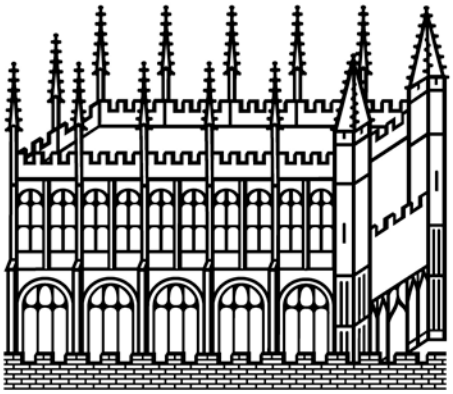

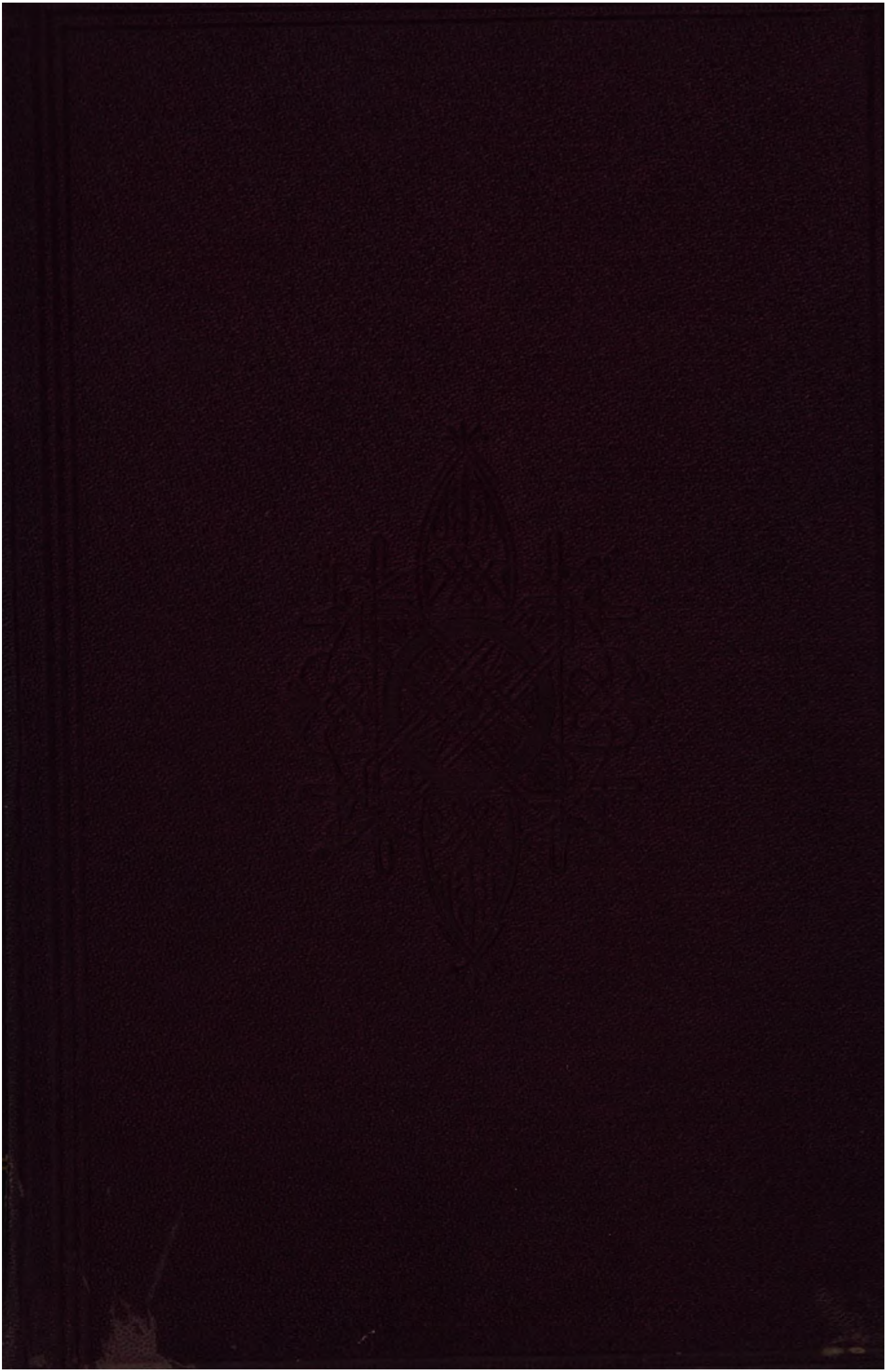

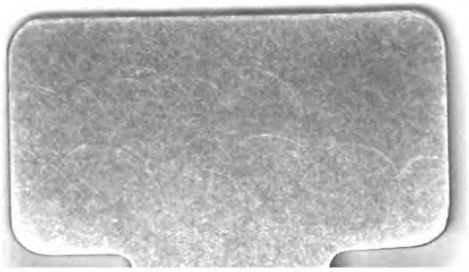

"Albert Lunel" was written by the late Lord Brougham in the year Eighteen Hundred and Forty-four, but for private reasons of his Lordship's, was not published.

*London, March* 1872.

# ALBERT LUNEL.

## A Novel.

BY THE LATE

LORD BROUGHAM.

IN THREE VOLUMES.


VOL. I.

---

LONDON:
CHARLES H. CLARKE, 13, PATERNOSTER ROW.

TO

## SAMUEL ROGERS, Esq., F.R.S.,

ETC. ETC. ETC.

It is natural that the countenance of a great name, the certainty of obtaining an enlightened reader, the benefit of having a candid though severe critic, should be sought by one who has no name at all, and only desires justice and intelligence in his judge. These attributes the writer of this work found united in you, and to you he has taken the liberty of inscribing it.

Should such an accident ever happen as your indulging in any curiosity upon so trifling a matter, you will find the mystery in which your unknown admirer is wrapt impossible to pierce. Your sagacity may, from internal evidence, serve to point a conjecture towards France and her colonies, as his country,—her language, as that in which his book may have been written.

But upon one subject, no doubt must be allowed to rest. In all that relates to political events, and political characters; to the manners, the genius, the con-

duct of nations; above all, to the state of society beyond the Atlantic; there is no fiction, no colouring whatever, any more than in the sacred doctrines most connected with human happiness—peace and freedom—religion, rational as well as pure—morality, uncompromising though charitable—benevolence, universal, but discriminating—which it is the design of these pages to teach.

# CONTENTS OF VOL. I.

## CHAPTER VII.



## CHAPTER VIII.



## CHAPTER IX.

# THE CHÂTEAU.

## CHAPTER I.

### THE BEGINNING.

It was one of those truly delicious evenings of which untravelled Englishmen know scarcely five or six throughout the summer, but which in Southern France are frequent, indeed almost constant, during half the year. The sultry heats of midsummer and early autumn, extending into the night, scarcely leave its relish to that sweet season, and the exhaustion of the day hardly permits a desire for any exercise; but as August fades away, the air becomes more temperate, and nothing can be figured more truly delightful than those evenings which succeed the latest heats of the declining sun. A lively pleasure is felt in mere existence; the air is balmy;

if any breeze moves it, there is refreshment conveyed on its wing; the lightsome feeling which is diffused cannot be described to those who have never known it; there is as much enjoyment as can be tasted without any excitement, and the languor which succeeds to more boisterous and short-lived pleasures, and is itself of brief duration, now becomes the habitual feeling and the pure solace of hours. An Englishman never fails to be deeply struck with these delights of climate; he finds within him unwonted emotions; his senses are stirred with new enjoyments; and he comprehends the Italian's meaning when, against all the joys of active exertion, congenial to our ungenial sky, he sets with an unhesitating preference the sweets of his idol Far Niente, sometimes extolled as *dolce*, and sometimes exalted to a higher rank by the prefix of *santo*, or even *sacro-santo*.

As we proceed further southward, the grove is filled with the sweet perfumes of those regions; each breeze wafts a scent to rouse the jaded senses, or to excite some feeling that may break the languor diffused over them, by providing some new sensation. The corruscations of the sky become more vivid and unremitting, and while the glow-worm's

lamp is hung out to allure her volatile love, and fix him for a while in her stationary bower, the fire-fly sparkles from bush to bush of the shrubbery, giving a lively but a mild illumination, that animates the scene without breaking its stillness or disturbing its repose. There wants, indeed, in those delightful regions only one charm; "Morn ascends not with the charm of earliest birds," and "Her solemn bird attends not silent night." The grove is perfumed; it is not vocal.

These evenings are the seasons of our existence, when, the soul, free from the interruptions of the senses, at least in their stormy mood, unprovoked by the stimulus of pleasure, nor vexed by the stings of pain, in calm and serene possession of itself, naturally falls into contemplations removed from earthly influence; expatiates over the prospect of human affairs, if informed for such views, or, at least, ponders upon its own past existence, its future lot; and rises oftentimes above all merely human scenes to speculate upon its fate in another state of being. The devout Catholic in those moments of repose, like the Brahmin under the shade of his Areka tree, is absorbed in heavenly contemplation, ruffled sometimes by passing doubts, but far more

commonly indulging those extatic visions of unbounded and unceasing bliss, which his infallible Church has declared to her believing sons, and has in tender compassion to human infirmity, as well as in skilful regard to her hopes of human adhesion, annexed to the easy performance of duties within the reach of the least rigid virtue, and calling for the most moderate exercise of self-denial.

This climate and these nights are enjoyed by the people of Languedoc in a greater degree than their Provençal neighbours know; because there is not the same parching drought which forms the curse of the South, especially beyond the Alpine ridge, and because there is a far more exuberant foliage, and everywhere an ampler vegetation than is to be found in the rocky, arid, though shrubby, region of the "Sweet-scented Mendicant."*

On such an evening as we have faintly described, and about the hour of sunset, arrived in the extensive grounds of the Marquess de Bagnolles, a travelling carriage, with a gentleman and a single servant, who leaving his master at the gate proceeded to de-

* Gueuse Parfumée—the name given to Provence, as the native country of perfumes, and nothing else.

liver a letter to the Marquess. The consequence was an immediate invitation to the Château; where a party was assembled, and had just taken their coffee after dinner. The stranger advanced, courteously but somewhat shyly, if not proudly, and made his obeisance to the circle with some excuse for intruding at so late an hour, but ascribing this to the illness of his niece, whom he had left at the village cabaret, and for whom he was anxious to obtain the hospitality of the Château, as they found it wholly impossible to continue their journey. A servant was immediately dispatched, and the young lady was soon safely placed in a suitable apartment, where the quiet which her ailment required could be secured. The travellers had been enjoying their visit at Nismes, exploring the rich remains of Roman architecture in which it abounds more than any place out of Rome, feasting their eyes upon the exquisite beauties of the Maison Carrée, which transports the imagination back to the Augustan age, by its entire preservation and appearance of a temple in actual use, and then gazing with increased wonder on the magnificence of the Pont du Gard, contrasted with its romantic environs, a magnificence to which even the Eternal City itself has nothing at all

superior, if indeed, it have any thing equal. The fatigues of this day with its excitements had, the Baron de Moulin said, proved too great for the feeble health of Emmeline, and he desired leave to retire and visit her in order to relieve the anxiety her illness had occasioned him.

Upon his withdrawing, the Marquess mentioned that the new guest of the château was well known to him by reputation, as a person of extraordinary faculties and great attainments, though of a character somewhat lofty and ungracious, yet one destined for great things, should the ferment continue which now existed in the nation by the state of public affairs; for though residing in Flanders, where his property lay, and where he had held high office, his family was French. "I am too young," said he, "to have any pretension to share in these things, and my father's premature death has called me to the discharge of private duties, that must for some time exclude me from public affairs. But the Baron, whose mature years and great capacity point him out to the friends of improvement as their powerful and natural leader, has only to struggle against the obstacles interposed by the weight of years; for the letter he brings me says, he is long

past his prime, although his marvellous vigour both of body and mind appear to gather new strength, and impart to all his actions new life. He has all his days been the most active of men, insomuch that it used to be a joke on him ever since he left the University of Montpellier that he slept with one eye ever open, and could write with both hands at the same time. Had he only your age" (continued the Marquess, addressing himself to M. de Chatillon), "he might reach the utmost heights of our state, should any of the storms that now threaten France unsettle the form of our ancient Monarchy."—"Alas, Marquess," said M. de Chatillon, "how far better would it be for us all that such spirits as you describe the Baron should pass through life like our forefathers, occupied with the care of their peasantry, or the improvement of their estates, and only seeking to excel in the tranquil walks of literature, or shine in the harmless splendour of courts!"

The Baron now returned to join the party in their walk upon the terrace, and he returned with a countenance that showed how much he had been relieved by finding his young charge greatly recovered and fallen into a sweet sleep, the refresh-

ment of which he expected would enable her to appear next morning.

They walked along a spacious lawn, which constant care and watering enabled the Marchioness to maintain in a somewhat green state, unless in the most burnt-up season of the year, but which the earlier rains of autumn had refreshed and really made somewhat like grass, if it could not be called turf. It was closed at one extremity by a pavilion in which were groups of marble figures by good artists, and one by Canova of the Graces, with a fountain that played in the centre of the vestibule. Through the pavilion you entered the flower-garden, which was extensive and rich and various. The other extremity of the terrace lost itself in a shrubbery, which ended in a woody walk, that wound along the side of an eminence near the Château, and conducted the party to a path of natural gravel on the margin of a small lake, whose deep blue water now reflected the last rays of the setting sun. Nothing could be imagined more truly delicious than this walk. Its course along the lake under the thick shade of the trees was both beautiful and refreshing; and from its extremity there led several footpaths through the deepest recesses of

the wood. When you followed these, you came into a perfect wilderness, without the least vestige of culture or care. Tangled thickets on every side almost impeded your progress; the underwood was dense, filling up the space between the trees; the ground indeed was carpeted with odoriferous plants of every kind, which in this delicious climate abundantly yield their perfumes to each passing breeze. But wildness was the prevailing character of the scene, and you plainly perceived that you were, indeed, in a desert wilderness, where nothing reminded you of human cares or even human existence. All at once, after labouring through the thicket, you broke upon a flower-garden of small extent, but of exquisite beauty, whose complete culture was visible in every plant, flower, stem, and group. A fountain played in the centre, and a rustic bower afforded a seat on one side. The effects of the contrast were remarkable; and the pleasure it yielded was the reverse of that which they feel who visit in Holland the thick wood of the Hague, the only piece of natural scenery in that country of artificial existence, alike for vegetable and for animal nature.

In these grounds the company wandered to enjoy

the twilight, and the heat being still too little abated to allow much walking, they sat down in one of the arbours reared near the lake; when a small choir of singers, part of the company that had gone round by another route, struck up the national air of Henri Quatre; and then recited some of the fine Troubadour Songs so intimately associated with all recollections of Languedoc and Provence.

The evening passed in the enjoyment of these delightful scenes; in reading and in games, rather of skill than chance, as chess; for the family of the Marquess was of strict Huguenot principles, like so many of those in that part of France, and the Marchioness was of the most rigid Calvinistic faith, her family having traced its descent from the old Covenanters of Scotland. The Baron felt this some kind of restraint; for he sincerely respected the religious feelings of others, how much soever he differed with them, and was always delicately apprehensive of giving them pain, by any of the levities into which his wit or humour might naturally betray him, and above all, by any appearance of making their puritanism a subject of his ridicule; but the early hour at which all retired to rest soon relieved him, and

he promised himself the greatest pleasure he could taste, in the restoration of his niece to society after the refreshment of a night's rest.

The breakfast next morning, according to the custom of the Marchioness (whose family was English) preserved our social fashion so much approved by Madame de Staël. After this pleasant and lively meal, where all are fresh and gay, and all are full of the morning's projects, or the day's occupation, the family circle had scarcely been formed in the drawing-room, when a slender and graceful figure was seen to rise and salute the Marchioness in her mother-tongue, with a peculiar sweetness of voice, and a manner modest even to timidity. Her complexion wore not the hue of health; but it added to the charm of her most delicate features, and her eyes at once shone with tenderness and spirit. Her form, though slight, was admirable, and without the traits of regular beauty, the whole effect of her face, figure, air, and expression had something far more attractive than mere loveliness of shape and colour can bestow. The rapture of the Baron's eyes when he presented her to his new friends, at once showed that this was his Emmeline, then in her eighteenth year: the cherished object of all his cares;

the only child of a brother with whom he had grown up from childhood in the most undivided intimacy, and whose true affection, whose sage counsels had guided, whose manly spirit had supported him through all his trials, and whose death had inflicted upon him the only great sorrow he had ever known. Since the loss of her father, while yet a child, her mother having died in giving her birth, she had centered all her affections in her uncle, whom indeed she regarded as if she had never known a parent; nor was he more wrapt up in her than she in him. The Marchioness seeing her embarrassed by the en-entrance of so many strangers from the breakfast parlour, asked if she would accompany her to sit awhile in the Orangery, to which she gently answered, "Please," and with the Baron they retired. She of course became the subject of conversation. "One plainly perceives," said the Countess de Chatillon, "that this tender creature is not the Baron's immediate descendant. His hard metal would not easily cut into so soft a trinket."—"And why," asked the Marquess, "should not his solid gold be beaten into a leaf so light that a breath might move it?" "Rather," rejoined the Countess, "take your comparison from the iron ribbons into which we saw that

powerful and intractable metal fashioned the other day at St. Etienne."*

"However," said the Count de Chatillon, "I think you will admit that Mdlle. Emmeline is a very attractive person in all that we can see of her appearance and her manner, which alone we as yet know; and I am told by her uncle that she is extremely clever and well-informed." "Aye, indeed, my good lord," said his gifted spouse, "I doubt not he gives his wares a good character as he brings them to market; but were I a man, I should prefer a less tender helpmate." "My darling," said her husband, "you are eternally speculating on people's designs about their daughters; when from all I can perceive of the Baron, and indeed from all I have ever heard of him, my belief is that nothing enters less into his head than any such event as you are dreaming of, and that to lose his niece in that way would give him the greatest concern."

"May be so," said his inexorable partner, "may be so. Did you just observe how tenderly this young exquisite drawled out her '*Please*' when the Marchioness offered her a seat in the Orangery?"—"My

* The Birmingham of France.

love," said the Count, "you are a very clever and a very clear-seeing person, and God knows how very clever and clear-sighted you may be without being quite as infallible as you conceive yourself; but anything more unlike one of your exquisites, those compounds, or rather, let me say, those *composts* of affectations, selfishness, and false sentiment, I never did see than Mdlle. de Moulin; and as for her 'please,' which offends you so much, I could not hear it without being convinced that it was merely her giving thanks to unburthen her mind of gratitude, without putting the other party to the trouble of receiving them." "Charming! sentimental! truly becoming a young innocent girl, or a professional poet! But from *you* whose tastes and habits we all know" — "Come, Countess," said the host, willing to break off a dialogue which plainly annoyed the husband, and did not cover the wife with any glory save that of ability and eloquence—"Come, let us have a drive through the Forest ride before the great heat begins." The Countess felt this rebuke, how delicately soever administered, and the anger, which her husband's less polished weapon had inflicted, was exasperated to something bordering upon fury by the keen cutting of the Marquess's

oil-dipped razor; but it was a suppressed fury; and the consequences were startling to each beholder. The fine colour of her face had given place to a harsh paleness that covered as with a shroud each feature; her eye was not so much animated with rage as glazed in her head; the expression of her beautiful countenance had become hard rather than fierce; while in her throat there seemed some obstruction, as if a portion of it were swollen by something she could not swallow. The lips from vermilion became pale and were compressed within the narrowest dimensions, betokening a strong effort of restraint under which she was endeavouring to lay herself. This appearance, altogether the most repulsive that can well be imagined, only lasted a few moments. By a continuance of the same effort she, who without any effort so often conquered others, had now subdued herself; she regained her noble look and wonted self-possession; nor could any one entering the room at that moment have supposed that a scene had preceded his coming. But, also, no one who had witnessed that scene could easily forget it; all felt it alike; and each said to himself, "What would this have burst out in, had she been alone with either the Marquess, or

the Count, or even the Baron, whom she now saw for the first time?" Nor could any one who had witnessed this scene ever fail to recall it to recollection, as often as he afterwards felt the power of her incomparable beauty, extraordinary talents, and commanding position in society.

While these things were passing in the saloon, Emmeline, with her uncle, was quietly reposing in the Orangery, where the Marchioness had left them to make her morning visit to the children's schoolroom, and to exercise them in religious offices. The heavenly weather, and the relief from her yesterday's illness, which she now enjoyed, made her give loose to those pious feelings, which, interwoven with her gentle and affectionate nature, made her whole existence one continued thanksgiving and prayer; and she could not retain any emotion of her heart from her second parent. "How gracious, dearest Zio* (so she always called him), are all the dispensations of our bountiful Father in heaven! Seldom he visits us with pain, and if he does, how surely does he make the compensation which I am now enjoying, in giving to our state of mind and of body

* Uncle.

on emerging from sickness a sweet zest unknown to those who have never suffered. I would cheerfully undergo all I yesterday felt to purchase the relish of returning health I now enjoy." The Baron clasped to his bosom this dear charge. "My blessed child," he said, "I pray it may not be your lot often to exercise your faith and your piety by such devout thankfulness; yet His will be done who disposes all for our good!" As she earnestly whispered "Amen," he felt what had so often tried his faith and exercised his piety, the awful doubts which are engendered in the mind by the touching spectacle of patient virtue suffering always and never repining, while the children of vice, or the votaries of folly, so often revel in their indulgence without any pain, as without any stint, and complain of the order of nature, should but a rose-leaf be ruffled on their couch.

When they returned to the drawing-room, Emmeline was soon placed by her uncle near the Marchioness, who entered into conversation with her, on the beauties of Nismes, and the wonders of the Pont du Gard; while the Countess engaged the Baron in a lively talk. Scenery she could not endure to hear mentioned, far less discussed. Her

proper study was man; and as her understanding was wholly masculine, her tastes were somewhat guided if not formed by it. She disregarded most topics of female interest; was not much satisfied with the talk which well-bred men even of intelligence and information addressed to women of her rank; cared somewhat more for homage done to her matchless beauty, the female stratum here fusing by the central heat and breaking through the harder crust above; but chiefly she delighted in either attack or defence of distinguished personages, or in examinations of literary merit, or above all in political discussion. The fame of the Baron, both as a savant and a statesman, had preceded him; she cared little for the repulsive plainness of his exterior, and his somewhat brusque though sufficiently high-bred manners; and she at once gave herself up to discover, as she told the Count, "what he really was made of."

For his part he was instantaneously attracted by her numberless charms, so fitted to fascinate one like him, because her features were instinct with expression, reflecting the spirit within that supported the exterior, diffused itself through each part, inspired the mass, and mingled itself with the ample

but graceful person. Little cared he for her proverbial coldness, so he might hope to thaw it by assiduous efforts; or even for her hardness, ill suited to harmonize with such truly feminine charms, so he might aspire to soften it, and reduce it within what he deemed the limits of her proper gender.

Thus prepared, these distinguished parties now first met in the single combat of society; for few besides themselves cared to bear a part in the conversation.

"What opinion, may I ask, has M. le Baron formed of the expected meeting of the States at Grenoble?"*

"Truth to tell, I have not as yet made up my mind, nor have I indeed had time to examine the grounds of the hopes and the fears I find entertained and extending far beyond Dauphiné. I met M. Courdemont at Nismes, and heard him say his say."

"Oh then tell us what he told you."

"Really," rejoined the Baron, "he is a person with all his abilities and acquirements but little suited to my taste, and who don't inspire much con-

* States of Dauphiné.

fidence, either in his facts or in his views; at least no confidence that bears any proportion to that which he himself reposes in both."

"Aye, truly," said the Count, "I hold him to be but a light material."

"Except as regards his pleasantry," said the Countess; "that you 'll allow is no light matter."

"Nor any laughing matter either;" said the Count. "He is, however, a well-meaning, as he is a well-read man, full half eaten up with self-sufficiency. But he is after all not much disliked, except by those who hate bores; and he is, generally speaking, on good terms with everybody he knows."

"Including himself," said the Baron drily, "whom he does not much know, and with whom he seems in no particular haste to improve his acquaintance. He has, indeed, a most undivided and even exclusive good opinion of himself—for he has it much to himself; few share it with him."

"Yes, yes,"—said the Marquess, "he is at the head of a small knot of admirers, all of whom have a share in the opinion of him; like a joint-stock company formed to manage a patent for exclusive sale

of an invention, the inventor and patentee himself being at the head of it."

"Nevertheless," said the Baron, "he is a man of shining abilities, much book-learning, so profound a mathematician as to have passed all his contemporaries at Montpellier, of as profound a knowledge of the law as ignorance of the world, extraordinary powers of conversation—eloquent in a high degree—fluent in the highest."

"God knows that he is," quoth the Countess; "I have groaned under his fluency; not indeed of conversation, of which he is incapable, but of talk. I do assure you I last Sunday suffered under him at Nismes, where I met him at dinner; and it is a far greater evil than the ordinary inflictions of society."

"What, dear," said the Count, "did he cut you out; leave you no niche in the talk?"

"Chatillon," said she sharply, "your pleasantry is ill placed. I am not apt to engross conversation, nor to grumble when deprived of my share; I can generally take it when I please; or if not, I can listen as well as most people to most people. But to the Sieur Courdemont I positively cannot. It is one eternal, unceasing, unbroken babble, wholly

without relief; a constant glare without any shade, a perpetual flash, or endless prosing, a stream of words that chokes you or makes you nervous. I protest that I could not recollect any one thing he said, after having been exposed to his talk for two hours by the clock; from the egg to the apple,* which, as he with infinite prolixity and self-approbation expounded to a young lady ignorant of Latin, meant from the beginning to the end of dinner—So, you see, I have really contrived to retain one thing he said. But, oh heavens! how much besides of this ceaseless and stintless chatter passed through both ears without in any way reaching the mind, or at least the memory!—I declare I never again, while I live, will run the risk of a like penance."

"I find people," said the Count, "require express notice to be given when he dines any where, and that some, like skilful generals, make it a rule to keep their carriages waiting until dinner is announced in order to secure their retreat, should they find he has effected a lodgment."

* The eggs came first, the apples last, at a Roman banquet.

"How strange it is," said the Marquess, "that mere faults of exuberance should be so fatal! Could he not cut himself down to the dimensions of an ordinary talker? The parings would set up half a dozen men endued with some sense, taste, and breeding."

"No, no," said the Baron: "were any one to tell him all this, he would turn a deaf ear; not indeed more deaf than he now does to all that every one says but himself. He has too long spoken to the little circle of admirers, the directors of the joint-stock company you spoke of, to bear the hard-hearted, hard-headed, indifferent public. His ear has been far too long tickled with the sweet music of his own voice, to bear being told how it grates on all the ears on other heads, and gives with his volubility a pain or at least an uneasiness in the stomach to his unhappy audience."

"Like a concert of drummers learning their trade," said the Countess. "But at least, Baron, you may recount something of his Grenoble intelligence."

"Alas, Madam, he was far too much in love with his own theories and historical recollections to tell me anything I could repeat. He pinned me

by the button for half an hour, while he treated me to a review of the assemblies, States General, Provincial States, and Parliaments. I believe he began with Charlemagne, if not with Clovis, and I only escaped towards the reign of Louis XIII. by the stratagem of a fainting fit, whereupon he pursued me to the Hotel, and when I was forced to revive he was prelecting to Madame Faure, the mistress of the house, and the head-waiter Corvon, upon the circulation of the blood, and organic diseases of the heart. They both kindly prescribed repose, in the hope that I might defer my journey a day or two, and take an apartment. So my tormentor went off in a kind of round trot, half walk, half run, speaking to himself with much vehemence, an auditory of whose attention and admiration he can always make sure; I understand he was taken for Janon the cobbler, by Madame de la Roche, who met him, and asked where his shop was, as she wanted to have her half-boot mended. Be that as it may, I escaped, and soon after we left Nismes."

"I perceive plainly enough," said the Countess, "that your taste does not much differ from mine in regard to the Prince of Bores; and he often

reminds me of the Bishop of Autun's* saying, as I have heard it repeated, that to reach eminence in that dismal art, the black art of boring, a person must have something in him—persons merely null cannot attain it."

"Why, I really must say," replied the Baron, "with all my respect for so high an authority, so great a judge's opinion, I somewhat hesitate on the point. One sees accomplished practitioners go on with marvellous little capital, with very little if anything in them."

"Yet try to recollect," said she, "and I think you will find not one of those whom you have dreaded as Bores, but had some talent beside that of wearying you to death. It seems as if the instrument required some sharpness as well as strength to penetrate and perform its office. It may be that we shake off the feebler species of the animal more easily, while the stronger can lodge and fix themselves like the forest-flies, that drive our cattle mad. People vary, like the cattle, in the degree to which they feel the infliction."

"Yes," said the Baron, "I am unfortunate in

* M. Talleyrand.

this respect; I am extremely sensitive to the Bore as I am to the musquito; easily catch the malady it gives; and sigh for a Bore-net, a para-bore, to protect me, like our musquito-curtains—I believe I am the natural prey of the Bore."

