, stood Mr. Gunter, (worthy representative of the good old man who so often in our youth rewarded our incipient capers with refreshments from his own hand,) superintending a group of attendants in the costume of Valencian gardeners, who either offered bouquets of fragrant flowers to the sentimental, or more substantial viands to the epicure, from a buffet which was loaded with a profusion of the most delicious and rare fruits. Under the shade of a cool grotto, dressed as a Russian Moujek, stood the ingenious Mr. Jarrin, holding forth the temptations of ices, cool sherberts, and all the other treasures of his art; whilst the Baron's *maître d'hôtel*, as a Vintner from Epernay, was firing a continued *feu de joie* from an inexhaustible battery of champagne in a mimic cabaret. Deeper in the woods, a small band of wind instruments appealed in vain to the attention of

the many, though it was from this spot that the view was most beautiful. Hence the eye wandered over an hundred rich and fertile valleys, teeming with towns, villages, and spires, until it rested on the Surry and Hampshire hills, whose dark blue flanks and chalky summits alternately gloomed in the shade of the fleeting clouds, or glittered for a while ere they melted into flakes of gold and purple, as they mingled with the bright and gorgeous beams of the sun, which appeared resting on their summits. In the intervening space, thousands of villas, churches, and rural habitations, reared themselves like sparkling opals from amidst the trees, shining and glistening like plates of burnished metal, as the rays of the evening illumined their casements.

A singular contrast to this gay prospect was formed by the black and cloud-capped aspect of the vast city, which stretched its ancient, huge, and endless masses of dark masonry over an extent of country which the eye could scarcely embrace; whilst the cupola of the metropolitan

church on one side, and the towers of the abbey on the other, peeping from above the mist, appeared like some huge giant reposing amidst a chaos of rocks, and of whom the head and feet alone were visible. A long and tortuous wreath of light vapour, taking its rise far inland, marked the mazy course of the Thames, as it twined and rolled itself around the Berkshire and Oxford hills, or watered the plains in the vicinity of the city, where for a while it blended itself with its dark mists, and then appeared to the southward, converted into a broad expanse of water, crowded with myriads of masts, or whitened with the sails of numerous nations, wafting the produce and wealth of the world into the very heart of the capital.

But we must return to Alfred, who had been long waiting for an opportunity of conversing with Lady Catesby, and who, to the annoyance of the former, for the first time in her life, appeared to be attacked with a sudden fit of conjugal tenderness, and scarcely quitted her husband's side for ten minutes during the after-

noon. Alfred plainly saw that this access of attachment for Sir Lawrence was not likely to be of long continuance, and he smiled as he saw her Ladyship tormenting herself with listening to what she always considered the prosy observations of the Baronet, whilst she would have given the world to have been waltzing or flirting. "This does not last an hour longer," said Alfred to himself, "or we shall have her fainting with restrained passion. I see she is fighting and working herself into a storm; but lime does not hold a bird more firmly than I hold you, my Lady." He had remarked that Lady Catesby not only avoided him, but that she had received with coolness and ill-humour the few words he had addressed to her during the morning: this, on any other occasion, would have been a sufficient pretext for his getting rid at once of any woman whom he was tired of, but she was necessary to his plans at present, and he therefore resolved to dissemble.

At length the moment he had foretold ar-

rived, and he saw her hastening alone to join a party, who were proceeding to walk round the grounds. Crossing the gardens, he contrived to head her, as a sportsman would say, in such a manner as to prevent her escape ; and as soon as he was at her side, he immediately held out his hand, which she, however, declined ; then, in the softest and most feeling tone, he exclaimed, “ What ! does Laura, I beg her pardon, Lady Catesby, refuse me event his slight mark of friendship ? ” Her Ladyship had watched the expression of Alfred’s countenance, when he uttered these few words ; but she could gather nothing from a face which never betrayed his real sentiments, and which he could, with consummate skill, adapt to the purpose of the moment. “ Have I deserved this ? ” continued Alfred ; “ no, rather say at once you are tired of me ; it would be more honourable to you, more kind to me, Lady Catesby, to confess that you are importuned by my attentions ;—but speak, for God’s sake ! I cannot bear this cold, this cruel suspense.”

After gazing earnestly at his face for some seconds, Lady Catesby answered: "Mr. Milton's conscience must sufficiently inform him that his conduct has deserved no warmer reception. There was a time when his manner was far otherwise; when, although he possessed a secret important to me as my life, yet he did not then treat me with insult and contempt, nor goad me with the degrading recollection of my being at his mercy."

"Dearest Laura," replied Alfred, "your accusations are most unjust; you are dearer, more necessary to me than ever. I own I have been in fault, but I was hurt and piqued at your apparent estrangement, and the preference you seemed to accord to Lord Taunton. Therefore, I confess I did *boudé* a little, being, as you know, too proud to make the first overtures, and I have therefore sighed and suffered in silence."

"Say, rather, that you have been sighing for Miss Manby," retorted her Ladyship; "say that you were only waiting for a pretext to cast

me off, and that you have found another, who, if she fall into your snares, will, in her turn, be forsaken and degraded like myself. But speak, Sir; for once be candid; when is it your intention to expose me? How long is it your good pleasure that I may continue to show myself in the world?"

Alfred plainly saw that jealousy was the principal cause of Lady Catesby's anger, and he flattered himself, with a little exertion on his part, he should soon re-establish himself in her affection; he therefore gently took her hand, pressed it to his breast, and exclaimed, in a voice of assumed emotion, "Oh, Laura, you little know the misery you cause me by your cruel suspicions; have I not given you every proof of my devotion and attachment? How can you suppose for an instant that I could be capable of any act which could disturb your happiness?"

"Deceiver, arch deceiver!" exclaimed Lady Catesby, still leaving her hand in his.

Alfred saw his advantage, and continued:

“ Whilst you, Laura, have been fostering these wicked, cruel suspicions, my only desire has been to consult you on a subject of the deepest interest to us both.”

“ Interest !” rejoined Lady Catesby ; “ what interest can there be in common between us for the future ? you cannot deceive me.”

“ Be patient, for God’s sake !” rejoined the other, “ and you will find that it is a matter of the most urgent importance to us both.”

“ It must, indeed, be a most desperate case, which can induce Mr. Milton to condescend to consult the opinion of a person whom he has thought proper to treat with even more than the wonted insolence and ingratitude with which he is accustomed to repay every favour, every kindness he may have received, let the sacrifices made for him be what they will.”

“ Ingratitude ! Laura ; what can be your meaning ?” exclaimed Alfred, with a forced sigh of tenderness, whilst he was cursing her in his heart ; “ is it thus you receive me, when my object is to draw the bonds which unite us

still more closely; when I am about to ask your advice and assistance? For where can I apply for counsel more appropriately than to Lady Catesby, when skill, prudence, and female charms are required?"

"What new scheme of wickedness has your fertile genius invented?" said Lady Catesby, withdrawing her hand: "who now is to be seduced,—who is to be ruined? What friend's wife or daughter is to be sacrificed? Whose horse is to be dosed? whose jockey to be bribed?"

"Have I deserved this language? can these reproaches flow from your mouth, Laura, with any degree of justice?" replied Alfred: "what, in Heaven! can have produced this sudden gust of passion, or rather what demon?"

"Demon!" rejoined the lady, with a look of bitterness, whilst a tear glistened in her eye; "that demon is yourself, Sir. Is it not enough that I was already sufficiently lost in my own estimation? Was not I sinful enough already, but you must add to my abasement? Is it

not enough that I should have placed myself in your power, that I should have sacrificed the honour of my husband to purchase your secrecy? And yet, forsooth, lie not! you come to insult my misery and increase my shame, by desiring me to participate in some new crime which you are planning."

Lady Catesby had uttered this speech in a manner which plainly convinced Alfred that jealousy and wounded vanity had more to do with her displeasure than repentance or remorse: he therefore replied in the same affected voice: "Indeed, dearest Laura, I am at a loss to imagine to what you allude; what hateful tale-bearer has poisoned your mind against me, and filled your brain with fantasies, which, could I love you more, or was I less hurt, I should either laugh at or resent; but were your suspicions as true as they are unfounded, even then I should not have merited these harsh and cruel remarks."

"What is there you do not merit?" retorted Lady Catesby, who became every moment

more irritated. "Do not pretend to trifle with my feelings any longer. I am well informed of your love, or rather your passion, for Miss Manby; for to call it love, where you are concerned, would be a mockery of the word. What, Sir, even this unfortunate orphan cannot escape you?" added her Ladyship, whose manner betrayed the most violent agitation; "but she shall, Sir; I will protect her—I will warn her against your treachery—I will unravel your plans, and, sooner than you should succeed, I will sacrifice myself, and bid her take warning from my example. She shall learn to hate you as you deserve; you shall become as odious and abhorrent to her, as the veiled prophet to the trembling Zeleika."

Alfred, who was little prepared for this violent resistance on the part of Lady Catesby, though she had often before broken out into fits of passion, had considerable difficulty to restrain his own rising anger; but it was urgent for him that Emily Manby should be persuaded to take the step he wished her to adopt, and as

he knew that she had a great regard for Lady Catesby, of whose character and history the former was ignorant, he determined to yield to her Ladyship's violence, and still endeavoured to soften and tune her to his purpose.

“Indeed, Laura, you do yourself and me the greatest injustice: if love has ever been profaned by me, if I have proved faithless and unkind to others, you, at least, ought not to taunt me with my want of constancy. Who is it, beautiful Laura, who has rendered all her sex indifferent to me; who is it who has enthralled my heart, and for whom have I earned the reputation of being inconstant and volatile? Whose charms have blinded me to the perfections of all other women; for whom have I renounced the splendid marriages which it was in my power to contract; and for whom have I formed and entered into a plot, which, if it succeed, will prove to you, dearest Laura, that for your sake I am ready to sacrifice every tie in life, and that I have no

object in wishing to acquire a large fortune, but that I may participate my happiness with you?"

"Avaunt, tempter!" cried her Ladyship, though evidently much softened by the fervour and apparent sincerity which Alfred threw into his words and manner—"avaunt! there is poison in every syllable which escapes your lips—death lurks in your speech. Woe, woe to the woman who confides in you!"

"Laura, my dear Laura," rejoined Alfred, already aware of the advantage he was gaining; "calm these angry transports, and do not reject my confidence."

"Confidence!" retorted her Ladyship; "every word you utter is fraught with falsehood. What! are you not content with the degree of abasement into which you have cast me, but you must now add to the upbraidings of my conscience, by making me the depository of your infamous schemes upon another—for infamous they must be, whenever a woman is the object of your views?"

Alfred was now beginning to get extremely tired of this scene, and would willingly have thrown her Ladyship over the steep bank where they were standing ; but he determined to make one other effort, ere he resorted to his usual reserve of menaces, which on more than one occasion he had been obliged to bring into action. “Laura,” said he, “this conduct is too cruel ; I plainly perceive it is your object to quarrel with me—be it so ; the day will come when you will learn to appreciate the value of the heart you have rejected. It is unnecessary, it would be useless, for me, under your present state of mind, to attempt to enter into the subject for which I anxiously sought an interview. All I shall therefore say is, I hate and despise Miss Manby,—but now farewell ! we never speak again. May he, for whom you thus abandon and reject me, never give you cause to regret your injustice and maltreatment of the unhappy Alfred—” and then, squeezing a few tears into his eye, he pressed

her hand, and exclaimed "God bless you!" and pretended to turn from her.

Lady Catesby, who was visibly affected by this last effort, ran towards him, placed her hand upon his arm, and looking earnestly in his face, said: "Do you indeed hate Miss Manby? Are you really sincere; are you not deceiving me? Is it not true that you wish to make use of me as a tool, to forward your views upon her? Have you no intention to marry her, or—"

"Marry!" retorted Alfred, interrupting her with a laugh; "marry! I—I, Alfred Milton, marry a sentimental girl, and pass the rest of my days, '*à filer le parfait amour*,' in a cottage! I renounce my liberty and my love for Lady Catesby for an unknown orphan for the sake of a few paltry thousands! How little you know me! how completely you undervalue your own empire over me! No—no, Laura; the lion does not stoop to the mole. Married, it is true, she must be, but not to me."

“What!” rejoined Lady Catesby, whose jealousy again took fire; “married! that you may with less inconvenience add her to the list of those unhappy creatures who have nothing left but to hate the day that first threw them in your way. I was convinced there must be some scheme of this kind passing in your mind.”

“A moment’s patience,” replied Alfred, “and you will find you are mistaken and misinformed; and beware lest I punish your informant; beware lest I revenge this conduct on your new admirer, Lord Taunton, for to him alone I am indebted for this treatment.”

“You may kill the coxcomb on the spot,” answered the lady, “but his death would not alter my opinions; he has told me nothing that I did not know before.”

“I shall take an opportunity,” rejoined Alfred, “of calling your noble lover to account, for thus daring to occupy himself with me. Could not the coxcomb content himself with

his own rapid success with you, Laura—you were wont to have better taste—without meddling in my affairs? But listen a moment, and I will explain my meaning. Miss Manby must be married! nay, start not, and that speedily, to my cousin Herbert!”

“What!” exclaimed Lady Catesby, “must your own family, must your friend, the son of the man from whom I know you have received benefits, the cousin to whom you are so deeply indebted,—must he be selected from all London to bear the disgrace which you intend to heap upon him? This is indeed carrying your ingratitude and wickedness too far. I will have none of your confidence, Sir; I must indeed be lost and degraded, that you can thus dare to make me the depository of such horrible projects.”

“If you imagine, Laura,” rejoined he, “that I have a grain of passion, since you will not allow that I am capable of loving; if you suppose that I entertain a thought of

Miss Manby, in any other light than as a stepping-stone to fortune, you do me wrong, and vilely underrate my talents."

"Then what can be your object? how can Miss Manby, unless you marry her yourself, be in any way instrumental to the advancement of your fortune?"

"Aye, there hangs the mystery," answered Alfred: "but you will see, Laura, that I have more confidence in your discretion, than you have in my morals or genius. Listen: I know Miss Manby loves, has long been attached to my cousin. I have drawn her by degrees to betray the secret, and I am equally aware that Herbert is not less in love with her. I have indeed the certainty of the fact, from his letters, which have all been placed in my possession, through the agency of Perez."