"Not so much, Baron," said the Marchioness, "as an old gentleman from India, whom I knew in England, and who had brought back the heats of Bengal to make his nature, if possible, more warm and impatient than it originally was. Once he was under the operation of an artist in this branch, whom he could not in any way brush off, being pinned up in a corner: and the good easy man was going on descanting, like M. Courdemont, with infinite self-applause, and laying down propositions on all his five figures, in the pleasing belief that the old Nabob's twitches and shrugs were the result of the intense interest he took in the lecture. All of a sudden, the patient"—

"If one may so call him," said the Baron.

"Well, the impatient, if you so please, broke out, and collared the talker, exclaiming, with an oath, 'There's no bearing this one moment longer!' and thus escaped. The bystanders describe the face of the astonished performer as beyond the

power of conception to any that had not witnessed it."

"I was once circumvented," said the Baron, "by Courdemont, whom I had innocently suffered to get me into a corner, the constant and as it were instinctive stratagem of the species; and my friends, hearing I was in durance, were busy planning means for the relief of the garrison, or to raise the siege. One proposed a ladder applied to the window, by which I might march out; another the cry of fire; but they ended in the simple expedient of a flag of truce—a letter by a courier—so I made my escape for that time."

"But, after all," said the Countess, "I can learn nothing of what most interests me,—Grenoble!"—

"Love," said the Count, taking his fair partner into the library, "you let politics run between you and your wits."

"Chatillon," said she, "I have often told you not to interfere with my tastes, as I don't interfere with yours."

"It is entirely for your own sake I speak, and to make you more perfectly amiable than you will allow yourself to be, with every advantage from figure and position that woman can possess."

"Spare your kind pains," she answered, with a look of no very mild description, "and let me try, what, I grant you, may prove impossible, to raise *you* into something more worthy of *your* position, and make you more respectable than you are pleased to make yourself, with every advantage of station that man can possess."

"Why, dearest," said he, "what would you have me do?"

"Almost anything you don't now do! Why not go to Grenoble and take your seat among the state deputies about to assemble? I wish to go there without delay; instead of lingering here, to vegetate, and kill time and patience together. I would be near the scene of action. Something must come of this ferment; and let us be on the spot to look after our own interest. I plainly perceive that the Baron expects it to increase and to spread, for all he turned me aside to discuss Courdemont and Boring."

It would not be easy to express the effect which this whole conversation produced on the mind of Emmeline, who heard all of it but the last part in the library. She never before had seen a female politician, nor had witnessed the effects of a passion

not natural to the person or the sex over whom its ravages sweep. With all the Countess's great beauty, all her talents, and all her information, Emmeline felt so much shocked at the unamiable harshness which the indulgence of humours and tastes little suited to a young woman diffused over her manner and even her appearance, that she gently whispered the Baron, "Dearest Zio, I had far rather look as silly and empty as my maid Susette, who is good-humoured, than shine in repartee, or deal out deep views and form large plans like that great Countess."

Of the lawyer, on the other hand, she formed a far more merciful opinion than the rest of the party; and she was so far right that he possessed great acquirements, but his judgment was defective. M. Courdemont was not content with his college fame as a mathematician; nor with confining his geometry and his algebra to their more ordinary and legitimate employment. He had his peculiar theories on various other matters, into which he imported the services of the severer sciences. Thus being long-sighted, as persons past their prime are apt to be, and aware that this arises from the lens of the eye becoming flattened by age, he must needs

apply muscular exertion to his eyes when reading or writing, and was in a state of hideous contortion, while his neighbour quietly sate with a pair of spectacles on his nose, and saw a deal better, though ten years older. So too, he had his theory of the moves at chess, and would, while a cause was going on in court, be going through a game according to his own rules. Whether he had as bad fortune when matched against himself, may be uncertain; but it is quite certain that playing with any one else he was always sure to be beaten. His adversary, however, had reason, like Pyrrhus of old, to rue his victory, and exclaim, that another such would be his ruin; for he had to suffer under an hour's lecture, demonstrating by the rules of algebra that he ought clearly to have been check-mated.

Next day there came to the Château two visitors, whose arrival could not be otherwise than interesting,—M. and Mme. de Montricard. They belonged to Aix, but passed part of the year at Nismes, near which M. de Montricard had property. He was a young gentleman in high estimation for his abilities and accomplishments, which fitted him for filling any station, but his tastes led him rather to the active sports of the chase and the

manège; while his wife was almost as fond of politics as Mme. de Chatillon herself. In some particulars they differed widely; Madame de Montricard, though a person of great beauty, was not equal in this respect to the Countess, having a less brilliant air, and less handsome figure; but in all other respects, as talents, information, even wit, she shone equally, and her temper and disposition were incomparably more amiable. She had a large family, to whom she was an exemplary mother, and the breath of slander never having assailed her reputation, the men of Nismes indemnified themselves by pronouncing her as cold as ice. It was a cold, however, that repulsed not, if it encouraged not; and she wisely reckoned that it served to secure her friendships as well as her respectability. She would quietly make it the subject of a pleasantry or a sensible remark; and once on being charged with it by a person whom she thought somewhat pertinacious in his objection, and who was constantly saying, that she had all manner of knowledge except knowing how to love—she wrote a quatrain with her pencil, as her explanation and her defence, which may be thus translated, though she said at the time that if fiction be the

soul of song, her lines were much too true to be poetical.

> " Platonic love too chill may seem
> For mortals to endure ;
> Two merits yet that fault redeem—
> 'T is lasting, and 't is pure."

All the wise men, both literary and political, of Nismes and of Aix, were fond of consulting her. With none was she so intimate as with the Second Judge in Languedoc, M. de Balaye; but love-making, of course, neither suited his station nor her tastes; and hence their intercourse was uninterrupted with any quarrels, though it so happened that he had been a strong political opponent of her father, a man of great eminence in his day. The Judge used to consult her in all matters, even scientific, declaring he knew no sounder judgment, and few more amiable dispositions.

Her success in society was universal. The Countess could not bear the mention of her name, undervalued her looks, laughed at her pretensions, and assured the Baron that he would find the grapes in this quarter really sour, if they were, by any miracle, to drop into his mouth. There was little fear of his trying their flavour; for he was

already enslaved elsewhere, and he took but little pleasure in her conversation.

The Château de Bagnolles in its interior arrangements corresponded with the beauty of its structure, and the scale and the style of its grounds. A convenient parlour, but not so vast as the dining-room, received the family at breakfast. It was hung with Canaletti pictures of Venice and the terra-firma towns; the freshness of the colour, especially the blue canals, pleasing and resting the eye. At either end was a sofa, under a case of books, to prevent the time from hanging heavy on those that might assemble a little earlier than the rest. On one or other sofa, you might find a priest of the Church and a pastor from Nismes discussing points of doctrine or of discipline, till the entry of the Marchioness announced that it was time to descend from the higher regions and pay a due attention to the demands of our humbler nature. From the breakfast the company generally retired either to the spacious library, so laid out that no book was above reach, and indented with recesses for reading or conversing uninterruptedly; or they went out to enjoy the fine air, free from heat, in a shady portico upon which the parlour opened. In this portico were benches placed conveniently among

the pillars and marbles which supported or adorned it. Here much time was usually passed; and as the steps, only two in number, led to the fine walk communicating at one end with the garden, at the other with the wood and the lake, the portico naturally became a rendezvous both before the drives and walks which the party might take and after they returned home; so that it was a joke in the Château, borrowed from the old steward, Gaspar, who had been brought up in trade at Marseilles, that the portico was the Exchange of Bagnolles (*Bourse de Bagnolles*).

The hospitality of the house kept a full proportion to its ample means; there was no distinction of sects suffered to interfere; the family, though Protestant, were highly respected by the clergy for their sincere yet tolerant piety; to see their friends about them, and contribute to their comforts or enjoyment, seemed to be their own chief gratification; few distinguished strangers passed through Languedoc without visiting Bagnolles, and when the parties were found to suit each other, a second visit never failed to follow, and to last for such a time that the Sieur Gaspar would remark on the Marquess keeping the best inn in all France, and the most reasonable.

One thing, however, detracted, it was said, from the accuracy of the Sieur's comparison. Guests who proved tiresome, or empty and frivolous, or in any way either unpleasant or unprofitable companions, never stopped long nor came twice. "Aye," said Gaspar, "then we do make travellers pay; somewhat they must contribute, though it may be in their person, and not in their purse."

## CHAPTER II.

### THE CAVE.

THE Countess, whose attention was ever awake, and whose observation was always on the alert regarding others, as she never had any love-affairs upon her own hands, had remarked that every day when the heat of the weather permitted, the Marchioness went out alone through the flower-garden upon which her boudoir opened, and which was commanded by the windows of the Countess's apartment. She had a small basket in her hand, somewhat larger than could be used merely to carry flowers, and she generally covered this over with the loose cloak thrown upon her arm. Had Mme. de Chatillon seen this but once or twice, it might not have struck her as extraordinary. But when it happened day after day, and never less than three or four times in a week, some mystery seemed to be in-

volved—the rather that having once taken notice of it, and offered to accompany her friend to "the cottage where she went to dispense her charities" (so she framed what our lawyers call her fishing question), she perceived an evident embarrassment, the subject being immediately warded off by a change on the Marchioness's part in the conversation.

The suspicious nature of the Countess now had full scope, and as she connected everything with politics, nothing with love, she failed not to imagine that some refugee from the arbitrary power of the government, or of the church, was concealed in the forest, to whose wants the hostess was ministering. The family being not only Huguenot, but having embraced the liberal opinions now spreading so fast over France, and the people of Nismes having shown on various occasions a strong disposition to ferment, greatly strengthened the Countess's suspicions, which she communicated to her husband; but his easy and careless nature could not be fixed upon the question, which seemed little to concern him, while he pursued his favourite occupations of the chase and of the riding-house. She therefore took her own course, and set a watch upon the Marchioness in the person of her maid, holding it quite

clear that the manner in which her inquiries had been balked by her friend gave her a full right to prosecute them in her own way. She had at different times spoken on the subject to the two or three young men who were visitors at the Château, and who professed a devotion to her commands, while she used them to gather information for her, and in all other respects, except graciously accepting their services and their admiration, treated them with sufficient contempt, above all laughing without any reserve at their gallantry as often as they thought fit to express any feeling beyond mere admiration. None of them had on the present occasion shown any activity in the matter, possibly from feeling that the indulgence of any curiosity on a subject plainly covered with a veil by their kind and amiable hostess, would betoken a want of due delicacy in her guests. The Abigail was therefore, in the natural course of things, resorted to, and she, in the same natural course, opened a communication with her friend, the valet, who having been unfaithful to his sweetheart, for whom he daily vowed the most eternal and exuberant love, had solaced himself with an attempt upon the heart of the Countess's confidential woman, and had so plied her with Parisian

anecdotes, with court gossip, with political gossip, with travelling gossip, and so dazzled her with cheap trinkets and mock laces, that he had gained upon the country and Huguenot fair one, notwithstanding her suspicions of all who went to mass and crossed themselves before and after meat. Through these worthy and sharp-sighted personages the inquiry made some progress; for it was ascertained that the mysterious basket contained provisions, and that the Marchioness's walk lasted seldom less than an hour, so that she must have some way to go; it was also certain that the basket returned empty. The Countess's curiosity was now exalted to the utmost pitch, and she once more made an attempt, but it was the last one her courage ventured upon, to wring the secret from her friend. It was an offer to assist her in what she "plainly saw was a compassionate work." "Beware the anger of a good-natured man,"—is a proverb, or at least is so true, so much the practical result of experience, that it deserves to be one. The mild and even-tempered Marchioness, who had already felt annoyed with her friend's questions, and especially with the plots she perceived her laying to inveigle her into a disclosure, broke forth: "Countess, you have more than

once pursued this course with me, and you have failed. Once for all hear me, and believe me when I tell you that all your manœuvring will not succeed in drawing from me the least hint to gratify your restless and endless curiosity. I let your secrets alone; pray leave me in possession of my own." So unwonted a vigour, and such plain indications of humour, had two effects on the Countess; she felt her stay at the Château become somewhat irksome, and she felt all her curiosity redoubled by this signal failure, with the addition of resentment, for the treatment she had experienced at the hands of one whose understanding she despised. She concealed her feelings, gave a general assurance of regret at having unintentionally given pain, and retired within herself to meditate the means of healing the wound she had received, and gratifying at once her curiosity and her revenge.

Her trusty minions failed not soon to make some progress in their investigations. Their speculations were short; the theory to which they led was plain and simple; it was embraced with the most unhesitating confidence. The Marchioness, it was quite plain, had a lover; she met him secretly in the

forest, and her basket contained a slender repast for the tender pair, while it threw over their transgression the all-covering cloak of charity. But still curiosity was on the stretch to find out the person favoured by the Marchioness, and above all to show her that she was discovered and so in their power. Many days did not pass before the valet found in the deepest recess of the forest, a track branching from the thicket to which one of the unfrequented paths led. Following this track, he came upon a torrent which lost itself among lofty rocks crowned with overhanging wood, in a dell as gloomy as the fancy could paint, and more dark than the eye could pierce. The first rains of autumn had swelled this water-course, and yet there were blocks of stone rudely fashioned and placed across it, over which it did not flow. The accident of finding a lady's hair pin on the first of these blocks, left no doubt in the man's enquiring mind, that this was the path which led to the supposed Dido's cave; and he crossed over with breathless impatience, making sure of no longer being balked, as he so often had been, by the thickness of the wood during the last week of his pursuit, when he had taken more exercise than in any whole year of his lazy life.

He was soon on the other side, and found another path by which his steps were again led to the torrent, and here he lost all trace of any foot-way. He thought, however, that he could perceive a plank resting against a part of the rock that jutted out over the stream, and felt assured that this was used by some one to ascend from the edge of the water. With the utmost difficulty he clambered up the steep sides of the bank among the tangled bushes and trees. Having reached the summit he looked down towards the torrent, and saw standing upon a narrow but flat space on its margin, in a musing posture, with his arms folded, a tall man dressed in black with long brown hair, and a beard of the same colour that descended towards his breast. So sudden an apparition affrighted him, and he retreated down the bank, having hardly ventured to look at the stranger's features. He hurried home by the path he had taken, and full of his discovery hastened to communicate all he had seen to his friend Jeanette, who repeated it with the usual exaggerations to the Countess, not forgetting to paint the lonely stranger as in the prime of youth, and of the rarest beauty ; facts necessarily unknown to her, inasmuch as her sweetheart had been in

much too great a fright to observe any thing of the kind before he fled.

That lady was now completely gratified. She had her revenge within her own power. Falling into the doctrine of the servants, she no longer doubted that the secret walks of the Marchioness were connected with a deeply rooted, and as deeply concealed passion. Her curiosity was appeased. But how to obtain the full measure of revenge was a more difficult matter. With all her courage, she hardly ventured to charge her friend directly, for she knew the irreproachable reputation which belonged to her; nor could she bear the thought of having her stratagems found out, and the low agents through whom she had been working, known. After much reflection she resolved to obtain the directions of the servant, and herself to pursue the track he had taken; so she made the Count her confidant, whom she found enamoured of the Marchioness (a thing that gave her no pain), and whose own attachment was thus interested in pursuing the discovery. Ever obedient to her will, indeed, he easily consented to accompany her, according to the description given by the maid from her lover's account. It was afterwards settled that at first he alone should explore;

and after several fruitless attempts, he, one day that the Marchioness had gone to pass the morning at Nismes, succeeded in reaching the rock where the foot-plank was found placed so as to join the edge of the river with that eminence. The Count bounded up the path with the lightness of the roe, and in an instant found himself in the presence of the mysterious Solitary; and almost at the same moment felt his throat grasped hard by a powerful hand, while another held a dagger to his heart.

The Count's orders on his breast at once showed that he was there by accident or from curiosity alone; he was also unarmed; the gripe was relaxed, and the dagger withdrawn. But the long-bearded man burst forth in furious accents:—"And who art thou that darest to intrude upon my deep concealment with thy poor, paltry, unmannerly curiosity? Knowest thou the risk its mean gratification exposed thee to? Had but the weapon of chace or the gun of the huntsman been about thy person, at this moment thou hadst ceased to live! Yes! I am a Christian, aye, a Christian Minister. Yet yielding obedience to the first of laws, the law of self-defence, had it been possible for me to believe

that there stood here in my power a minister of the justice which pursues me for yielding obedience to the second law of nature, the law that rules our social affections, my dagger would have been plunged into his bosom, and his corse have been buried in the torrent, my protector and my accomplice, that roars beneath this cave!"

The horror with which Chatillon heard that he stood in the presence of a felon, perhaps a murderer, certainly of one who was prepared for deeds of slaughter, hardly left him the power of observing how perfectly beautiful a form and expressive a countenance was worn by the stranger. He endeavoured to excuse himself for an intrusion which he felt to be rash and also unwarranted, or warranted only by his habitual obedience to her who had commissioned him on this errand. But he was speedily interrupted with—"Enough! No more! Begone! and learn to respect and to avoid this spot, well assured that if the knowledge you have chanced to gain of this retreat shall ever lead to others approaching it with different designs, you shall then have seen the sun for the last time; you will be pursued, though the mountains were to cover you, and your punishment be in-

stantaneous, before my destruction can be accomplished!"

The Count waited not for a second warning; he swiftly descended the plank which he heard rapidly moved up the rock after he had passed down; and in a very short time he was stretched breathless, exhausted, and agitated on the sofa in his wife's apartment. She felt somewhat of his alarm at so unexpected a sight, and was impatient for his being able to tell his story. It threw her into one of those fits of reflection and imagination in which her designs were usually conceived. Her first impression was one of disappointment at her theory of the Marchioness's conduct being found less intelligible, though she still adhered to its outline; but the feeling that next succeeded was pointed against her unfortunate partner, whom she at once charged with want of spirit and determination.—"Had I been a man, or any thing in the shape of one, think you I should have let this concealed paramour throttle me unpunished?"—"My love," replied the Count, with his accustomed mildness, which never failed to increase her irritation, "pray reflect that I put myself completely in the wrong by intruding where I had no right to be."—"In the wrong?" she replied, "as

if that signified, when he profaned your person with his hands!"—"Well then, dearest, recollect that he had drawn from his girdle a dagger, while I was unarmed; to say nothing of his far greater strength."—"Had you not the roaring torrent close beneath for your ally? Could you not have at once washed out in its waters your own disgrace, and buried in them the pious Marchioness's sins?"—"Catherine! Catherine!" said her justly offended and shocked husband, "stay these your unseemly reproaches, and a thousand times more unseemly suggestions! What man can do have I ever done to love, honour, and obey you, giving honour, as it seemed due, to the stronger vessel! But one step will I not take in the path of crime to gratify your inordinate ambition, or slake your boundless thirst for vengeance! God of his mercy forbid that any blood, most of all any innocent blood, should ever lie on my soul!"

There was a determination of manner and of purpose so marked in the loud tone and the firm voice which now, for the first time, filled her ear, that she was reduced to silence, and even said, "Perhaps I was wrong. But I will not forgive her whose intrigues have caused me this. I will

steadily pursue the inquiry. Be you sure of that!"

Chatillon, who, far from sharing in her suspicions, felt entirely convinced that the whole matter, on the Marchioness's part, had its origin in feelings very different from lawless love, yet dreading his wife's reckless and restless disposition when once any scheme had got possession of her, was determined at once to make Mme. de Bagnolles herself his confidant, to prevent any further mischief, and even assist in a design, which he could not doubt was wholly founded in charity and compassion for some unhappy, perhaps persecuted, individual. She, on her part, having the utmost reliance upon his honour, and knowing that she could trust the kindness of his nature, also gave him every encouragement in his disclosure, and though she was deeply impressed with his wife's misconduct, yet, holding him free from all blame but that of having too yielding a nature when his duty required more firm resistance, promised to beg that the Hermit would receive him, and, in the course of a few days, took him with her to the cave, by a somewhat less entangled path, with which she alone was acquainted.

She had taken the very necessary precaution of

preparing the Solitary for his reception; giving a just panegyric of his amiable and honourable character; and accordingly, the stern and even terrible manner which he had before been dismayed with, was now composed into a calm and not uncourteous dignity of demeanour, which only served to render his countenance more impressive, and his figure more striking. There was still, however, a lofty and distant tone in all he said; and the first interview passed without more than a permission to come alone, of which the Count soon availed himself. This led to a repetition of these visits; for he took much interest in this intercourse with a person so singular in his circumstances, and had a natural curiosity to hear more of his history than the few general intimations of the Marchioness disclosed. The Solitary on the other hand was exceedingly attracted by his new acquaintance, whose suavity of temper and ingenuous disposition gained much upon him, and whose acute understanding he soon learnt to appreciate. His principles too, were of that liberal cast which were then beginning to spread over France. A confidence thus growing up between them, very unlike the feelings that attended the beginning of their acquaintance, the stranger de-

sired him to come one morning early to his retreat, when he thus unfolded, for his own defence and that of his kind protectress, the mystery of his present situation.

## CHAPTER III.

### THE MONK.

"If I say that the sun does not rise upon a more wretched being to light him on his way towards the much-wished-for tomb which every motive drives to seek, and one paramount duty forbids to enter, I use not words of common course, ever in the mouths of those who only half know sorrow; I speak the sentiments of my inmost heart. You are young; you may live to be old; but through all your life, be it ever so prolonged, your eye will never rest upon more misery than it now beholds.

"Know, then, that I was born of a noble family, though somewhat reduced in its circumstances, and no longer, as its ancestors had done in past times, dispensing the charities and performing the duties of large possessions. My early years, however, were spent with kind parents who had ample means of supporting and educating me. I had a brother

much older than myself, to whom all the family looked up as endowed with commanding and various talents, capable of anything, as was the current expression of the house; but ruled by a fiery and ungovernable temper, which gave him, it was thought, little prospect of worldly success. He left us when I was but a boy, and he had reached man's estate; nor did we even discover which road he took, much less what were his future fortunes. One parent still survives; the other I have lost; she believed I had, like my brother, paid the debt of nature; and it is not one of my least afflictions that I shall never more be permitted to look upon her whom, of all human beings save one, I most constantly and warmly loved.

"You will perceive, from what I have said, that the choice of a profession was likely to be made for me, or by me, with a view to pressing as lightly as possible upon the family resources. I was destined for the bar; and it was the design of my father to save by practising the strictest economy as much as might suffice to purchase a judicial place in either the courts of Montpellier or of Toulouse; these offices being saleable by one of the ancient abuses of our government, an abuse the effects of which are so far mitigated by manners and the habits of society

that it produces very few of the evils naturally to be apprehended from its manifestly mischievous tendency. In the course, however, of my preparatory studies for assuming the robe, I had been brought in contact with several ecclesiastics; and I had formed as great an intimacy with one of this body as could well be cemented between persons of ages so unequal. I was barely eighteen and he was turned of five-and-thirty.

"He was a friar of the Benedictine order, a man of profound learning, and of the most winning address; of a temper the most placid I have ever known, but of principles as fixed as his feelings were lofty; and, although singularly gifted with both a liberal judgment and a calm mind, yet from the perfect sincerity of his nature, and the powerful hold which his opinions had of his mind, as strongly touched with enthusiasm as was consistent with an intellect so vigorous and acute. Indeed, even in these early years, and while the sphere of my observation was still as limited as that of my experience, I used to remark with interest and curiosity the kind of conflict which his zeal maintained against his extraordinary sagacity; and to contrast the ease and the quickness of his perception when other

men's errors were the subject of discussion, with the slowness he evinced to give up his own. I had been carefully educated by my excellent mother in the habit of consulting my reason on all subjects of dispute; and, although the dogmas and the mysteries of religion were excluded from the list, yet I could not believe that the peculiar tenets and observances of the cloister were reconcileable either with right reason or with the genuine spirit of the Christian revelation. To those tenets and observances, he without any reasoning clung. Such was Father Jerome. The vast superiority of his attainments, the large experience by which he was trained, the practice of disputation which had rendered him a consummate master of the logical art, above all his varied and accurate learning, placed me at a distance from him so immeasurable, that I by degrees, and without being sensible of it, became so entirely subjected to his influence, that my original habit of thinking for myself left me, and I seemed, not only to feel with his heart and yield to his understanding, but to see with his eyes, to have but one being and one soul with him. But I doubt if all his solid acquirements and real talents could have gained such a mastery over me at that age, when the most solid

merits are far from making their due impression, had I not also been dazzled with his great knowledge of the world and of mankind, for I was to live in that world and not in the cloister. He had taken the vow after attaining a certain age, in consequence of a disappointment in love; and I have often since reflected on the nice discrimination of character and the profound and just remarks on manners which shone through his conversation, and which, though I might not at the time perceive their deep sense, I have since learnt fully to appreciate. For example, he would say, 'Observe the noblesse of our provinces, imitators of their caste in Paris, and, indeed, importing from thence much of the vice and frivolity with which they make our society corrupt and ridiculous. See the riddles which they present, but which may all be solved by selfishness. Most of our Counts and Barons pass their time in laying siege to the virtue of our countrywomen, and manifestly proceed upon the supposition that not one is impregnable to their stratagems and their assaults. Whom they cannot wear out by blockade, they think they can take by storm. Yet only mention to any man of them all that this Countess or that Marchioness has yielded to any one of their friends, and he will

at once deny it, as if he were the lady's champion. And, why? Merely because every man is jealous of all others, even with regard to women whose virtue he never attempted. For if, without naming any particular person as successful, you give the lady the far worse character of promiscuous libertinage, M. le Comte will at once acquiesce.'

"'Are the same things to be remarked in the women?' I have asked. 'No, not the same—but they have their paradox too, though they will eagerly lower every one to their own standard, there being nothing so credulous of other women's frailties as those who are themselves frail. Yet as to the charms of others, you may always expect to find them extremely niggard of their admiration where real beauty or fascination exists, and abundantly apt to commend generously the plain and the unattractive.'

"Then he would comment on the folly of the world, as living, he would say, at cross purposes and in voluntary self-deception. 'See our great merchants giving their entertainments and their wives giving their assemblies at which no cost is spared, nor any pains to invite guests. They ask you as if the favour was done to them by your acceptance;

yet they all the while have a feeling that they are obliging you, and their gratitude seems to be because you let yourself be laid under that obligation to them; perhaps, too, it is their thankfulness for having an opportunity of displaying their wealth; for certainly what is called hospitality very mainly consists in this; in saying inwardly, "See how much I can afford to spend;" and not seldom it is all false and hollow, and much more than can be afforded is spent to give colour to that vain trumpery boast.' He used to tell me of another class by no means in small numbers whom I should frequently meet in the world, persons who were always very reasonably expecting that men should give them credit for uniting in their own persons the most opposite and repugnant qualities. 'I have known,' he would say, 'libertines who were extremely offended if you supposed them tight-laced; and yet must needs desire to pass with men of probity, for leading strict and temperate lives. But if you should say that this is only a common kind of hypocrisy or double dealing, what say you to a class by no means rare in society, of persons who will insist upon having credit for the very conduct they never held, and the very qualities that don't belong to them? There is

the Baron de l'Escaut, whose family came from Flanders, and who is narrow and saving even to meanness. Yet he is haunted with a love of ostentation that torments him unceasingly. While he is doing the very shabbiest things in the world, he will insist upon passing for a mighty lord, who cares nothing for expense, and is the munificent patron of all who approach him. He gave as a wedding present to his cousin an old carriage not worth repairing, and fit only to be broken up for firewood, and spoke of this bounty as if he had set the young man up with a span new equipage!'—I recollect once when Father Jerome was dwelling on this chapter of human folly, having remarked that it was not confined, apparently, to persons living in the great world, and pampered by the caprices they figured among, for I had remarked in one or two of our teachers a similar inconsistency. They would be extremely wroth if any one charged them with having written certain papers that were admired, but of somewhat free opinions on political matters, in the Montpellier Journal, and yet would be not a little ruffled if any one either ascribed them to other pens, or declared themselves incapable of propagating such doctrines. 'Aye, truly,' said the

Father, 'they remind one of Charles XII., who travelled incognito, and went to war with a German Prince for taking him to be what he pretended, and treating him as a Baron, not a King.' He added, however, more seriously, 'My good young man, never forget the lesson these men teach by their folly—it is to shun anonymous writing. It only exposes them, perhaps, to a little ridicule, if it does not also taint them with a little duplicity. But it is for a person of your abilities, and who are rising into a learned rank, the most dangerous of seductions, nourishing the worst of vices, the roots of all evil, the sappers of character.' 'And which,' I asked, 'be they?'—'Malice, falsehood, and cowardice,' was the reply.

"I have said enough to show how near an observer of men this friar was while yet in the world, and how little he had forgotten them when buried in the cloister. It was in minute particulars as in greater things, that his perspicacity was acute. Nothing seemed too small for his fine vision. 'You will find,' said he one day while I observed upon the form of a fellow-student's finger; 'you will find that nobody, no man at least, cares to have you look narrowly at his hands. I believe, from what

I have heard, that women are as scrupulous about having their feet examined unless when well covered.' It struck me at the time that this latter remark betokened a larger experience than I had given him credit for, but with the intuitive sagacity of his nature, and as if he had read what was passing within me, he added, 'Sister Ursula first made this remark to me upon her sex.'