"Perez!" exclaimed Lady Catesby; "what! your old valet?"

"The same," replied Alfred. "Well, it is my ardent desire to see them united, they love each other, and she is comparatively rich. In for-

warding my own views, I insure their happiness, I have there a double motive ; regard for my cousin and my own interest. Besides," added he, " I wish to prove to you, Laura, that I am not the wicked, cold-hearted being which my enemies would persuade you is my nature,—no, marry they must, and then, in completing their felicity, my triumph over my calumniators will be complete. But, to effect this, there are many obstacles to be overcome. Sir Herbert's opposition, and Miss Manby's disinclination to marry Herbert without the consent of his father, not to mention my cousin's absurd prejudices about parental duty, obedience, and all the other goodly sentiments with which he will oppose my plans. But seriously, I have his happiness alone in view."

" You most consummate hypocrite !" rejoined Lady Catesby ; " never did a spark of generosity or kindness enter your brain ; or if it did, you were not then in your senses. But no more of this fooling ; if you wish me to listen a moment longer, throw off the mask at once, declare

your intentions without reserve, or leave me—leave me, for ever !”

“ Well, then, to be plain,” answered Alfred, “ Herbert, you know, is an only son. He stands alone between me and his father’s fortune, though, I flatter myself, I possess a larger share of the old Indian’s favour.”

“ Plain, indeed !” exclaimed Lady Catesby, with a sincere look of alarm. “ Good God ! Sir, you make me tremble at my own thoughts. Perez !” added her Ladyship, meditating a moment,—“ Perez was your servant, he was discharged by your cousin, he received money from you as the price of his treachery, and the accounts of his being attacked and nearly assassinated by this very man at Lisbon were received last night by Mr. Sidney and Lady Milton.”

“ I am as well aware of that as you are,” returned Alfred coolly ; “ I have heard from him myself ; but, indeed,” continued he with a smile of contempt, “ your Ladyship is carrying your joke a little too far, to suppose me capable

of getting up such a melodrame. No, madam, there is no necessity for my recurring to the bare bodkin, though in the event of Herbert's death, or of his dying without children, I should, it is true, inherit his fortune."

"Well, then," exclaimed Lady Catesby, who endeavoured to restrain her alarm, as she felt convinced Alfred was in some measure connected with the attack on Herbert, of which she had heard the details from Sidney,—“ what can be your object in wishing your cousin to marry, and by this means most probably cut yourself off from all chance of the inheritance you covet ?”

“ Nothing can be more simple or more certain,” replied the other. “ In the first place, I know beyond all doubt that my uncle will disinherit his son, the instant he marries Miss Manby ; in the next place, I am acquainted with the names of her parents, which secret is a sufficient guarantee to me, that Sir Herbert never would forgive his son, and that I infallibly step into his shoes.”

“ Good God !” exclaimed Lady Catesby

“ had I not reason to say you were a demon ? By what black art have you discovered a circumstance which baffled all the researches of the Manbys for years ? Are you the Wandering Jew, or Asmodeus ? ”

“ It matters not how I became possessed of this secret,” answered he ; “ suffice it to say, that the knowledge of this circumstance, though it has cost me dear, will amply repay me in the end ; it shall be of more value in my hands than the mystery of the philosopher’s stone itself.”

“ Beware,” cried Lady Catesby, “ most potent alchymist, that you do not perish by the exhalations from your own crucible ! ”

“ Fear not,” continued Alfred, “ and do but lend me your assistance to persuade Miss Manby to accept my cousin with or without his father’s consent ; my fortune will then be made, and your debts as well as my own acquitted ; and surely you will not refuse your aid when you are certain to insure the happiness of your young friend.”

“ I will never lend myself again to any of your schemes, Mr. Milton,” rejoined Lady Catesby, “ unless you declare most fully every previous circumstance, every probable result ; I will not, Sir, commit myself farther in any of your plots, unless my eyes are completely opened to the consequences ; therefore, at once reveal the secret of Emily’s parentage, as well as the results you anticipate from your machinations.”

“ As far as regards Miss Manby,” replied Alfred, “ I fear I must deny your wish. I have sworn, solemnly sworn, never to divulge the secret ; and you well know,” added he, with a significant look, “ I can now and then keep my promises on this head ; for the rest, as I have before said, it is my grand object to induce Herbert to marry Miss Manby without the consent of his father, and it is necessary that you should use all your influence and art to persuade her to consent. You know, moreover, that she is independent ; and although Sir Herbert disinherit his son, they will even then have a very good income.”

“Your plan,” she immediately replied, “is worthy of Machiavelli himself; it is a masterpiece of craft and wickedness, and I had, indeed, undervalued your talent for mischief; but I will tell you fairly, that, unless you at once disclose the secret of Emily’s birth, you must not reckon on my co-operation.”

“Ask not an impossibility,” answered Alfred. “I have not only sworn never to divulge what has been communicated to me, but I am bound by a heavy penalty—the success of my schemes also depends on the concealment of this circumstance—and you, at least, should be the last person in the world who should feel displeased at my proving that there are secrets which I can withhold from my dearest, most confidential friends.”

“So, Sir,” retorted Lady Catesby, “you wish to draw me into a participation of your crimes; you think you may safely make use of me as a blind and willing instrument to advance your fortunes, and yet you withhold from me the most important information, and merely affect

to honour me with half confidences. But you have taught me lessons of caution, Mr. Milton, and I shall therefore adopt your own maxim, of never playing a card without calculating those in your adversaries' hand."

"Laura," rejoined Alfred, "this is too absurd; you are really drawing too largely on my patience—it cannot be—therefore pray carry on this farce no longer. You well know that it is for the interest of both of us that we should continue friends, and your assistance at present is the price of my future friendship."

"And the price of my assistance," retorted Lady Catesby, "is your entire confidence! You know my terms."

"Beware," rejoined Alfred, "that you do not exhaust my good nature!"

"Beware, Sir," replied the lady, "that I do not divulge your infamous connection with Perez;—take care that I do not communicate the whole tissue of your villany to your cousin and Lady Milton!"

"Your Ladyship is at liberty to make what

use you please of the knowledge you have obtained of my affairs; you may, if you judge it prudent, repay my honourable silence, by your treacherous gossip:" and then casting at her a look of mixed disdain and fury, he added, "but beware, woman, how you trifle with the sleeping tiger! a word from your lips, a hint, a look which may disclose my plans, nay more, your refusal to assist them to the utmost of your power, and I forthwith publish your letters in every journal in England; I make known your intrigues, and your former conduct; and we will then see whether the ravings of your virtuous Ladyship will have greater effect with my cousin and the world, than my simple proofs. But I waste my time in talking to a woman, whom I had spared hitherto, because I despised her. You have been, and are useful to me still, madam; improve this ability, or dread the consequences. But enough; I once more caution you to beware, or I shake you off, and cast you into the mire from whence you sprung!"

“ Monster of insolence and ingratitude !” screamed the now almost raving lady Catesby ;
“ I defy your malice ! I scorn your treachery !”

“ As you please, madam,” rejoined Alfred, calmly and scornfully tapping her arm with his cane : “ in the mean time, look narrowly to yourself ; you are in my power, and you shall feel it. You are my victim, and you shall not escape me.” Then, with a short sardonic laugh, he turned upon his heel, darted through the trees, and, arriving at the house by a circuitous path, entered into immediate conversation with one of the groups, with an air of reserve and timidity, as if he were the most shy and awkward person in the universe.

To depict the various emotions of Lady Catesby’s mind after this scene, would be impossible : shame, fear, hatred, and jealousy, racked her bosom ; the violence of her passion was too much for her frame, and she sunk fainting in one of the garden chairs, nor was it for some minutes that she was enabled to totter towards the house, where she immediately retired to the Baroness’s

dressing-room, and, desiring her carriage to be ordered, sent for Sir Lawrence, and then making her excuses to her hostess, was in the course of a short time on her road home.

It would be impossible to present a better moral lesson, or a more forcible warning to all those who are on the eve of plunging themselves into similar immoralities, and disregard of every principle of virtue, than that offered by the wretched Lady Catesby. Who is there that would not pause ere they sacrificed themselves for ever, ere they cast themselves into that awful gulph from which years of repentance cannot redeem their consciences, even if the world shall have forgotten their errors? Who is there who would not shudder at the consequences of guilt, could they but feel for a moment the dreadful agonies which tore the heart of the miserable Laura, rendered still more acute by the gentleness and affectionate manner of her injured husband?

Sir Lawrence was aware that his wife was giddy, unthinking, and vain of her personal charms, but he reposed the utmost confidence and re-

liance on her virtue. He saw she was fond of admiration ; but he trusted that time, and a little experience, would contribute to correct these faults, which he attributed to the flatteries of the world, rather than to any propensity to evil. He had, it is true, ventured to remonstrate with her upon the eternal thirst she exhibited for "going out," but this was done from the fear of her health being injured by the constant round of dissipation in which her days were passed : he had moreover most earnestly intreated her to check the continued attentions of Mr. Alfred Milton, whom he justly represented as a young man of the most dangerous character ; but his remonstrance did not arise from any mistrust in her, but from his dread, lest her reputation should suffer in the opinion of the world, which he well knew is not wont to be over lenient in its judgments on similar occasions. Far, however, from being desirous to control Lady Catesby in the moderate and rational enjoyment of amusements becoming her rank and station, Sir Lawrence

was even pleased and flattered at her success in society, which success he attributed entirely to her own merits and charms. Although his own occupations, and the fatigues of his duties, left him little leisure, and still less inclination for late hours and hot rooms, yet he was anxious that she should obtain a footing in the most select and distinguished society. Indeed, in this matter he evinced a degree of eagerness almost inconsistent with his character and avocations. If a party was announced at Carlton House, or any other place proportionably select, Sir Lawrence was in a perfect fever until the card or note of invitation made its appearance; and it then afforded him considerable gratification in arranging these fashionable passports in a conspicuous position, on the side of the great mirror, over the chimney-piece. In the present instance he evinced the utmost tenderness and sympathy for Lady Catesby; and as she had scarcely quitted his arm for more than half an hour previous to his being sent for to

the Baroness's *boudoir*, he was the more pleased with her for having afforded him (what he mistook for) so great a proof of her attention to his wishes respecting Alfred.

Immediately upon their arrival in Stanhope-street, Lady Catesby retired to her own apartment, told her husband she merely required repose ; and as soon as he quitted the room, she hastily undressed herself, and then, dismissing her attendants, fastened the door, and gave way to all the bitterness of her feelings, which were still more acute from her having endeavoured to suppress her agitation during their drive to town.

For some time the unhappy lady continued pacing up and down her chamber with a hurried step, alternately bursting forth in torrents of convulsive tears and sobs, or uttering a short hysteric laugh, still more torturing to her bosom. The guilt of the past, the horror of the present, and her dread of the future ; the remembrance of her parent, who had died

heart-broken on her elopement ; her jealousy, her still unextinguished passion for Alfred, her conscience-stricken fears for her husband, all united to distract her mind with the most violent emotions of terror, shame, and remorse. The thought of Alfred's cruel and pitiless threats, the conviction that she durst not attempt to free herself from the odious bondage in which he held her, and the cruel avowal he had made, not only of his indifference, but of his contempt for her, drove her to a state of temporary frenzy. Striking her burning brow with her hand, the dreadful thought of self-murder crossed her maddening brain, and she looked around for some implement of destruction. For an instant, however, she paused : it was not the fear of death, it was not remorse, but the feelings of a mother which arrested her hand. She thought of her two children, of her two sleeping babes, to whom, notwithstanding her guilt, she was fondly attached ; the recollection of her own situation,

and of the innocent creature who must perish with her, recalled her for a moment to her senses. She threw herself on her knees, clasped both her trembling hands across her bosom, and endeavoured to utter a short prayer for mercy and forgiveness to the great Being, into whose dread presence she had been about to rush unrepenting, and loaded with guilt. For months, nay for years, Lady Catesby had not prayed: it was the first time since her marriage with Sir Lawrence that she had even attempted to pour forth a sentiment of supplication; and it appeared, at present, as if the demon who possessed her was resolved not to renounce his victim. In vain the unhappy woman essayed to repeat a prayer,—the words died in her utterance. Her thoughts of the Deity and of her children vanished from her mind, and were replaced by that of Alfred taunting her to destruction; and the sound of his last words again rung in her ears. Springing on her feet, she rushed to her dressing-table, and seizing

a phial of opium, uttering aloud, " Alfred ! my death be on your head !" she swallowed the contents. Her head soon became dizzy, every object swam around her, and falling senseless on the carpet, her sorrows and her guilt were buried in oblivion !

CHAPTER X.

AFTER the scene with Lady Catesby, Alfred sought the earliest opportunity of communicating his project to the Baroness, who had, he knew, considerable influence over Emily, and whom he found seated in her *boudoir*. As he approached, she exclaimed, "Oh! there you are, *Barbaro Tiranno, Crudel Vincitor!* why we have had Lady Catesby in fits, *grandissima scena*;—there was the *marito* in an agony with Eau de Cologne and æther, and the new Cavaliere, Lord Taunton, in tears. '*O quante lagrime finor' versai!*' and you, Sir, where were you? Oh, I am certain you have been playing the cruel! or else Sir Lawrence and the *prima*

donna have been quarrelling. But tell me all about it ;—there, sit down, and do not look so very good. Now for the *premier coup d'archet*.”

“ Upon my word,” replied Alfred, as soon as the Baroness gave herself time to take breath, “ indeed I am shocked to hear Lady Catesby has been taken ill, but I am completely ignorant of the cause ; in fact, I have scarcely spoken to her twice during the whole day : and instead of quarrelling with Sir Lawrence, she appeared to have been seized with a sudden fit of conjugal tenderness. She scarcely left his side for a moment during the whole day ; and, between ourselves, that was enough to have made any one ill.”

“ Oh, but I think him excessively agreeable,” rejoined the Baroness.

“ No wonder,” returned Alfred ; “ he is not your husband.”

After a few more observations, Alfred succeeded in bringing the conversation round to his cousin, and then recounted all the particulars of Herbert's adventure at Lisbon ; express-

ing, with every appearance of sincerity and feeling, not only his horror at the atrocious conduct of Perez, but his own distress at the idea of having recommended so great a villain to Herbert. His good-natured audistress listened with great attention and sympathy to the details of this affair, and merely interrupted him now and then by exclaiming, "Oh, my dear Alfred, it is too shocking! It would have been such a pity if he had been killed, he sings so well! Poor fellow! I am enchanted at his escape; I shall now have Moretti's last composition." And as soon as Alfred had brought his recital to a close, she added, "Poor dear Emily! what a state she must have been in when she heard the report. Oh, there she is! I must run to her, and tell her all about it. Let me see, you said seven briganti, and he had both his hands tied, and then the Spanish lady trying to hang him from jealousy, and his great poodle dog biting the rope.—Oh, I must get some poodle dogs!"

"I will give you mine," answered Alfred,

laughing at the extraordinary confusion which the volatile lady had made of his story.

“What, your beast *Poco-Curante*, I would rather be assassinated than admit him again into the house, he howls so dreadfully when the Baron accompanies me on the bassoon;—but I am enchanted to hear that poor Herbert is coming home, I was so dreadfully afraid about my music, and Emily—”

“Emily!” exclaimed Alfred, interrupting her; “what, in the world, has Miss Manby to do with your music?”

“Oh, my dear Sir,” retorted the Baroness, “you confuse every thing; why, Emily is in love with Herbert to the death; her old Duenna, Mrs. Walden, told it me as a great secret;—by-the-bye, what a charming couple they would make; I wish we could bring them together, they would improve so much by practising, their voices harmonize perfectly.”

“That is the very subject I wished to consult you upon,” was Alfred’s reply.

When once upon the subject of music, of

which the Baroness was passionately fond, nothing could avert her thoughts to any thing else, and she therefore now launched forth on her favourite topic.

“ I am very glad you agree with me on this point,” said she, “ for I think some of her low notes equal to any thing I remember of Grassini: did you ever hear her in ‘ *Parto, ti lascio addio!*’ how delightfully they would sing that together! Ah, my dear Sir, with all your lessons from Tremmezani, you never will have such execution as Herbert: what a splendid tenor; his B flat is *impayable*. Ah, ah! you and Lady Cat. never will produce such an effect in your little duetts. In fact, we must bring them together.”

“ Why, my dear Baroness,” exclaimed Alfred, “ if you will but listen to me an instant, you will find that it only requires your mediation and influence to unite them at once; for I am more anxious than you can imagine, that Herbert, who has been attached to Miss Manby for years—”

“ *Sempre fedele a te!*” exclaimed the Baroness; “ but go on.”

“ Well, continued Alfred, “ I am naturally most desirous that the poor *tenor* should not (against every operatic rule) die of love, after having escaped all the dangers of his Lisbon adventure.”

“ What ! is he really and seriously in love ?” quickly replied the Baroness; “ then it is all settled. I will take upon myself to arrange every thing ; I will propose for him at once to Emily ; then we shall have ‘ *Noce et Festin,*’ and we will get up a little opera *d’occasion*, ‘ *Le nozze dei Harmonici,*’ and Lord Barriton shall arrange the music. By-the-bye, I hope he will allow Morlachi, or Rossini, or Picini, to compose the *whole* of his next production ; for the small portion of his own in his ‘ *Morte de Cleopatra,*’ made one suffer as much pain as the Queen herself.”

“ But, my dear Baroness,” rejoined Alfred, “ we must first get up the marriage, before we think of arranging the opera.”

“Why, where is the difficulty? She sings divinely, is rich, beautiful, and a very dear good girl: he will have a splendid fortune, is one of the handsomest creatures in London, and they are in love—what more can be wanting to insure their happiness?”

“There exist greater difficulties than you are aware of,” answered Alfred: “in the first place, my uncle, from some unknown cause, entertains the greatest dislike to Miss Manby, and appears to have as great an enmity to her as he had to her foster-father; and I have reason to fear he would at first object to their union.”

“What fun,” rejoined the Baroness, “it would be to make them run away,—an *enlevement* would be delightful!”

“Well then,” answered Alfred, “if you will undertake to persuade Emily to consent to such a measure, I will, on my part, engage that Herbert shall carry her off; and although Sir Herbert may be a little angry at first, yet I have grounds for asserting that he would quickly relent and forgive them; and then, my dear

Baroness, you and I shall have the satisfaction of being instrumental to their happiness: it is the only means within my power to show my regard and affection for Herbert."

"Instrumental!" exclaimed the lady, "and vocal too! It will be charming—it will make such a delightful little opera. Testarossa shall write the poetry, Barriton bespeak the music, and the Baron shall design the costumes. Let me see; Herbert, as *primo tenor*, may introduce "*Solo per te ben mio!*" then Emily, *prima donna Cantante*, may sing "*Se il genitor mi toglie colei che m'innamora*" then the duet from "*Isolina and Tebaldo*," "*Che dici ah no*," will suit them delightfully. Then that cross Mr. Rookby, as the *Crudel Padre*, will make an admirable *basso*; and for the underplot, you, as a kind of Leporello, may flirt a little in recitative with Lady Cat. as my *cameriera*; and I will be the Princess who unites the couple."

Here the Baroness was interrupted in her operatic *programme* by Alfred, who said, "Do, for heaven's sake! be serious for one moment,

and tell me if I may rely upon your endeavours to obtain Emily's consent to marry Herbert ; I, for my part, will guarantee that Sir Herbert pardons them within a month."

"If you are confident, Alfred, that the old Rajah will relent, I will do all in my power to persuade Emily. But, dear girl!" added the Baroness, with more forethought than she was wont to consider these matters, "I should be sorry to urge her to take any step which might affect her future happiness. To be sure, she has no father, no relation to consult ; she is her own mistress ; but I know her so well, that she would not, I am convinced, gratify her own love for Herbert, at the expense of drawing his father's anger upon his head. But as you assure me this will not be the case, I will use all my influence to induce her to make my *tenor* happy."

"How kind of you, my dear Baroness !" replied Alfred ; "how grateful Herbert will be ! to your kind mediation he will be indebted for his happiness. The moment he arrives I shall

set him to work, and I hope in the course of two or three months we may rehearse our opera."

"Here comes Lady Milton!" exclaimed the good-natured hostess: "I shall tell her of our plan; and as I know she doats upon Emily—"

"Not a word, my dear Baroness, to my aunt, as you value poor Herbert's success," here interposed Alfred, alarmed at his friend's suggestion.

"She ought not to be acquainted with the business; for, naturally, as she is aware of Sir Herbert's objections, she would interfere, and Herbert would never have courage to disobey her, though the certain happiness to himself and Emily was the result."

"Very true, very true!" replied the other, "we will arrange the whole matter between ourselves; and now I must go and congratulate your aunt on the *tenor's* fortunate escape."

The Baroness immediately ran towards Lady Milton, and poured forth a volume of compliments and congratulations, which were

most pleasing to the latter ; whose affection and pride in her son were augmented, if possible, by the details which had reached her of his gallant conduct upon the distressing occasion.

After conversing a few minutes with his aunt, Alfred proceeded in search of Emily, and resolving to make an experiment to obtain her confidence, or at all events to show her that he was not ignorant of her attachment for Herbert. He no sooner saw her, than he said, " I rarely dance ; but if Miss Manby will do me the honour of waltzing with me, I will endeavour to brush up my steps, were it only to celebrate, *par extraordinaire*, my cousin Herbert's fortunate escape."

Emily, who was on the point of rallying him upon this unusual exertion, was however completely silenced by the last words of his speech ; and blushing deeply, she assented ; and then taking his arm, placed herself in one of the circles.

After a few turns, Alfred ventured to ask Emily if she had heard all the particulars of

the Lisbon adventure; and then, without waiting for a reply, he immediately proceeded to recount the whole affair, interspersed with his own observations.

During this recital, Alfred watched most intently the effect produced on her countenance: her cheeks were alternately blanched with terror, or crimsoned with pleasure, as the narrator either dwelt on the imminent danger to which Herbert had been exposed, or described the uncommon courage and self-possession which he had evinced during the whole of the perilous scene: nor was the involuntary "thank God!" which escaped her lips unnoticed, as he concluded by saying, that the report of the surgeons was most favourable, and that his cousin might be expected in London in the course of a few weeks. Alfred did not require any proofs of Miss Manby's attachment to Herbert; his object in thus exciting her mind at present, was merely to draw her into some unguarded expression, of which he might take advantage to open the subject at once to her, and to insinuate

that his influence over Sir Herbert rendered it easy for him to obtain his forgiveness, though his previous assent would probably be withheld.

Seizing the moment when Emily had almost involuntarily uttered her expression of thankfulness for his safety, Alfred observed, "I fear Miss Manby will think me more than impertinent, if I dare to remark, that were my cousin a witness to the interest she appears to take in his fate, he would, I am sure, willingly undergo a much more perilous adventure, could he meet with the reward so dear to him, as your sympathy."

Emily blushed more deeply than before: she, however, summoned courage to make an effort to parry this direct attack, by replying, "Surely it is most natural, Mr. Milton, that the relation of such a dreadful occurrence, attended with such horrid marks of treachery and revenge, should excite the interest of the most indifferent person; those who are not acquainted with Colonel Milton must feel—"

“ Not quite so much, Miss Manby, as those who are well acquainted with him ; whilst those to whom he is any thing but indifferent, must much more naturally feel as you do.”

Poor Emily, who saw that she had only committed herself more deeply by her last feeble attempt at defence, instantly replied, “ You are quite right, Mr. Milton : I do not hesitate to say, that I do feel great interest in the welfare of your cousin ; I should be most ungrateful, if ever I were to forget his humanity and tenderness at the most heart-rending and painful period of my existence : and,” added Emily, as the tears rushed into her eyes, “ that kindness has, I am not ashamed to avow, made a deeper impression when contrasted with the fatal and cruel animosity of Sir Herbert Milton, and which, if I am to believe all I hear, has not ended even with the grave.”

“ I may take upon myself to assert,” rejoined Alfred, “ that you have been misinformed respecting my uncle’s animosity to yourself ; he is neither unreasonable nor unjust :—as to Her-

bert, all I shall say is, that the impressions you have made upon his heart have been proved by absence and temptations of every kind;—do not be angry, I intreat you, but I will boldly affirm, that, for your sake, he has turned a deaf ear to the most splendid matrimonial alliances, and, in short, that the misery or the happiness of his future life is in your hands.”

Emily’s agitation during this speech was excessive, and she vainly endeavoured to make any answer to her tormentor, who continued, with an air of great apparent feeling and sensibility; “I love my cousin as my brother, Miss Manby; his happiness is paramount in my heart to every other consideration; and although I risk both your displeasure and his, by thus venturing to anticipate his own declaration, yet I shall think myself amply rewarded, if hereafter I should have been instrumental in facilitating his views, or in removing from your mind those doubts which his delicacy, and the reports of the world respecting Lord Henry Thursby, prevented his clearing up before his departure.”

“ One word more, and I have done. My influence with my uncle is perhaps greater than that of any other human being; fear nothing on that head: his enmity, if any exist, shall end with his arrival in England. But I see you are offended; I perceive that my affection for Herbert has led me too far: forgive me, Miss Manby, but if he returns to England to meet with the destruction of his dearest hopes, 'twere better that I should write to him at once, and distinctly state the truth; and he can yet return to the army, ere it be too late to retrieve himself.”

Poor Emily, who was nearly fainting from emotion, merely replied in a half whisper; “ I am not angry, Mr. Milton; do not write, do not prevent his return.” Before, however, her tormentor could continue his attacks, they were joined by Sidney, who came to claim her promise of dancing with him. Happy to escape from Alfred, she gladly accepted Sidney's arm, and without any farther remark proceeded with him into another room. Sidney easily per-

ceived the extreme agitation of his lovely partner, and attributed it to the effect of the intelligence of Herbert's adventure, which he had himself only heard from Alfred, his own letters not having arrived. With great good-nature, he merely said, "Do not let us dance, I see you are fatigued; suppose we sit down and discuss the people as they pass." Emily accepted this offer, and was soon after joined by Mrs. Walden. She was however again destined to be tormented; as every one knowing Sidney's intimacy with Colonel Milton, either came to congratulate him on his friend's escape, or wished to ascertain the particulars of the affair. Amongst others, he was accosted by Mrs. Dunsten, a lady who was a native of Flanders, and had married an English merchant of great wealth. In consequence of some important services which her family had rendered to the members of three or four illustrious families who were detained by Bonaparte, she received letters of introduction to some potent patronesses in London, and by dint of giving a number of balls,

to which, for the first two or three years, her kind patronesses did not permit her to ask any of her own company, this trouble being taken off her hands by these condescending personages, who were even for some time in doubt whether they would allow more than one daughter to make her appearance, whilst they strongly recommended Mr. Dunsten to be taken ill on these occasions. In short, by dint of this kind of *surveillance* on the part of her friends, and by a perpetual series of dinners, Mrs. Dunsten “*née van Hoog van der Boompen,*” contrived to have all the best people in London at her house, and in return she found herself as generally invited by all those personages who are not of the ultra select committees.

Mrs. Dunsten’s principal object in life was, if possible, to marry one or two of her daughters to men of rank; fortune was a secondary consideration, as her husband’s great wealth rendered all thoughts of money quite unnecessary; but hitherto neither the charms of Miss Ulrica Carolina Georgina Dunsten, nor the seductions

of her sister, Miss Alexandrina Frederica Wilhelmine Dunsten, (who, as well as her brother, George Francis Paul Louis Ferdinand Dunsten van Hoog van der Boompen, were christened after sundry reigning potentates,) had yet elevated them to the peerage, or even opened the road to the every-day business of a Milady of the Bath, Guelph, or Tower and Sword. The two young ladies were not quite so vulgar as their mamma : they were half blue from education, and half black from a noble indifference to Mr. Sims's real Windsor ; they spoke about ten languages, played upon a dozen instruments, and weighed at least two hundred and fifty pounds avoirdupoise each, and, in short, were overpoweringly accomplished and tiresome. All these accomplishments were however a mere matter of report, as their conversation consisted of nothing but an endless string of unmeaning questions.