Such was Father Jerome, and so formed to captivate a novice as I was, yet more inexperienced in the ways of the world than in the forces which disturbed the paths of the planets. The fascination of his rare qualities and of his delightful manners was increased by the affection which he showed me. Precluded by his state, and by the cruel, unnatural law under which he lived, from all the endearments of a family, he seemed to regard me as his son; and I cannot well express the joy I felt when I found the object of my admiration and deep respect took a pleasure in my society, and even in consulting me, whose mind his instructions had formed and trained. There is a delight not easy to describe conveyed to a youth escaped from the season of careless boyhood and from its thraldom, when, touching upon man's estate but of a doubtful

title to its privileges, he finds himself cherished as a friend by one much older, and who admits him to a footing of equality like a man. Ambition may have some part in this feeling; vanity, thus gratified, has more; and with this is mingled the leaning upon the superior mind for protection. All these things enter largely into the love of woman for our sex. The homage we pay them, though their masters in strength and in understanding, soothes them, and they look up to us for defence; they lean upon us for counsel and guidance. The ardent love which they often feel for men much older than themselves, and of comparatively feeble personal attractions, is only to be explained by these sentiments, in which all love mainly originates.

"I never shall forget the exultation which filled my mind when, after having for two years set him before me as the object of unceasing admiration, I found that he entertained for me feelings of friendship and confidence. These he had not before shown, apprehensive that favouritism might be imputed to him by the five or six other pupils who were with me pursuing their studies at the same convent. It was one evening, while taking our

accustomed walk in the beautiful garden of the House, where, under a fine lime-walk, we sat down upon a bench, and he went on to descant upon the extraordinary provisions by which the stability of the solar system is secured, referring to the chain of demonstration by which he had shown in his lectures that the mutual actions of the heavenly bodies upon each other, while they prevent their motions from being ever continued in one orbit, yet also set limits to their deviations from the elliptical path. He perceived my eye glisten with the feeling of rapture which such proofs of divine power and skill naturally excite, and, seizing my hand, he said, 'I know, and have long known, you to be superior to my other pupils. You are cast in another mould. You inspire me with a confidence which springs from congenial character; and I regard you more as a friend than a pupil.' When he spoke of confidence, it was not that he had any secrets to disclose either as to his conduct or his opinions. That was pure and blameless; these were strictly orthodox; nor did his devotion to human science ever lead him away from his religious pursuits, much less interfere with the submissive deference wherewithal he bowed in all things to the decisions of an

infallible church. If he did not, with the commentators on Newton, affect to disbelieve the true doctrine of astronomy; if with Galileo, rising from a recantation of his heterodoxy, he firmly exclaimed, '*e pur si muove!*'—he yet meditated much with the holy men of Galilee on divine things, and could easily reconcile the implicit belief of revelation with the discoveries of science which the Divine Author of that revelation has graciously enabled his creatures to make by the faculties he has bestowed on them. But by 'confidence,' he meant that he could share with me his feelings, communicate his opinions, and discuss the numberless little points of dispute which arise among the members of a monastery; few of whom had anything like his enlargement of views, and none of whom possessed his modest, amiable, humble disposition. To be thus treated by such a man as his equal, filled me with joy and pride; it was the gratification of all the ambition I had ever felt; and I never looked forward to the honours of my destined profession as capable of raising me more in my own estimation than did the friendship and the confidence of Father Jerome.

"A year glided away in this delightful intercourse; but it was a year not wholly devoted to

studies that might prepare me for the courts of Toulouse and Montpellier. I enjoyed the purest gratification in the continued society of my accomplished teacher; and my studious attention to the lessons he taught was only exceeded by my devotion to his authority. I found, however, that my father was alarmed at the small portion of my time which was given to jurisprudence; and perceiving the ascendant which Father Jerome had gained over me, and the pride I took in his friendship, he one day seriously warned me against imbibing a taste for the monastic life. My mother joined in the same entreaties, with that greater gentleness and more fond affection which armed every word of hers with irresistible force. Alas! the deed was done; the taste already imbibed! Though the friar had never spoken one word to me on the subject, nay, rather had received with a repulsive coldness my advances to proselytism, I yet had become enamoured of the tranquil life he led, the sublime studies which I saw he pursued in his convent; and I could little bear the vulgar contention of the courts which I occasionally had witnessed, with all the more disrelish that they were petty, provincial tribunals. I could still less endure the thoughts of being

separated from my guide and friend, being severed by a great distance from his fixed residence, and being thrown among strangers, towards whom I felt neither affection nor admiration. It was not long before he discovered the bent of my inclinations; nor did he fail to combat it. He honestly and strongly opened to me all the evils of monastic life; the jealousies and heartburnings of the monks; the rigour of their discipline; the tyranny, often the caprice of the superior; above all, the unnatural subjugation of our strongest passions, and the yet more dreadful restraint of our most powerful and most innocent feelings, which the inflexible severity of the vow imposes. With delicacy he alluded to my naturally ardent temperament, and more plainly hinted at the strength of my affections, that bore their due proportion to the constitution of my bodily frame; and he never failed to set before me the one prevailing motto:—'Whoso enters the cloister seals his fate for ever in this world, leaving himself no return from his voluntary grave!' But though his honest nature led him thus far, and to the very edge of his duty, his vow to further the interests of his order would not suffer him to go one step beyond it; and most brethren, in his situation, would rather

have removed than raised any obstacles to my becoming a novice. His pains were taken only in setting fairly before me the consequences of the step I was bent on taking; and this he did with all the force of his persuasive eloquence. But all was in vain. I was too young to take prospective views, to cast my look forward into the dark future; too ardent to see difficulties, or weigh the sober lessons of experience. I saw of a convent only its quiet chambers, its noble library, its green and shady walks; saw of its inmates only the studious habits, the contemplative life, the pious devotion to religious duties, the tranquil existence, withdrawn from all worldly bustle, and consecrated to kindly charity, or to learned ease. With these prepossessions powerfully co-operated my fervent attachment to Father Jerome, and my repugnance to any change that should separate me from his guidance, and sever the ties of friendship which had insensibly been formed and had knit me to the brethren of the convent.

"A few months of earnest entreaty, and a conviction that resistance to the bent of my inclination must prove vain, coupled perhaps with some religious feeling on the subject, overcame the reluct-

ance of my parents, and I entered upon my noviciate. The year which this requires was the happiest of my whole life; nor can anything be more groundless than the notion that in cases of voluntary entering upon the monastic state, a trial is thus made of the devotee's taste for it. That taste is far more likely to be confirmed than weakened by the probation. Accordingly the Council of Trent required that each female novice should, before being allowed to take the veil, leave the convent for some time, after her probationary year has expired, and, at her own home, be examined by her parents and by the bishop as to her fitness and her disposition for the holy state of the Saviour's wedded spouse. My year expired with a great increase of my resolution; and I finally was received and made my vows.

"I suppose no one, except perhaps he belonged to the class of the common people, who become members of the smaller orders for a lazy subsistence, and whose minds are little struck with the ceremonial of their reception, will ever forget that awful proceeding. Every particular of it remains deeply engraven on my memory after the lapse of many years; and, fully as I had been prepared for it, and entirely as my mind went along with the step I was taking, an

involuntary shudder came over me as I was slowly and solemnly consigned to a living tomb. Though I had several times been present at the same ceremony in the case of others, the sensations which I experienced in my own were such as I never had been at all prepared to expect; they gave a bias to my mind which afterwards did not fail to produce the most powerful and the most unhappy effects; indeed I question if I should not have drawn back and recanted my resolution had I distinctly foreseen what I was to feel; as I suppose men have committed suicide, repenting of it after the fatal draught was swallowed which the instant before they had eagerly commended to their lips. Certain it is that my firm grasp of the chalice relaxed suddenly, and I was all but ready to dash it on the ground.

"The ceremonial of reception is abundantly calculated to impress the mind of the neophyte; and on some, to help in producing the consternation which I felt on first feeling that I had been irrevocably entombed, when just entering on man's estate. High mass succeeds to the magnificent air of *Adeste Fidelis*, which fills the vaulted roofs, now thundering and now warbling—solemn or delightful. The novice experiences, far more awfully than before, a feeling

that the daily recurrence of the Mass had deadened the actual presence of the Deity himself, in the temple made with hands; for it seems as if the Godhead had descended to witness and to seal the vows, ready to avenge a breach of the covenant made with the Almighty Father. This is the prevailing idea that fills the mind throughout the ceremony; and more especially as the Host is raised with numberless bells to fix the attention upon the awful symbol now become a real presence; but the choirs of sweet and powerful voices which thrill the senses, the chant of the well-selected Scriptures and prayers, the full organ interposing from time to time, the multitude of tapers diffusing their dim religious light over the splendid vestments of the ministers, the devout obeisances of these, comporting themselves as actually before the Divine Majesty—all fill the mind with feelings far removed from earthly things. The exhortation, addressed partly to the novice, partly to the auditory, would perhaps make less impression than any other part of the ceremony, except that it comes immediately before the terrible vow. The time for that was now come; I pronounced the vow, and as the sacred vestment was thrown over me, with the words 'God put on thee the new man with

this garment! God put off from thee the old man with all his errors!' a cold sweat broke over my brow; the tapers burnt pale; a confused noise filled my ear; I stood before God, and in that awful presence, I vowed to sever myself from the world, and in the midst of life to be in death. The dreadful comminations were then pronounced by the Bishop, 'Whoso breaketh his vow, vowed to God, whether in act, or word, or thought, let him be *Anathema Maranatha!* accursed for ever and ever; he is guilty of the sin against the Holy Ghost, never, never to be forgiven.'—The sacred music now once more pealed through the roofs of the chapel an anthem of joy on the victory achieved over human infirmity, or human reason.

"The kindness of my brethren, and above all of Father Jerome, soon awoke me from a trance in which I scarcely seemed to breathe. The terrible ideas that had filled my mind, and given me the feeling of being buried alive, were necessarily short-lived, as all exaggerations are; for they rested on an imagination, on a metaphor; and I soon felt that I was still in the world of living creatures, though cut off from so much that makes it worth inhabiting.

"My hours glided smoothly and silently along

for some months after my reception. The novelty of the duties I had now to perform, and the interest I took in the affairs of the house, served to excite me and to fill my mind; while the studies which occupied my time made the day pass without weariness. The society of the friars, with most of whom I was well acquainted, and who were generally well informed, and some of them sensible men, was far from unpleasing; the abbot was uniformly kind and condescending; and above all I enjoyed, without restraint and in the fullest measure, that intercourse with my beloved Father Jerome, which to me was ever the greatest relish I was capable of tasting. Far from becoming less the object of admiration upon a close intimacy, like so may shining men, especially men who call in the arts of the actor to support their position, and set off their abilities and acquirements, I might truly say that at a greater distance I had not known his extraordinary endowments; and that the angelic sweetness of his disposition could only be appreciated by a long and a constant intercourse, which proved how impossible it was for anything to ruffle his temper. On his part he cultivated my friendship more than ever, now that we were brethren of the same order, and that

he no longer could excite jealousy by bestowing on me any marks of his confidence and esteem. He had no greater pleasure than to consult me upon his literary pursuits, to show me his writings, to plan with me other undertakings. Sometimes he would discuss the State affairs which occasionally occupied men's minds even in the remotest provinces, when the loss of our North American colony, and the defeat of our fleets, had given to the House of Bourbon the first blow it received since the latter days of Louis XIV. His far-seeing intellect, as it pierced the walls of his cloister, penetrated also the clouds which veil futurity from our eyes; and much of the ferment now raging in different parts of this country was foreseen by his perspicacity, which could well compare the past with the present, gleaning from the history of other times lessons of wisdom applicable to our own. Inexperienced as I was, and knowing men from books alone, upon his sayings I hung as on the voice of an oracle, while he delivered his opinions with a modesty only equalled by their calmness and sound observation, and with a suavity that I never have since known in another; and explained difficulties with a clearness that seemed to leave nothing unsolved.

"Our reading and discussions were not confined to science, or even to history; through the realms of fancy we made frequent excursions; and from him I imbibed the taste both for the poets of Italy and of our own country, which has been one of the few solaces of many weary, painful hours in less happy times. Above all, he inculcated in me the duty of appreciating the awful Florentine; bade me note the manly energy, the self-denying conciseness of expression, the scorn of yoking to his chariot a number of epithets, like those who drive a substantive and six adjectives, beside adverbs as outriders; the confining of his efforts to careful selection of the best expressions, and leaving all the rest out together; the just and dignified confidence in the force of a single phrase, and disdain of making his impression by a repetition of little blows; qualities which we in vain seek in any other modern, and only find, perhaps, in two among the great masters of ancient diction, Demosthenes and Lucretius. He would then make me contrast Dante with the other masters of song, and mark their invariable inferiority. 'See,' he was wont to say, 'this poet, not satisfied with one metaphor, but he must give you a cluster, as if a constellation would ever shine

bright like a planet; or that other, who, to describe an object, makes a catalogue, an inventory of all its parts, like an auctioneer or valuer, instead of seizing on the bold and leading features, bringing them out and casting the rest into the shade; while in one respect they seem all to agree; and it is the powerful contrast with the divine genius of Italy: though they often do hit upon the right word, they have in their search found so many others of some value, that they must needs make a setting of these round the jewel itself.'

"Once, I said when this critique was going on, 'Don't you rather show some lenity to them by allowing they find a jewel and make a setting for it?'—'Yes,' he said, 'indeed I do; rather they resemble sempstresses, who having cut out a flower, must needs gather up the parings and make a vile patchwork round it. But

Non ragionam di lor', ma guarda e passa.'

When I would object to the plan and the epic of the *Divina Commedia,* sometimes comparing it with the Iliad, sometimes with the Odyssey (to which merely superficial readers have found more resemblance), he freely admitted its great defects;

confessing that story there is none, nor hardly anything that can be called the action or the speaking of persons in their proper character; and admitting that an immeasurably inferior artist, Tasso, has far more pretension to epic powers, and that even Petrarch more successfully attains his object; that, however, being only the very humble one of a fine sonnetteer; a power showing inexhaustible fertility of resource in ringing the changes numberless times on two or three ideas. But of Dante, he naturally lauded the wondrous power also of felicitous imagination, not always restrained by severe taste; the endless gallery of striking pictures through which he leads us; the extraordinary learning he displays; and the profound metaphysical attributes, above all, of the Paradise. Nor can anything be more perfect than both his descriptions of nature with a blow, as in the doves (con l'ale aperte e ferme); or of sentiment, as in the Pia; or of moral feelings, as in the evening scene (Era già l'ora); or of horrible emotions, as in the Ugolino; or of both pain and pleasure combined, as in the Maestro Adamo. However, he recurred to the marvellous diction and the dignified self-restraint in its use, as offering the most striking contrast with other,

and above all, with modern artists. He said, he understood there was an English poet who, in many passages, came near him: but he could only judge by a literal translation. One description he had seen impressed him with a very high notion of that poet's power. It was a picture of death, exceedingly sublime, and which, from first to last, raised in the mind no image of a skeleton, as all others did on the same subject, but left every thing vague, shadowy, shrouded in unutterable horror. 'Such things are,' he would say, 'worthy of Dante himself. And yet I doubt if his picturesque genius would have avoided the skeleton.' He would extend his criticism, just though severe, even to our masters, the ancients; few of whom he would allow faultless. For example, Tacitus he could little endure; though he would admit his merit of deep observation, and even his peculiar and sometimes expressive conciseness: as when he puts in two words the idea given in four by Sallust (whom he liked far less, and was prejudiced against for his libel on Cicero), the one saying "alieni cupidus; sui profusus;" the other saying "alieni prodigus." But a style so unnatural, so studded with conceits, often puerile, he little valued; and would, at times,

make merry by comparing it with what he called the short-hand writer, Florus. Of all Latin prose, he most relished Livy; the least trustworthy, however, of historians: and of all Greek, Thucydides, and the Halicarnassian; Polybius, of course, the least, notwithstanding his honesty. But in Demosthenes he found every merit; the finest declamation, the most lucid statement, the most perfect narrative, the most thundering appeals to reason by sudden juxtaposition, graphic allusions to facts, vivid exposure of inconsistency, marvellous comparisons, and resemblances, and analogies *(rapprochemens)*; only, he denied that a sustained argumentation, a logical train of reasoning, was to be found in that first of masters, nor did he conceive that the levity of an Athenian audience would have borne it. How often has he built castles in the air, and fancied us wandering in Attica: and after rowing over the Ilyssus, 'going down,' like Plato, 'to the Piræus,' visiting the glories of the Parthenon, then placing ourselves on the steps of the Ecclesia, in front of the Bema, and fancying that by the wonderful formation of that building, we heard even at a distance the voice of him who thundered over Greece, wielded at will the fierce democracy, and made the

throne of the tyrant to shake. This, and the examination of the Plain of Troy, often was the subject of our waking dreams; not that, all full as he was of admiration for Homer, he much fancied that any traces of the poet's pictures could be found on the ground, or in the ruins, or that he ever had professed to describe real existence in one respect, while in all others he was purely the maker of fiction.

"But on no subject did he more love to descant, and on none was he more interesting, than on one which came close to his own sacred profession, the great topic of Pulpit Eloquence. Here he was peculiarly at home; and here Massillon, the great Bishop of Clermont, was his Demosthenes; but also he would compare him to Dante, for the power which he has of finishing a topic with a blow. I recollect his remarking how singular it is, that the most celebrated passage in all this great preacher's discourses, that of the Judgment, in the '*Petit nombre des Elus,*' is imperfectly given in the book itself, and only to be found correct in a place you would the last search for it—Voltaire. He has preserved this magnificent trophy of true eloquence; the ordinary edition makes the preacher only say, 'Are you

sure half here present would then (were Christ suddenly to appear as our Judge) be found among the saved? Are you sure that ten would be found?' But Voltaire's edition nobly adds, 'Would there a single one be found?' (*'En trouveroit-il un seul ?'*) It was upon this exclamation that the audience rose up in horror and dismay. I asked if he considered this as the finest passage in Massillon? He said 'No—The first four words of his funeral sermon on Louis le Grand beat every thing; this is the noblest, the most sublime, the most simple of all the feats of eloquence. "God only is great, my brethren"—(*"Dieu seul est grand, mes freres"*) words which every people can receive, because every tongue can render them alike. But it is grievous to find the sentence not, as it should have done, stop there. It goes on, " Et dans les derniers momens, surtout, où il preside à la mort des Rois de la terre."—The body of Louis then lying dead before the people, surely, when the great preacher stretched forth his hands, and with a voice as of one sent from above to improve this solemn occasion, proclaimed the King Eternal, Immortal, Invisible, the only living God; surely, to add his presiding at the death of kings, as if to evince his superiority,

was somewhat needless. It was like the addition which Tasso makes to the noble simile of the lion in Dante's Sordello: "A guisa di leon quando si posa;" whereunto Tasso is pleased to subjoin, in kind compassion to the reader, for fear he should not comprehend the matter,

"Girando gli occhi è non movendo il passo."

Surely,' added Father Jerome, 'Massillon must have for the moment been transformed into Bossuet, to make an addition which himself could no more have made than Bossuet was capable of the sublime opening.' I found Bossuet's unctuous style, his sugar sweet (*doucereux*) sentences, his overdone feeling, when he is *touched* with nothings, and calls upon his hearers, but calls in vain, to be touched too, was no great favourite of my acute friend, who, however, exceedingly admired his justly celebrated '*Discours*' (on Universal History) both for its learning, its philosophy, and its composition. Bourdaloue he revered as the father of pulpit eloquence, and, contrary to common opinion, regarded him as the model on which Massillon must, after the ancient masters of speech, have formed himself.

"In these discussions and these day-dreams our hours were passed, when not engaged in the duties of the house, or in visiting the poor of the neighbourhood; and ministering to their wants; a duty which Father Jerome held the most sacred, and from the discharge of which his compassionate nature derived the purest gratification.

"Thus glided our monotonous and peaceful life. Among the fraternity, there were few indeed whom I did not esteem greatly; one only for whom I felt any thing like aversion. Father Ambrose was of a noble family, in high favour at Court; and through that influence, and his own merits, which were of a high order, he aspired to succeed the ancient abbot now at our head—Father Jerome, who by universal consent must have been their choice, having always openly declared that nothing should induce him to accept the abbacy. The faculties of Ambrose were great: his learning extensive in the branch to which with ambitious views he devoted himself,—theology and the scholastic science generally. His spirit was daring; his art profound; his resources inexhaustible. Wholly unscrupulous in the choice of his means; as wholly unbridled in the selection of his purposes; of the deepest dissimulation; of the most

malignant soul when any one crossed his path; of fiery passions, which nevertheless he kept in habitual subjection to his strong will, and his firm purpose,—he seemed to revive in the eighteenth century the character of the priests who ruled the destinies of the fifteenth; and to have all the genius and all the ambition, which after raising the possessor of the one, and victim of the other, to the head of a monastery, could elevate him to the custody of the keys, could encircle his head with the triple crown, and make the 'servant of servants' a ruler over the princes and potentates of the Western World. This man had early conceived a jealousy of me, from observing that I became a favourite with the brethren, and also from perceiving that I did not pay him court; for Father Jerome, the god of my idolatry, had an unconquerable dislike to him, grounded on his perfect distrust of so designing a person, and his repugnance for one whom he knew to be perfectly unamiable; and in this feeling I easily became a sharer. Occasions frequently arose to prove how little I esteemed him, and opportunities were not wanting to show on his part a return with ample interest of the same sentiments. A trifling circumstance added to the aversion with

which I viewed him; he bore a likeness to Father Jerome, so striking that I have over and over again, on seeing him at the end of our arcades or lime walks, hastened to meet him, and embrace him, my heart overflowing with affection, when I suddenly on approaching perceived by the sardonic smile on his fine and expressive, but unamiable countenance, that he both had divined my mistake, and was sensible of the feelings which I experienced on being undeceived. It was surmised by some, and among others, even by the kind and charitable Father Jerome, that Ambrose was not that one of the brethren who kept his sensual propensities under the most entire control; and rumours gained credit of his impetuous nature having broken out in the course of the charitable visits which he made to objects of the monastery's benevolent care.

"We had another brother in our convent, whom I did not much like, although certainly I had not the same aversion for him as for Ambrose. But though he was not wicked, and had great abilities, especially a lively and entertaining fancy, yet I never could either place any confidence in him, or take much pleasure in his somewhat amusing society. He was an Irishman by extraction, indeed by birth, having

soul of song, her lines were much
poetical.

"Platonic love too chill may seem
For mortals to endure;
Two merits yet that fault redeem
'T is lasting, and 't is pure."

All the wise men, both literary and
Nismes and of Aix, were fond of con
With none was she so intimate as with
Judge in Languedoc, M. de Balaye;
making, of course, neither suited his sta
tastes; and hence their intercourse was un
with any quarrels, though it so happen
had been a strong political opponent of
a man of great eminence in his day.
used to consult her in all matters, even
declaring he knew no sounder judgment
more amiable dispositions.

Her success in society was univer
Countess could not bear the mention of
undervalued her looks, laughed at her
and assured the Baron that he would
grapes in this quarter really sour, if they
any miracle, to drop into his mouth.
little fear of his trying their flavour;

the thin partition that divided
humour from his anger; he
of a quarrel, partly from fear,
mour; and you found he had
rupture had taken place before
icion of it. So far he was ami-
give pleasure and would go a
way and also out of the way of
pain. His spirits were exu-
indiscriminately laughed and
His nerves were very far
as he affected: he would bra-
there was little danger, and
ly the person with whom he
ld and stout: he was anything
ded man. He was abundantly
had an eye to his own in-
his volatile nature kept him
pursuing it, and his habitual
im often fail of success, his
sult of indifference to the end,
pulousness about the means.
was more than civil; he was
ing, partly from good humour,
culation. His judgment was

come over to our convent when grown up to the age of sixteen; he was called O'Halloran, of a small gentleman's family, in middling circumstances, though proud of tracing back their lineage to some obscure and local barbarous chiefs, whom they were pleased to call Ancient Kings of Ireland, and of whom I do suppose there may have been scores at a time. He was not a man who would deliberately lie, or wilfully engage in a fraud; yet it was impossible to place the least reliance on his account of any person or any thing, partly because he suffered his memory to be ever warped by his imagination, now obscuring it, now creating materials for its exercise, and partly too from a vile habit he had, and which really seemed a second nature, of looking in his narratives always to the effect they might produce; so that he would paint a transaction or a person in colours purely fantastic to give amusement to the hearer, or he would mould his statements so as precisely to suit the purpose of the moment in furthering any object he had in view. Father O'Halloran, or Pierre, as he was called, was well natured, too, but more from a joyousness of spirit and a warmth of temperament than from good disposition. A very surprising part of his character,

or his temper, was the thin partition that divided his mirth and good humour from his anger; he never gave warning of a quarrel, partly from fear, partly from good humour; and you found he had passed the line and a rupture had taken place before you had the least suspicion of it. So far he was amiable that he loved to give pleasure and would go a good deal out of his way and also out of the way of truth rather than give pain. His spirits were exuberant, and he pretty indiscriminately laughed and made laugh with all. His nerves were very far from being as stout as he affected: he would bravado and bluster when there was little danger, and he always knew exactly the person with whom he could venture to be bold and stout: he was anything rather than a firm-minded man. He was abundantly selfish too, always had an eye to his own interest; and, though his volatile nature kept him from very steadily pursuing it, and his habitual imprudence made him often fail of success, his defeat was never the result of indifference to the end, or of any great scrupulousness about the means. In his demeanour he was more than civil; he was subservient and fawning, partly from good humour, but partly too on calculation. His judgment was

bad, with all his acuteness; you could not trust his decisions any more than his narratives. But after all it was this latter quality that mainly created my dislike for him and that of Father Jerome, who hardly had more aversion for Father Ambrose himself. He used to say that it appeared to him as if O'Halloran did not know the difference between truth and falsehood; as if some organ was wanting in him which other men had; and he would give this Irishman as an example of a remark he had made very generally, that there are no people more credulous of falsehood than those who themselves deal little in truth; as if a secret consciousness that they might have occasion for quarter from other breakers of the great moral law induced them to give help and credence to their neighbour in his need. With this brother you will readily believe I cultivated little acquaintance and no friendship. He had little solid or accurate learning; a rubbish of history and theology in his head, ill assorted and no wise arranged; but no information that could help his own views or win the confidence of others. Its sad characteristic was want of accuracy in the groundwork, of care in the superstructure, and of discretion in the application. Thus, of all the teaching brethren,

he had the least success. Nothing could exceed the confidence he shewed in the task of instruction he undertook; nothing could exceed the pains he took to gain his pupil's favour. But his scholars made little or no progress, and he failed even to ensure, with all his chace of popularity, as much favour among them as others of harsh and distant, and even severe, manners obtained. His pupils had quite as little respect for him as his brethren.

## CHAPTER IV.

### THE CONVERT.

"FATHER AMBROSE and Father O'Halloran, such as I have described them, formed really the only exceptions of any importance to my esteem for the brotherhood of St. Benedict. Many were inferior in amiable qualities to Jerome; all were of very far lower talents and accomplishments; and in the union of a pure angelic character, both in sweetness of disposition and sterling goodness of heart, with the rarest faculties of the understanding, none could be named as belonging to the same species. But excepting Father O'Halloran, there were none for whom I had a contempt, and excepting Ambrose, none were positively hateful, and even his character was not of a disagreable, though it might be of a vicious, cast.

"Time accordingly wore on smoothly in the studies, the duties, and the occupations of the place.

But time also was working some change in the temperament of a youth only just arrived at man's estate, whose passions had been suppressed and whose feelings had been trained by the rigour of the monastic rule. Religion and its observances, even the religion of the Romish Church, and even of the regular clergy of that church, though impressive at the first, and well fitted to fill the mind, was not of power sufficient, especially when some time had passed away, entirely to absorb its faculties and to deaden all other feelings. A cloud of ignorance rather than of mystery would sometimes spread over the mind, and prevent it from clearly comprehending what was taught and what was believed. A reluctance would sometimes affect the mind, and weaning it from sacred things, as these had formerly weaned it from the world, would make the total abstraction from the visible world hard, the entire absorption in things unseen impossible. A doubt would sometimes steal into the mind, and beget notions that Providence which endowed men with faculties for active, and feelings for social intercourse, never could have designed any part of the species to vegetate in absolute indolence, and to sheathe their hearts against all the influences of the tender passions.

The struggles which thus arose within me, it would be difficult to describe. A war was waged with the awful sense of religious obligation which my solemn vows had completed, my pious education having begun it. Against that deep sense of duty were leagued the strength of my understanding, the passions of my frame, the feelings of my heart. In this conflict it was vain to consult any one of my brethren; even Father Jerome forbade the subject; and though he wept as he marked the agony I was enduring, with his accustomed delicacy he never even reminded me of the warnings he had given, and in spite of which I had persisted in embracing the monastic life.