“ How d'ye do, Koptin Sidney,” exclaimed the Brabant lady, as she approached ; “ I am fery hoppy to koncratoolate you on your friend's

escabe; he iss a fery lucky tog.”—“ You mean he was very lucky to have a dog,” rejoined Sidney, smiling at his own joke.—“ No, no! he is fery lucky yonk gentlemans,” replied the lady, “ for I onterstant he shall be morried dee moment ven he kombes bock, vat you tink ?” —“ I think nothing more probable,” rejoined Sidney; whilst poor Emily blushed, and looked as much confused as if her name were forthcoming. “ I think nothing half so probable, but I have not an idea who is the happy person, unless it is one of the Miss Dunstens.”

“ Oh, goede God !” exclaimed Mrs. Dunsten, not displeased at the supposition, “ I do not tink my tacters never gif him no encooragement, do he is a very noice yonk chentelmans, and he will pe a baronet, into the parguin.”

“ Well, then, I cannot conceive who it can be,” answered Sidney; “ and I must say, I feel somewhat interested, as he may, perhaps, have chosen some person who may stipulate that his wild friend Sidney shall be treated like

the friends of a prince when he comes to the throne."

"Oh, dat is all a fun of yours, Koptin Sidney; you know all die woorld says he shall marry Lady Zoosin Bossville, and dat vill make a fery noize motch. She has got all die feashions and dee ronk, and den he has got all dee fortunes."

"I wonder whether she has taken the little precaution of asking Herbert's consent," rejoined Sidney.

"O dat iss not necessary," replied Mrs. Dunsten; "Lady Dossington is fery intimate, she iss on die pest foot mit Lady Milton, and I do not suppose dat ony yonk chentelmans would refoose a motch mit sich a feashionable yonk ladys."

"Do you not?" replied Sidney; "why, I declare, Mrs. Dunsten, had I not a penny in the world, and had Lady Susan my property, I would sooner pass the rest of my life in all the pauperism of celibacy, than marry such a regu-

lar London Miss, as artificial as Maradan's flowers, and as hollow as one of Ude's *soufflets*."

"Oh Koptin Seedney, you are so trectfully sargostick," replied the lady. "Vell, I dink dey are fery noice yonk ladies; dey always comes to all my palls, and pring who dey like."

"If that be a criterion of merit," rejoined Sidney, "it depends but on your good-nature to render all London delightful; for who is there who does not covet the honour of being invited to a house, where the hostess and her accomplished daughters are a sufficient attraction, independent of the delightful accessions which are showered upon one! Ah, Lord Marcus is a happy man."

"Ach! you are fery fell pred, indeed," answered Mrs. Dunsten, grinning at the compliment, and catching the last word; "if you are not enkached next Sondag, vill you doo us die pleasure to dine mit oos; I will sent you a cart to remind to-morrow morning, and den I vill infite

Lord Morcoos to meed you." Sidney bowed, accepted the invitation with great gravity, though he meant to send an excuse if any thing more agreeable presented itself during the week; as he afterwards confessed to Mrs. Walden, he never dined in Bruton-street, but as a *pis aller*; it made him really ill to see the whole herd of large and small van Boompens, throwing down spadeful-full of caviare, Russian cucumber, and *fromage de Roquefort*; besides, their wines always appear as if they had just arrived from a journey across the desert, and their soups as if they had passed a winter on Mont-Blanc.

"Vell," said Mrs. Dunsten, "I am fery glod Coloneel Meelton is komink bock, dem ogly Sponish wars, she run away mit all die yonk chentlemans, dat is vy dere is soch a little mor-riges koing on. I do not regollekt any seazin, vere dere vas so little toing. All die yonk chentlemens vot is left at home, she comes to your ouze, she eats your soopers, she takes your deaners, and she porrows your opera dickys, but she does not take up mit your

tachters. Oh, dere iss no morrhiges, whatever, koing on in dee feashionable woorld ;” and then addressing Sidney, she added, “ Kom, Koptin Seedney, ven would you bi morried ; kom, you are reech, fy don’t you put up mit a yonk lady ?”

“ Who, I ?” answered Sidney ; “ oh, I am too deeply occupied with my engagements with the Derby, to think of any thing else at present.”

“ O, enkached mit die Darby,” rejoined Mrs. Dunsten, with some degree of respect, “ I soppose one of die grand-tachters ; vell, dat iss a fery noice konnections, dat is a fery noice yonk ladies : I fish you vel, mit my heart ; ven is it to take place ?”

“ Not before next spring,” replied Sidney, with great gravity ; “ but, apropos, Mrs. Dunsten, when are we to congratulate you ? the world says, Mrs. Dunsten,”—and he then looked significantly towards Lord Marcus Maltby.

“ Och !” replied Mrs. Dunsten, putting up her glass and laughing ; “ you are sich a yonk chentelmans for chokes ; but do you know ?”

it is fery stranche, dere is Lord Marcoos tancens mit my tachter Olaxondreena. Och! die world she will talk, but I assoore you, Kopten Seedney, I do not fish to marry my tachers until she shall have seen die world."

"You are quite right, my dear madam," rejoined Sidney; "they have it in their power to select whom they please, and they have not been out above four or five seasons."

"Fery true, dey have plenty of time, and coot fortunes, and den, you know, dey are fery aggomplished yonk ladies, and dey speaks all manner of lankuaches;" and then begging Sidney not to forget the dinner on Sunday, she went off to superintend the evolutions of Miss Alexandrina Frederica, who was playing off the whole force of her massive battery of charms, accomplishments, and Poliglott lore on the slippery young nobleman; who, with the whites of his eyes inverted, expressed in his countenance all the agony he felt at being obliged to dance with Miss Dunsten,—an operation which his Lordship felt himself bound to

undergo now and then, by way of paying off endless dinners, opera tickets, and balls ; not to mention frequent presents of bulbs from Haarlem, boutarga from Odessa, pies from Strasbourg, and herrings from Antwerp : though he asserted that the balance was considerably against himself, as he lost more in one waltz by his efforts to make Miss Alexandrina revolve on her ponderous axis, than he gained by twenty of her papa's Anglo-Flemish repasts. Indeed the operation was no contemptible undertaking, and was much better calculated for the propelling genius of Messrs. Bolton and Watts, than that of a very slender young nobleman.

Emily and Mrs. Walden, who had with difficulty restrained their mirth during Mrs. Dunsten's dialogue with Sidney, now gladly gave way to their gaiety, though both attacked Sidney for having ventured to quiz the good-natured lady even to her face. They were now joined by Sir Harry Sneerwell, who immediately congratulated Sidney upon his marriage.

“ So,” said Sir Harry, “ we are to lose you at Newmarket, Sidney ; Mrs. Dunsten has just told me you are going to be married : I am sorry for it. It will be a sad loss to the Derby.”

“ Mrs. Dunsten’s an old fool !” rejoined Sidney : “ pray did she tell you to contradict the report of Lord Marcus being engaged to her daughter ?”

“ No ; but she asked me to meet him at dinner on Sunday, as if her dinners were not quite bad enough, without such an *hors-d’œuvre* as his Lordship.”

“ Come, Sneerwell,” rejoined Sidney, “ have some mercy upon her.”

“ Never, until she gets another cook, and dines out with all her family, when she invites me.”

Emily now asked Sir Harry the name of a tall, plain, and heavy-looking man, who was talking to one of the princes of the royal family, his left arm occupied by that of a gaunt, dissatisfied, and singularly plain woman ; while

his right hand was employed in twisting and twirling what Emily mistook for an immense seal, suspended to an enormously broad watch-ribbon, which peeped from beneath the breast of his coat : on which coat was embroidered a star, quadruple the magnitude of these decorations usually worn by others ; having in the centre enamelled a grey horse, which might have served as a park hack for the heaviest Miss Dunsten."

"That," said Sir Harry,—“that is a particular friend of mine, the Prince Stolz-zopf-Winters-graben, N° 43. I think him very pleasant, but the world is so ill-natured.”

“What, is he here upon a tour?” demanded Mrs. Walden.

“Yes,” rejoined Sneerwell ; “but they say that his *tour* is *passé* ; however, he is *envoyé* from a whole almanack of German courts, Plenipotentiary from half the mediatorial Princes of the Confederation, and Grand Piqueur of the Holy Alliance.”

“By-the-bye,” said Emily, “I have heard

much of the Holy Alliance; I wish you could tell me what it means, or for what purpose it was formed."

"For the protection of the Grand Signor, for the furtherance of civil and religious slavery, for the re-establishment of the Inquisition, the destruction of mutual instruction, the propagation of ignorance, and the better learning by heart of 'God save the King,' translated into modern Greek, out of compliment to the Grand Signor," answered the Baronet.

"We are not a bit the wiser," replied Sidney, "for your liberal explanation."

"Answer for yourself, Sidney," rejoined Sneerwell; "if ignorance is bliss, then indeed you are a most fortunate fellow."

"One thing, at least, is wanting to complete my happiness," retorted Sidney, "on that score; which is, by unfortunately knowing you, I know too much."

Emily, who feared this sparring might lead to a quarrel, as she was not acquainted with those little changes of civility which generally

passed between the Cynic and his friend, now begged Sir Harry would tell her who the lady was with the prince.

“ That is his wife, who is daughter of one of the sixty little potentates whom my good friend represents. *I* like her, but they tell me she is very disagreeable, proud, imperious, and as dull as a dinner at Boodles ; what you took just now for a watch-ribbon, is the cordon of the order of St. Hubert, of which both his highness, and my tailor purchased the grand-crosses together : the one on the delusive anticipation of Sidney paying his bill ; and the other, with his little gleanings from the fiscal ‘ *cuisse*,’ the key of which, and not of his watch, attracted your observation.”

“ You are rather severe upon your friend, I think,” replied Emily ; “ for, although I do not know him, I have heard him spoken of as a man of talent, firmly attached to this country, though perhaps having more than the usual portion of German hereditary pride.”

“ I think he is precisely what you say,” re-

joined Sir Harry ; “ but people are so ill-natured as to assert that his great merit consists in having persuaded our ministers that he was a man of talent, which, at least, proves him wiser than they : and then nothing can be more natural than his partiality for this country,—he finds the climate agree so well with his chest. In short, he will never quit it as long as he can derive any benefit from it.”

“ If you wish to have a specimen of his pride,” said Sidney, “ watch him when he bows : he is literally too proud to stoop ; he bows backwards, instead of forwards.”

“ He has not had the advantage of a Newmarket education,” retorted the Baronet, who never liked any body to say an ill-natured word but himself ; “ he has not acquired the pretty bend, which one learns by stooping half one’s life over the mane of a horse.”

“ Come, come, Sneerwell ! I take him to be a better jockey than you choose to allow : he is first favourite for the King’s plate, and has a good chance for the Grand Duke’s stakes.”

“ I really do not understand what you mean,” observed Emily; “ I have always heard his disinterestedness, and the sacrifices he made for this country, spoken of in high terms.”

“ And very justly, *I* believe,” rejoined Sir Harry. “ He gave up a landed property of about a thousand acres of very profitable morass, and one of the finest specimens of a ruined baronial castle in the world, to follow the orders of his sovereign ; and, poor fellow ! he has met with no other reward than a paltry pension of six thousand a-year for himself and heirs, a few thousand acres of land, that will not produce an ounce of peat, a *chasse* where the game destroys the harvest, a few hundred peasants, and a modern built house, well furnished and of vast size,—but not to be compared to his former castle, either for its picturesque beauties, the serenity of its position in the middle of a bog, or the hereditary *souvenirs* attached to the place, which are naturally so dear to a man of his ancient family !”

“ He is, indeed, a very ill-used man !” re-

joined Sidney, laughing. "At the same time, if he has been unmindful of his own interest, he has not forgotten that of his family,—even unto the fourth or fifth generation; why there is not a Stolz-zopf from the Tyrol to the German Ocean who is not on the list of pensions!"

"What can be a better proof of the goodness of his heart?" rejoined the Baronet. "I admire him for the care he has taken of his relations; and the world is excessively ill-natured when they abuse him for having set aside so many meritorious officers who bled and toiled during the war, and having omitted them in the distribution of the decorations, honours, and rewards, to which they laid claim."

"Yes," rejoined Sidney, "and these very stars, crosses, pensions, and places, were showered upon the Stolz-zopfs; who during this time were snugly established with Jerome at Cassel. And indeed many of them had absolutely fought against their legitimate sovereign."

"My dear Sidney," rejoined the Baronet, "it would have been impossible for the Prince

to act otherwise without great injustice to his heart and principles, which, of course, are those of the *Sainte Alliance*, whose great maxim is to support the '*pacte de famille*.' Then," added Sir Henry, "I have heard some ill-natured people accuse him of having been the original adviser of the expedition to Walcheren."

"Then I shall hate him for ever!" exclaimed Emily, whilst the colour mounted in her face at this expression of Sir Harry: "if he advised that measure, he can neither be a man of sense or political knowledge!"

"That is precisely what the world says of him," replied the Baronet, unmindful of the tender chord on which he had touched. "The fact is, it might have been more prudent to have despatched the expedition to the Weser, or still farther north,—where the Prince's enemies declare the country was ripe for revolt: but then, you know, no man who loves his country, would like to see it become the theatre

of war, or exposed to all the inconveniences and exactions of military occupation; and I think it very natural that he should rather have wished to see a whole British army perish, than that his own country should suffer by the natural consequences of war."

"God deliver me from my friends!" exclaimed Sidney. "I only accused him of being a fool; you wish to make him out a knave."

"Not in the least," replied Sir Harry; "but I should like much to know, if you had a pet preserve of pheasants, if you would not rather my hounds should draw any other man's cover than your's?"

"That may be," rejoined Sidney; "but I should not feel myself warranted in advising my friend to put his best hunters into a glandered stable at an inn, to preserve myself from giving them a few feeds of corn at my own house."

"Who is that man," demanded Mrs. Walden, glad to divert the subject, "who never

leaves the Prince's side but to eat or drink? I have watched him devouring every thing within his reach."

"That," said Sir Harry, "is a great friend of mine—at least, he offers to dine with me whenever he fancies I am not engaged elsewhere."

"But who is he? And what is his occupation besides eating?"

"It is the Baron Von Maklzich," answered the Baronet;—"a very useful personage to my friend Stolz-zopf, by whom he is employed in sundry negociations, where the latter thinks it imprudent to appear in person. Moreover, he assists the Prince in laying out, at a comfortable interest, some of those sums which he contrives to economize even in this dear land, or undertakes to sell the diamonds which His Highness receives on his diplomatic snuff-boxes, and supplies their places with paste."

"Well, but is he a Jew, a diplomatist, or a soldier?"

"Nothing of the last; not much of the se-

cond, but much of the first," replied Sir Harry : " no, indeed, he is so extremely antipugnacious, he has such a horror for all blood, that I believe he would rather pay a double letter than receive an epistle with Post Paid stamped in red letters."

" Oh dear, it must be the man who we heard was so distinguished at Vienna—"

" For his temperance and abstemiousness at home," exclaimed Sir Harry, interrupting her, " and for his voracity *en ville* ; he never was yet known to have given or refused an invitation to dinner. I once had the honour of meeting him at the table of an illustrious individual in this country, and you may judge of his host's surprise at seeing his German guest (of whose voracious appetite he had formed a very indistinct idea) place his plate upon a wine-cooler."

" What, in the world, did he do that for?" demanded Emily ; " how very ill-bred."

" Why the answer he made to the question, which was put to him by his illustrious host, was, ' *Ah, Monseigneur, l'appetit est grand, le*

diner court, le chemin longue ; et comme je n'ai pas l'avantage de faire si bonne chaire tous les jours, je fais l'impossible d'abrevier la distance entre l'assiette et ma bouche.' ”

“ Oh, what an ogre he must be ! but what did Monseigneur say,—was he not shocked ? ”

“ On the contrary, ” replied Sir Harry, “ he was enchanted with Mahlzeit's *na“veté* ; and instead of directing him to be turned into the kennel with the hounds, he was frequently ordered to come and exhibit his masticatory powers before the same illustrious Amphytrion. ”

“ But I heard that he was not only remarkable for his penury and appetite, but for lending his money to his friends. ”

“ Then, ” said Emily, smiling, “ surely they cannot grudge him a few dinners, if he is so liberal, poor man ! ”

“ The poor man, as you call him, ” answered Sir Harry, “ takes good care to be as well paid for the loan of his money, as he does for his domestic starvation when he dines out. You may judge by the following anecdote to which

I was witness. During my stay at Vienna, I was invited to dine with a nobleman of high rank ; among the guests were the Baron and a Count Taschenleer ; during dinner, the *maître d'hôtel* extinguished two or three candles in endeavouring to snuff them with a pair of snuffers of which the spring was out of order. ' Send to my hotel,' exclaimed the Count to our host, ' for some of my English snuffers ; I can let you have five thousand florins' worth, cheap ; contraband, it is true, but real Sheffield, warranted by Baron Mahlzeit.' The Baron looked very foolish, but pretending to take no notice of this speech, continued eating with his usual avidity. ' What !' exclaimed the host, ' have you been speculating in English contraband goods, my dear Count ?' ' No,' replied the other ; ' but being in want of forty thousand florins, and knowing that my friend, the Baron, was always happy to assist his friends, I applied to him, and he good-naturedly consented to advance me this sum, on condition that I paid twelve per cent.

and received a third of the amount in British commodities: and as I was getting into the carriage to come here, a cart arrived at my hotel, loaded with snuffers, tea-trays, knitting-needles, and razors! You may judge," added Sir Harry, "of the roar of laughter which burst forth upon this discovery of the Baron's double capacity of usurer and diplomatist—of his being purveyor of politics and patent pins."

At this moment, a tall, meagre-looking man came up to Sidney, and, extending his hand, showed great pleasure at meeting the young officer.

"Who was that?" said Emily, as soon as the gentleman had quitted them; "he looks like a foreigner."

"He is indeed a foreigner, and in every land," rejoined Sidney: "I do not pretend to be very sentimental, but there is something in that man's fate which gave me a better lesson than all the sermons of my tutor for a dozen years."

"Has he taught you how to make a good

book for the next meeting, or shown you how to turn up a king at *ecarté*?" exclaimed Sir Harry.

"No," replied Sidney; "he proved to me how the king could be beat by a knave, and that it is often better to play the one than hold the other."

"Well, who is he?" demanded Emily, "by his manner he does not look like an adventurer."

"A short time past," answered Sidney, "he was really a king."

"Of spades, I should think," said Sir Harry, "for he looks mighty like a grave-digger."

"Now do not be so absurd, Sir Henry," exclaimed Emily; "pray allow Mr. Sidney to go on with his story."

"In fact," continued the latter, "he was once the ruler of a mighty and warlike nation; representative of a long and valiant race of princes; legitimate descendant of Gustavus Adolphus and Charles XII. but he is now without a house to afford him shelter, without

a servant to perform for him the most menial offices, banished from his native land, exiled from the throne of his ancestors, his rights usurped by the son of an obscure Gascon, under the immediate sanction and protection of that Alliance.”

“ *Faites nous grace!*” here exclaimed Sir Harry, “ of the rest of your tirade against that respectable and worthy body, and say at once that it is Colonel Gustronson.”

“ How did you become acquainted with him?” demanded Emily.

“ On my way through Germany,” replied Sidney. “ The morning subsequent to my arrival at Frankfort, my servant, an old soldier, entered my room, and without farther preface exclaimed, ‘ Well, Sir, I would rather be a Chelsea pensioner than the biggest king among them all!’—‘ What has happened now, Wadding?’ said I to the man; ‘ I conclude, like a true Englishman, you are grumbling because your beefsteak and porter is not ready.’—‘ Why,’ replied Wadding, ‘ I should like to

know what you would say, Sir, if you saw our King drive up to the Black Bear in Piccadilly, on the outside of a Bristol van, (for their Dili-gences here are no better), without a top-coat, his fingers bitten by the frost, and his whiskers frozen like icicles hanging from a hayrick; and then, Sir, what would you think of his turning-to, to clean his own boots?'—'Why, I should say you were mad for inventing such a story,' was my answer.—'That's what they say of him, poor fellow!' rejoined the honest Wadding; 'and i'cod enough to make a man like a raving bedlamite: why, its bad enough to be reduced from pay-serjeant to the ranks; but to be one day a king and then reduced to a private the next, and that without a fair court-martial.'—'What nonsense have you been picking up?' said I. 'I really believe your old wound in your head has affected your brain.'—'Why,' answered he, 'here's the old King of Sweden down in the shoehole a-cleaning his boots with your blacking.'—'Nonsense,' said I; 'they have been laughing at you, Wadding.'—

‘Have they,’ replied he; ‘well, all I know, they told me he was a king, not General Blarneydot, but Colonel Custardson, or some such name; what your honour was presented to when we were at Stockholm, on the Baltic expedition, and he’s just as proud now as if he was on the throne; for it went against my heart, Sir, to see a king-like with a blacking-brush in his hand, and so says I to him, says I, Here, please your Majesty, Lord bless you! give us hold of the brush, you ’ll never bring a polish on ’em, at that fashion. Well, instead of saying thank you, i’cod he looked as if he were the commanding officer, and said something about ‘paw raw,’ so as he called me such names, I left him to clean ’em himself.’”

“Really,” said Emily, “I do not know which is the worst, you or Sir Henry. Mrs. Dunsten was quite right in saying you are too fond of a joke.”

“Indeed I never was more serious,” replied the other; “all my servant told me, I found perfectly true; and upon my subsequent ac-

quaintance I found, that in consequence of his having refused the pension offered to him by Bernadotte, he was reduced to support himself by the sale of the few jewels which he had rescued from his private property."

It was now getting late, and Emily was preparing to order her carriage, anxious to arrive at home, where she might indulge in all the delight she felt at the certainty of being beloved by Herbert. She had, it is true, felt annoyed at the boldness with which Alfred had entered upon the subject; but his words had left a deep impression on her heart, and she felt fully inclined to forgive the liberty he had taken, in favour of the intelligence he had communicated. The hope of Sir Herbert Milton's opposition being speedily overcome, relieved her heart from a load not less oppressive than the uncertainty she had been in respecting Herbert's sentiments towards herself. As she was about to leave the rooms, to which the whole of the party had retired from the gardens, they were joined by Mr. Ouncedale, who with his glass at

his eye, and his face more than usually long, appeared as if he also had been driven from his possessions. The *Tic-douloureux*, for so Sir Harry had christened him, now exclaimed, "How d'ye do? have you seen Mrs. Ouncedale? I have been waiting two hours to go; my horses will catch cold; I feel a slight twinge of the gout; conceive Lady Graspall having past nine times at *ecarté*!"

"I saw Mrs. Ouncedale waltzing with Colonel Graindorge," replied Sidney, who had returned from ordering Emily's carriage, "and I can only say, that she desired me to tell you, if I met you, that you might go home, if you liked, as Lady Graspall would give her a place in her carriage to town."

"That odious Lady Graspall!" rejoined Mr. Ouncedale; "she is enough to corrupt all the young women in town;—she ought not to be admitted in society."

"Why," said Sir Harry, "it is true, though I never saw any thing wrong; indeed *I* like her

very much, but the world does say very ill-natured things of her: at *ecarté*, for instance, they are cruel enough to say that she always claims double the sum she stakes when she wins; and when she loses, she contrives to change sides when she is betting, and generally seizes the stake of some young man who she thinks will be either too well bred, or too timid to remonstrate with her."

"Not a word, Sir Harry!" now exclaimed Sidney; "she is a great friend of mine, and so fond of me, that she wanted to catch me for her daughter, Lady Clara, and, indeed, I was within an ace of proposing."

"What the deuce prevented you?" asked Sir Harry.

"Why, my fear of her making a practical pun, which would have been worse even than your's," replied Sidney. "The fact was, I overheard Lady Clara tell her friend Mrs. Thornby, that she only intended marrying me for my fortune."

“Why, what in the world,” rejoined Sir Harry, “do you imagine any one would marry you for?”

“The fact was,” answered Sidney, good-humouredly, “I did flatter myself that I had made some slight impression on the little *ingenue*, who Lady Graspall told me was the most timid *naïve* creature in the world; when, as ill luck would have it for my vanity, and for her Ladyship’s schemes, I went to Mrs. Congreve’s masquerade, where being disguised in a domino, I heard her say to Mrs. Thornby, that she thought me an insufferable horse-dealing bore; that her mamma wished her to accept me for my property; and that she wished I was ruined, to which Mrs. Thornby very quietly replied, ‘Marry him first, my dear, if it were only for the pleasure of ruining him afterwards.’”

“Oh!” exclaimed the *Tic*, “I wish to God I had been fortunate enough to have worn a domino for a few months prior to the time fixed for my marriage! But do see,” added he,

“ what a fool that insufferable Mrs. Thornby is making of young Lord Tiverton !”

“ There is nothing extraordinary in that,” rejoined Sir Henry ; “ she would find it a much more difficult task to make a man of sense of him.”

“ As for that,” added Sidney, “ she is merely playing the same game with that boy that she has done with half the young men in London ; no sooner does a young man make his *debut* in the world, or a young peer or baronet leave his paternal nest, or escape from his Alma Mater, than she forthwith seizes upon him, and plays with him like a cat, until the boy’s ideas become more expanded, and he finds he has been throwing away his time and his attentions upon a cold-hearted, practised coquette, and that he is the laughing stock of London, with the advantage of being shown up in the ‘ Age,’ or roasted by ‘ John Bull.’ ”

“ And then, when he brings his action for a libel, he has the satisfaction of being convicted, by a jury, of being one of the ugliest men, or

one of the greatest idiots living," added Mr. Ouncedale.

Emily's carriage being now announced, she left the party, which did not completely break up before the morning was far advanced; and I shall take the liberty of giving my readers some account of the ladies I have alluded to, before I proceed to the next chapter.

They were all of that mischievous, that pernicious set, whose example has such a baneful effect on the morals of the young men and women of fashion, especially the latter. When the young and inexperienced girl perceives that vice is in a great measure countenanced, levity of conduct encouraged, and delicacy disregarded, in the highest society, to which the absence of virtue, and the total disregard of public opinion, are in most instances a necessary passport; when she discovers that she cannot obtain a footing in the most select society, without establishing an intrigue, or what is called a flirtation;—in fact, that the sacrifice of a certain portion of her reputation is almost a *sine qua non* to in-

sure her being ranked among the most fashionable; it is natural that she should quickly learn to look with contempt upon those principles of morality and virtue which are so dear to women in a less elevated, less perilous, and less mixed station of life.

Lady Graspall was a leader of one of these sets. Money was her ruling passion; whether at *ecarté*, elections, the marriage of her daughters, or in her own flirtations, this sordid passion showed itself in the strongest colours, and had rendered the intrigues and adventures of her younger days still more scandalous.

Born to occupy a leading position in society, she was not, however, content with the advantages which she derived from her rank and connexions, but she determined to form a supreme junta, of which she was to be the chief, and her conduct the precedent for that of all the members. Her great object was to induce all the women enrolled in this band of "Free Doers," to brave the opinion of the world; to set at defiance the advice of their husbands; to look with

contempt on the reputation of their own names, or the credit of their families;—in short, to arrive at that complete disregard for every principle of decency and virtue, which had marked her own conduct through life.