"A younger brother of the order, having discovered by some chance remark the state of my mind, was the first to break silence with me upon the subject that now engaged all my waking thoughts, and forbade me at night to taste repose. He had entered the convent more in compliance with the wishes of his family, who hoped thus to obtain for him an abbacy, than from any opinions which he had formed, or any religious impressions to which he was subject. He was a fine young man, of noble mien, good abilities, strong passions, warm feelings,

and no fixed principles; by no means profligate in his notions, entirely void of guile, of an amiable disposition, and much attached to me from similarity of age, and from a likeness which he very erroneously supposed to exist in the circumstances of our situation. He had for some time begun to feel the restraints of the order more than he could well endure; and though he was fully aware that no escape from them was possible, he yet was anxious to open an unreserved communication with a fellow-sufferer, as he supposed me to be, and he was not very slow, or very nice, in finding an opportunity of unveiling his heart to me. Though fond of his society, which was amusing and agreeable, I at once repressed all such confidence, and no further disclosure was made to me, until the force of restrained passion produced its usual effect, and my comrade was soon stretched upon a bed of sickness, to which he summoned me that I might minister to his consolation. When I had given him such advice and such comfort as I could render, he gently squeezed my hand, and declared to me that my refusal to receive his confidence, and let him unburthen his mind, had been the main cause of his present severe indisposition. All further severity on

my part now became impossible; it would indeed have been misplaced; and in the hope of ministering to his relief, I listened to all his complaints against the monastic rule—complaints which were one continued and mournful echo to the feelings that had for some time been secretly preying upon me, and seemed to gnaw my very heart. Discussion of every subject was the inevitable consequence; we partook of each other's sentiments; we began to take up strange unlawful opinions, to form strange unlawful wishes; and this interesting youth's recovery being much promoted by the relief which my society afforded him, he once more assumed his place in our fraternity; and our intimacy being perceived, was marked by Father Ambrose. My friend became an object of his especial suspicion and dislike, almost equally with myself.

"Father Isidore (that was his name), though not much older than myself, was much more practised in the ways of the world; and he planned for me, I verily believe with the purest wishes for my good, a scheme by which he hoped to effect my emancipation from the thraldom I still laboured under. He introduced me to a cousin of his own, whose health was feeble, whom he loved as a sister,

and who he believed would receive comfort from my ministrations. I am quite certain that he had no bad designs in this proceeding; and that, could he have foreseen how far beyond the interest taken in a penitent my attentions would go, he would at once have put a stop to our intimacy. But long before he could perceive this, long indeed before it was known to myself, the most tender feelings of our nature had been engaged, while I only imagined that I was fulfilling a religious duty, and occupying agreeably and with perfect innocence, a few spare hours of my time. The virtue, as well as the accomplishments of Mdlle. Louise Orange were unquestionable. Her family was of the first respectability. She was visited occasionally by Father Jerome, who ministered to her, when unable to attend the convent mass; and though he abstained from female society, however agreeable, upon a principle of avoiding temptation, he yet now and then saw her for half an hour at a time, holding her to be one of the most interesting and accomplished persons in Avignon. She was a creature of bewitching manners, and of a beauty far more attractive than the greatest regularity of feature, or brilliancy of colouring, or grace of form, can ever become; for her beauty was of the

understanding, and her expression was as varied as powerful. It was almost impossible to see, and quite impossible to hear her unmoved; and to be fascinated was only to have a perception of what is most lovely and most striking in woman. After struggling with my feelings for weeks, after restless days and sleepless nights, after hearing all Father Jerome's warnings, enduring all Father Isidore's jibes, suffering all my own reproaches, more terrible than any that could come from without, I, at length, was compelled to commune with myself, and confess to myself, that I had become desperately enamoured of this matchless person, and had all but broken my solemn vow in thought—all but transgressed in my heart.

"Whence comes it to pass that things which at a distance seem so formidable, instead of becoming still more frightful as we approach near, are almost divested of their terrors and cease to dismay? Is it that we have conjured up ideas more terrific than the reality? Is it that we have exhausted our stock of fear and horror on the terrific prospect, on the fancied evil, so as to have none left for the thing itself? Or, is it that the mind is still under the influence of the feelings which have betrayed it, and views through the medium of those feelings the peril they have

made us encounter—the mischief they have drawn down upon our heads?—I know not; but of this I am sure, that I had no sooner made to myself the confession of my fall from grace, than I felt as if a weight was removed from my heart, and as if my emancipation was finally effected. It is true, that had I instantly resorted to Father Jerome, he would at once have opened my eyes to the risks of my position, to the destruction which yawned on all sides of me. One interview with him, one sentence of his firm but sweet voice, one embrace, folding me to his affectionate heart; and all the fascination of Louise would have become powerless, all my own weakness in yielding to it would have been revealed, and my disease would at once have been cured. But alas! it was part of that weakness, of that disease, to prevent me from approaching the subject with my most loved and revered friend. I carefully avoided every thing which led to it. Father Jerome stood aloof on the shore, ignorant of the struggle in which I was plunged; and my destruction was completed, before he knew that I had been assailed. It was not so with Father Isidore; but he loved me so tenderly, and shared so entirely in all my doubts and difficulties, and himself felt so strongly all the

influences under which I was falling, that anything rather than remonstrance was to be expected from him.

"The giddy, intoxicated state of my mind for some time chased away all the ideas that would naturally have haunted me. I ventured not, indeed, to whisper love in the ear of her whose slave I had become; yet I saw the delight she took in my society, and I gradually accustomed her to hear from my lips expressions of interest in her lot, nay vows of tender friendship, which a little reflection would have shown to be utterly irreconcileable with the vows I had made to heaven. Possibly my friendship for her kinsman, who lived with her family as a brother, tended to blind her, and prevent her from perceiving how full of hazard was the situation she approached, until she had actually got entangled in all its inextricable difficulties. An accidental circumstance, the reading together of a poem in which both took deep interest, at once removed the veil from her eyes—she heard me declare that could she but love me, my whole soul was devoted to her—she trembled from head to foot—she fell down on the book now closed—with a deep sigh she exclaimed 'Oh, God! Oh, God! I love

you too well!'—and I became at once the most delighted and the most wretched of mortals!

"Whoever has long sighed in secret for the heart of a lovely being, to whom he never durst disclose the hidden flame that was smouldering under a cold exterior, and consuming him night and day, will comprehend the terror with which I ventured to disclose my secret, and the anxiety with which I stifled my breath during the interval of a moment that seemed an age between that avowal and her answer. Whoever has heard the sweetest of all music that can reach the impatient and greedy ear, will comprehend the state of extacy in which the artless expression of fervent passion that burst from her, as if she had felt my delay had been too long to tell the secret in which she took so deep an interest. But ours, alas, was not an innocent love. In me it was apostacy, it was perjury, it was flying in the face of that Divine Being, who had in his own awful person witnessed the vows voluntarily and deliberately made, vows to fly in the face of that nature which the same Being had created, to outrage all the strongest feelings which he had graciously implanted in the heart. If such rebellion was a crime in me, she who knew of my allegiance

became my accomplice and shared my guilt. But all this was not felt at first. We were for the moment plunged in a trance of delight, and each only knew that the other and none else existed in the world.

"The rapture of this short interview, however, was succeeded, and quickly succeeded, by the fears and the pangs appropriate to our several situations. I can speak of myself only; and I immediately was, like our first parents after their fall, conscious of my nakedness, convinced that other eyes than mine saw it, above all that it was glared upon by the all-seeing eye and by the delegated vigilance of His appointed ministers. I durst not pray that day! I durst not enter the chapel where I had knelt to make my vow, now shivered to atoms; The bell tolled for mass; I durst not attend! The bare idea of again seeing the Host elevated, and standing once more in the presence against which I had revolted filled me with unutterable dismay. Adding falsehood to my other sins, I feigned sickness, and remained in my cell. Nor durst I next day see Father Jerome, who I could not help thinking must perceive the dreadful change which a day had wrought in me. But not only he, every one

that passed seemed to be regarding me with suspicion, some with horror, and Father Ambrose with the exultation of a fiend-like nature gratified by my fall. Father Isidore alone seemed to remain with whom I feared not to converse, and in him I found all the consolation of which my situation was susceptible. He even rejoiced in the change that had come over me. His own mind was now pretty well made up that monastic vows are unlawful in the sight of God, and his scepticism had extended much further than he cared, or perhaps dared, to let me know. For the present he was satisfied with raising sundry doubts in my mind, open to receive them by the bias which a powerful interest gave to find them well founded; and, proceeding upon the principle that men easily believe what they wish to be true, he kept by me during my state of distraction without ceasing to comfort and to seduce me, and helped me to avoid Father Jerome, whose eye, mild but piercing, I durst not meet. It was thus that a person of very inferior intellectual powers to my own, and of attainments much less ample, obtained an easy ascendancy over me, aided as his assaults were by the enemy within, ready to fling open the gates and make the garrison surrender.

"By degrees my mind became tolerably calm. Father Jerome frequently walked with me. The first time I met him was in the dusk, when I could escape his eye; and his manner, kinder than ever, in consequence of my supposed illness, put to flight the notion that he was aware of my state. Our intercourse was renewed, and I even ventured to hope that I might one day prevail upon him to discuss some of Isidore's doctrines, though I secretly felt a fear of beginning the conversation, not so much lest he should forbid the subject, as lest he should put to the rout the sophisms on which I feared, perhaps felt, I had been feeding. But that which most relieved me, and best soothed my distracted mind, though it all the while added fresh fuel to the fire that kept devouring me, was the intercourse which I continued to have with her whom I now dared to call my Louise. Isidore lent himself to this intercourse, from which with the impetuosity of his age and his nature he hoped to discover the means of accomplishing his favourite purpose, our escaping from the monastery, abandoning our faith as well as our profession, and quitting for ever a country which, after such an enormity, we no longer could be suffered to inhabit. With me he had as yet confined his disputations to

questioning the lawfulness of vows by persons of either sex, and consequently the whole monastic system. But it was easy to see that this led necessarily to a general investigation of the grounds of our Catholic persuasion ; and the terror I lived under at having made a vow to the Deity which I was prepared to break, easily opened my mind to those irresistible arguments by which it is shown to absolute demonstration that we have much better proofs, and of the self-same kind, against the transmutation of the sacramental elements, namely the evidence of our senses, than we have of the Saviour having left a record of his authority for daily performing this miracle. He had easily made me a convert to the position that the church never could be right in making Marriage one of its sacraments, and yet excluding from partaking in it the whole body of its ministers, while it only gave half the other and holier sacrament to the lay people. He now presented to my mind the argument of the Protestants against the Real Presence ; and it seemed to have a force yet more irresistible. The road to conviction and conversion was in both instances smoothed by my interests and my feelings. The one doctrine allayed my greatest apprehensions,

the other gratified my strongest feelings. Fear secured the triumph of the one argument, love that of the other.

"Meanwhile my nature, fiery and impetuous, was reasserting its rights, so long withheld; my passions and my feelings, so long kept under control, were gaining at length free scope; and the former restraint only served to make them more ungovernable. The first penalty which they made me pay was the torment of jealousy, which I was now fated to endure in a measure proportioned to the strength of the attachment I cherished. The most perfect affection for Louise, and her undeviating kindness to me, did not secure me against a whisper that often filled my inward ear. I knew she had erred, nay sinned, by becoming the accomplice of my broken vows; and she who had gone astray with one, might she not yield also to another? The hated form of Ambrose now rose before my eyes; for he had frequented her society before I knew her; and a more formidable rival no one could have to dread. His winning address, peculiarly formed to captivate the female heart; his graceful form and polished manners; his great talents and solid acquirements; above all his wit, the most fascinating I had ever known; all

gave a power to his designing mind and most wily disposition, which, as it rendered escape from his toils difficult for a victim, made suspicion of his rivalry natural and hardly to be avoided. Hitherto I had little known what the power of jealousy was; but that little I had owed to him. He had laid siege with success to Isidore, and at one time both estranged him from my society, and obtained an ascendant over him, which only ceased upon the discovery of some subtle artifice he had been employing to circumvent us both. I did not, however, soon forget this passage; and it filled me with suspicions of his designs upon Louise. I saw that his conversation not only amused but interested her. Full of love for me, she yet saw far more of him than I could reconcile with that attachment, very much more than I could easily bear. His was not the passion comparatively innocent with which I was filled, and which pointed for its only gratification to the sacrifice of all worldly ambition, and the living for love alone. He had no views but those of the order he belonged to, and hoped to rise in; his plans, and I never doubted for an instant that he had formed them, must lead to the ruin of her

I adored, and consummate my misery with her destruction.

"After suffering unspeakable torments in the struggle, and making vain efforts to overcome the suspicions which preyed on me, nay, which, added to the other miseries of my situation, often made me feel life itself a burden I would fain have shaken off, never having ventured to converse with Isidore on the subject from the pride which always enters so largely into the feeling of jealousy, I at length resolved to make Louise herself my confidant, because I could feel no humiliation in confessing my weakness to her. Nothing could be more kind than her demeanour; nothing more gentle than the rebuke which she felt she had a right to give me, for what she described as a groundless fancy, and described it with perfect frankness, and a manner so wholly unembarrassed as at once laid all my suspicions asleep. She even promised to give up all intercourse with Father Ambrose, at least never to see him but in my presence, or that of Isidore; and as the hours at which alone we could ever see her were known, there could be no difficulty in completing this satisfactory arrangement. For some

weeks I perceived the wily and persevering monk repeatedly leaving the door of the house her family lived in, having been refused admittance because she was alone.

"One day I found her reading some verses which he had sent her, his own composition, and set by him to music, which she was preparing to practise. There was some humour in the remark I made on it, asking her if she intended to allow his accompaniments when she had learnt the air. There was a proportionate humour in the reply which this drew from her. 'She did not know but she might; he was the only one of her friends and familiars who played, and his guitar was admirable.' Never had I so perfectly hated him as when he was thus classed with me among her familiars (*habitués*). Never had I felt so little satisfied with her.

"I soon made some excuse for leaving her, and was strangely agitated when I found she made no attempt to soothe, or even to chide me, for an anger which she must have seen her remark had engendered, and that she suffered me to depart after a visit as short as it was every way unsatisfactory. I walked about in a state alternately melancholy and irritable, until the time had arrived for my return to

the evening lessons of the convent pupils, and after that hour it was next to impossible that either myself or Isidore, or any of the younger brethren, should be seen without the walls of the garden.

"About eight o'clock, the evening was fine and still; the season was autumn; the day I am little likely to forget. As I was walking with Isidore I perceived Father Ambrose leaving the evergreen-walk that leads from the cypress garden through the small Gothic back porch, surrounded with flowers, and facing the part of the town where Louise's mother lived. An involuntary shudder came over me as I observed his guitar under his cloak. But I continued the walk, and mastered my feelings sufficiently to give an indifferent answer when Isidore asked if I was unwell. A few turns more brought us to his cell, and I hastened through the Gothic porch. I remember stopping to pluck an autumnal flower, which grew in peaceful solitude near the wicket; and though void of fragrance pleased the eye, and seemed to calm for an instant the ruffled surface of my soul. The flower was pansy; I have before my eyes its round form and violet leaf, with light yellow margin and two small specks. I never see that flower without a bitter pang. I went to-

ward the gate, and stumbled on a cross which the wind had the night before blown down: it lay against a small bench, and I nearly fell over it. At the moment I thought I heard distant thunder, but was not certain. A human bone lay close by the upright limb of the cross; I recognised one of the two which our superior had over his bookcase under a skull; he would sometimes carry them with him while taking his evening walk, and I have before known him to drop one. At any other time I might not have marked it. As I opened the wicket I heard a raven scream hoarsely. After passing through, I met one of our acolytes near the gate retiring to the convent; and, in accents that were nearly choked, I asked if he had seen Father Isidore, not daring to name the other. He said he had only seen Father Ambrose going into the Countess's house. I made but one step across the Place, now nearly deserted, and sprang to the gate of the Countess's house, which I found standing ajar. The apartment of Louise was reached by a narrow and somewhat lofty stair with a rail, and ending in the passage, along which a rope was drawn, the continuation of the rail being under repair. I mounted the steps in breathless agony.

As I approached the door of her chamber, I heard the last bars of an air which she was singing, or rather had just sung; I then heard two voices for a minute or two; I could distinguish no words; I could only be sure that both parties spoke; however, it seemed to my troubled brain, that these accents were those of affection, if not of passion; a pause ensued; and then I heard a step approaching the door, but as it opened, I distinctly heard a kiss; and forth stept Ambrose. No longer master of myself I sprang upon him, and dashed him through the rope, down upon the ground.—Louise shrieked and fell upon the floor.—I looked down into the hall and saw that it was—Father JEROME whom I had slain !''

" Gracious God !" exclaimed the Count, " Father Jerome !"—" Ah, well may you thus exclaim !" resumed the Solitary. " Well may the recounted horror thrill your frame ! But mine it was to witness it, and to have done it ! In the desperate effort to throw myself after my victim and terminate instantly an intolerable existence, I sunk senseless upon the passage floor. On recovering I found I was in Louise's room, but she was gone, and Father Isidore was tenderly watching over me.—I need not stop to

add what I afterwards learnt, that the song I had heard was the Evening Hymn, the kiss was from Louise's lips upon the good father's hand, which had previously given her his most precious blessing.

"I must hasten over the dreadful sequel. My memory is imperfect, for my mind was disturbed for many weeks; and I have but the recollection of one scene, which never can be erased from my brain. The saint-like man survived about a day, after being conveyed home by the Countess's people, who believed he had accidentally fallen through the rope, and I was taken by Isidore to witness his last moments, or if I dared ask, or dared receive it, to obtain his forgiveness and his blessing. Even of the particulars attending this awful scene I have an indistinct remembrance. The entry of the Host, borne by the abbot himself, the solemn communication of the Sacramental elements, the anointing, the sprinkling, the bestowing of the *Viaticum*, I less distinctly can call to mind. But the picture that remains burnt into my soul, and which has never been absent from my eyes, is the pious father laid meekly on his lowly bed after all the necessary ceremony of the Church had been performed, and the look of unbroken mildness, of unabated affection

with which his eye beamed upon me as he saw me kneel, unable to beg a blessing. That look, far, far superior to merely betokening forgiveness of his murderer, what would I give that it had been withheld! How thankful should I have been to see his countenance clothed in frowns, nay, distorted with anger! His placid smile, his heavenly look of love, his inward prayer for me piercing his exhausted and scarcely living features, made the torment I endured ten thousand times more acute; nor was it till long after this dreadful hour that I could have calmness enough to reflect on the most edifying sight which all had witnessed, and of which I alone had not been sensible at the time, the passage into endless bliss of one whose whole life had been one of innocence, of kindness, of devotion; whose latter end was peace, and an example indeed, but far above that of those who, acting a part, would teach us how a Christian can die; for in him this scene was nature; and he had been created an angel before he was made a Christian.

## CHAPTER V.

### THE OUTLAW.

"THE effect of the death-bed scene in awakening me and collecting my faculties was but transient; soon I relapsed into a state of mind which prevents the pursuing of any reasoning, or the formation of any fixed purpose, or indeed the correct perception of what is going on around us, and easily confounds with realities, the creations of the bewildered brain. I enjoyed nothing, took an interest in nothing, but suffered nothing. I felt as strange to myself, and wholly indifferent to everything around me. The society of the brethren I could little bear; but this was from the exertion it required to answer questions, and sometimes from the acute pain they gave me by the mention of Father Jerome, the only living sensation to which I was subject—all other feelings were blunted in an extraordinary degree. I could even endure the hated presence and voice of

Ambrose, and though the watchful attention of Isidore was felt, and possibly had some tendency to soothe me, I cared little for it. The feelings of the soul, like the nerves of the body, are liable to a paralytic numbness; and as we sometimes partially lose the use of the latter, so do the former also lose their acuteness. I had lost the taste of both the bitters and the sweets which the society of my brethren afforded. But this was not all; the enchanting voice of Louise herself fell flat upon my ear, and I took no pleasure whatever in her kind affectionate care to wean my mind from its apathy by touching those chords which she was formerly wont so easily to strike and make harmonious with her own accents. Fits of mere stupor, too, would succeed to my wanderings, and possibly these were graciously given to prevent a more complete distraction; for they generally succeeded any allusion to the calamity, as it was thought, which had befallen me.

"How long a time I passed in this dreadful state I know not; except that the opening year was somewhat advanced when I slowly began to recover. The restoration of my mental health was attended with extreme suffering from a degree of irritation which

I had never experienced, and which contrasted mightily with the comparatively passive and insensible state I had so long been in. That state I had now ample reason to regret the loss of. I awoke to an acuteness of feeling almost morbid, a recollection of past scenes hardly possible to bear. Every step in the monastery and the garden called up the most lively images of past happiness, of the hours which I had passed in innocence with my venerated guide, the friend of my bosom. All his words, his lessons of wisdom, his playful mirth, his rich fund of anecdotes on the most important personages of past and of present times, above everything the traits of his pure benevolence to all, and of his unceasing kindness to myself; these came perpetually into my mind, and these never for one instant of time could be dissevered from the manner of his death. I stood before the eyes of the brethren as one to be pitied for the affliction which had deprived him of his dearest friend, his second father, whom he had loved without the admixture of fear, at least of filial respect, which places a distance between parent and child when of the same sex; for between father and daughter, son and mother, it exists not. In that light I stood in the eyes of others, the object of

great compassion; in my own I stood as a criminal, as one who, minded to perpetrate one murder, had committed another, and been punished here, and would be hereafter, having sacrificed his dearest friend to his infernal lust of revenge, roused within him by another passion, which he had vowed before God never to know.

" This terrible thought soon became the one ever uppermost in my mind; but gradually another arose within me more unbearable still. I was as yet wholly unsuspected both of Father Jerome's death, and of an attachment for Louise, which would have given far more scandal to the brethren, than the greater sin that had followed from it. How long might it be before the horrid truth was discovered? How could I ever be sure that a secret known to at least two persons beside myself, would be kept? If I had no fears of Louise, was it certain that Isidore, with his fiery nature and loose principles, would never form an attachment and reveal the mystery, in the course of those endearments in which lovers ever seek excitement from adventitious circumstances, and are even consoled for the calamities that befal themselves by having a pathetic or a striking communication which

offers an occasion to work on each other's sentiments, and indulge in the luxury of feeling together? But could I even be quite sure that the awful fact was not in possession of others as well as ourselves, those who might not at any time be trusted? Had no servant of the house heard the short struggle preceding the fall? Had no suspicion arisen in other minds than Father Ernest's, the lawyer of the convent, who, on seeing the rope torn down, observed that it was driven away on one side, and marked that the place where the father lay was not quite directly under the edge of the passage? Nor was it perfectly certain that Louise's maid, who was in the adjoining room, and had seen me ascend the steps, though she closed the door of her apartment, had not opened it when she found that I stood near the chamber for some minutes without entering, as usually I did, immediately upon coming up? All these things were most harassing to my mind, already both enfeebled by disease, and rendered more irritable and anxious than formerly; but it must be admitted that some of these considerations were sufficiently founded in reason to bring alarm over a more firm and healthy intellect than mine. Nor was it any relief to my apprehen-

sions that Father Ambrose was confessor to the Countess Orange's family, and was consequently sure to be first in possession of whatever was known by any of them on so grave a subject as the death of a leading Benedictine.

"Such were the terrors that filled me, and, far from becoming less distracting by being long felt, they gathered strength each time they haunted me according to the rule of our nature by which fear long felt, from weakening the texture of the mind, acquires increased power over its functions, and filling the imagination, gains perpetually new associates to aid its operation. At first anything unusual excited my apprehensions of a discovery. Any unusual excitement among the brotherhood, any proceeding out of the common course taken by the abbot, any strange person appearing to demand an audience, any unexpected messenger arriving at the convent, all became the source of alarm, and all were connected with my horrible mystery. But presently it went further. It soon came to pass that I could hardly separate the most ordinary and indifferent matters from the idea that constantly pursued me, by day and by night, studying or walking, praying (if ever I ventured to pray), or musing;

the one idea that haunted my waking hours and cast its shadow over my dreams. I could not see one of the brethren look at me as I passed without a fancy that he eyed me narrowly, and knew or suspected something. If an acolyte, or a verger, or a novice, gazed on me, possibly a little more earnestly from the prevailing notion that my mind had been affected by my loss, I straightway imagined that they had heard some whispers in the society of the town. If the superior gave me his blessing with more than ordinary unction, from my distressed state, I set it down as a proof that he had penetrated my secret and felt how much I stood in need of his prayers. I could not meet Father Ambrose's eye, glaring as it was formerly wont to be with hatred, now seeming calm with conscious superiority, though incapable of compassion; I always felt that he bore me more patiently than heretofore, because he knew me to be humbled by my guilt. He only felt that my protector was gone. I believed he knew the terrible secret of his going. I never saw two of the brothers in conversation but I took it for granted that I formed the subject of their talk. Nothing could have appeased my fears but the gratification of my restless curiosity to know all that

all the house were saying, and, if possible, all that each was thinking, in order to make sure that they spoke not nor even thought of me. I could have prayed for omnipresence and omniscience, that I might know what all the people of Avignon were always speaking about when any of them met, in order to be certain that I or my secret did not form the subject of their discourse. With all this I had no resource in religion or its offices. I had remained, from mental illness, incapable of the Holy Sacrament; I continued to affect a partial indisposition that I might avoid what I so much dreaded, the standing once more before the Maker, the Searcher of hearts, of whose actual presence I still, after all my debates with Isidore, relapsed into a belief, though a waning, and shaken, and obscure belief. Confession I durst not think of, and before the season for it at Easter came, there happened an event which compelled me to make up my mind, according to Isidore's unceasing suggestions, and at once to quit the order and the Church.

"The maid who attended Louise, and who had for many years been an attached servant of the house, fell dangerously ill. Her devotion to the family had hitherto kept her strictly silent on what

she knew and what she suspected. Even in confession she had let nothing escape which could be a clue to the suspicions she more than entertained. But this concealment, as it was a protection to herself against disclosing what she was by her duty bound to have made known in the proper quarter, was thus a sin on her part against the duties of the confessional; and this weight she had, though with pain, taken upon her conscience, until now when her latter end approached, she could no longer avoid disclosing what lay so heavy on her departing soul. She therefore sent for Father Ambrose, as I discovered by accident when sitting with Louise, who sincerely lamented the illness of her amiable serving-woman. My first impression was to see the dying woman before the father came to perform his office, but Louise wisely intreated me to avoid this step, as we had no reason whatever for believing she was aware of the truth, and any questions or suggestions from me would at once have converted into certainty whatever suspicions she might entertain. For the same reason Louise was afraid of conversing with her on the state of her mind, or her past recollections; added to which was the consideration that Father Ambrose must have discovered that such

criminal advice had been given, and the jealousy of the confessional being roused, the consequence might have been a refusal to grant absolution, with the further gratification of his spleen in throwing the responsibility upon Louise herself, whom, for her late repulsive demeanour towards him, he very heartily disliked. Nothing remained, therefore, but awaiting the event inactive, and as patient as one so deeply interested in it could manage to be.

"Father Ambrose came; the visit was not long; he called upon Louise as he departed; the flash of his eye, and the exultation that reigned through his countenance, at once proclaimed his belief that one or both of us was in his power, and but for the absolute secresy of the confessional would be trodden under his feet, armed with the law. To know this sufficed for our agony of alarm; but this was not all. He had cunningly, but perhaps not unjustifiably, counselled the penitent to communicate to the magistrate her offence, such it undeniably was, of so long a concealment; and the unhappy woman had also told him, under no promise of secresy, that she saw through the imperfectly shut door my arm suddenly flung round, as after a great effort, and instantly heard a heavy body strike the ground. In terror at

having witnessed such a thing she had retreated, and remained in her room till summoned by her mistress, who had taken refuge in it, and made her fetch Isidore from the Countess Orange's, where he had happened to be, in order that he might succour me, who had swooned away and had been with difficulty dragged into Louise's room by herself. The fall of Father Jerome, with the certainty that my action could have proceeded from no effort to save him, was quite conclusive against me; and my avoiding the duty of confession, my long delay to attend mass, my dreadfully agitated state of spirits, seemed to fill up whatever these circumstances left defective in the chain of evidence against me. Isidore, being called to our councils, saw the matter in this light; we at once made up our minds that the time for flight had arrived, and that we durst not remain one night longer in Avignon. We left it for ever, and left Louise with a faint hope of once more meeting her in other days, a hope cherished like some feeble taper's flame, and sheltered from each blast that assailed me, kept tremblingly half-alive and ever on the point of being extinguished, the only light to shed a gleam on the dismal prospect that now seemed to close in upon me from every side.