Her Ladyship's daughters, educated in this school of deceit and immorality, were as selfish, hollow-hearted, and mercenary as their mamma could desire; indeed, so well did they play their parts, so admirably did they act up to the lessons of the Countess, that the Ladies Clara and Helen Mount Lewis were looked upon by all those who had not penetration to discover the *dessous des cartes*, as two of the most single-hearted, ingenuous young women in London. In the course of two or three seasons, the young ladies succeeded, the one in marrying a rich young nobleman, and the other a half-furled baronet of immense property, who had just returned from his travels. Though Lady Helen, the youngest, showed greater symptoms of feeling on this occasion, than was either to be expected from her, or than at all suited her

mother's ideas of filial obedience. The conversation between the mother and daughter, on this occasion, was a curious specimen of Lady Graspall's principles, as well as those of her daughter.

"Helen," said her Ladyship, one night, as they returned from Almack's, "so you chose to play the fool, and speak your opinions openly of that horrid bore, Mr. Sidney?"

"I only said it in a whisper to Mrs. Thornby," replied the daughter; "and I did not think the man would have been listening at my elbow."

"Well, he has just told me, that he's off, that's all; and you've lost——"

"An ass!" exclaimed Lady Helen, "and the stock is not exhausted."

"You've lost twenty thousand pounds a-year, by your stupid *bavardage*. I thought you would have had the sense to have deferred speaking out until the fortune was your own."

"La, mamma! I'm sure it is all the same to me, whether I marry one fool or another: for

you know I never liked any body much, except Captain Acton, Mr. Corbin, Charles Norval, and Lord Henry."

"None of them will have a sous until their father's death," retorted Lady Graspall; "and I have no idea of people *having*—what does your brother call that sort of thing?"

"Going to Heaven by the devil's bridge, mamma," answered Lady Helen.

"It's going to the devil at once," rejoined her Ladyship. "No, it does not suit my views to have to *chaperone* you about, after your marriage. I will not be pestered with petitions for the carriage, and your saddling yourself and a tribe of squalling children on me, both in town and country. I will not have you marry to remain a burthen on me; and your waiting until some disgusting old man dies, before you can have an Opera box, or, in fact, any of the most common necessaries."

"Common indeed, mamma, they are now! Why the great double box next to ours belongs to papa's attorney, and the box on the left

to a man who cleans the streets, or the sewers, or something."

"Never mind those low people," replied the mamma, "but thank Heaven that you have one of the most affectionate, indulgent mothers in the world, who is slaving night and day to repair your errors and establish your fortune."

Lady Helen, during this speech, hung down her head, and her conscience told her that her mamma's exertions were never more necessary than at present.

"Any body else would have been outrageous," continued the Countess, "at her daughter's making such a fool of herself as to throw away twenty thousand a-year!"

"It is very good of you, my dear ma'," replied Lady Helen, "and, to show you my sense of your kindness, I am ready to marry any body you please directly."

"Well, then," rejoined the Countess, "whilst you have been *bavardéing*, I have been acting; and I have got another to supply Sidney's place."

“ Who is it, mamma ?” demanded the young lady.

“ Oh, Sir Maurice D’Orville, who has an immense fortune.”

“ La, mamma! the young man whom you were speaking to in the corner, and who looked at me so strangely ;—why he ’s quite mad, they say. Lord ! he had his keeper waiting on the staircase.”

“ So much the better, my dear ; marry him, and then nothing will be more easy than to take out a statute of lunacy against him, and have him put into confinement for life.”

“ But, mamma,” rejoined Lady Helen, with real sensations of terror and disgust, “ you would not have me marry an absolute maniac ? Good God ! how horrid to be left alone with such a creature ! I should die of fright ; and then only think of entailing the horrid (and here Lady Helen shuddered) malady on one’s children ; for it is of no use to mince the matter, mamma : indeed I can’t—any one but him !”

“ Helen !” returned Lady Graspall sternly,

“ marry him you must ! remember, I know all that has passed between you and Colonel Acton.”

Lady Helen now hung back in the corner of the carriage, and became pale and faint as death.

“ Any other parent but myself, Helen,” continued the Countess, “ upon such a discovery, would have turned you out of doors ; but I refrained from communicating the circumstance to your brothers, with the hopes that we could marry you without the disclosure of your conduct being made necessary, and in order to save us all from disgrace.”

Lady Helen still continued silent.

“ I shall say no more on the subject, Helen,” added her mother ; “ you are aware, that I know there remains little time now, unless you marry Sir Maurice, ere the world, as well as your brothers, must be informed of the circumstances. You may do what you please, when once you are married ; but I will not have you bring disgrace upon me, whilst you are under my roof. You will decide, therefore, to-night, whether you will receive Sir Maurice as a lover,

or whether you choose to be sent out of the country with one of your brothers. As for your qualms of conscience, they are too absurd, for you have taken care to render them entirely superfluous."

Briefly—in less than three weeks, Lady Helen was the wife of the unfortunate Baronet, who, before many months, became sufficiently mad to warrant his being placed in custody, and her Ladyship was appointed guardian and manager of their only child, and of her husband's vast estates.

Poor Mr. Ouncedale was among those who had reason to lament his wife's enrolment in this corps of female croats. Mrs. Ouncedale was a pretty, cold-hearted little woman, who had married the *Tic* for his fortune, and they had continued for some years to vegetate in a very negative state of composure, until Mrs. Ouncedale took it into her head to become a woman of fashion. Mrs. Ouncedale soon perceived that all the most fashionable women rendered themselves more or less notorious, for some little

scandal, and she determined, therefore, immediately to establish for herself a trifling flirtation, of course, with some marked man of fashion. By dint of carrying off Colonel Graindorge from a competitor, and by attaching four or five particular men to her train, she contrived, in due time, to qualify herself for Lady Graspall's set.

Whenever her husband attempted to remonstrate with her, she either treated his advice with contempt, or accused him of being a jealous tyrant, who wished to deprive her of the most innocent amusements.

Once, indeed, the *Tic* had the courage to adopt decisive measures, which were met with not less decision by the lady.

“ You shall not have the carriage, madam, to go with Graindorge and the Thornby party : I will not be made a fool of any longer.”

“ That which is done cannot be undone,” quietly replied the lady.

“ By God ! I will not be undone,” rejoined the husband, “ by you or any one else !”

“ I think you are a very absurd old man,”

rejoined the wife: "perhaps, you have sense enough, however, to ring the bell?"

"What for, madam?" retorted the husband. "I will not be trifled with, and bearded to my face."

"Ring the bell, Mr. Ouncedale, I say, that I may order the carriage; and order the butler to wait in the room until it is ready, or perhaps you will beat me."

"Madam! I repeat, you shall not have the carriage to go to Richmond."

"Oh!" exclaimed the wife, getting up quietly, and ringing the bell herself: "oh, it is all the same to me. I can go in a hackney coach as far as Lady Graspall's, and then all the world will hear of your absurd jealousy."

"Madam! by God! you shall not quit this house without my permission!"

"You are an insignificant tyrant," rejoined the lady, rapping the ground with the most provoking *nonchalance* with her foot—"you are falling into your dotage:" and then, as the servant answered the summons of the bell, she

said, " Thomas, order me a hackney-coach :— your master says I cannot have the carriage ;" and then seating herself at the piano, she endeavoured, by playing as loud as possible, to drown the voice of poor Mr. Ouncedale, who, to save himself from being laughed at, was at last obliged to yield the point; and as his wife mounted her *brichtska*, to proceed to Richmond, he took up his hat, to walk with one of his boys in the retired part of Regent's Park.

Ouncedale was not, however, the only person who had to lament his wife's connexion with this set; others there were, who, like himself, felt all the misery, the disgrace, which must fall on themselves and their families, by their wives pursuing a course of life so dangerous to their reputation, so inconsistent with their characters as mothers, and women of birth and education. Night after night they heard, as well as the world, of the heavy losses of these ladies at play. Day after day they were witnesses to the demands made upon them by tradesmen for the payment of immense bills for dresses, hats, and

bijouterie, to an amount which was often far beyond the immediate means of the husbands to pay, and which in every case was at least quadruple the lady's pin-money. The bills, however, of the tradesmen might be pardoned and discharged; but the play debts were of a different nature, vicious and inexcusable. Beginning with the trifling loss of a few pounds, and a few tears; but ending, in most cases, in the abandonment of honour, the ruin of domestic peace, the destruction of every moral tie, and the verdict of a jury.

Mrs. Thornby was another of this set, who possessed almost all the bad qualities of Lady Graspall, except her passion for money; but she yielded nothing to her in want of heart, and utter disregard of feeling or principle. The Misses Thornby were yet too young either to profit or suffer by their mother's example; and it was perhaps a fortunate circumstance for them, that, during the London season, they often remained many days, nay weeks, without seeing their mother, who, to say the truth;

would willingly see anybody else's husband, or any one else's children, rather than her own. The one bored her to death with his society, and his prosing about the levity of her conduct, and the difficulty he made about paying her expensive bills, which were often purposely augmented by twenty or thirty pounds, on an understanding with her tradesmen, in order that she might obtain money to cover her losses at *ecarté*, which she was afraid to confess to her husband. Her children were also fast growing up, and nearly at an age to remind the world that Mrs. Thornby was now too old to be perpetually flirting with all the young boys who had just left school, or entered the Guards. So far did Mrs. Thornby carry her utter want of feeling for her children, that she made it a point never to see her infants until three or four years after their birth: if she met them accidentally on the stairs, she would ask the governess their names, pat them on the head, and say "There, there; you are very nice children—which are you, a boy or a girl?" and

as the little innocents would press around her, with the instinctive fondness of nature, to obtain some mark of maternal tenderness, she would exclaim, "There now, you nasty little pigs, do not slobber one; come, do not tread on my flounce." And she would then direct the governess always to take the children in future up and down the back-stairs. With a heart too callous and cold to feel attachment for any one but herself, and with too much calculation to permit herself to fall into that abyss into which others, too many others, had been hurried by the effects of some unhappy and fatal passion, by the seductions of the other sex, or the brutal conduct of their own husbands, Mrs. Thornby contrived to steer clear of absolute shipwreck, though she was utterly indifferent to the loss of reputation, or the scandals to which she gave rise. Virtue had no share in her salvation, calculation was her great safeguard. Her greatest delight, as Sidney observed, was to throw herself on the youngest men. Year after year the greenest, the newest comers out,

were to be seen in her train ; and if she saw any very young man of rank or fashion engaged in a pursuit which was likely to terminate in marriage, she would put forth all her powers of intrigue and seduction to carry him off, and to prevent it. Had she done this for the sake of marrying her daughters, there might have been some excuse ; but her sole object was mischief, vanity, and wanton pleasure in destroying the happiness of others. A proof of her skill, and its consequences, will appear in a subsequent chapter.



CHAPTER XI.

SIR LAWRENCE CATESBY had observed, with much alarm and anxiety, the extreme agitation of his wife on their return to Stanhope-street. Concluding that she was much more seriously indisposed than she had chosen to avow, and dreading the consequences of a nervous attack, he immediately despatched a note to the family physician, Sir Fergus Malcolm, requesting his attendance without a moment's delay. Many minutes, however, had not elapsed after the servant's departure ere the worthy Baronet was startled by a noise in the apartment of Lady Catesby, which was situated immediately above his own cabinet. Sir Lawrence rushed up-stairs, and

found his lady in a senseless state ; the cause of which was too plainly revealed by the empty phial which had fallen to the ground. Surgical assistance was immediately procured, and from the promptitude with which antidotes were administered, the greatest portion of the deleterious liquid was withdrawn, and before the arrival of the physician, Lady Catesby was declared out of danger from the effects of the laudanum, which her husband and female attendants naturally concluded she must have swallowed by mistake, and Sir Lawrence had soon the satisfaction to learn that a few days would suffice to restore her to perfect health.

The return of Herbert Milton to England had been retarded many weeks beyond the period so anxiously expected by his friends ; the time, however, at length arrived, when the gallant young soldier was again destined to revisit his native land, and those only can picture to themselves the delight he felt at once more seeing the white cliffs of England rising from the bosom of the blue ocean, who have them-

selves been many years absent from their home, and who, after many hardships, dangers, and perhaps a perilous and stormy voyage, once more feel convinced of the certainty of pressing to their hearts all those who are dearest to them on earth.

Feelings of this nature are calculated to strike more forcibly upon the mind of an Englishman, than that of the natives of almost every other country (continental of course); not that the sensations of our countrymen are more acute—not that they can feel a greater attachment to the soil of their birth than the denizens of any other land, nor boast of greater patriotism or love for their kindred—yet there is something in the very position of our Island, which renders a return to her shores a thousand times more impressive than a mere transit from one continental state to another. With the exception of the Swiss, the natives of other nations, in returning from a foreign land to that of their birth, have nothing striking or remarkable to attract their attention, or to declare as they look from their car-

riage window, that they are now within the boundaries of their legitimate sovereign, [save indeed the altered livery of the postilion, or the variegated colours of the sentry-boxes and barriers, or the loss he suffers by the difference of the coin. There is nothing extraordinary or sudden in the transition from one principedom to another: the change of language, generally speaking, is gradual; the trees, roads, hills,—in short, all the features of nature, bear more or less affinity one to the other; the costume and countenances of the people are not marked by any immediate alteration: in fact, if he can sleep well in a carriage, a Dane may travel from Copenhagen to Naples, or a Frenchman from Marseilles to Petersburg, without being aware of his having quitted his native country, though he may have passed through the dominions, and heard “God save the King” played, or rather squeaked, on the posthorns of an hundred different potentates. On the other hand, an Englishman can alone attain the soil of his forefathers by a complete transition and change of

elements. The boisterous roaring of the gale, the angry lashings of the waves of the boundless ocean, is the music which accompanies him to the sea-girt shores of his fatherland. He must risk the dangers of the mighty deep, he must expose himself to the mercy of the storm, and the caprices of the winds, ere he can hope to fold within his arms the wife or child who tremblingly awaits his return.