"It never struck us, until we were some distance from Avignon, and had proceeded along the banks of the Rhone in the direction of Beaucaire, that our habit was fatal, and at once must betray us. Accordingly we got rid of the cloak and hat by throwing them into a well, and we spent great part of the little money Louise had been able to give us in purchasing the brown jackets and trowsers of a farmer and his servants, at whose house we took shelter, saying we had been robbed of our clothes while sleeping on the bank and half dressed after bathing in the river. This farm was only two leagues from Avignon; and, afraid of waiting till the alarm should reach it, which was certain to spread over the town as soon as day broke, we went on our journey, and began seriously to consult on our anxious prospects. The first idea that struck us was the most painful of all. Clearly we must separate. 'My dearest friend,' said Isidore, 'anything rather than this. If I say that I hated the rule and the brotherhood less than I have ever loved you, I should speak without any exaggeration. All my ideas of happiness from being emancipated, all the castles I have built in the air, were founded on the cherished prospect of passing my

life in your society and friendship; and when my sanguine temperament would ever let me build dungeons in these castles, my separation from you formed their structure.' 'Alas, Isidore!' I replied, 'we dare not, at least for the present, indulge such feelings. God knows that my state most requires joyous and soothing company like yours. But consider, for a moment, that the mere fact of two persons being in company, and whose accent declares them to come from the Contât*, carries suspicion, if not proof, along with it; for the rumour will be, of course, that two friars, charged with murder, have escaped from the monastery.' 'How, then, shall I ever struggle alone with my fate?' said Isidore. 'I begin already to feel that I have been rash, as I ever am, in following my inclination; and that I never looked forward to probabilities until these became events. I might well have foreseen all the difficulties that now surround me, and the greater part of which would have been sure to meet me even had your catastrophe never occurred.' 'Alas, Isidore!' I replied, 'how you

* Contât of Avignon, or of the Venaissin. This district was then in the Papal dominions, from which one of the earliest acts of republican aggression severed it.

harrow up my feelings by that word! I have been the means of involving you, as well as myself, in calamity, and, what is far worse, in disgrace; for, with your opinions, to have only quitted the order would have been little; and it is through me that you are involved in a suspicion that will ever attach to you, the suspicion of being privy, if not aiding, to a crime of the deepest dye.' 'Let not this idea vex your mind,' said the generous youth. 'My attachment for you, and my devoted admiration of your superior nature, will never make me feel the disgrace while I know I am free from the guilt.' 'What, then, must my feelings be,' I rejoined, 'who have both loads to struggle under, and the additional pang of causing so great an aggravation of your danger? But, unhappily, part we must! and I will take the road across to Nismes, where a clergyman serving in one of the temples,* and connected with my family, will be ready to receive me, and give me some assistance to further my escape.'

"Isidore could not avoid perceiving that our separation was necessary for securing even a chance

* The name given to Protestant or Reformed Churches. A large proportion of the people at Nismes are of this faith.

of safety. His plan was soon formed with his accustomed resolution, and pursued with his wonted vigour. He intended to cross the country by Arles, to Aix, and so to reach Marseilles, where he should be safe in the crowd of a great city, until he could procure employment on board a vessel for the Levant. 'The errors of Paganism,' he said, 'and the more pure superstitions of the Mahometan, can never much disturb one who has seen men assume to make their followers believe their dogmas in opposition to their own senses, pretend to create the Deity whom they worship, and usurp his most eminent attribute, that of granting pardon for sin.' Only half converted from these views, I could not resist an involuntary shudder at hearing the mysteries I had so long been used to revere, thus treated with scorn; but all other feelings were lost in the affection with which I embraced the only friend whom my guilty hand had left me in the world. He took the road to Arles, and I, avoiding Beaucaire, journeyed on towards Nismes.

"I was now left all alone; and, for the first time in my life, I knew the feeling of solitude. My own reflections were for a while absorbed in the separation from Isidore, who had gained exceedingly on my

affection during some months, and whose existence I had begun to regard as knit up with my own. The severance of this tie gave me great pain; but other and far more painful reflections swiftly succeeded when my mind was left to prey upon itself. The idea of Father Jerome was never absent; the dreadful struggle on the staircase; the discovery of my fatal mistake; the mild aspect of the dying saint; his hopeless condition as he lay in his cell; and last, and worst of all, that kind look, that look of heavenly affection with which he had sought to send peace into my distracted soul; these were the recollections that haunted me, and kept me from recurring to the only idea which could have soothed my troubled spirits, the image of Louise; for that deserted me;—and I durst not pray.

"But these feelings were only those that kept me company while I was alone; one, still more harassing, was joined to them, and tormented me as soon as my solitude was broken. I came near Courbefort, a small village, as twilight began to gleam; and I hastened through it as if I were pursued, without reflecting that the news of my flight never could have reached the place, or, if it did, that I was disguised from all inquiring eyes in my pea-

sant's brown garb. I hastened towards Nismes, hardly knowing what I did; and when I arrived there it was broad daylight. A patrol came near, and I never doubted that his intention was to seize me; but he passed me, and this reassured me. I entered the town and met a priest. This sight fixed me to the ground; I supposed he must have heard all; and that my crime and my flight was the constant topic of conversation among all churchmen, and all friars, I could not for a moment doubt. But again, I forgot the distance I had come, and the little communication there is between heretical Nismes and the orthodox Contât. I felt as if every eye was glaring upon me, and every one I met was ready to seize and deliver me to justice. In this dismay, I entirely forgot the name of the reformed minister whom I was in quest of; till seeing Rue de Gard written up as the name of a street, I remembered that it was Father Gardein I wanted, and I was easily directed to his modest dwelling.

"When I asked for him, I was told that I must wait, as the good man was going to morning prayers; but if I chose, I might partake (the female servant said) of the family worship. I entered the room in which they were assembled, and I shall not soon for-

get the deep impression made upon my mind by the simplicity of the service, so entirely contrasted with the grandeur and pomp to which I had been accustomed. Surrounded by the servants of his house, the pastor, first asking for the Divine assistance, read some verses of Scripture in the vulgar tongue, and then kneeling, offered up a prayer of his own, the fervour of which affected me exceedingly. Then rising, he seated himself in his chair, opened the Bible which lay before him, and read a chapter of the New Testament, upon which he delivered a few explanatory observations, and from which he drew a lesson of moral conduct. Another prayer succeeded, and then a psalm, in which all present joined. This closed the simple solemnity; and, all else leaving the room, he remained to ask what was my business with him. The disclosure of my name at once obtained his protection, but I did not venture to explain the whole cause of my flight from Avignon; I only said that I had accompanied Isidore, who had the misfortune of having accidentally occasioned a friar's death, and had quitted the monastery in consequence; taking me with him, who partook of his doubts touching the lawfulness of conventual vows. The pastor was visibly alarmed by my recital, foreseeing the risk to

which he must be exposed from harbouring any one at all mixed up in such a transaction; and still more (considering his cloth barely tolerated in France) from harbouring a monk who had thrown off the garb of his order, violating one, at least, of his three vows, that of obedience. In the state of violence to which controversy then proceeded at Nismes, where the community was split into factions and sects mutually abhorring each other for Christ's sake, and living in daily breach of the Gospel law of charity, to show their zeal for that Gospel, it was undeniable that he encountered no little hazard by any shelter which he might lend me. His own gentle and peaceful nature, too, bore some repugnance to the contact of one ever so remotely, ever so innocently, mixed with deeds of blood. The friendship, however, which he bore our family, and the destitute condition in which he saw me, overcame all other feelings; and he at once introduced me to his wife, his daughter, and his grand-children. Yes, to his wife and children! This was a strange sight to me; I could hardly recover from my surprise at seeing a priest actually married, and father of a family, and served in the house by only females. It was something so repugnant to all I had

ever before witnessed, and all the ideas I had ever formed of the sacred calling, that I seemed to be cast into a foreign land, or rather into a new and untried state of existence.

"The dreadful situation in which I now was placed received a new embarrassment, from the necessity under which I felt that I lay, sooner or later, to exonerate my dear Isidore from the blame I had been compelled to lay upon him, that I might not be driven forth by the good pastor in his first sensation of horror at seeing, for the first time in his life, blood-stained hands supplicating his protection. But after all, the prevailing alarm under which I suffered, was the hourly terror of being discovered. It was not long before the whole community was occupied with the news which came from Avignon: of course with great exaggerations. Two friars were said to have escaped after murdering and robbing the abbot; it was added, that they had quarrelled about the division of the spoil, and one was supposed to have killed the other, from the circumstance of a hat and garment being found in a well, on the road to Beaucaire. The police of Nismes were as much on the alert as the society; for it appeared that one, at least, of the fugitives

had been traced to Beaucaire; and some one had seen a strange-looking peasant passing very early in the morning of the day after the murder.

"In the controversial state of Nismes, this dreadful affair gave rise to opposite views of the great question on which parties were divided. The reformed sect did not fail to draw from it an argument against monastic institutions; their tendency to produce an artificial and unnatural state of mind; the effect of their rigid observances, to make men's natural feelings revolt against their vows; the consequences of broken vows in leading to the breach of other and more sacred duties. The established clergy, on the other hand, ascribed the crime that had been committed to the relaxed state of discipline, arising from toleration to Protestants; the free-thinking opinions propagated by the reformers; their proselyting practices, which had manifestly beguiled two sheep from the fold of the Lord. The more strict, particularly the Regular Clergy, scrupled not to see in the event the hand of Providence, which dealt out this judgment against the abbot for his extreme spirit of toleration (confounding the abbot with the good and dear Father Jerome). It was significantly whispered, that the lenity of the age in this great

particular, would lead to a belief that the edict of Nantes had never been revoked: and Nismes, the centre of Protestantism, was plainly said to be, by its neighbourhood, the cause of what had befallen the orthodox Contât. Meanwhile, all anxiously desired the discovery of the culprits; the one party to release itself from all suspicion by showing, as they expected, that Catholic hands alone had been concerned in the deed; the other to extort, as they hoped they should, confessions that the lessons of the reformers had first seduced the criminals from their duty. The police, on its part, was unceasing in its active efforts to obtain the wished-for discovery.

"It would not be easy to convey any idea of the agony I was doomed to undergo, while these things were going on. It seemed as if the world's accustomed fickleness and aptitude to be soon tired of one subject of excitement had undergone a change; for, day after day, the same topic occupied all men's minds. This was partly owing to the new matter that every day brought forward to help the search. One man having been found to possess a friar's frock marked with the name of F. Isidore, he was immediately seized; and narrowly escaped being

brought to trial by showing that he had bought it of a boy, who had found it under a hedge. At length the farmer near the Rhone who had sold us the brown dress was so alarmed by the accident, and the general hue and cry, that he went to the magistrate, and related the whole story. No doubt could now remain that the criminals had escaped in this disguise. One was traced to St. Canaut on the road to Aix, but the scent was lost in that town; he plainly came alone, and plainly was a stranger from his tongue, and a fugitive, from his inquiring the road to Marseilles. The other, therefore, must have left him at Beaucaire; and as no one could be traced to Arles, and the Courbefort peasant had seen a man pass at a suspicious hour, it was at once concluded that he must have come to Nismes. Happily the man who directed me to the pastor's house was not examined, possibly had forgotten the circumstance, because it was the morning of a feast day, when the streets are crowded. Yet as the offender was concluded to be in Nismes, the activity of the police was redoubled to detect him; and a person answering the description given from Beaucaire and Courbefort, and who had fled upon being questioned, probably only to avoid being detained

and troubled, was arrested and brought before the magistrate. Unfortunately for him, he proved by his dialect to be from Avignon, and he had pretended to be a Nismes man. A purse of silver was found in his girdle, when searched, though he had said a livre piece was all he possessed. He had a rosary and crucifix in his pocket, of a far better kind than peasants ever wear, and could only account for this by saying he had found it; and he had the folly, when irritated by the searching questions of the magistrate, to speak disrespectfully of the beads as having done him more harm than they could ever after do him good.

"A scene of general self-glorification was now performed, with abundant self-satisfaction to all the actors. Each person praised some others as a covert method of conveying self-laudation, by pointing towards himself the public attention. The police were duly inflated with the glory of their successful investigations, and modestly gave the credit of it to wise arrangements of their chief; that chief affirmed that Lieutenant Sartine * himself had never abler officers than he was happy to

* The famous chief of the Paris police.

have under him; the magistrate complacently said from the bench, that Nismes could vie with any one city in its admirable administration of justice; a generous panegyric was pronounced upon the beautiful jurisprudence of France in general, 'a country happy above all others, in the accurate but humane administration of Criminal Justice, whereby the escape of the guilty was effectually prevented, and the innocent were thus from all suspicion effectually secured;' and the crowning proof of this position (which was applauded by all the audience) was forthwith given by condemning the wretched man to the torture, as the only step in the process now wanting to supply all the defects of the proof against him. Furthermore, the exquisite justice of the same law required that the question extraordinary, as well as ordinary, should be applied in this case, because it was one of sacrilege; thus presuming the party guilty, and dealing with him as such in the very act of ascertaining whether he was not innocent of the charge.

"The horror into which I was thrown when the account reached me, that on the next morning this unhappy man was to have his joints stretched, and his limbs broken, to make him confess a crime of

which I knew that he was guiltless, cannot easily be imagined. I thought I heard his shrieks while undergoing the dreadful operation; and I saw him led away to execution for words that he might drop under the agony of his torments. In this state I threw myself on my knees before the good pastor, and besought him to go before the magistrate, with an asseveration to which his spotless character would give weight, that he knew the man was innocent; but this he could only know by also being aware of the guilty person. That he had obtained any knowledge from confession he could not say, because the Protestants have no such exercise. If a Catholic priest had been called in, he was absolutely debarred from making any communication to the magistrate, and must patiently see an innocent man suffer death rather than violate, even by negative assertion, the strict secresy of the confessional. In this grievous dilemma, in which I felt prepared to rush on my own destruction rather than see innocent blood spilt for my offence, it occurred to the pastor that the governor of the place, a man of extraordinary honour and good sense, as well as great humanity, might be entrusted with the secret, only in part as yet revealed

to himself. I easily assented. To what would I not have agreed to escape the horrors of a second, and now a deliberate murder! General Talmont was accordingly seen, and implored to interpose his authority with the magistrate, and prevail upon him at least to suspend the Question, until he could communicate the particulars to the Government at Paris. The worthy officer nobly agreed to act, and disdained to consider the inevitable consequences of his conduct, that of being charged with screening an offender, for whose detection at all hazards the public, including the contending sects, all alike were eager. The Question was postponed for a fortnight; but in the meanwhile the prisoner found means to elude the vigilance of the most perfect of all police establishments, the able chief who had equalled himself to Lieut. Sartine, his much lauded officers, and contrived to prevent the most dignified and acute of magistrates from administering in his case the most admirable of all systems of criminal jurisprudence; in fact he had withdrawn from the custody of the officers, the superintendence of the jail, and the blessings of a law as humane as it was accurate, preferring the more certain blessings of freedom from all process, to those of being subject to any.

In a word he had, to my unspeakable relief, made his escape. It is very likely from all the circumstances that he was an old offender, probably come from Marseilles to maraud at the Candlemas fair of Nismes. Certain it is that he appeared no more in that quarter.

"The indignation of the police now reached a pitch of fury, and nothing could satisfy them but a general domiciliary visit; to which in the prevailing ferment a consent was obtained from the governor, to whose interposition the man's escape was not unnaturally ascribed. The Government had also taken the precaution of sending to Avignon to ask the attendance of some one of the Benedictine monastery, whose evidence would be material, but who, residing in a foreign territory, could not be summoned; and the arrival of one of the brethren was daily expected.

"My terror may easily be conceived in these circumstances. Should the domiciliary visit lead to my being in ever so slight a degree suspected, I was sure to be at once identified by the testimony of the monk who might come from Avignon; and even if I escaped this fate, he was sure to give a more correct account of the facts than common report had

propagated, so that the pastor could no longer be kept ignorant of the deception I had practised upon him in laying the chief blame upon Isidore. Happily, a reluctance on the abbot's part to suffer his brother's examination in a secular court delayed the arrival I so much dreaded, and the domiciliary visit was postponed for the present. Yet I lived in perpetual fear, and learnt by experience that there is no suffering which so renders man weary of existence, and so perpetually makes life a burden. What I endured made me easily believe the accounts of persons who have destroyed themselves under the terror of dangers to which they were exposed, and as for self-murder of a like kind committed to escape disgrace and public odium, I could at all times well credit the possibility of it.

"My only solace during this period was the kindness of the pastor and his family, who, seeing how much I was suffering, exerted themselves to relieve me. Nothing more soothed my troubled spirit than the religious conversation than Monsieur Gardein, in which he mingled learned and rational argument with spiritual consolation. We discussed together freely all the points of dispute between the two churches, and certainly the result was to confirm all

the impressions which Isidore's reasonings and railleries had made on me, and to wean me entirely from the errors of the Romish faith. This conversion was much aided by the judicious course which the pastor took. He was a man of great learning and much ability, but he was also of a singularly moderate disposition; tolerant of adverse opinions, and regarding those whom he deemed benighted in error with compassion, but without the least pride of conscious superiority far less any feeling of hostility. His respectful treatment of even the dogmas to which his clear judgment stood most opposed, helped him to make many a proselyte whom a more fierce and contemptuous disputant would have for ever alienated and confirmed in error at the very outset of the argument by haughty assertion, or scorn, or misplaced ridicule. Indeed he held that ridicule was never to be used in discussing sacred subjects, both because it wounds the feelings of the unconverted and because it shuts their minds up against the entrance of the truth. This subject of employing ridicule is difficult, in my apprehension, and a distinction is to be taken between the different kinds of ridicule. The statement of an absurd consequence drawn clearly from any position,

the exposure of its self-repugnance, or other gross absurdity and senselessness, inevitably produces a tendency to laugh, inevitably produces a ludicrous effect. So far, and of this description, ridicule is a necessary part of demonstration. The superficial and ignorant vulgar, always confounding unlike things, are perpetually crying out on either a written or a conversational argument of this truly logical kind that it is merriment and not reasoning, whereas it is the closest and most urgent demonstration. But when to this we add any superfluous picture of a ludicrous kind, and call in anything laughable in manner, or character, or habits, anything personal to the disputant, we clearly go beyond what is the legitimate province of reasoning, especially upon sacred subjects. Nothing could, for example, be more fit than to expose the great absurdity of making our senses the test of the words received from Christ through the Evangelists, and then holding their evidence inadmissable to show that the bread and wine have retained their humble nature after the priest's benediction. You may even go so far as to show the ridiculous consequence that flows from the doctrine, namely, that a created being is supposed to make, at least to summon into

his presence, the God who made him. But if you enter into details, letting your fancy luxuriate in the difference between bread and flesh, wine and blood, or speak of a God-maker, or a God-smith, a God-eater, or a God-monger, you needlessly import the ludicrous into a most solemn argument, and descend from the pure and refined wit of reason to the broad and vulgar grins of humour. From the turn of the good pastor's mind, at once serious and forbearing, he applied this principle to all controversy, even on secular matters; and he had a practice in reasoning of rather leaving his adversary to perceive the ridiculous in his own argument, or its consequences, than stating it in terms to him. He, perhaps, was skilful as well as tolerant in this course, for it is certain that there is more or less of triumph in the ordinary proceeding of disputants, who press each other with the weight of their argument, and are over-fond of the pleasure derived from the exposure of absurdity. The Socratic method of discussion by questions pressed upon the adversary, and making him state his own error, and as it were take of himself the steps to his own refutation, proceeded upon somewhat of the same view. Be that as it may, I can affirm that M. Gardein was a formidable

disputant, not more from his acuteness and his learning, than from his suavity, and his carefully abstaining from showing triumph or giving offence in any other way. He in this, as in many other features of his amiable and attractive character, bore no little resemblance to my dear and ever lamented Father Jerome; and had the excellent, and indeed well-gifted, Isidore possessed somewhat of his moderation and self-command, I am certain that my conversion would have been accomplished before I left the convent.

"Much, however, as I owed my escape from the grievous errors of Romanism to the reasoning and the information of the good pastor, I believe that my liberation from the fallacies with which that most artfully contrived system enchains the mind was greatly aided by the co-operation of another cause. The domestic society in which I saw him living and teaching, the endearing company of his wife, of his daughter, and her children, those ties which, far from lessening his clerical usefulness, only redoubled his powers of persuasion, and, far from impairing his zeal in the service of God, only made it burn with the purer flame, lit at the tenderest and most innocent feelings of the heart, had a powerful influ-

ence on my mind, because I daily witnessed the practical exposure of the falsehoods which Popery inculcates, and proved, by constant evidence of my senses, that the state which is natural for man is in nowise dangerous to priests, but, on the contrary, increases their usefulness while it relieves them from the pains of unnatural restraint, and gratifies the most innocent propensities of the human heart. All Isidore's arguments about the clergy refusing themselves one of the sacraments had been feeble compared to the practical experience which I now had of a married clergyman, a pastor, at once the spiritual father of his flock and the natural father of his family.

" As the period of the domiciliary visit and the Benedictine's arrival approached, I grew more and more uneasy. I scarcely dared venture into the streets for fear of exciting suspicion. Walking in the Place at an early hour, for I never ventured out except in the morning and evening, I heard, to my extreme horror, a voice calling out my name twice, 'Albert! Albert!' I instantly turned round, and was relieved to find it was a woman calling on her child that ran across the walk. But this had at least shown her that my name was Albert.—One day I

walked to the Maison Carrée to indulge in the recollections of past ages, and taste if possible of the peace which, its inscription says, had been established over the world; a face which was familiar to me almost fixed me to the ground; it was a gentleman from Avignon to whom I was known, though slightly. I had only presence of mind to turn round and abruptly quit the portico, on whose numberless beauties he was intently gazing.—I had some days before seen a travelling musician at the public gardens whom I recognized, but who knew me too little to perceive who I was; yet the alarm which even this gave me had driven me home for several days, until I supposed the minstrel had departed in pursuit of his erratic calling. But all these things, and numberless other alarms which proved false, showed me that my present place of concealment was too near the spot of my shame. The distance was not, indeed, above ten leagues, and though both political and religious considerations restrained the intercourse between the centres of heterodoxy and orthodoxy, yet intercourse there was, quite enough to bring real risk upon me.

"I accordingly seriously planned my departure, and having consulted with my kind and revered friend, he

helped me, to the utmost extent of his small means, in the accomplishment of this design. All communication with my family at Avignon had of necessity been broken off. My writing or receiving letters would have led to a discovery of my retreat, and even M. Gardein was forced to keep the strictest silence on the subject in his correspondence. Once only he had an opportunity of privately apprizing my wretched parents of my being safe for the moment; and he learnt from a friend who had seen them, that their grief was largely mingled with the horror of what had passed, so natural to all persons of right feeling, especially such as strictly held by the religion of their ancestors. Any effort to supply my wants could be little expected from them; they considered me as lost to my family as well as my faith, and that they had now to bewail the loss of another son, but in circumstances far more distressing than those which accompanied their former misfortune of the like kind. But the kind good pastor did not dismiss me on my weary, solitary, and melancholy pilgrimage, merely filling as far as he was able my scrip. He thought he had a higher duty to discharge, and one peculiarly belonging to his sacred function,—the duty of giving me such coun-

sels and such warnings as his longer experience had suggested, and as one in my circumstances peculiarly stood in need of. This conversation made a deep impression upon my mind; it was at night, after the frugal supper of the family had been succeeded by worship. He retired with me into his study, and kept me in discourse above an hour. Before I went to bed I took a memorandum of what he had then spoken, and I soon afterwards extended it so as to preserve both the substance and the expression, which was exceedingly simple but earnest. This precious memorial of my third father, I have in all the vicissitudes of my life been allowed to preserve, and I will read it to you when next you come here; for I am too much exhausted now to continue a conversation which, though it has some tendency to relieve me, is sadly mingled with the most painful recollections."

---

## CHAPTER VI.

### CONVERSATION IN LANGUEDOC.

THE Count returned to the Château entirely occupied with the strange and dreadful story of Albert. As nothing more fills or distracts the mind than a constant state of anxiety and alarm, so no relations more arrest the attention, and make the hearer not merely feel sympathy, but actually partake of the painful sense of danger described; and the Count, whose imagination was sufficiently lively, and whose feelings were strong, shared largely in all that the Solitary had depicted of his state of mind. He felt uneasy; he was disturbed by the perpetual recurrence of the scenes which Albert had traced before him; he saw the officers of justice and the emissaries of the church in pursuit of his friend; and he found difficulty in believing, that even now, when all the wanderings of Albert had brought him safe to his

retreat, that retreat itself, and the greatly diminished zeal of the clergy, with their much restricted power during late years, could make him quite secure against discovery and persecution. The likeness which the Baron de Moulin bore to the tenant of the cave, seemed to keep before his eyes the picture he had just come from gazing on; that resemblance was as great as could well exist between a very handsome and a very ordinary countenance, like the Baron's, whose features, however, were abundantly expressive, and had the impress of genius which always precludes any appearance of deformity. In his presence the Count's mind still more keenly dwelt upon the sad story of Albert; and he fell more than once into a reverie, which was speedily perceived by his fair partner. As soon as she could find him alone, she assailed him with an eagerness which in company she with difficulty suppressed. "Well then; and you have been to hear the wild and crazy hermit's tale? Of course he has satisfied your easy mind perfectly as to the visits of your friend the Marchioness?" "That he most entirely has," said Chatillon, "nor was it difficult. My opinion of her is very high indeed; and I find, as I truly expected, that nothing was ever more completely

groundless than the suspicions cast on her conduct." "Oh! no doubt," said the Countess, "quite groundless; and without the least colour of probability from the first.—Mind you, Chatillon," she continued, "I will believe all you now affirm, in terms so very general, as soon as you let me know what were the Solitary's communications to you, and as certainly not otherwise." "My love," he replied, "I am most perfectly indifferent."—"None of your insolent abuse," she exclaimed; "say at once, frankly and freely, that you choose not to confide the matter to me, because it is of a kind better kept concealed, and I am satisfied; but no impertinence, I desire"—and with that she flung out of the room, all the more convinced by Chatillon's silence, that her suspicions were anything but groundless.

The Count, to relieve his mind, ruffled by his fair helpmate's temper, walked out into the delightful shrubbery that surrounded the Château. The rest of the company continued conversing on the subject which the Count's musing disposition, so new in him, suggested; and the discourse turned, as it is wont to do, upon the two absent members of the society. On no occasion are the absent ever more

uniformly in the wrong, and without exception, than when they leave assembled the contents of a Château, persons for the most part idle, and who, being without pursuits when in the house, occupy themselves diligently with the concerns and the persons of their neighbours in the same society. The precise period of the day when the absent are most generally in the wrong, and when they form the most animated part of the conversation, is when dinner is waiting for their arrival. But at no time of the twenty-four hours are they apt to be very much spared by the company present. So it fared with the Count and the Countess on this occasion. While they were occupied, the one in a solitary walk, with musing over the strange adventures of Albert, the other in her boudoir with her extensive and various correspondence, and with the journals which she diligently studied, and which began now to be filled with speculations on the unquiet aspect of affairs, the company were employed in descanting upon the two absentees, each after his own fashion and humour.

"I marvel," said the Marquess, "that our good and light-hearted Count should have chosen his present wife, so different from him in both temper and

taste. She was a widow, too, and had not made her first husband happy."

"Have you not observed," answered the Baron, "that men as well as women are apt to fix their affections on somebody very different from themselves? How often do you see close friendships knit between men of the greatest dissimilarity of character and of pursuits?"

"Yes, truly," the Marquess observed; "there is always one obstacle removed by such a difference—there is no interference, and thus no rivalry. However, I believe your remark has another foundation as to men's choice of a mistress or a wife. The variety is pleasing; the turn of mind so different from our own amuses; it is what we term *piquant*."

"For which," said the Marchioness, "I have often remarked we have in our insular language no word, though we have many that cannot be translated into your tongue."

"But surely," rejoined the Baron, with much animation, "the matchless beauty of the Countess must at once furnish a key to her husband's preference for her. Saw you ever beyond the Alps more perfect loveliness than our Tramontane fair one dis-

closes?" addressing himself to Prince Caramelli, who had just arrived from Florence and been visiting the Pont du Gard.

"Why, really, Baron," replied the Tuscan, "I must at once be ungallant enough to answer with a positive Yes. In the first place your fair one is of an advanced age."

"An advanced age, Prince! Why she is barely thirty."

"Barely thirty! Baron," said the Italian—"Had you said barely twenty—very well. But I own to you the addition of ten years is not very much to my taste. I might admire her society, might even relish the remains of former beauty, and let her live upon a recollection of past charms—I might make her my friend, but as for anything else, you will excuse me."

However, the rest of the company, though not so particular on the point of age, wholly denied the correctness of the phrase selected by the Baron to pourtray the object of his present devotion.

"Really," said the gentle Emmeline, "dear Zio, for so great a master of diction as you to choose the word 'loveliness,' and 'perfect loveliness,' as descriptive of the Countess, does, I own, a little surprise one. Incomparable beauty, if you will; but

surely to loveliness there goes something beyond form."

"I agree with Mdlle. de Moulin," said the Marchioness, "and I will add, what of course she meant to allow, that though Madame de Chatillon has great expression as well as fine form—it is not a lovely expression at all. It is full of intellect, but it is also tinctured with both pride and temper."

"Two things the most inconsistent with the idea of lovely, certainly," said Emmeline. "But I hardly wished to say so much against any one I know so little, and am taught by my dear Zio to respect so highly. I only meant to say that she shows some tartness of disposition which little suits my poor humble taste."

"Come," said the Marquess, "I will not stop there. I freely confess to you, Baron, that I never could admire her at all. Her beauty is haughty; she enters the room as if she came to dictate, and expected to be obeyed without hesitation; moreover she has that sort of look as if she were the only virtuous person in whatever female society she honours with her presence, and almost the only person of talents or information in the male circles, where she most likes to move and to shine."

"Let me tell you, Marquess," said the captivated Baron, "that when a person is so endowed as she is, and leads also a life so pure, she may well hold her head high above the frivolous and the corrupt age in which she lives. But her harshness, of which you all complain—is it not well redeemed by the truth and honour it is akin to, and allied with? Who could ever charge her with a falsehood? When did the breath of slander ever settle upon her reputation?"

While these things were under discussion there arrived at the Château two guests of note from Nismes; Madame Leblanc, a widow, considerably past her prime, but who, from her position in society, had also considerable currency; and the Abbé Miltaud, a leader of the high fanatical party, to which the widow herself somewhat inclined. Accordingly the reverend personage had not scrupled to travel with her the journey from Nismes; "albeit it was," as he observed, "of more than one hour's duration; and albeit she was not much more than five-and-forty years of age complete." She naturally glided into the conversation, in which her niche was not likely to be filled in her absence. No sooner had she thus placed herself than she asked if

the Countess had not set out for Grenoble; and finding she was still a guest at the Château, but also that she had retired for the morning to her extensive correspondence, and that the Count was gone to the chace, she felt it her duty to take these absentees under her especial protection; not, however, without aid of her spiritual friend the Abbé, whom she thus invoked, somewhat without asking his consent.

"Aye, truly — correspondence indeed! The Abbé and I have just been wondering what Madame de Chatillon writes about; for we hear at Nismes that her letters equal in number those of many merchants, and some ministers of state."

"Verily, Madame," said the reverend man, "I remember me not the remark you mention as having beguiled the time spent on the way. Peradventure was I then commending me to His care who maketh the rough places smooth, and guards them that travel by land and water from the perils of their path. But as to the post-office, know I little or nothing, being of them that use it not."

"But, Abbé," rejoined Madame Leblanc, "at least you must remember having said you deemed the Countess more intent on the things of this world than of another; and when I said that the

case was a common one, you said, The more 's the pity, and the less the excuse."

"Yes, verily, sister, did I so deliver myself; to the which you replied, that you could have more easily forgiven her worldly-mindedness if she only could now and then show a little charity toward offending brethren."

"Well, and so I still say—for, considering how many offend, surely nothing is more needful than a capacious and almost indiscriminate charity. There, for instance, is La Maréchale de Bournon, whom I never shall say one word against, nor can I say one word for her neither, for I believe she is no better than she should be."

"Truly," said the Baron, "it is a somewhat hard measure of justice to require her to be better than she ought to be."

"Well, well, as you please,"—she replied, "I speak always well of her; better than I can think—though, indeed, I like her much, only I can get nobody to agree with me. But there 's the dear Countess de Pignerol, whose adventure with the Italian Prince is much talked of—and my belief is that he owes his principality to her good graces; for a lady told me that he was neither more nor less

than a courier, whom some Prince turned off. But God help us! we are all but weak and sinful creatures without His aid. And if it be His pleasure the Pignerol should thus have gone astray, His will be done."

"Amen! amen!" ejaculated the holy man.

"So I say of the Countess, and when I hear people all saying she only minds politics, and having never had any children by either marriage, can think of nothing domestic, here I must take her part. She has long had a lover, to my certain knowledge, and that page of hers who is always on the fetch and carry is as like her as ever he can look."

"Certainly," said the Marchioness, "a child she never had, and as to the boy being, as you would insinuate, some kind of natural relation, some child of her father or her brother—"

"Ma'am, I only said she never had had any child *since* her marriage; I go not, God forbid I should, to any thing that may have happened before, either with M. Bertrand or any one else, whatever I may know personally on this subject."

"Really, Madame Leblanc, you are too bad with your anecdotes and your personal knowledge," said the Marchioness.

"Why, look you, my dear," replied the lady of much charity, "you should be cautious of discrediting even a report; for, as we are all in search of truth, how easily may we be deceived by incredulity!"

"But," said the Baron, unable longer to contain himself, "how much more injustice may we do by easy belief!"

"There I must differ with you," said she of the considerate mind; "you will observe that a great deal is always sure to be done that never gets out, so that I generally find it a safe rule to believe *at least* what I hear. A lady told me that she knew the affair with M. Bertrand, and that it is as much alive as ever."

"That I 'll be sworn it is," said the Baron," and I fairly tell you I don't believe one word of it."

"How extremely ill-natured that is, Baron! How hard upon the lady I have been quoting! Have you no regard for her character? Why should you so slander one you don't know?"

"And whom I never shall know, I dare swear," said the Baron.

"But, Sir," said the woman slow to blame, "you do neither more nor less than positively charge her with bearing false witness against her neighbour. How

should you like any one disbelieving a story you had told, and of which you knew all the particulars?"

"Verily, and of a truth," said the Abbé, "you put the matter in a Christian manner. Howbeit, I would say a word for the other party, the Countess, but that I learn she is taking part with the evil disposed, who now infest our land—nay, purposes going with her obedient husband to Grenoble, where the work of the father of mischief is now for a season permitted by the Lord to prosper."

"Aye, truly, Abbé, well may you say so; there she says she must go, and go she will. Her obedient husband, indeed! well may you so call him; and her patient, her much-enduring, and her long-suffering husband. My heart melts when I think of him; it bleeds within me to see so much good nature so rewarded with oppression. However, he comforts himself in other quarters—of that, at least, there can be no doubt. But let us be just, even to sinners. It is not true that he keeps four mistresses and introduces them into his house. I believe he never has had more than two at one time; and if they are admitted into his house, it is always by a back door, so as no one not in the secret shall know anything about it."

The Marquess here wished to turn aside the conversation from its present channel, wherein it might have flowed without any interruption, or any end; so he reverted to Grenoble, willing to hear the Abbé upon a topic in which he took much interest. But at this moment entered the Countess herself, she having finished her day's despatches; and all eyes were at once turned upon her; as happens on any conversation being suddenly extinguished by appearance of its subject.

"Well, Baron," she said, on entering the saloon, "you will find I am right as to the great event of the States of Dauphiné. They are beginning to put themselves in an attitude; and if this does not lead to something material, I am much more mistaken than I have usually been."

"My dear Madam," answered the Baron, "I never had any doubt whatever that something would come of it. I only questioned your very sanguine view, that all grievances were to be redressed in less time than it would take to draw up a catalogue of them; and I am averse to sudden change, well knowing that the fruit which grows fast spoils quick."

"They do tell me," said the Abbé, "that some

mention hath already been made of tithe, as if *that* were a grievance. Help us! what shall we next see?"

"Why really, Abbé," said the Countess, "were that our only grievance, there would need but little time and less trouble to rid ourselves. My opinion is for a clergy like the Swiss, among whom I was brought up, a poor and a working clergy."

"Mercy on us, to hear you talk! a poor and a working clergy! What! Shall they which serve at the altar not live by the altar? What portion of worldly goods cometh ever to my poor share, that do I freely take unto me; as knowing, that it is the portion of the Lord, and appertaining unto Him and His church, to whom and to which all glory for ever and ever!"

"Amen," ejaculated Madame Leblanc; "nevertheless, I could wish that in taking their share of our goods, they would let alone our persons. I am sure I have more than suspicions of the Abbé Lafosse and Madame Bertrand. I refer to his late visits and his long walks; and they do say the bishop has given him severe admonition."

"Sister!" said the Abbé, "it little becomes you so to speak of the church. The pious should dis-

trust their eyes, and yet more their ears, rather than lightly believe in disparagement of the people of God. My brother Lafosse is of the elect, and can hardly fall from grace. Haply," said the pious man, "the Lord Bishop's admonition which you wot of touched some point of doctrine, wherein the Abbé might have gone astray from the path, and peradventure might lack wholesome correction."

"Abbé," said Madame Leblanc, "let you and I take a little walk in the shrubbery, before we go back to Nismes."

"Yea, verily, sister," said the holy individual, "for it now is waxing late; and I may not go on the way after the setting of the sun alone even with you in a carriage."

"Nor in a carriage even without me either, Abbé," said the charitable; "I observed you were in serious alarm each little jolt that we had on the smooth road coming out."

"Truly," said he, "and I do but regard it as a tempting of Providence, when I expose me to any kind of risk—save the hourly risk we ever run; for in the midst of life we are in death."

"Well," said the Countess, as soon as they were gone, "thank heaven, we have got rid of this

canting pair! However, Madame Leblanc is not, by half, so bad as this Abbé; and as to her having some little *causeries*, I really hardly complain of that; for her abuse is no slander, so well is her venom known. I verily believe I am the only person of her acquaintance whom she has not freely charged with a *faux pas;* and that I ascribe more to my own prudence and reserve on all occasions, than to her forbearance."

"Oh! certainly," said the Marquess, "you set her at defiance. But also she may set you at defiance; for you don't hear what she says, any more than if it suited her humour she would care what you did."

There was a kind of smile on the Marquess's face as he spoke this, that seemed more significant than the fair lady, all conscious of her virtue, quite relished. Having assumed, and almost declared, that she was not merely above blame, but beyond attack, she now thought she had been under the searching operation of Madame Leblanc's unsparing tongue before she rejoined the company, and she immediately wore her enraged aspect as she said: "Well, I do believe that is the very worst woman in Nismes."

The Count here came in, having returned from the forest, where he had been shooting, to relieve his thoughts of the mournful impression made on him by the history of Albert, and to beguile the time, which he thought an age, till his curiosity should be gratified by the remainder of that strange and affecting story.

Prince Caramelli returned from his drawing excursion before dinner, and interested the party greatly by the exquisite sketches he had made of the Pont du Gard; which he pronounced more than Roman in its magnificent and perfectly preserved architecture. "I really," said he, "never could have imagined the French had such good builders. We generally plume ourselves upon our Italian masonry, and the buildings at Rome, particularly the older ones, which I suppose date as far back as our Gothic ancestors, are thought very fine, though now a good deal destroyed, and, in some places, fallen to pieces. But positively I find nothing, even in St. Peter's, equal to the Pont du Gard."

"The Pont," said the Baron, "is not a French structure, nor even one by the Gauls."

"Were the Gauls a French province?" inno-

cently asked the Prince. But no one dared enter fully into this antiquarian discussion, out of charity towards this accomplished descendant of the brave Etrurians, who had the blood of the Medici in his veins, though he valued himself far more on his Gothic descent.

In the evening he delighted the ears of the company with his music still more than he had their eyes by his drawings. He was an admirable player both on the piano-forte and the violin, sang beautifully either a first or a second part, was so passionately fond of music that he discoursed eloquently respecting it, and had so much real taste that he almost seemed learned upon the subject. His contempt too for all others, when his favourite subjects of the pencil and the lyre were on the carpet, was only half concealed by his perfect politeness. He plainly perceived, or thought he perceived, that the French were, by some physical necessity, incapable of the least relish for the productions of either; and would cite, ten times in a day, the unfortunate mistake of a gentleman whom he had met at a Marseilles concert, and who, seeing the music-book in his hand, had asked him "If that Adagio was contemporary with Corelli?"

The conversation, however, was not suffered to rest always on the fine arts. The Countess must needs know what the feelings in Italy were on the ferment now beginning in France, and turned his attention to the assembling of the States at Grenoble. The Prince had here as much to learn on the art of discord as the amateur of Marseilles had on that of harmony. He desired to know what States were; and the Countess kindly undertook to describe that they represented the different orders of nobles, clergy, and commonalty. But the idea of anybody being represented except by his ambassador if a sovereign or his agent if a private person, could not easily enter the Tuscan mind; and when Madame de Chatillon said that this assembly shared the powers of government in a certain degree, he concluded they were officers and men raised and commissioned by the king; for he asked if they were a military corps, and drawn out occasionally, or on permanent duty? When told they were civil functionaries, he supposed they might be a great department of clerks, appointed to conduct the public business. It was impossible to make him comprehend how the government could be carried on by any person except under the king's autho-

rity; when the Countess, gently for her, but with an intelligent look that made no small impression on his southern and inflammable nature, reminded him of the republican time of Florence, her *balia*, her *farsi publico*, her *parlamento*, she found him as ignorant of the former history of his own country as of the present state of France. All he could say was, that no country could possibly exist in such a state of confusion as she seemed to speak of, unless perhaps England, which he had understood to be under the dominion of a lawless multitude of many hundreds, and to lie accordingly under such a heavy curse of constant confusion that nothing should ever induce him to venture near it. An orchestra of bad fiddlers, without a book or a director, seemed to him harmony compared with what he concluded the parliamentary government must needs be.

The Countess, finding all political discussion for ever shut out in this quarter, was fain to sit by while he either charmed the company with some more airs, or with the almost equally pleasing melody of his conversation; for he was a Sienese, and with the most beautiful Tuscan he had not any of the harsh guttural pronunciation so unpleasant at

Florence, Pisa, and Leghorn. His small talk, though far inferior to that of our own countrymen, was agreeable, and the animation which his excitable nature ever showed, prevented his emptiness from being dull. To his ignorance there was a compensation in his fire, which rendered him anything but insipid; while his perfect manners and imperturbable good nature made an impression on all who valued those lighter qualities. Emmeline, who had never seen an Italian, was much struck with him, and afterwards made a remark which even the profound and fastidious Countess thought had something in it: She said it was singular to see how a person might appear to have strong feelings who had only in all probability warm passions, and most likely no feelings at all; for she coul not conceive it possible that a person of the Prince's station and family could have remained ignorant of every thing even relating to the history of his own country and his own house, if he had possessed the least dignity of character or any self-respect.

With all these claims to the contempt of reflecting or manly natures, there was nevertheless so much to attract in the Prince's winning exterior, and his

frivolous accomplishments; his countenance, like that of so many Italians, was so intellectual, and so plainly showed that the genius was in him but asleep, and only requiring the torch of the educator to awaken its fires; and his good nature so unruffled, even by the eager animation of his southern manner, that he proved a favourite in the society of the Château, was easily borne, and even liked by all—by all save the Baron, who could not endure him; but this aversion arose from an accident that worked on his pride, which blinded, and his fiery temper, which impelled him; for he was very far from intolerant of persons inferior to himself, and even loved to repose upon their more tranquil dispositions.

Unfortunately the Prince had mistaken him for another person in the company, Major Drelincourt, an officer though not in uniform, who lived at Aix, to whom he bore some resemblance, and with whom, notwithstanding his imperturbable good nature, the Prince had had an unpleasant quarrel in a place of public resort in that town. Seeing the Baron in the ante-room of the Château soon after his arrival, he said, fiercely but not unpolitely, that until their quarrel, interrupted by the regimental colonel's in-

terference, should be settled, one or other must quit the place. The Baron furiously turned round upon him, and asked when he, the Prince, intended to go. The mistake was instantly discovered; an ample apology was tendered with the explanation. It was dryly and very imperfectly accepted; and from that moment the Baron could not endure the sight of one whose most innocent error had, by the merest accident, been the occasion of an unintentional annoyance to his feelings. Nor could he bear the Major any more than the Prince, because his idea was mixed up with what had happened. The Marquess, having heard of the unfortunate circumstance, did all he could to accommodate matters, and it had the good effect of bringing about a reconciliation between the real parties to the only quarrel that, properly speaking, existed. But the Baron would not be appeased, or rather he could not control his humour, and he told Emmeline that they must quit the Château, and continue their journey. Her gentle nature was deeply wounded when she heard the cause. She was at first exceedingly hurt that her uncle had received any annoyance from any cause, and still more that his pride blinded him to a just view of the matter and of his position. Her

calm judgment now, as on so many other occasions, saw things in their true light, and her rigid sense of justice, a prevailing character of her mind, made her really unhappy at seeing one whom she so fondly loved violating that most sacred duty. She cared little for the disappointment of leaving a place to which she had begun to feel attached, from the agreeable and instructive society assembled in it; that or any other sacrifice of her own wishes, she would cheerfully have made; and indeed one of her uncle's greatest difficulties always was to find out what she preferred, so carefully did she conceal her own likings whenever she feared they might interfere with his. But she could little endure the appearance of the Baron going away from what she could not help regarding as a somewhat childish fit of humour. "Dearest Zio," she would say, "do only, I beg and beseech you, consider that it was all a mere mistake, an accident that might have happened to any one as well as the Prince, and respecting any one as well as you. A more harmless man never lived than he seems to be, and he has many good qualities." — "And the Major too, whom he chose to take me for; I suppose, dear, *he* is very harmless and agreeable. I never saw any

one less so, I own."—" No, no, dear Zio, I say nothing of him, excepting this, that if possible, he is even less to blame than the Prince, for he had no part whatever in it, except being of your size, and being taken for you in the dusk of the billiard-room." " Well, well, my little love, but they are all mixed up in it; let them settle their affairs together as they will; they have all been the occasion of my getting angry before strangers, and being hurt by an empty fool; and the idea of them is hateful." A night's reflection, however, and the unwillingness to give Emmeline pain, independent of the reluctance to quit the Countess, which began to operate powerfully, restored this proud person to a more reasonable frame of mind; and he at any rate would take no step, and say no more about it, though he still said it was as hateful a thing as had for many years happened to him; and no entreaty even of Emmeline would induce him so far to throw off his humour as to offer the Prince his hand, or testify by any other courtesy his forgiveness of an unintentional error which he could not bring himself to forget.

Thus the evening and the next morning passed

quietly away, and the Count, impatient to hear the continuation of Albert's story, again visited the cave, when the Solitary proceeded to read his notes of the good pastor's parting advice.

## CHAPTER VII.

### THE PHILOSOPHY OF A LANGUEDOC PASTOR.

"'THE young delight in action; contemplation is best suited and most pleasing to the old. But when the heart is rightly attuned to humane feelings, there is also a disposition in age to make its experience profitable to youth. Not only is there a satisfaction in dwelling upon the results of that experience, wholly apart from all ideas of egotism; there is a pleasure in conveying instruction, and in the act of making their own history useful to others they have a pleasing consciousness that they have themselves not lived in vain.

"'Do not be alarmed, my good young man, at the prospect of a sermon. In the discharge of my pastoral duties I am never ashamed of preaching, nor reluctant to be instant in season and out of season, for the truths committed to my care. Woe

be to me if I shun the service of my Master! But I have mixed with the world, as well as with the silent inmates of my study, and I have lived in society as well as in the pulpit. My lessons are of a kind that gownsmen fear too much the ridicule connected with familiar topics to teach on the Lord's day. The successors of our Saviour, even in early ages, much more the preachers of his Gospel in modern days, have lacked the gift of that divine taste as well as wisdom which dictated the exquisitely delicate composition of the parables. All their exhortations must for want of it be covered over with generalities, and, between the dread of exciting laughter and the fear of giving offence, the most impressive kinds of moral instruction are neglected, nay shunned by all who publicly teach the people. I shall address myself to you on the present occasion without any apprehension of either ridicule or resentment. My purpose is above suspicion; my heart is single; and on the margin of the grave into which I must soon descend I now stand, to give you the result of my observations upon the world into which you are entering, not forgetting also the great topic of things unseen.

"'And I begin with that greatest of all subjects

on which the mind can dwell, the highest to which it is permitted to soar.

"'Think not that I use a clerical common-place, or am guilty of a professional exaggeration, when I affirm with the solemnity of a death-bed declaration, that in comparison with the sense of God's presence all other considerations are as of no importance, and compared with the hope of his future favour all earthly things are of no value. Whoever has known sorrow, and whoever has known sin, provided only he believes, will know also the necessity of this consolation to sustain him. When, under the pressure of either, the soul sinks within us, there is no effort from without can raise it up; and yet such is the incurable perverseness of human nature that I have generally found a less lively sense of religion in those whose lot was mournful, than in persons of happy circumstances and of a cheerful disposition. You, my dear young friend, belong, unfortunately, to the less favoured class, and on your mind there hangs a load, the accumulation of unlawful passions criminally indulged; as over your destiny there hovers a cloud which improvidence combined with accident, has gathered to darken your prospects. Oh hear the voice which bids you flee to the

sanctuary for comfort! When all without frowns, and the world is bleak to the eye, the torch of piety lights us from within on our weary way. We can lay our head on the hardest pillow, and commend ourselves to his care who made the world; and even when oppressed with a sense of our own transgressions, though far from me be the attempt to inculcate an indifference or a callousness to the stings of conscience, still the sincere penitent may humbly hope for mercy, casting his look forward to the happier state of being, where sorrow shall cease, even sins be forgiven, and the inward monitor, ever jealous of neglect, shall torment no more.

"'My hope is in revelation. I anchor my soul to that rock; then think not that anything I am about to say betokens a preference for another scheme of devotion, another ground of belief. But then I never shifted my faith like you, and it never has been shaken. You have left one church, a dogmatical, infallible, unreasoning church, and have come over, after long struggles, to another creed. I know not how much this rude trial may have unhinged your belief, how soon you may be visited with fresh doubts, with new misgivings, a thing I have so often witnessed, that for ignorant and for feeble minds I

have ever considered the risks of conversion to our purer form of worship as more than counterbalancing the benefits of a nearer approach to the truth. I hope with you it may prove otherwise; yet, in case of scepticism ever invading your mind, I wish to remind you that the greatest of all religious truths, the belief in the existence of the Deity, rests upon natural reason, not upon revelation; that the belief in revelation pre-supposes a previous belief in a Divine Being; that all we observe around us, all we experience in our own minds, all we feel and see of our own bodily frame, demonstrates the truth that the greatest power and highest wisdom has created the world, both natural and moral, and presides over all its parts, all its movements, all its fortunes. No rational being can be an atheist, or even a sceptic, who examines a plant, an animal, an insect, much less who studies his own body or his own mind, or who lifts his eyes on the wonders of the planetary system and surveys the starry heavens. But the hopes of a Future State belong more clearly to the revelation of Him 'who is the resurrection and the life.' Nevertheless, even from these the pure theist, relying on the light of Nature, is not shut out; and I have known several men who

had the great misfortune of doubting the truth of Christianity, and yet had nearly as firm a belief in a Future State as in a present Deity. The nature of the mind, its surviving the body's decay, its continuing the same while every portion of the corporeal frame is over and over again renewed and changed, forms indeed a cogent argument for its not perishing when that frame is dissolved. The improvement of the faculties to the very close of life, our greater fitness for heavenly things at the moment of our mortal existence ceasing, coupled with the prodigious goodness of the Creator, who has filled all things with proofs of his beneficence towards us, affords another, and as strong an argument for the continuance of our nobler part in another state of being. The universality of religion, and of the belief in immortality, is not to be despised as an auxiliary to the argument; perhaps we might add the kindred topic of the consent given to it by the wisest and most enlightened men of all ages and of all nations.

"'Wherefore, whatever may betide thee, and even should doubts unhappily assail and cloud thy mind respecting revealed truth, by the faith in those matters, which natural and revealed truth alike teach,

cling thou! By these eternal doctrines hold thou fast! To them, and the comfort, the unutterable comfort which they are fitted to afford, cleave thou! Cherish them; revolve them; dwell upon them; give them the first place in thy heart; meditate upon them the first thing each morning, the last each evening; let nothing ever sever thee from them; for in them of a surety shalt thou find the sweetest enjoyment in good fortune, and in evil the surest consolation!'

"Here the good old man, whose voice had sunk in loudness, and had become a mere earnest whisper, paused; he remained wrapt for a short space as if in heavenly contemplation; his hands folded devoutly over his breast; his eyes closed; his face turned upwards; his cheeks suffused with a glow that broke through their wonted paleness. When he opened his eyes, in which a tear now stood, he presented the very picture of a saint in devout contemplation; but it was a saint without ascetic austerity, a devotion without abject fear, a religion without spiritual pride, a worship which gave glory to God, and breathed good-will to men. After a few minutes he tenderly squeezed my hands between both of his, and then continued his interesting discourse.

"'Think not that the future state of being which

I desire you ever to have before your mind, as well in the seasons of action and of suffering as in moments of calmer contemplation, is such as the vulgar feign for want of pure and refined ideas. They take the Oriental metaphors of Scripture in a literal sense, as do the Mahometans with their sensual paradise, the Hindoos with their extravagant superstitions. Unable to conceive a soul existing separate from the body with which they have always known it united, these practical materialists easily fall into the wild and gross error of fancying the fire described in the Sacred Writings to be actual fire such as consumes the body, and the torments of the wicked to be of a kind which sends up smoke to darken the air. Far more intolerable anguish than any the nerves of the flesh can endure will be the lot of those who pass their probationary time here below the slaves of lawless passion, and rebellious to the will of heaven. The ancient philosophers and orators, in their benighted state, formed not a bad notion of the fallacy that prevailed in the popular notions of Hell. Those furies, said they, which agitate the men whom they pursue, and are sometimes represented on the stage, are the insatiable passions, the vile propensities of our nature, disturb-

ing the reason and giving the soul no rest. Such furies, unceasing in their torments, desires that vex the mental frame and never can be gratified; rage that spurns restraint and maddens the soul; revenge burning with a thirst never to be slaked; fear that sleeps not; shame that cannot be covered; self-abasement, degradation in others' eyes; the stings of a sleepless and avenging conscience; yet worse, the terrible presence of the Most High, the insupportable glare of the eye which is too pure to behold iniquity—these are among the torments in store for the wicked hereafter, and which, if constantly thought of here below, might deter men from sin. Nor is it unlikely that the very first suffering will be the most unbearable. At once the judgment being pronounced the veil will be torn away that hitherto had concealed our wicked deeds and vile thoughts from every eye but one. At once we shall stand revealed in our real colours to all. Whatever crimes we have committed in the flesh, and kept secret with unceasing pains, will all be exhibited in their true light. The secret thoughts of the heart will be made public. All our shameful propensities which we had thought would ever lie hid in the bosom that they deformed; all our shame-

ful lusts scarce confessed to ourselves; our degrading jealousies—our low envy—the anger we had repressed when pretending indifference or affection; the fears under which we had quailed when affecting disregard of danger; the vicious thoughts that had filled us while covered with the sanctimonious garb of purity; the disregard of heaven that had lurked beneath the hypocritical mask of devotion; the furies that had agitated us and made us commit murder in thought, now from hatred, now from spite, now from sordid calculation of gain—all will now be exposed. All others will read the darkest secrets of our inmost heart; and our own minds, no longer blinded with self-love, will be astounded with the clear view of our real nature, concentrating against ourselves all the hatred and all the scorn with which we had ever hated or scorned our neighbours! Think not, then, that I mitigate the punishments of a Future State when I make them such as a spirit unconnected with the body can undergo. The Hell which I paint to you is far more dreadful than any that poets have figured or the vulgar fear.

"'But believe me, my good young man, there are not wanting other reasons against swerving from the

paths of innocence, and flying in the face of Heaven. You cannot with impunity fly in the face of your own conscience. You have felt its stings, and I will not dwell upon the jurisdiction, severely, unsparingly, unceasingly exercised by that judge, implanted in our bosoms by Him who wills not that we should swerve from the paths of virtue, but who also wills that no deviation should go unpunished here below, and therefore makes his delegated agent begin the vengeance which himself will finish hereafter.

"'But the delight of a virtuous life is less felt in description than the sufferings of guilt, just as it is far less easy to paint the enjoyments of heaven than the torments of hell; a difference plainly experienced by Dante, as all but enthusiastic admirers of the great poet will freely admit. They partly from their prejudice, and partly from the love of singularity and the vanity of paradox, a common form of that weakness, profess to admire the *Paradiso* most, and they have few followers among persons of good sense and honest judgment. Yet I think I may appeal to your own experience when you contrast the peaceful existence you passed in Father Jerome's society, before you knew Louise Orange, with the turbulent state of your excited feelings after your mind was

unsettled. There is a heavenly calm in feeling day after day that we have left no duty unperformed, and suffered no thought to gain admittance into our minds, of which we should care that all the world were aware as well as ourselves. When fortune smiles on us, this consciousness of rectitude doubly sweetens the cup of life; and when our lot is clouded with adversity, the feeling that we have not brought it upon ourselves, nay that we have not deserved it, enables us patiently to bear the infliction. Even in the exercise of patience itself, we come to take a pleasure, which is one of the best preparations, if indeed it be not an anticipation of a future and more perfect being.

"'Of the extreme difficulty of this I am aware. Our nature is unhappily fundamentally gross, and lamentably feeble. It is ill fitted to maintain either its purity or its struggle with ills. We find it hard to conceive how it shall suddenly put on the mantle of innocence and strength. The doctrine of an intermediate state of existence, which shall prepare our souls for happiness, has, I am quite clear, no warrant of Scripture. Yet some such preparation does seem to me so necessary, that I regard the want of this intimation as one of the things purposely withheld

from us in the volume of Revelation. That Sacred Book, which is quite clear and precise in declaring the great fact of life and immortality, and thus is far above the volume of nature in its communications, has no superiority whatever in the details, and leaves us quite in the dark as to the mode and manner of our future being. So it gives us no intimation of any purifying or perfecting process. I think it possible the omission may be owing to the Divine Will being that we should make this world the place of preparation; though after all our efforts I cannot help fearing that we shall still be found sadly wanting in capacity for at once being raised into the mansions of perfect purity, and boundless and most refined enjoyment.