Wafted by favourable winds and a smooth sea, the gallant vessel which conveyed Herbert to England, had made the shores of Cornwall during the night; and Herbert felt as though his heart would have bounded from his bosom, when upon rising in the morning, which was peculiarly serene and brilliant for the season of the year, and going upon deck, he found they were about to enter the noble harbour of Plymouth, and, in fact, that they were then passing the narrow channel between the angle of the Breakwater and the shelving banks of Mount Edgecumbe. As the ship, urged forward by wind and tide, appeared to fly almost through

the water towards the anchorage, Herbert gave a hasty but delighted look at the scene around him. On the right, far above a mile, extended the rough and broken points of that mighty barrier, which the genius of man has so successfully opposed to the fury of the ocean, over whose black and rugged points the furious billows continually reared their foaming summits, and appeared to clash and burst together as if in fits of maddening but impotent rage at the obstruction offered to their progress; whilst the bosom of the bay within appeared as calm and unagitated as the surface of some inland lake. On the left, the crags and banks of Mount Edgcumbe, feathered with forest timber, or clothed with evergreens, whose branches almost swept the surf from the ocean; its green walks, its picturesque sites, temples, and the distant mansion embosomed in the woods, presented a striking contrast with the red and barren cliffs of the opposite strand, whence every now and then the loud explosions of the miners came pealing on the ear, as huge masses of gra-

nite were torn and blasted from their rocky beds, for the purpose of increasing the artificial rampart which the genius of Rennie was raising as a proud monument to the greatness of his country. As the vessel entered deeper in the bay, the neighbouring island appeared more distinctly to detach itself from the main land, and reared its castellated summit from the bosom of the calm basin in which it was embedded, masking the shores of Devonshire, and concealing hundreds of vessels which lay sheltered beneath its protection. Far to the right, the Sound stretched forth its noble bosom, in which several huge ships of war were seen in quiet and secure repose ; whilst to the left, the towns of Plymouth and Devonport extended across the hills, intersected with churches, steeples, batteries, and public edifices, and disclosing, as if in its very bosom, a forest of masts which sprung from the vast arsenal at their feet, giving a noble picture of the gigantic power and naval grandeur of the nation. No sooner had Herbert passed through

the hands of the custom-house officers, than he threw himself into a post-chaise, and in a few minutes was on his road to London at the moderate rate of ten miles an hour.

Lady Milton, who had remained in town, (long since deserted by the fashionable world,) to receive her son, continued, for several days prior to his arrival, in a state of feverish anxiety, dreading lest accident or misfortune should retard his return. At length the long-expected vehicle drew up before the house—hastily she rung the bell, sprung to the door, and bounded down the stairs with the agility of fifteen. In one instant Herbert, accompanied by his huge and faithful preserver, sprung from the chaise into the hall, and in another was locked in the embraces of his affectionate and doating parent. “My dearest mother!” “My dear, dear child!” was all that either of the parties could utter for some time; and such was the violence of Lady Milton’s emotion, at the certainty of once more folding to her bosom her only and dear loved son,

that she was scarcely prevented from fainting by shedding a flood of tears, which relieved her overflowing heart, though she still clung to the bosom of the young and handsome soldier with all the tenderness of maternal love. In the mean time his noble dog, who was unaccustomed to witness such scenes, and was perhaps jealous of these marks of tenderness bestowed by his master on Lady Milton, now came up wagging his tail, and raising himself on his hind legs, placed his paw on Herbert's shoulder, and half whining, half growling, licked his face, as if requesting to be introduced. "Ah!" exclaimed Herbert, as he shook his huge favourite from his shoulder, "dearest mother, I ought at once to have introduced my brave preserver to your notice;" and then turning to the dog, he added, "*Chucho, essa es mi madre.*" The noble animal, as if he really understood the meaning of the words, uttered a kind of pleasurable bark, and then scampered round the room as fast as his vast size would permit, to the imminent jeopardy of the china

and furniture; after which, crouching at the feet of Lady Milton, he looked up in her face, and appeared to await some mark of recognition. Then, as her Ladyship, half-trembling, stooped to caress him, she exclaimed, "Noble animal! I shall ever love you as the saviour of my son," the good-natured and faithful beast crept closer to her feet, and laying his head upon her shoe, whined and licked the ground.

The pleasure which Herbert's return afforded not only to his mother, but to the whole household, who were now assembled in the hall, was marked in their smiling countenances. Every soul in the house, from the kitchen to the garret, had stolen into the passage; all made some excuse for being present. Many were the curious faces which, if they did not come forward, were seen peeping from behind the doors. All those servants who had been long in Lady Milton's service were devotedly attached to Herbert;—kind, condescending, and affable in his manners, liberal in his presents, he had won all their hearts, so that

those who had been hired since his departure, were inclined to worship him, upon the reports which they heard of his generosity, kindness, and condescension, from their fellow-servants. The story of his adventure at Lisbon had lost nothing of its terrible accompaniments on its passage from the drawing-room, through that of the housekeeper, to the servants' hall, and, in fact, was looked upon by all as infinitely more miraculous than the defeat of the Philistines. The maids kept smirking and smiling at a distance, exclaiming, "Dear! what a beautiful young gentleman!" whilst the men, like true Englishmen, were examining from the corner of their eyes the small hand which they had heard killed a dozen men at a blow; and then the dog, which ate them up afterwards.

Among the first who claimed the notice of Herbert, was the old housekeeper, who had been his nurse; and had accompanied Lady Milton to and from India. Smoothing down

her silk apron, half crying and half giggling with pleasure at the sight of Master Herbert, she no sooner saw him released from the embraces of his mother, than she came up to him, and in a moment was fondly recognized.

“ Lord, my dear Master Herbert,” said the old woman, “ how the sun has burned your sweet face ! dear, we must wash it with milk of roses to take out the freckles ! Bless me ! there’s the nasty cut the villains gave you. Lord love you, my darling, how you have changed ! ”

“ Not for you, at least, Martin,” exclaimed Herbert, as he again kindly embraced the faithful servant.

“ No, God love your handsome face, I do not mean that,” answered she ; “ only you’re grown so brown, and so manly-like. I always told my Lady, when you was two years old, says I, my Lady, ‘ His hair will be as dark as your own when he grows up,’ though it was as white as snow then ; I have got a

bit of it here, my dear, in this locket; I cut it off the day you were two years and thirty days old, and that's now twenty-four years ago and five months, come next fourth of December."

There is no knowing how long Mrs. Martin might have continued her twaddle, had not the old butler, who had been footman to Lady Milton's father, now put in his claim for recognition.

"Ah, my old boy!" exclaimed Herbert, shaking the fat butler by the hand, "how d'ye do? how goes it with the gout and the brewing? I bring you letters from your sons. George was made serjeant-major of my regiment before I came away, and, if he goes on well, is sure of a commission."

"Thanks to your goodness, more than his own merit," answered the honest servant; "though it is indeed a great honour to be serjeant-major of a regiment of Guards; and I believe he's better there, and more respected, mayhap, than if he were to get a commission."

“ I’ll answer for his doing well wherever he is,” answered Herbert; “ no one will forget his brave conduct at the battle of ————”

“ I did hear say,” said the butler, with a tear of pride and satisfaction in his eye, “ that he did conduct himself like a brave lad there.”

“ Brave !” exclaimed Herbert: “ if he had been in the French service, he would have received a cross of honour immediately, and have been made an officer on the spot: why man, when the regiment on our left was thrown into confusion, and overpowered by numbers, half their officers being killed or wounded, your son himself, at the head of their grenadiers, rallied them, made head against the cavalry, collected the remains of the battalion into a square, charged with them, took a gun, and then returned to us with the same coolness as if he had been merely marching off a guard.”

This short account of the young man’s gallantry filled the worthy father’s eyes with tears, and he would have overpowered his young master with his thanks, had not one of the footmen

requested Herbert would have the kindness to speak to his dog:—the fact was, the Corporal finding himself not only entirely forgotten, but among a number of strangers, who were all frightened at him, had quietly returned, and crept into the post-chaise, in which Herbert's cloak still remained, and there seated and maintained himself, in despite of the coaxing of the servants, and intreaties of the postilion, keeping them all at a distance by the mere vibration of his tail, and the irritation of the bristles on his back; nor was it until Herbert ordered him to his side, that he would abandon the vehicle, which, as he had travelled in it for upwards of twenty-four hours, he now probably looked upon as his home.

Before Lady Milton and her son separated for the night, it was determined that they should remain in town for a few days, and that Herbert should then accompany his mother to Milton Park, which, with the estate and mansion, had formerly belonged to a

branch of the family, but had been sold by its possessor, and again re-purchased by Sir Herbert's direction. From thence, Herbert intended to continue his tour to the houses of different friends, from whom he found pressing invitations awaiting his return. It may be well imagined, that the paramount thought in the mind of Herbert, on reaching London, was that of seeing Emily, and he was on the point of putting on his hat to proceed to Park-lane on the following morning, when he was met by his friend Sidney, who was hastening to congratulate him on his safe arrival, and who, after the first salutation, exclaimed, "Berty, I see by your eye what you want to know; she is not in town; they are down at Merryford, with the Dropmores."

In spite of his attempts to conceal his chagrin, Herbert showed how much he was annoyed by this intelligence, which would perhaps render their meeting a case of uncertainty for some months, as he was not intimate with the

Dropmore family, where Sidney informed him Emily intended passing the greater part of the winter.

“Write to Mrs. Walden, my dear fellow, and give a broad hint you wish to see them, and I’ll bet you a *pony* they are in town in less than a week; women can always find excuses. But seriously, Herbert, since there is no longer any secret between us on this subject, tell me, fairly, what are your intentions; it is evident, there can be no doubt, Miss Manby is as much in love with you as you can desire, and I think it is but fair you should come to a conclusion one way or other, and the sooner the better.”

“My intention is to await my father’s arrival, who will certainly, I find, be at home in the spring; and if he gives his consent, there can be no doubt as to what I shall do.”

“But in the mean time, if you meet Miss Manby, do you intend going on sighing and ogling like a schoolboy passing a pastrycook’s shop, or shall you bid at once? I well know my

advice is never worth two-pence, but I should recommend your first confessing yourself to Miss Manby, and then waiting for absolution from the Padre afterwards. Egad, Berty! one would think you were going to marry your father instead of the prettiest girl in London: but here comes your cousin Alfred; I see his cabriolet at the door; I take it he knows as much of the matter as I do; but *entre nous*, Herbert, mind what you are at; beware, I say, of the snake in the grass!"

Before Herbert could demand an explanation of his friend's hints, the door opened, and Alfred embraced his cousin with a degree of warmth and affection that appeared really to flow from his heart. The conversation between the young men turned entirely upon fashionable intelligence, the "what's what" of London life, the arrangements for winter, the marriages, divorces, and scandal of the past season; and, in half an hour, Herbert had received a tolerable account of all the remarkable events which had occurred since his departure.

Alfred, however, made not the slightest allusion to the name of Emily, or indeed to any family matter; but proposed that he should send his cabriolet to wait for them at White's, and that they should all walk to look at a horse or two, which Sidney had recommended to his friend; as well as to sundry tailors, boot-makers, and hatters, who were in no small degree necessary to a man of fashion, after a three years' campaign in Spain. We must leave the young men to discuss the merits of splints, spavins, and windgalls, whilst we return for a short time to Emily, who at this moment was in a state of great anxiety and nervousness at Merryford.

Having buoyed up her heart with the hope of seeing Herbert almost immediately after the fête at Beau Regard, her distress and vexation were proportionably great when she heard of his illness; nor was her agitation at all diminished by the certainty with which she flattered herself of being the object of Herbert's affections. This, certainly, she had not only heard from the mouth of Alfred, but her

friend Madame de Geigenklang had not wasted much time in acting up to the wishes of Mr. Milton. In the course of four or five days subsequent to the *déjeûné*, the Baroness invited Emily to dine with her, and offered to *chaperone* her in the evening to Almack's. No sooner had the two ladies retired from the dining-room, than the Baroness commenced her attack.

“ Well, my dear,” said she, “ so my *Tenor* and my music are coming over directly, in spite of the brigante; *Osmino trionferà*, he will throw himself at your feet, you blush, he kisses your hand—he will say, ‘ *Rendite ben mio*’—you will make no reply—silence gives consent, and you are married—grand finale.”

Emily did indeed blush deeply; and though she could scarcely avoid smiling at the Baroness's programme of what she considered likely to occur, yet she attempted to make a defensive answer.

“ Lord! my dear,” continued the Baroness, “ I know all about it; you are *sospirando di notte di giorno* for this *amor vincitore*. Ah!

the very thought of it kills me: I used to sigh and groan so horridly about the Baron, indeed I was very nearly crying two or three times, and I could never see the Romeo, or hear that beautiful air of '*Ombra adorata aspetta*,' without thinking I saw the Baron dying for love in a cellar, or a vault, or some shocking old place."

"My dear Baroness," rejoined Emily, "I hope that our history will not be quite so tragic; though I fear Sir Herbert Milton's animosity to my poor father will overcome his affection for his son?"

"Nonsense, my dear; you like Herbert, as you call it, very much; he loves you, as he calls it, '*à la mort*;' and he has authorized me to propose for him, that is to say, I am convinced he will be very much obliged to me for taking the trouble off his hands. Lord! my dear—by-the-bye, what a nuisance it must be for a man to propose! it is quite bad enough to listen to a proposition; I declare I trembled like Leporello when the ghost nodded his head: but tell me, will you have this man for your wedded hus-

band; come, say yes, and we will go at once to Carcons and order the *trousseau*."

"I fear, my dear Baroness, I must reject your proposal," answered Emily: "surely, since you will have me speak the truth, you, my kind friend, would not urge me to accept any man against the wishes of his parents—you, of all others, who set so good an example?"

"Oh! my dear," exclaimed the Baroness, interrupting her, "do not talk of my example; *qual fiero tormento*, the very idea of it quite *squarcia mio core*; besides, there was a great difference between my postponing the Baron to please my own poor father, whom I dearly loved, and your refusing Herbert, out of deference to his old, horrid, bilious papa, whom you have every reason to hate; moreover, you are mistress of a very comfortable fortune, and I had not a sous."

"Fortune," rejoined Emily, "is the last thing I think of; but still, if I had millions, I never could be happy, if I thought I was the cause of dissensions between my husband and

his family! I own," continued she, blushing deeply, "I confess I do love, have loved Colonel Milton for many years."