"'The nature of that enjoyment is wholly concealed from our eyes, and for the wisest reasons. It is probably such that unless our present frame of mind were wholly changed, we should be unable to sustain the burden of our existence on earth among sorrows and privations, enfeebled by weakness, and harassed by difficulties, even when not vexed by pain or worn down by sorrow. But we may conceive somewhat of the future bliss in store for the virtuous, if we reflect on the purest gratifications of

which the mind is susceptible; the free interchange of thoughts and affections with those we love; the innocent recreations of alternating exertion and repose; the contemplation of new and singular truths; the pleasure of exerting our power in ministering to our own improvement; and as in our Father's home there are many mansions, we may not all at once be admitted to the full perfection which our nature is capable of attaining, but be gradually raised from step to step, and thus be always tasting the enjoyment of gratified curiosity and conscious progression.

"'There is assuredly one part, and in the purest state of our faculties a most interesting part, of this field over which a veil is drawn that we cannot help wishing were removed. They who have known the bitterest of sublunary afflictions, naturally are anxious to be assured that those they have lost will be restored, and that they shall again know one another in the regions where there is no sorrowing, and where separation from those they love shall visit them no more. But the same wisdom, which has shrouded the rest of our future prospects in darkness, has suffered no light to beam upon this portion of it, lest we should not be able to en-

dure our present privation and prematurely seek to end it.

"'And now, my dear youth, you are entering into the world of action, of suffering, of misdeeds. If your mind be not strengthened and supported by fixed principles of conduct, by an unceasing regard to him in whom you live, and move, and have your being, by an unremitting dread of incurring your own self-reproach, you are gone, and can hope no more happiness either here or hereafter. Of all virtuous character, and all blameless conduct, I need hardly remind you that a sacred regard for truth is the foundation; it is the corner-stone of the moral structure. You know the scorn of yourself, the shame which you felt even when no eye saw it, at those concealments and fictions to which your offence in the convent drove you; and the agony with which you received Father Jerome's commendation for supposed conduct the reverse of that you had been pursuing. You remember too the disgust which you ever felt at the cunning devices of Father Ambrose, and the contempt with which the more venial falsehoods of the Irish friar inspired you. To have it said of one as Father Jerome said of him, "The story may be true, although Father O'Hal-

loran told it,"—what can be more degrading? What can render a rational being more utterly despicable? Yet his untruths were not of the worst kind; they were rather invented to help himself than to hurt another; but be assured truth is so sacred and paramount a duty, that it can never with impunity be violated; and when you hear men speak of white lies and pious frauds, tell them boldly that no lies are white, though some are of a blacker shade than others, and that all frauds are impious, though some may be devised to compass a worthy end. The God of truth and purity wills that we seek good objects by right means, and has appointed no dirty road by which men may clamber even to heaven.

"'In proportion as falsehood is abominable, and undermines every portion of the mind, so are those courses to be shunned which naturally lead to it. You have never lived in Nismes, or indeed in any society beyond the walls of your convent, else you would have seen the consequences of violated truth in the lives many of our grandees lead. The marriages which are made spring from no mutual attachment of the parties, hardly even from any personal acquaintance. Often they are arranged by

the parents for their own convenience and the supposed good of their children; almost always they are matches of worldly interest, with a view to an establishment alone. The heart, however, which had not known love before the indissoluble knot was tied, soon opens to receive what, wholesome before, has now become poison. Attachments spring up, which ripen into connexions, criminal in themselves and a breach of the conjugal vow, but doubly pernicious in their consequences; for they can only be indulged in secret, and must be covered over with every cloak that female ingenuity can weave. Constant dissimulation and pretence, endless contrivances devised in falsehood, disguises of the real sentiments, assumption of those not felt, an ever ready lie to meet a charge as well as a suspicion—such are the component parts of the existence thus passed in guilt; and as of the hypocrite so may it be said of the paramour, that his whole life is one lie. You have known somewhat of the same mischief produced by the unnatural restraints of the monastic state, and you have often told me that there are few inmates of a convent in whom the natural feelings and passions are so entirely dead and the obligations of the vow so cheerfully undertaken as to prevent much dis-

sembling and much pretence. The hypocrisy thus engendered, you must have been fully sensible, could never be maintained without irreparable injury to the purity and sanctity of the character; and if you had to choose in whom your confidence should be reposed, you never could have failed to suspect those for all purposes whom you knew accustomed to practise insincerity for one.

"'The great Christian rule of conduct forms one unerring test of right acting; we have but to ask, 'How should I like to be so treated?' Another test is also of much efficacy: 'How should I like this to be known?' And can anything be more humiliating, can anything lower you more in your own estimation, than to feel you are acting, or designing, or even thinking, in a manner which, were the light let in, and your deeds, or intentions, or thoughts, made known to others, you would instantly become the object of their aversion or their scorn? Can you be more degraded than by feeling that you only owe your escape from that hatred and that contempt to the veil in which you shroud yourself? You thus are wearing false colours, obtaining forbearance or even commendation to which you have no right, passing for that which you are not, not known for

what you are; in a word, you are a hypocrite, and your life is a lie.

"'Such is the sacredness of truth, so fatal is its violation, which throws open the door wide to all evil, that I will suffer nothing to palliate the least deviation. All contrivance, all trickery, all stratagem, all concealment, all pretence, I condemn as partaking of the master-crime, father of all others, falsehood. When men of experience in the ways of the world lay down such maxims as are often in their mouths, I try them by one test, 'Do they consist in dissimulation?' They will advise you, when anxious to gain your object with others, that you should appear indifferent or careless, and will assure you that the less you seem anxious about it, the nearer you are to success. True; if your object be one you dare not avow; if you be in quest of something you have no right to obtain; if you want to throw your neighbour off his guard, in order to steal a march on him—true; but if your purpose be fair, why not openly avow it? If you don't want to overreach, why fear to tell what you mean and what you wish?

"'I carry my hatred of falsehood from the highest to the lowest subjects, and I will not even permit

what are called the harmless affectations of the world. The concealment of our opinions too, the avoiding of discussion when the truth is impugned before us, the appearance of assent to avoid opposition, whatever exceeds mere indolence, or good humour, and the unwillingness to give pain by differing, I proscribe as leading to dangerous habits of insincerity. But above every thing, let there be no pretence of affection that is not felt; no concealment of contempt under the guise of respect. We are not bound to express all our thoughts and feelings; but we are bound to express nothing we do not think and feel.

"'I will freely own to you that, with the most perfect veneration for the morality of the Gospel, I am sometimes staggered when I reflect on the injunction to love our enemies. That we are bound to return good for evil, at all events that we are forbidden to injure those who have injured us, no one can doubt; this rule of the Gospel is easily obeyed; and its observance doing no violence to our nature, offers no injury to our sincerity. But it has often appeared to me singular that the same Being who made us what we are, should exact a duty from us, which before we can perform, our nature must be changed. To keep

our hands, or even our tongues, from hurting an enemy is easy; it is not difficult kindly to entreat him; but to love him is beyond our power, and the effort can only, as I think, lead to self-deception. It is a violence to our nature, perhaps, even to return benefits for injuries; to love those who have hurt us seems little consistent with honesty, in the weakness of our fallen nature; it seems so great a violence done to our strongest feelings that we can hardly hope to practise it, and may be tempted to feign it even with ourselves, thus seduced into either hypocrisy or self-deception. Possibly the divine command is only an Oriental hyperbole, or rather refers to our deeds and words (which are deeds) than to our thoughts; possibly we should only read it as an injunction to act as if we loved our enemies; that we should hold out the hand of friendship and loving kindness to them, should embrace them as friends; and indeed to kiss, to give as it were the kiss of peace, is one sense of the original Greek word.

"'It is no deviation from my fundamental principle that we should master and even smother our wrath and our other violent passions; it would be a deviation were it certain that the fire so covered would still burn; but our nature is so constituted, that by

stifling we extinguish the lawless passions, which, like fire, may be suppressed, and may burn the more fiercely when uncovered to the air. This is true even of our feelings: grief, for instance, may be indulged so as to become extravagant and prey upon the mind, while some alleviation of our sorrow may be derived from avoiding the external display of it, if to suppress it be impossible.

"'Of course I entirely disapprove some practices to which cunning men resort of concealing their angry passions in order to gratify them the more securely or the more effectually. I have known some of this class who never took offence at the moment; and, if attacked in society or in controversy, defended themselves, but not even in self-defence were much moved, and never retaliated as if to avenge the attack. They bottled up their fury, and let it loose on some occasion for which they lay in wait, that they might spring, as it were, from the thicket on their prey unwarily, and thus prevent any one from perceiving what they did was in revenge for having themselves been wounded. Women are of far more sensitive and nimble minds than men, and can better see through others. Their over-suspicious nature no doubt often fancies things to be passing in

those they are inspecting, but also often hits on what really is going on within our bosoms. Hence no such stratagems as I am referring to ever deceive them; they connect the attack with its cause; they see into the thicket where resentment is lurking. This clear-seeing of women has often astounded me, even of women little remarkable for abilities. It seemed as if their passions supplied force to their intellect, and sharpened their wits. I have known a jealous woman appear actually to know what passed within the mind of her lover and her rival, as if she could see through their breasts to scan their thoughts and examine their designs.

"'Men have discussed the question, whether or not any circumstances, any extreme juncture, can justify a breach of veracity. The dispute is really about words; for when cases are figured to show that a concealment of the truth, or even the assertion of a falsehood, is lawful, we cannot say that any obligation at all is broken. No one is bound to tell an assassin which way his victim has escaped; no one is bound to disclose the secret I have confided to him because an impertinent person asks him; and yet, in order to prevent him obtaining the information which he has no right to, and which it is

a duty to withhold, you may be obliged to say No, at once, and not to refuse an answer, because he may so frame his question, that your refusal would be a confession of the truth which you are bound to conceal. The fault in these cases is not in you who only refuse the information which it would be criminal to give, but in the other party who asks you. The violation of truth is, in fact, committed by the assassin, who would make you an accomplice; or the impertinent, who would make you break your trust.

"'If truth, and a sacred regard for it, must ever be the corner-stone of our character, the superstructure is to be reared, and the fabric maintained, by firmness of purpose. This, indeed, consolidates and strengthens the foundation itself; inasmuch, as a constant regard for truth can hardly be preserved amidst all temptations, unless our steadfastness be guarded against the disturbing forces which are continually acting upon us. How many miserable wrecks of cast-away reputations do we see in all directions, when the natural capacity was considerable, the disposition kindly, the desire to do well reasonably strong, but yet the firm and determined will wanting: and the principles, originally sound and

good, were one by one sapped, and the whole crumbled down ! Consider how it happens, that a life of secret indulgence is a life of falsehood and of guilt. The passion thus gratified is the father of lies, but their foster-father is fear, and to resist the one, as well as be above the other, requires the moral courage, without which no virtue can long be found to flourish. When I trained my children, I was as careful to shun whatever might expose them to terror, as I was to remove any ordinary temptation from their path. In early childhood the habit of truth must be acquired, and whosoever is severe to his child drives him to falsehood. Firmness is to be taught by example, more than by precept; and the parent who wavers himself in his treatment infects the child with his weakness or his caprice.

"'Of pride, I know not well what to say as a general rule; so closely is it allied to both great virtues and great excesses. In so far as it prevents mean actions, it is useful: and yet, it rather acts thus as a substitute for a higher and more worthy motive; it operates by the high and overweening opinion of self. Many are saved by its influence, whose principles are unsteady in other and better

respects. In itself, it cometh of evil, and often leads to the worst actions, to want of charity, to intolerance, to hardness of heart, even to cruelty; and revenge is its natural fruit. When it prevents base deeds, as doubtless it often does, we must regard it as a compensatory principle in our machine; like the parts of an engine which we sometimes see ingeniously contrived to make its aberrations correct themselves, and help the general movement by the effects of a partial obstruction.

"'Yet after all, what mischiefs come from this same pride, and how little does it become a frail creature like man! If it occasionally rescues us from the degradation of a lie, does it not often reconcile us to falsehood, for the sake of covering a weakness that is no crime, and that no one needs be ashamed of? Don't we daily see men persisting in hurtful error, even on important subjects, rather than freely own themselves to be in the wrong? Even on the highest is this often seen. Does it not obstruct the right and wholesome course of the feelings, leading now to their suppression, now to their perversion? How often do we see men ashamed of being grateful; hating to incur obligation for fear of being compelled to admit a

superior; and when the debt of gratitude has been incurred, vainly, preposterously, thinking to pay it off by fastening a quarrel on their benefactor! Oh! no, there can be no balance in settling the account. It is all on one side! The sin of the fallen angels is not redeemed by the little good that ever results from its indulgence. Vanity may make us more ridiculous; pride makes us more hateful; and they who to avoid contempt fear not encountering hatred, they who say with the tyrant, "let me be detested, so I be only dreaded, and not despised," are in imminent risk of incurring both inflictions, and of being scorned as well as hated. Yet it is more detestable than despicable: or rather our laughter is lost in our indignation. When a Protestant poet, I believe an Englishman, said that a naked human heart is a sight so horrid, as only the Deity can bear to look at, he surely must have had in his eye the dreadful havoc that pride makes in its structure.

"'Nor is pride without an appointed punishment here below. To suffer endless mortification; to have the centre of action placed beyond our frame and our power, and suffer for what others do or withhold; to be harassed by suspicion—to be riven by

jealousy—to be vexed by a sense of wrong because we have imagined a standard of injustice for ourselves; to be pressed down by a feeling of injury because we have set up a rule of justice—these are among the sufferings which the indulgence of pride inflicts; nor can its victim fail ever and anon to have a misgiving that he is not very much consulting his dignity in all he does, and all he feels; but, on the contrary, is making himself most contemptible to shun contempt. In this respect, no doubt, the despicable folly of extreme vanity is far less painful to its possessor; it may sometimes be mortified, but it ministers, for the most part, rather to his contentment than to his distress; while pride is almost always the source of uneasiness and pain.

"'Moderation in all our feelings, my young man, should be cultivated as the parent of many virtues, the protector against many vices. This is so trite a subject that it will bear but two remarks. The utter exhaustion we feel from a relapse into tranquillity after a vehement excitement, is a paralysis of the mind brought on by ourselves: it unhinges us, and unfits us for all useful exertion, independent of the pain it occasions. Then nothing so warps the judgment as exaggerated feelings. Beware of

indulging either in violent friendships or strong aversions: both are apt to drive us into the opposite extremes. The most groundless dislikes that I have ever seen succeeded to preposterous partialities; and as often as I hear a person express unreasonable hatred of another, I look forward to the day when, blind to real imperfections, he will become devoted to the object of his former antipathy.

"'Akin to moderation, and growing out of it, is the habit of economy; itself a virtue because connected with justice and charity, and the mother of other virtues, as well as the safeguard against many evil ways. The danger of falling into the almost insanity of parsimony and avarice must at the same time be carefully shunned. The reason why men are prone to indulge the love of mere saving arises from their liking an enjoyment so entirely within their own power, and under their individual control. It also ministers to the love of security, removing day by day all the fears which can ever invade the mind of being needy or dependent.

"'I have mentioned two simple tests of conduct, as safe to be trusted; I must add a caution of sovereign virtue as a preventative of misdeeds, because it is levelled at the great corruptor, self-delusion. The

passions are of all sophists the most subtle; for they not only turn away our eyes from the surrounding perils, but blunt our sense of vision itself, so that we could not see, were our eye pointed to the quarter where the danger lies. But the worst of their sophistries is directed against conscience itself, the judge established in our own bosom by the Most High to exercise his jurisdiction, both police and penal, both preventive and vindictive. The sophistries I speak of, practised on that judge, too often succeed in swaying him over to their side. I will speak without a figure on this most important matter. Beware of the self-delusion which so often represents a vengeful act as done in self-defence! How usual is it for him who would gratify a feeling of vengeance to say, "I am attacked and must protect myself,"—for him who would profit at his neighbour's expense to say, "I have been injured by another, and must bring myself home,"—for him who would gratify hatred to say, "He has wronged me, and I have cause to dislike him;"—for him who would fly in the face of the public opinion and insult the general feeling to say, "All men scorn me, and I must be at war with the world!" Be assured of this, that it is easier by such sophistries to disarm

conscience of her terrors beforehand, than to quiet her after guilt has been incurred from a neglect of her warning voice; and the same power will be found swift and stern to punish in proportion as it has been impotent to deter.

"'Nor let me among the securities against vice, pass over industry. The love of labour is a propensity not unnatural to us, and it ought to be cherished constantly, never repressed. Industry is a great safeguard to the virtue of a frail being like man, upon whose mind the wicked passions must make fearful inroads while it has no innocent pursuit wherewith to be occupied. But, independent of the usefulness both to ourselves and others of labour, independent of its being subservient to virtue; its enjoyments are great, both in the exertion of our faculties, and in the repose which succeeds that exertion. I have myself tasted of these sweets; but I have conversed with others whose lives were passed in labours far more strenuous and unremitting than my own They have described with rapture the exquisite delights of having finished a long task, of being rewarded with delicious repose after fatiguing toil, of sinking into tranquil rest after severe or agitating efforts, of letting the mind slumber when the

and enlightened men, who have well considered holy subjects. The weight of that opinion is great with all rational minds, though it is not derived from the authority of their station, or from their illustrious names, unless in so far as their renown is the reward bestowed by universal consent upon their merits. Upon temporal matters you will steer a safe course by pursuing the same middle path. The most credulous persons are often those who have occasion for confidence to their asseverations, and I have often observed that ready liars are easy believers. But, on the other hand, who will venture, after what we have seen effected by science and by art, to pronounce anything impossible? You need not, even after beholding men sail in the air, and pump up rivers by steam, or rend rocks by gunpowder, believe that we shall ever live to see them travelling by steam without horses, or sailing by steam against the wind;* nor because we know how respiration and combustion are performed, is it very likely that we shall ever find out how the internal

* A few years later, and thirty years before railways were known, Darwin distinctly foretold them in that beautiful and philosophic poem which our Cannings made the theme of their shallow wit.

structure and functions of our living bodies are influenced by diseases; nor, because we now know many new metals with strange qualities, are we likely ever to see metals floating in the water and taking fire on touching the air. Yet forget not that we have already ascertained the great laws of planetary motion, of chemical action, of animal life; and turn not a deaf ear to any one that predicts the arrival of a time when we shall be able to see that all the apparent irregularities of the heavenly bodies, from their mutual disturbances, are parts of one necessarily harmonious system; that the mutual actions of substances follow mechanical laws, and their combinations observe definite proportions; and that the movement of our muscles may be traced to the nerves which connect them with the brain. These are, possibly, dreams, but they import nothing more marvellous than the existences which science has already created, and they are certainly more connected with the pleasures of refined contemplation, the gratification of learned curiosity, than with any use or any interest touching ourselves.

"'But one inference powerfully strikes the mind from considerations like these, and gives them the closest connection with our very highest concerns.

If parts of the worldly system, which being once placed beyond our reach, appeared disjointed, without order, and without rule, now fall gradually within the scope of the laws regulating the universe, so that real harmony is found to arise out of apparent discord, and absolute regularity to reign where anarchy but yesterday seemed to revel—surely we have a right to conclude, that when the film shall be wholly removed from our eyes and we shall no longer see as through a glass darkly, we shall find what to our limited faculties now wears the aspect of evil permitted by the Great Maker and Disposer, is no longer entitled to the name, and that Perfect Goodness reigns throughout the great system which Perfect Wisdom has planned and Almighty Power has created!'"

The Solitary ceased to read; and Chatillon, who had listened with unabated attention to the philosophy of the pastor, although it interrupted the narrative and suspended the gratification of his curiosity, confessed to himself that he had not passed an unprofitable hour. Little used as he was to deep reflection, and generally careless about anything that did not immediately affect his senses, yet the great interest excited by Albert's history, and

the affection he began to conceive for him, had led to a wish that nothing should be withheld, had made him engage his best attention in the story, and now made him patient of a long and general, if not somewhat abstract, discourse. Many things had in the progress of it been presented to his mind in lights which had never struck him before; many things had been discussed on which his mind had never dwelt at all; and he felt that he had listened to what he afterwards called a kind of sermon, with more profit and less weariness than he sometimes felt at the Temple, when the Countess, educated in Switzerland, and having a leaning in favour of the Reformed worship, had made him occasionally accompany her to that congregation. But Albert now resumed the narrative of his own adventures.

## CHAPTER VIII.

### THE EXILE.

"I RETIRED to rest full of serious but not unpleasing reflections upon the important matters which I had just during two hours and upwards committed to paper from my recent recollections of the pastor's discourse. I could, however, take but little and interrupted sleep. The anxiety which filled my mind respecting my own situation, the dark veil which clouded the prospect around me to whatever point I carried my view, above all, the thought that I must now seek refuge in a foreign land, and quit, most probably for ever, the neighbourhood of the Contât, in which were my parents and my love—never more to be cherished by my dear mother, never more to cherish Louise—all this agitated and dismayed me; the rather that during the perpetual dread of detection in which I had been living at Nismes, and my agony lest the innocent man should

suffer for my crime, I had not been able to have these tender ideas present to my mind, and had never been able to abstract it from the recollections which occupied all my thoughts, unless at seasons when the pastor administered consolation to me, and led me to discuss the articles of the Catholic and Apostolic faith, or the observances of the Romish ritual. I was now about to be left altogether in my own company, and my mind was accordingly filled both with apprehension, for the future which had never left it, and with musings on the past to which it had for some weeks been comparatively a stranger.

"Early in the next morning M. Gardein tenderly embraced me, and pronounced his blessing with a devout prayer for my welfare. He made his lad take me to a vetturino, with whom he had agreed to carry me as far as Beaucaire; and I arrived there without any accident or any occurrence worth recounting. There was no other passenger till we got within a league of the town, when, to my infinite consternation, I saw, coming up to take a place in the carriage, a person whom I at once recognized as having seen at Avignon, though I did not know him; and it immediately struck me that he must

be on the look-out for me, and had received intimation of my travelling by this vetturino. I drew instinctively back, and ensconced myself in the darkest corner at the back of the long clumsy vehicle. To my no small relief, the man quietly drew out a pipe, and began to strike a light and involve himself in the clouds he exhaled. I took, however, the first opportunity of leaving the carriage and passing swiftly through Beaucaire, till, reflecting that my walking quick might excite suspicion, as I had resumed my peasant's dress, I slackened my pace, and, buying some bread and some cheese, refreshed myself for the journey before me. The road towards Aix is uninteresting; I met very few people by the way; and at night I slept in a small cabaret, where they let me lie on the bench for a few sous. Next day I arrived at Aix; and as I sat in an inn frequented by muleteers, wishing to obtain a conveyance or to accompany some one towards Dauphiné, that I might get into Switzerland, I was inexpressibly shocked to hear the conversation turn upon the murder of Avignon, as it was called. The gross exaggerations with which it was interlarded did not prevent me from recognizing the portion of truth on which the fabrication rested; and my heart sunk

within me when I heard that one of the criminals had been secured on his flight towards Marseilles, and was in the Papal prison at Avignon, where he had been condemned to the rack. I gave a convulsive start, and well nigh shrieked to think of Isidore. It now seemed as if all eyes must be upon me; but so frantic did I become at the thoughts of my dear companion suffering for me, that I little regarded my own situation, and was prepared to go back and surrender myself, when a remark that escaped respecting money having been found in the prisoner's girdle made me conceive the hope that the whole was a mistake of the police proceeding at Nismes. This relieved my anxiety for the moment, but I could not leave Aix under the uncertainty; I went to a place were the Avignon Gazette could be read; and as I found nothing in it except an account of the Nismes proceeding and the escape of the prisoner, my alarm was quieted.

" I now took the road to Sisteron, in order to arrive at Grenoble. The further I removed from the Contât, I felt that my fears became less strong, and I could even enjoy the magnificent scenery and the fine weather, neither too sultry nor at all chilly, which the season, though advanced to the very end

of autumn, gave. When the mind is in an agitated or a melancholy state, there is something peculiarly mournful in the serene aspect of a sunny sky, and the tranquil beauty of a fine landscape, such as many of the valleys near the Durance and the Isère present. The contrast is striking between what is felt within and seen without; but the thought which prevails when our affliction rests upon the loss of those most beloved, or upon an uncertainty as to their fate, is that we refer to them the surrounding objects.—'Shall the dear Father Jerome ever more open his eyes beaming with kindness on this glorious sun? It rises as formerly when we have walked forth in the cool of the morning to contemplate together the works of the Creator, and when the father's learning taught how that light was composed, which clothes all nature in varied hues. It sets as formerly when we have gone out to meditate at eventide, and when his lessons taught me that the reflection on a well-spent day is more serene than the summer heavens as night comes on, and the beauties of virtue dazzle more than the sparkles in the starry firmament. Yes, it rises and sets; lighting men to their labours, or suggesting to them their needful repose; but on the holy friar's grave

it sheds in vain its rays; for him there is no alternation of seasons; it is dark always: it is cold the year through; the warmth of that heart is extinguished which so long glowed with love of God and man, and the gentle light of that eye is quenched, which shone with intelligence and glistened with tenderness! Whose impious hand laid the venerable Father low? Does he—can he bear yet to live, and live even to be filled with anxious fear about the burden of the vile life he carries about, not daring to shake off his hated existence? Then can I be sure of that being the last crime which rests on my loaded conscience, and should bend down my guilty head? Is it certain after all that Isidore has not fallen a sacrifice to my escape? His friendship, which made him my accomplice by aiding my concealment and sharing in my flight, has exposed him to the risk of capture; and am I sure that in my absence he has not become an expiatory offering for my sacrilege?'—It seemed as if a second time within a few weeks I had involuntarily the guilt of blood upon me, by the blow which I had wilfully and wickedly designed for others having fallen upon those I most would have desired to spare. Such were the reflections with

which I cast my eyes on the magnificent landscape that is spread from the Isère by Vizille, as far as the sight can reach, terminated by the Swiss Alps. It opened upon me in a fine setting sun, as I came round the point between La Mure and La Freye. There are few more striking or more noble prospects to be seen. A vast and cultivated plain stretches to an immense distance in front, with two considerable towns in the foreground, and studded with villages and farm-houses as far as the eye can reach. Vizille is romantic from its fine buildings; and to gain La Freye, you have to cross the Isère on a handsome and spacious bridge. The Drax rolls on in ample flood below Grenoble to the left, and that fine city stands on an eminence which commands the champaign country on either side of the rapid stream. The Higher Alps, on whose chain is the Grande Chartreuse, rise behind it at a moderate distance, and the view on the other side is closed by the lofty mountains of Switzerland, among which the glaciers are seen to tower in the severe majesty of eternal snow, the loftiest of the whole, Mont Blanc, losing its purple summit in the clouds. This magnificent spectacle for the moment distracted my thoughts from melancholy

contemplations, and I cast a wistful eye to the time when I used to visit new scenery, light of heart, and indulge in day-dreams of other excursions and other contemplations with those I loved and should see no more.

"As the sun sank behind the lower chain to the west, I entered the fortifications of Grenoble, and could not help feeling a shudder when I found myself surrounded with the force of the place. It seemed as if each soldier was ready to stop and to execute justice on one who was fleeing from it. I buried myself in a low inn, frequented by Swiss cattle-dealers, and at once saw how unlike my dress was to either those persons or any one in the Grenoble country. My alarm was increased by a servant-girl of the cabaret remarking that I neither seemed to speak like the French nor the Swiss. So I stole out of the inn and took shelter in another, where, happily, I passed without observation. Next morning I sallied forth to find my way up the mountains; and observing a crowd in the public place, I safely mixed in it, all being so deeply intent on something which was passing upon a stage erected near, that none thought of regarding me at all. But what was my horror, my unspeakable dis-

may, to see that the object all thus gazed on was an execution! The priests were administering the last rites of the church to the unhappy culprit, a young man of most forbidding aspect, and rude, savage mien, against whom the feelings of the multitude seemed strongly excited. I would have given worlds to be at a distance from the accursed spot, but I felt as rivetted to it; and my agony of mind was severely increased when I saw the preparations for the rack before the sentence of death should be executed. I had heard those around recounting the particulars of his crime with horror; but this feeling was soon to undergo a great and a sudden change. When stretched on the terrible wheel, his screams filled the air, and were echoed by the indignant spectators. True, he had committed a cruel murder! the murder of a working man in the neighbouring wood for the lucre of gain, that he and his comrades, of a gay night, might spend the poor traveller's money, the price of his summer's labours in the Grenoble forest, with which he was hastening home to support his little family, widowed and made orphans by his fate. True, all this was well known, and had been preached upon in the sermons of the friars ever since the condemnation,

as well as promulgated in the proclamation of the sentence by the magistrates. True, the murdered peasant had long been well known as frequenting the vicinity of the town, and respected for his orderly and quiet demeanour, as well as for his unwearying industry, so that his death had been bewailed, and the public anxiety, till the murderer was discovered, had been wound up to a high pitch, making the discovery the subject of general exultation; and, if a less cruel punishment had been inflicted, even a capital punishment, all sympathy would have been interested on the side of justice. But the sanguinary, the unmerciful spectacle, of agony beyond the power of human endurance, deliberately inflicted by the officers of the law, obliterated all recollection, even the strongest and the most fresh, from the minds of the assembled thousands; all their feelings were perverted; they had only sympathy with the sufferer whose contortions they saw before them, whose shrieks and groans rent the air; and if they could find a place in their bosoms for any other feeling, it was for indignation against the merciless law, which, execrating for its needless and revolting cruelty, they unjustly accused also of violating all justice. The criminal

had changed places with the murdered man, and become the object of public compassion; the law had taken the place of the crime, and was the object of detestation. Their feeling was to rescue the suffering culprit, and wreak their vengeance on the ministers of justice.

"I have often since reflected on this exhibition of popular feeling, and drawn from it the conclusion that such must ever be the effect of punishments which, either from being disproportioned to the offence, or from being of a kind needlessly cruel and revolting, fail to carry the public feelings along with them; and I have further felt persuaded from the savage spirit which I saw excited at Grenoble, that sanguinary punishments have a tendency to prepare criminals rather than repress crime by habituating to cruel sights the minds of the vulgar, uneducated, and acting from blind impulse. But such reflections were not the suggestions of that moment; I could then only think of the terrible scene before me; I felt as if each turn of the wheel was destined for my own limbs; I seemed as if doomed by Providence to a foretaste of the fate which awaited me. The finishing stroke, the *coup de grace*, was at length allowed to terminate the wretch's agony, and re-

lieve the spectators as well as the principal sufferer; it seemed to terminate my bodily and my far less tolerable mental sufferings; and when the black pall was flung over the wheel on which the murderer's body lay stretched, I for the moment, could hardly avoid envying him his last, perhaps his first repose, as I hastened away from the dreadful scene, scarce conscious of what I did, and wholly careless whither I went.

"My state of mind while winding through the Alpine passes I cannot well describe, for I could think of nothing but the Public Place at Grenoble, and could only see the horribly distorted face of the tortured murderer. But this I remember, that I shunned the path which leads to the Grande Chartreuse, feeling alarmed at any approach to a monastery. After several days of suffering, caused by the cold, which had set in like winter in these elevated regions, I at length came in sight of the frontier, and reflected that I had no passport. Ignorant whether it was a Catholic or a Protestant canton that I was about to enter, I durst not say I had become a convert to the Reformed faith and was flying from persecution; and I could think of no other means of escape from the police of the boun-

daries than waiting till night fell, sauntering on the unfrequented road, and then clambering up to some height on the mountain at the peril of falling over a precipice. Fortunately I found a hut in which sheep had been driven for shelter against the cold, and I contrived with the aid of their warmth to pass the night, one of the most dismal I had known since my escape. Next morning I found myself among a race of peasants different from those I had seen any where in France, and I breathed freely on being assured that I had altogether escaped from my native country.

"I did not, however, venture to linger long on the frontier; I gradually made my way through the canton, reached the Lake of Geneva, and before November set in, which in these parts of the world is completely established winter, I had got as far as the neighbourhood of Vevay, on the upper part of the Leman lake.

"The country there is exceedingly fine, but I found the winter severe. What made the life more vexatious was the difficulty I found in obtaining work, for my only resource was day labour in the fields. I was afraid to seek employment as a clerk, or shopman, or any capacity showing education,

lest I should betray my secret. Even among peasants I ran, or constantly felt that I ran, a risk of discovery. After I had been some time in a farmhouse about a league from the town, taking care of the cattle and stables, a work which I certainly must have done very indifferently, I was one morning alarmed by a man who slept in the same room, and whom I observed looking very attentively at my bed while he thought me still asleep. I did not move, and I observed that he went to the door, and whispered to another, a servant-girl who was passing. They both came and gazed. I then perceived to my great alarm that it was at the whiteness of my skin they were wondering, one hand and arm lying over the bed-clothes as I slept or seemed to sleep. They stood wondering, and looked attentively at me and at each other. Afraid of awakening me, they stole away, and I heard them whisper something on leaving the room, as if they remarked on the language I spoke. All this was enough, and more than enough, to rouse my fears, and I resolved to go further from the town. But the day being Sunday, I determined to go there once before I left the neighbourhood, in order to see at dusk in the coffee-house or reading-room whether

there was any mention made of news from Avignon. The first paragraph that struck my eye fixed me to the spot. My having been at Nismes was mentioned as a prevailing rumour, but probably connected with the police proceeding, and it was said that the daughter of a respectable family, the cause of the whole, though she did not accompany my flight, had since left the Contât and taken refuge in the Protestant city. The editor or news-writer indulged in severe remarks on the intrigues of the Reformers, and deemed it a duty incumbent on the government of the most Christian king to purge the land of their pastors, as his ancestor of pious memory had done a century ago.

"I now removed to some distance from Vevay, and sought employment on the opposite side of the lake near St. Gingoulph. On revolving the report, and reflecting upon the likelihood of Louise, who was clearly the person meant, leaving the Contât, it appeared very probable she should have heard of my going to Nismes, as the good pastor had informed my family of my retreat. I therefore ventured to write to him, and, putting no name to my letter, I informed him where I was, beseeching him to give me any information he could as to poor Louise. Day

after day I went to the post-office in hope of receiving his answer; and after a month had elapsed, I was mortified beyond expression to see my letter stuck up as not having been forwarded, for want of the postage required in the case of letters going out of the canton. I durst not pay it; because, forgeting how many of the peasants in these countries can read and write, I was fearful my being able to do so might excite suspicion, as it inevitably would in France. But a fellow servant taking his own letter one day shewed me my mistake, and I franked mine over the frontier. Another period of anxious expectation now succeeded, and when I asked for letters directed to Paul Meyer, I was somewhat roughly asked by the post-mistress, if I was a German, as I spoke a kind of French. I said I came from Alsace, and was no longer molested.

"The Swiss are a people of rude manners, who possibly on that account get credit for more honesty than they really have. They are exceedingly selfish, and, though not capable of the trickery for which the Italians are famed, will go a good way from the straight path to serve their own ends. They have, I think, less warmth of heart than the Germans, as they also have less grossness. In some parts of the

country, as Geneva, Lausanne, Neufchatel, they are sufficiently civilized, and show much aptitude for literary and even scientific pursuits. But their genius is not original; they are good at abridging and explaining; they have the gift of didactic faculties in rather an eminent measure; they are good also at pursuing minutely and into their details the discourses and the theories of more enlarged and original minds; but they are themselves of a narrow and petty intellect. If, however, their genius is confined, their self-sufficiency is on a very large scale; no people are better pleased with themselves, nor more easily satisfied with their own performances. This complacent temper extends from the qualities to the possessors. They regard their little country as the eye of Europe, and their paltry affairs as of incalculable importance. Their manners have the tinge of their contracted understandings, and of their selfish dispositions. They are pedantic in the extreme; the word *précieux* (priggish) seems to have been invented for their especial use; they are also most regular and orderly, being of cold passions as well as sluggish feelings; method is their god. I used to think they always did the same things, and almost said the same things, at the

same hour every day. Their mirth is of a mournful caste; it is dulness thrown into action; so that I can well comprehend what the witty Bishop of Autun is reported to have said when asked if Geneva was not rather dull, 'Yes, particularly in its gaieties' (Oui, surtout quand on s'y amuse). I saw little of the upper classes, until a subsequent visit; but the peasantry, among whom I lived, are a simple, though a somewhat rude and abundantly selfish people. They are much attached to their country, and have credit for more love of liberty than they can with any truth pretend to, all they care for being their own institutions; and those of the aristocratic cantons are just as much attached to their slavish customs as the inhabitants of the democratic states are to their free government. They are all brave, however, and I believe would make a stout resistance with their rifles and their stones or rocks, were any foreign power to invade their valleys. The upper classes, even in the most democratic parts, are fonder of rank and value themselves on antiquity of family more than any people I ever saw.

"After some weeks of farther anxiety and suspense, I at length, when I asked for Paul Meyer's letters, had one put into my hand in the dear old

pastor's handwriting. Who can depict my agitation as I ran home with it in my bosom, building a thousand castles in the air, all inhabited by Louise Orange; but now and then harassed with fears of some sinister accident having befallen her, or those whom I so dearly loved at home! I stole into a light granary of the farm-house, and closing the door, laid the letter before me, dreading to open it, and dissipate my visions or realize my fears. The state of the seal immediately caught my eye; it had been broken, it was plainly cut across with some sharp instrument, and its parts were clumsily joined. Thus, satisfied that other eyes had seen the contents, I read them with the most feverish anxiety; and though no names were mentioned, yet if the same hands had opened and the same eyes read mine to M. Gardein, it must be known that the 'young man' meant Louise, and the 'Hospital' meant the monastery. The alarm which this reflection naturally excited did not prevent me from devouring the good pastor's few lines, in which he informed me that the friars were as vigorous as ever in their search after me; that he had written to make his brother-in-law, and intimate friend, a clergyman near St. Meurice, between that and St. Gingoulph, receive me as his

guest; and that from him I should learn more respecting all in whom I took most interest. I hastened to M. Girard's house, the spot pointed out, in the dusk, fortunately as the event proved; for the next day two persons strongly suspected of belonging to the French embassy at Zurich arrived at the farm where I had been working, and enquiring first for one Paul Meyer, and then for a person lately arrived from France, left no doubt as to my being the object of their search. I was thus compelled to confide a portion of my history to M. Girard, who provided me with an entirely new disguise, that of a clergyman; but I took the precaution of disguising my face with red whiskers, and wearing a pair of green spectacles.

## CHAPTER IX.

### THE HOUSE OF MOURNING.

"M. GIRARD was a very worthy man, far advanced in life, of venerable presence, of silent and reserved manners, a model of piety to his flock, and abounding in charitable dispositions; but he was both of a contracted mind compared with M. Gardein, had not any knowledge of the world like him, and gave little pleasure in his social intercourse. He excelled in the discharge of his pastoral duties. To his people he was kind and attentive, distributing among them the savings of an extremely poor income, and often relieving from absolute want the labourers who could at all times with such difficulty find employment, that work was run after, and canvassed for, and distributed among them as places of profit may be in more happy and easy communities. How I have seen the clerk after service on a Sunday, taking the poor working-people aside into the porch and

communicating with an air of importance, a patronizing air, what they heard with delight and scarcely could believe to be true, that in the course of a day or two a new wall would be built, not above a league off, and some ground cleared for planting, which would give a month's employment to fourteen or fifteen men!* They went home blessing Heaven for mercies so plenteously showered down upon them, and well convinced that in no country under the sun did more real felicity reside than among the Alps. M. Girard on such occasions never failed to improve their pious and contented feelings, and to draw a moral of patience and submission to the Divine will when things should wear a less smiling aspect.

"To see this good man in his most attractive aspect, it was necessary to go, not into his society or even his study, for his learning was small, but to be among his congregation on a Sunday. His aged aspect had a truly venerable air; his silver hair scantily covered a high and arched forehead, in which his eyes were sunk deep; his countenance was expressive, benevolent, but perfectly serious; his action, extremely simple, was yet not without the graces of a natural manner occasionally warmed with his sub-

* See the 'Leonard and Gertrude' of Pestalozzi.

ject; he spread his hands over his flock as if he would gather them under his wing and protect them from the blast of sin, or the blight of unbelief; his voice was sonorous, but generally of sufficient harmony; and at times when he exerted it, as in preaching a funeral or other occasional sermon, there was something peculiarly touching in his earnest simplicity. But one method he had of being impressive, of commanding attention, and creating the deepest silence—when coming to a passage intended to be striking and effective, he did not speak loud, but dropt his voice suddenly, and threw it out with extraordinary distinctness indeed, but only in a loud whisper. The effect of this was such as I never remember to have seen equalled in any other preacher or speaker. Another thing I also remarked in his preaching. When he would handle any pathetic subject, as on occasion of a funeral, his topics were all of the plainest, most ordinary, even homely kind, and his language the most simple and unadorned: the impression on the feelings which his discourse produced was in consequence very great. He used few notes; preparing himself diligently both by reading, meditation, and prayer, in which he devoutly engaged for some time before going to his

church. But his sermons were the fruit of study, and not the wild effusions of extemporary fancy, or undisciplined enthusiasm. He had nothing at all fanatical in his composition; and though his knowledge was confined, it embraced the two great subjects which it most imports the preacher to know, the Sacred Writings and the human heart. He had the gift of searching both, as both had been the study of his long life. Though his occasional discourses might be more striking, I confess the ministrations in which he has produced upon me the greatest effect were his ordinary distributing of the Sacrament of the Supper, and his reading the Burial Service. He gave the former with his wonted simplicity; and I was greatly impressed with a practice which he had, I believe, himself introduced—he read with a solemn voice the Ten Commandments, laid down the book which he had held up, and then took the Elements in his hands. The effect was solemn beyond anything I can describe. I never saw him lift before his face the broad volume of inspired truth, and turn toward the congregation, without awe; and I felt a thrill through my whole frame when he said with a clear, loud, and authoritative voice, 'God spake all these

words and said, I am the Lord thy God! Thou shalt have none other Gods but me.'

"The deep sorrow of which I tasted so largely while under his quiet roof, and which made me wholly forget my troubles and dangers, has mournfully impressed on my mind the recollection of all that there passed around me, nor is the remembrance so unpleasing as might be supposed. I know not if I be constituted as others are made, but I have a strange hankering after recollections of the past; and no sooner has any portion of my existence become shadowed over in the mist of distance, than I look back upon it with a pleasing emotion, as if wistful that it were renewed. Even when I have been at the time most miserable, nay, while I have the distinct recollection of my hours having then been spent far less comfortably than the ones actually flying over my head, yet still it seems enough that they should be the past hours, that their events should have sunk into the shade of distance, and their pains, or their perils, or their languor, only live in the memory, for me to regard them with regret, and sigh for their return with an unavailing and unintelligible fondness. It is this feeling that in part makes me take some pleasure in recounting to you my history, and

overcomes a reluctance which I might otherwise feel to dwell on a retrospect of so much sorrow. I pursue my narrative.

"I had not been many days at M. Girard's when he took me into his study, and communicated the information that Louise had set out from Nismes to pass the spring, now beginning to break, with his granddaughter who lived with him, and was a plain but not unpleasing girl of about eighteen. Whoever has been suffered, beyond his hopes, to escape from a prison to which he saw no end, whoever has been restored to health by some sudden change, after he had been given over, and told to prepare for death, can conceive, none others well can, the sudden change in all my feelings, thoughts and prospects which the intelligence produced. I had only power to ask if she knew I was at St. Gingoulph; but I was told she did not; and that it was probable she never would have consented to come had she been apprised of it; for she was a rigid Catholic, and, having heard of my conversion, had, though with a severe struggle, done violence to her feelings, and dismissed me from her thoughts, as if the revolution in my state and my sentiments, which had truly removed the chief impediment to our union,

had raised up between us an impassable barrier. There was no reasoning with her on this point, M. Girard said; for as he justly observed, it is unfortunate, that on the most momentous of all subjects, that of religion, men seldom reason at all, they only feel. However, I was young, and sanguine, and I awaited her arrival with inexpressible anxiety. She came at length, and I thought she was more beautiful than ever. Through my thick disguise, she at once recognized me, and her salutation was perfectly friendly, though it betokened feelings far different from the rapture that filled my bosom, and that she aforetime had also shared. She was calm and she was melancholy; she frankly avowed to me the state of her sentiments; declared her fixed resolution; assured me that had she known I was under M. Girard's roof, or in his neighbourhood, she never would have given me the pain or herself the uneasiness of coming; and finally, begged me to believe that, as she was inflexible in her determination, I must not only avoid any allusion whatever to our former intimacy, but frequent her society as little as it was possible to do in a very small house. Hope is strong when man is young, and though cast down I did not despair; but I own that the extreme calmness of her

whole demeanour, the little effect produced on her by the surprise of finding me at St. Gingoulph, above all the extreme devotion to the observances of the Catholic faith, which I soon found had taken fast hold of her mind, and literally filled her whole time, did give me very painful apprehensions; these soon were crowned with an alarm from the intimations of her young friend, who though a Protestant had been educated at a convent in Avignon, where her father lived, and had a leaning towards Romanism, which she concealed from her grandfather, though she saw very frequently the Romish priest of St. Meurice, that Louise herself had serious thoughts of taking the veil. This, it seems, had become a favourite plan of Louise after my flight and conversion; it had become a resource in her hours of sorrow; and it fully accounted for her calmness on meeting me and her generally altered demeanour. Emilie, I found, had no such thoughts, nor, indeed, had she yet quitted the Protestant faith.

"Nevertheless, the time passed with me very differently from anything I had been accustomed to since I left Avignon, and one effect of the passion which now became once more my master, was that it absorbed all other feelings, and left little room for

even the fears that were unavoidably incident to my situation. To this passion, too, fresh fuel was daily administered; I saw and conversed with Louise, though always in the presence of Mdlle. Emilie Fonrose. We generally sat in her little room, where her books, her work, her beads, her crucifixes, and her little caskets of relics, were tastefully arranged; having no other instrument in that small and frugal household, Emilie used to sing and play on a small guitar; her grandfather had given her one of the musical boxes made at Geneva, which played the three tunes she most admired. It was one of her simple and innocent relaxations to set these playing after she had fatigued herself with work; and she had a little bird which sang so sweetly that we would sit for a length of time to hear its warbling. With this enchanting Louise, and her amiable friend, the hours flew swiftly away; and the summer came on with all the loveliness of an Alpine climate. Emilie, indeed, was herself a person of very great merit. Without the least pretensions to beauty, she was pleasing in her expression of countenance, of simple and even graceful manners, of the most mild and placid temper I have ever known, and of a calm and unerring good sense which would in any

one have made a profitable exchange if bartered for more showy qualities. Her humble sense of her own merits, her constantly preferring others to herself in all matters from the greatest to the most trifling, her quiet, retiring demeanour, which only let her come forward into notice when drawn out from her modest retreat, made her a favourite with all that approached her. Her benevolence was unbounded, and though almost as poor as many of the objects of her bounty, she would deny herself every thing that bore the remotest resemblance to indulgence, in order to taste what she relished far more, the delights of charity. Her small pecuniary means failing, she would take bread to give when a family was perishing for want of work; and when she could not in any way help the poor, it was one of her choicest recreations in hard weather to feed the poor little birds that flocked round her, and showed by their chirping and flapping their wings, that they knew their kind protectress as soon as she walked into the garden. She formed the only link which now connected her grandfather with this world, and he was wont to say that, should it ever please Providence to take her from him, his earthly career was closed.

"To be so many months in the society of Emilie Fonrose, without feeling deeply penetrated with her virtues, and touched with the incomparable sweetness of her disposition, was impossible. There was even something inexpressibly affecting in the poverty, not squalid, even not inelegant, that reigned through the pastor's small establishment. I have often felt moved with the innocent joy of this artless girl, when she had secretly saved a few sous, and laid them out in purchasing a little tea, a luxury unknown in the ordinary fare of the parsonage. She would then invite her grandfather and me to partake of this treat in her room. It might have made the hard and silly muscadins of Paris or of Nismes smile to see what only drew tears from my eyes; the kind of pride with which she would do the honours of her frugal feast, and the little air of patronage and of consequence which she seemed to wear, as a great lady might dispensing a nobler repast. If the good pastor's mind had not been far removed above worldly objects, the feeling which then filled him would probably have been that of repining that his child was not shining in a higher sphere, worthy of being adorned by her. But he seemed to think more justly, and more con-

tentedly; and as he was, though of dry if not hard exterior, yet of a warm and even tender heart, it was easy to see his eye glistening with delight at marking the pleasure she seemed to enjoy.

"There is an indissoluble connection between all the feelings of the heart, as much as among the vessels that circulate its blood through our frames. Not to have felt my brotherly affection for Emilie ripen into love, had Louise been taken from me, would, I verily think, have been impossible. Shall I own it? This idea began to pass through my mind as she persevered in forbidding all renewal of the subject which she had at first proscribed; and Emilie became, naturally, the confidant of the affliction which this, coupled with the sad prospect of the nunnery ever before my eyes, occasioned. But it pleased the Great Disposer to order otherwise than that any such end of my intercourse with her should arrive.

"In order to make some small purchases for the summer, and to see an old friend of her deceased mother, married to the English chaplain, Emilie went to Geneva; and I, as well as Louise, accompanied her. We staid over the Sunday, and attended the English service; we all understood the

language well enough to admire that noble liturgy; Louise greatly preferred it to the simple Calvinistic ritual she had heard at St. Gingoulph. Alas! we were fated soon to hear a more striking portion of that fine service. After the sermon was over, we looked at the monuments; and Emilie said to the old clergyman, she should like to be buried there; but Louise would not allow that it could be called consecrated ground. Next day, we were invited to join a water-party on the lake, given by a family that lived near Secherons, about half-a-league from the town. A young English sea-officer must needs shew his naval skill by taking charge of the boat, and, for some time, he succeeded well enough, the breeze being steady. But the boatmen, accustomed to the squalls which are common to all lakes surrounded by unequal and abrupt heights, repeatedly warned, and warned him in vain, not to trust his maritime experience, which would here assuredly fail him. In trying to double a point, we met a sudden change of wind, which at once upset the boat. I rushed towards Louise, whom one of the men succeeded in saving; but poor Emilie sank to rise no more. The officer himself paid the forfeit of his rashness, for though he kept himself afloat,

the rudder of the boat, as the men were righting her, struck him, and he sank in deep water. The boatmen saved the rest of the party.

"It would be in vain to describe the horror and dismay of Louise, when she came to understand her loss, after being herself rescued from a watery grave. I did not feel less the bitterness of grief, but my relief on Louise's escape, which I had supposed impossible, broke the force of the heavy blow. The body of the ill-fated Emilie was conveyed to the inn at Secherons; and I went immediately back to St. Gingoulph, as fast as a char-au-banc could take me, that I might break to the wretched old man the intelligence of this sad disaster.

"I found him just risen from his solitary meal, and having returned thanks in presence of his maid-servant, whom I begged to quit the room. My sudden appearance, unaccompanied, at once revealed, as well as my faltering manner, that I was the messenger of evil tidings, and he calmly breathed a prayer, 'God's will be done.' Though thus partly prepared for it, on learning the truth he was struck dumb, and could not weep. He grasped my arm in his long and bony hand; he looked almost vacantly in my face as if to seek some mitigation of the

cruel blow; he found no comfort there; and he breathed out a disconsolate prayer, or rather a reluctant and compulsory admission that His will must be done and His name be blessed, who giveth and who taketh away.

"It seemed to soothe him when I proposed that he should accompany me back to Secherons, and attend the last solemnities due to poor Emilie. We arrived there late at night; and found Louise had given the necessary directions with great firmness and presence of mind. Before retiring to rest the ancient pastor desired to see for the last time the loved remains of his child; but we dissuaded him, as deeming that it might break that sleep he stood so much in need of, and which sorrow, by a merciful dispensation of Providence, has rather a tendency to bestow than to withhold, provided no undue excitement interrupts it. The next day was passed in dismal affliction, and as night fell, just before our family worship, he required us to accompany him to the chamber of death.

"The coffin lay upon a bed, and the face of Emilie was exposed full to our view, by the light of the tapers that burnt gloomily round the room. The calm expression of countenance was strikingly different

from the distorted features of agony and alarm I had last seen while she was struggling in the water; all had now relapsed into unbroken tranquillity, as if pain, and fear, and sorrow were now and for ever no more. There was nothing frightful, nothing repulsive in the sight; on the contrary, there was a peculiar sweetness in her placid features, which wore an air even of beauty that had never before been perceived. A kind of fine transparent hue, though pale, seemed graceful; and the long lashes appeared to pronounce that the eyes were but closed in sleep, though the sleep was to endure for evermore. The dreadful idea, however, soon shrouded the mind, 'You see her for the last time!' The pastor softly, as if he feared to disturb her eternal slumber, approached the bed, and fixed a last kiss upon her cold forehead, but still he could not weep. For a whole day and night his grief had been unmitigated by tears; no refreshment had his parched eyelids bestowed on his suffering; and we quitted the chamber, throwing the last look behind upon its lifeless occupant. In the room below, to which we withdrew, the reverend old man prayed fervently to the Father of all for grace and for comfort, and that it would please Him to sustain us in this cruel bereavement wherewithal

He had seen good to visit us. As he closed his prayer a noise fell on our ears, as of screwing some board or other sounding body; instantly the idea flashed through our minds—it was the closing of Emilie's coffin. As if his prayer had been heard the old man now wept aloud, and all unused to such tender scenes, he sank into Louise's arms.

"Next day the funeral took place, and in the English chapel, where, with a prophetic warning of her fate, she had desired to be buried. As the body slowly descended the staircase, the pastor stood reverently with his head uncovered, leaning on my arm for a needful support. We followed in a mourning carriage to the town, of which the gate or wicket was first shut and then opened to let us pass onwards. The simple procession arrived at the churchyard. It was here met by Emilie's venerable friend, the English clergyman arrayed in his white vestment. I never had witnessed this solemnity, which I never shall forget. Meeting the corpse as it was slowly borne along, he uttered with a solemn but tremulous voice,—'I am the resurrection and the life, saith the Lord. Whoso believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live, and he that liveth

and believeth in me shall never die!'—The thrill which this shot through my frame I never can forget. As he walked onwards before the coffin, reciting other portions of Scripture to the like effect, there was a manifest emotion excited in all the spectators of so mournful a solemnity. When the reading of the Scriptures selected for the occasion was suspended, the coffin was placed over the grave, near the remains of Emilie's paternal grandmother, an Englishwoman. A pause now succeeded in the service, when unexpectedly to me at least, the organ struck up a sweet and melodious anthem of the most solemn kind; its notes sometimes rolled over our heads like distant thunder, sometimes warbled plaintive and tender; it seemed a dirge, such as a heavenly choir might be fancied to perform, no person being seen to play it. During this solemn harmony the body was slowly lowered down into its last resting-place; and we were both shocked and moved to see poor Emilie's little lap-dog, the companion of her solitary walks, and which slept in her room, make its way through the crowd and seek to share her endless couch. It had not accompanied her, but seemed to have followed the pastor with the kind of inscrutable instinct which the more

sagacious of tame animals possess. It was of course removed by the attendants; and as soon as dust had been committed to dust and ashes to ashes, with the usual solemnities, and the organ ceased to sound, the clergyman resumed the service with—'Man that is born of a woman hath but a little time to live and is full of sorrow.'—Not a dry eye could now be discerned in the chapel, and after casting a last look on the name 'Emilie Fonrose, aged 19 years,' upon the coffin, the pastor slowly left the place, followed by us; we entered a small carriage procured by his friends, and arrived sad and silent at his now desert dwelling. Nor spoke he a word that day, unable even to perform the usual family worship in the evening. His race was run; his earthly career finished: and when next morning he assembled us to prayers, he began the Song of Simeon, 'Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace,'—and there he was obliged to stop, his tongue cleaving to the roof of his mouth when he would have continued.

"The unhappy old man by degrees regained his tranquillity, and frequently blessed God for having reserved this heavy blow till he was so near following his beloved child, that it made only the dif-

ference of closing his long life with a few months, perhaps weeks, of wretchedness. I remarked that he was more diligent than ever in the performance of all his duties, and would take no help which his neighbouring brethren tendered him in his ministrations. He seemed, if not to derive comfort from employment, at least to have his mind seduced from the subject of his loss; and his piety assumed a more fervent appearance than before. He complained, however, that when not employed in his pastoral duties, he suffered exceedingly; and one feeling he could not get out of his mind. As the door of his room opened, he would think Emilie was coming in; he could not bring his mind to the belief she had gone for ever. In his dreams, too, she appeared to be restored to him; he never once dreamt of her death; yet, he said, there was always a something, as it were, hanging over her; she could not speak; or she turned from him; she went away; he could not follow or find her; there was always something changed from what it once had been; yet there she was, and alive again, and, as if half conscious it was a dream only, he would fear to awake. But when he did, sorrow returned the more grievous when he found it had all been a

dream; and then the poor old man would wander about as if to get rid of himself.

"But to one part of his small mansion he never repaired; I did not once see him enter Emilie's room; and indeed I, for a few days, was fain myself to avoid this suffering. At last, alone, and when all were out in the fields, I went into it. Nor shall I soon forget the pang which the sight gave me. There were her books, her drawing-paper, her half-finished letter about some charity at St. Meurice, her pen and inkstand, the chair she sat on. A simple straw bonnet she had thrown off when setting out on her last fatal journey, lay on the little sofa; her guitar, now mute, was beside it; the musical box was on the chimney-piece; and, most touching sight of all, the poor little bird hopped about in the cage, flapping its wings as I entered the room, and pecking at the bars, expecting to be taken out, and perch, as heretofore, on its mistress's finger. The sight of this goldfinch was a severe trial to me; its silence seemed mournful; but when it began its warbling, as formerly, I really felt quite unmanned. At that moment Louise, who now too, for the first time, ventured into the room on hearing my footsteps, never having dared to enter it alone, came in and

found me. She saw I was moved. She heard the poor little forsaken bird; she had been deeply touched before by the sparrows flocking round her, to receive their pension from their kind protectress's hand, now stiff in the tomb. Altogether, and when she cast her eyes on the bonnet which recalled her friend, as if she had only gone out of the room, she was entirely overcome: all her resolution fled; her estrangement was suddenly put an end to; and when she saw how much my feelings were now overpowered, how entirely they were her own, she flew into my outstretched arms, fell on my neck, sobbed aloud, and could only articulate 'My dearest, dearest friend!'

END OF VOL. I.

LONDON :
Printed by WILLIAM CLOWES and SONS,
Stamford Street.