"Well, my dear," said the Baroness, before the sentence was finished, "and if you love him, can you bear the idea of delivering him up, to be devoured by those Lady Bossvilles, who would have no scruples in running away with him, in spite of twenty fathers, if they were certain of his fortune?"

"I would rather perish; I would rather my heart should break; I would rather see him the happy husband of Lady Susan, than consent to become his wife, if our marriage were to entail disgrace and ruin upon him; at least, I should have the consolation of having done my duty; and though my death ensued, I should extract even from Sir Herbert himself, that approbation which he refused to me living."

"Oh! my dear Emily," rejoined the Baroness, really affected by the earnestness of her young friend's manner, "you are a dear good girl, and old Milton's a horrid cross old tyrant!"

—I hope he will die of bile directly ; but even if he should not, I assure you, that you exaggerate greatly his objections. I know, from the most undeniable source, that, although he might perhaps refuse his assent before, and perhaps *bouder* a little after, he would forgive you both in less than a month:—really, my love, you carry your scruples too far.”

“ You cannot disapprove of my motives ; you cannot, surely, condemn my resolution ? ”

“ Yes, my dear, I do excessively,” retorted the Baroness : “ if you persist in this horrid determination, you ’ll drive my poor *Tenor* mad ; he ’ll lose his voice, or starve himself to death. No, no ; you must promise me you will accept him ; I will answer for old papa Milton, and, you know, my dear Lady Milton thinks you are perfection.”

“ Nothing can be more flattering to me than the idea of being looked upon favourably by Lady Milton,” replied Emily ; “ but I can plainly see by her constrained manner when we meet, that she participates in her hus-

band's sentiments of animosity: and Mrs. Walden assures me I am the only person in all England who must not, dare not, think of Colonel Milton."

"Mrs. Walden is an old twaddle!" retorted the Baroness; "she knows nothing about the matter; but you may do as you please: but do, there's a good girl, let me tell Herbert, the moment he arrives, that you consent."

"I will not consent," answered Emily mildly, "to take any steps before Sir Herbert's return; it shall not be said that I took advantage of the influence I might possess over Colonel Milton's mind, to induce him to hurry into a marriage during his father's absence:—no, my dear Baroness, I am not ashamed to avow, I have long loved, and suffered in silence; I have loved without the hope of a return; and now that I have almost obtained the certainty of being dear to the only man I could ever love, this knowledge is enough to insure my present happiness, and to give me courage to wait in patience for the return of Sir Herbert."

“ Well, my dear,” replied the other, “ you may perhaps be satisfied with this phantom possession ;—but what does La Bruyere say about love and fire?—‘ that it requires constant fanning or it will go out,’ or something of that sort ; at all events, love requires feeding ;—apropos, how uncommonly good the *filets de soles* were to-day ;—and so, if you allow Herbert to starve, or grow cold, he will probably take up ‘ mit some other yonk lady,’ as Mrs. Dunsten says ; and then, my dear, there will be an end of the whole affair.”

“ Nothing, my dear friend, shall induce me to take any step before Sir Herbert’s return,” rejoined Emily.

“ Perhaps, my love,” answered the goodnatured hostess—“ perhaps you are right to wait till the old Rajah comes home ; but if then he refuse, take my advice, marry Herbert, *bon gré mal gré*, and I will guarantee the nabob’s assent in a month afterwards. I should not urge you to this step, unless I was convinced of his ultimate forgiveness ; and I am

certain, if you were to persist in your refusal, Herbert would die of a broken heart, or go out with the man who is so fond of ice, and be frozen up amongst the whales and the *montagnes Russes*, or marry an Esquimaux princess, or break his neck in hunting seals upon sea-horses.”

Emily could not help smiling at the *imbroglio* which her friend made of a North Pole expedition.

“ My love, it’s no laughing matter, I assure you ; he may, perhaps, in despair, set off to Timbuctoo, and marry a hundred and fifty black sultanas, if he does not die of the black fever. How should you like to see him driving about in his carriage, with half-a-dozen great, fat, soot-coloured queens scratching each others’ eyes out, to sit next him?—then, good God! the horror of their music, only two notes, no idea of thorough bass, or Logier’s system ; no other instruments but drums and flutes, made out of the skins and bones of dead men !”

They were now interrupted by the gentlemen,

who came in from the dining-room; and as soon as coffee was over, the carriages were ordered, and the party started for Almack's.

After undergoing all the preliminary pleasures; waiting for nearly an hour in the "string" of vehicles, which commenced at the bottom of Albemarle-street;—after having been regaled with the charming accompaniments of the oaths of footmen, as the poles rattled amongst their unbooted legs, in despite of the precaution of boards and barricadoes; the slashings, and execrations of coachmen, as they cut into the line, or were foiled in their attempts by the vigilance of those who formed a part of it; the remonstrances and threats of masters as they heard the horrid grating of a hind-wheel scarifying the pannels of their new equipage; and, to sum up the whole, the screams of the Baroness, who, being a dreadful coward, always gave vent to her terror, first by loud exclamations, and then by pinching her neighbour as green as calipash:—after all these additional and common introductions to the pleasures of

a London ball, the party at length landed under the awning in King-street; and having delivered their tickets to the watchful Cerberus on the right hand, they were proceeding up-stairs, when their attention was attracted, and they were in no small degree amused, by a dialogue between a young nobleman and the guardian of the entrance.

“ My Lord,” exclaimed Mr. Whiffler to the Peer, “ I am sorry, but we cannot possibly allow you to go up-stairs.”

“ Not allow me to go up-stairs ! Why, what do you mean ?” replied the nobleman ; “ is my ticket a forgery, or have I given you a wrong one ?”

“ Neither, my Lord, neither ; your Lordship’s ticket is perfectly in order, but it is the costume we allude to.”

“ Costume, Sir !” exclaimed the Peer ; “ why, how long have you been established as a judge of dress ?”

“ The Ladies Patronesses,” rejoined Mr. Whif-

fler, "have given us most positive injunctions not to permit any gentlemen to enter the rooms in loose trowsers, unless they are Privy-counselors, or Knights of the Garter."

"What excessive nonsense!" rejoined Lord Taunton, looking at his dress, which he had flattered himself was the height of perfection, especially his cravat, which, in despite of eleven failures, had at length succeeded, and presented one of those neat flat cross-bows, held together by a turquoise-headed pin, which it requires such long practice to attain with perfection, and in the arrangement of which not above six or seven men in London were ever looked upon as decided masters. "How ridiculous," continued his Lordship, "to subject one to these whims and caprices! why do not the Ladies print on the vouchers the kind of dress they wish one to wear? I shall certainly not return now, Sir."

"Of course, your Lordship must act as you think proper," rejoined the powdered guardian,

“ but we shall feel it our duty to report the circumstance to their Ladyships, who will use their own discretion in the matter.”

“ One would think one was coming to a Caledonian ball, instead of Almack’s,” rejoined Lord Taunton; “ why what do the old cats mean ?”

“ Oh, it is all that delightful person, Princess Nasowitch,” whispered the Baroness in Lord Taunton’s ear; “ she always chooses her friends and her footmen from the size of their legs;— she is a sort of Catherine in her way.”

“ In that case,” rejoined the Peer, “ I must forthwith order some *mollets postiches*, or I have no chance of entering into her good graces.”

As soon as the ladies had mounted the stairs, and deposited the cloaks and shawls, Mr. Whiffler again made an attempt to arrest the ascent of Lord Taunton.

“ If we may take the liberty to suggest,” said the man, “ we should strongly recommend your Lordship’s not appearing before their Ladyships in your present costume; if your Lordship will have the kindness to return home

and change it, we will take upon ourselves to admit you after the established hour; indeed, my Lord, we have been already obliged to send back several gentlemen for the same reason."

"More fools they, for submitting to such nonsense! and I request, Mr. Whiffler, you will do me the favour another time to take my ticket, and be less prodigal of your remarks," answered Lord Taunton, as he followed the Baroness and Emily into the room.

The clock had in the mean time struck eleven, and the door of admission was immediately closed:—scarcely, however, was the bolt drawn, ere a knock was heard.

"Who is there?" exclaimed the guardian, peeping through the little grating; "who is it that comes at this unseasonable hour?"

"Mr. Stanwell," replied a voice from the other side.

"I am very sorry, Sir, but you are too late; the clock has struck eleven."

"But I am a member!" rejoined the appellant.

"Extremely sorry, Sir, but there has been

no house this evening," was the reply of the guardian.

"But this is ridiculous!" exclaimed the other; "I could not get up before, from the length of the string."

"The last carriage has set down above half a minute!" repeated the sentinel coolly.

"Do you mean to say, Sir, that I am not to be let in, because I happen to arrive one moment too late; this is carrying your impudence, and the nonsense of the Patronesses too far: I shall certainly report your insolence to them to-morrow."

"Sorry, very sorry," rejoined Mr. Whiffler coolly, "to give offence;—regret, but cannot avoid; we have their Ladyships' orders to take down the names of all those gentlemen who come too late, and all those who appear in this list are to be excluded for one subscription. Their Ladyships are determined, since their husbands cannot produce a reform in Parliament, that they at least will introduce a reform in the London hours!" and so saying,

he quietly walked away from the door, leaving Mr. Stanwell no other resource but to retire quietly to one of the neighbouring clubs, to vent his anger at whist. Scarcely, however, had he removed from the spot, ere a loud knocking was again heard at the door: without, however, hurrying himself in proportion to the loudness of the appeal to his ears, Mr. Whiffler again approached the grating, and demanded what was wanted.

“Open the door for the Duke of ——.”

“I can’t,” replied Mr. Whiffler, “unless it is one of the Royal Family.”

“It’s I,” now exclaimed a voice, “the Duke of Gloria !”

“My Lord, your Grace; I am extremely sorry, your Grace, but it is more than three minutes and fifteen seconds too late; it would be at my peril to admit anybody after this hour.”

“But I am just returned from a Cabinet Council,” replied the Duke,—“it was impossible for me to arrive sooner.”

“I will refer to the bye-laws, if your Grace desires me,” rejoined the man of tickets; “but I can take upon myself to say, there is no exception made whatever for any but members of the houses of Peers and Commons when there is a debate: their Ladyships have come to the most positive determination, that their standing orders shall not be broken through under any pretext or excuse whatever. Your Grace will, I trust, see how utterly impossible it is for me to open the door without orders from above.”

“Well then, go; zounds!” exclaimed the Duke in a rage, “go and tell them I come from the council, and do not keep me standing in the cold all night.”

“I will attend to your Grace’s instructions,” replied Mr. Whiffler; “and if your Grace will step into the larger room down-stairs upon parole—upon parole, your Grace—whilst I consult their Ladyships, I will open the door.”

The Duke condescended to comply with the important guardian’s proposition, and the latter slowly walked up-stairs, and then addressed

Lady Dossington, whom he found sitting on]one of the elevated seats near the entrance.

“ My Lady,” said Mr. Whiffler, “ there ’s his Grace the Duke of Gloria below ; he wishes to know if your Ladyships will permit him to come up-stairs.”

“ Has he forgotten his ticket ?” demanded her Ladyship, pursing up her mouth, and looking extremely solemn, whilst both her daughters whispered,

“ Shut him out, mamma ; he has no business to forget any thing ;—besides, it will be such a good joke !”

“ No, my Lady,” replied Whiffler, “ he has got his ticket, but the hour has struck.”

“ What is the clock ?” demanded the Patroness.

“ Five minutes, twenty-nine seconds past eleven, by your Ladyship’s chronometer,” rejoined the man.

“ Was there any thing going on in the House of Peers ?” inquired Lady Dossington.

“ Nothing, my Lady,” answered the other ;

“our messenger reported that their Lordships were not in sufficient number to constitute a house; and I understand, my Lady, that their Lordships have come to an agreement not to sit on your Ladyship’s nights.”

“A very proper decision!” exclaimed the lady: “you will inform his Grace, Mr. Whiffler, that the Ladies Patronesses, having taken his case into consideration, regret extremely that they are under the necessity of adhering to their rules.”

“Oh! I forgot to inform your Ladyship,” answered the man, “that his Grace desired me to say he was detained by the Council.”

“I am very sorry,” rejoined her Ladyship, with infinite solemnity, “but we cannot permit the Council to interfere with our regulations. Their Lordships must either sit earlier, or renounce meeting upon an Almack’s night, if they wish to be admitted here.”

“It’s very absurd that they can’t choose some other time, when they have all the week at their disposal!” added the daughters.

Mr. Whiffler was about to quit the awful Patroness, when he said, (certainly forgetting that the Duke was cooling his heels down-stairs, amidst the footmen,) " I had almost omitted to mention to your Ladyship, that Lord Taunton would force himself up-stairs, improperly dressed, in despite of your Ladyship's injunctions."

" How is he dressed ?" demanded her Ladyship, frowning.

" In longs, my Lady," was the answer.

" In longs ! how highly improper !" rejoined the Patroness : " what, tight ?

" No, my Lady ; loose."

" Loose ! how indecent !" exclaimed the Ladies Bosville : " dear mamma, do have him sent away."

" Did you communicate our orders ?" demanded Lady Dossington.

" Yes, my Lady : I told him that your Ladyships had no decided objection to longs, if they were tights ; but if they were loose, they must

be shorts : but he treated me with indifference, and walked into the room."

"If any one again attempts to intrude themselves in such an improper dress, I request you will call in the civil power, Mr. Whiffler; and in the mean time, unless his Lordship makes an apology to the Committee, he shall have no more tickets."

Mr. Whiffler now proceeded down-stairs to communicate his orders to the Duke, who very good-naturedly laughed at this most important message, and, ordering his carriage, left the house.

The ball of this evening passed off as all other balls at the same place, creating envy, jealousy, and hatred in the minds of many of those who have been unsuccessful in procuring tickets; affording real amusement to few, and disappointing a greater portion of those who, by dint of manœuvring, petitioning, parliamentary interest, or presents, have been enabled to obtain the desired vouchers; and as this was one

of the last balls of the season, and a general election already talked of, the mixture of company and the number was much greater than usual; and, consequently, it was what the most correct persons called, "horrid bad Almack's!"

END OF THE FIRST VOLUME.

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