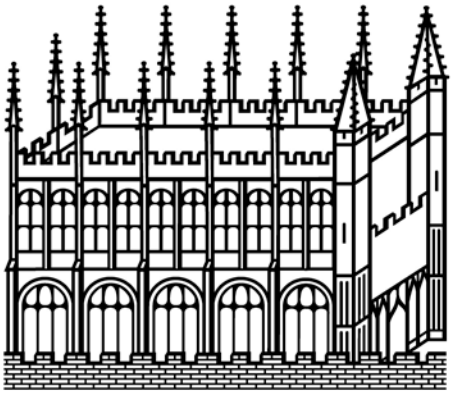

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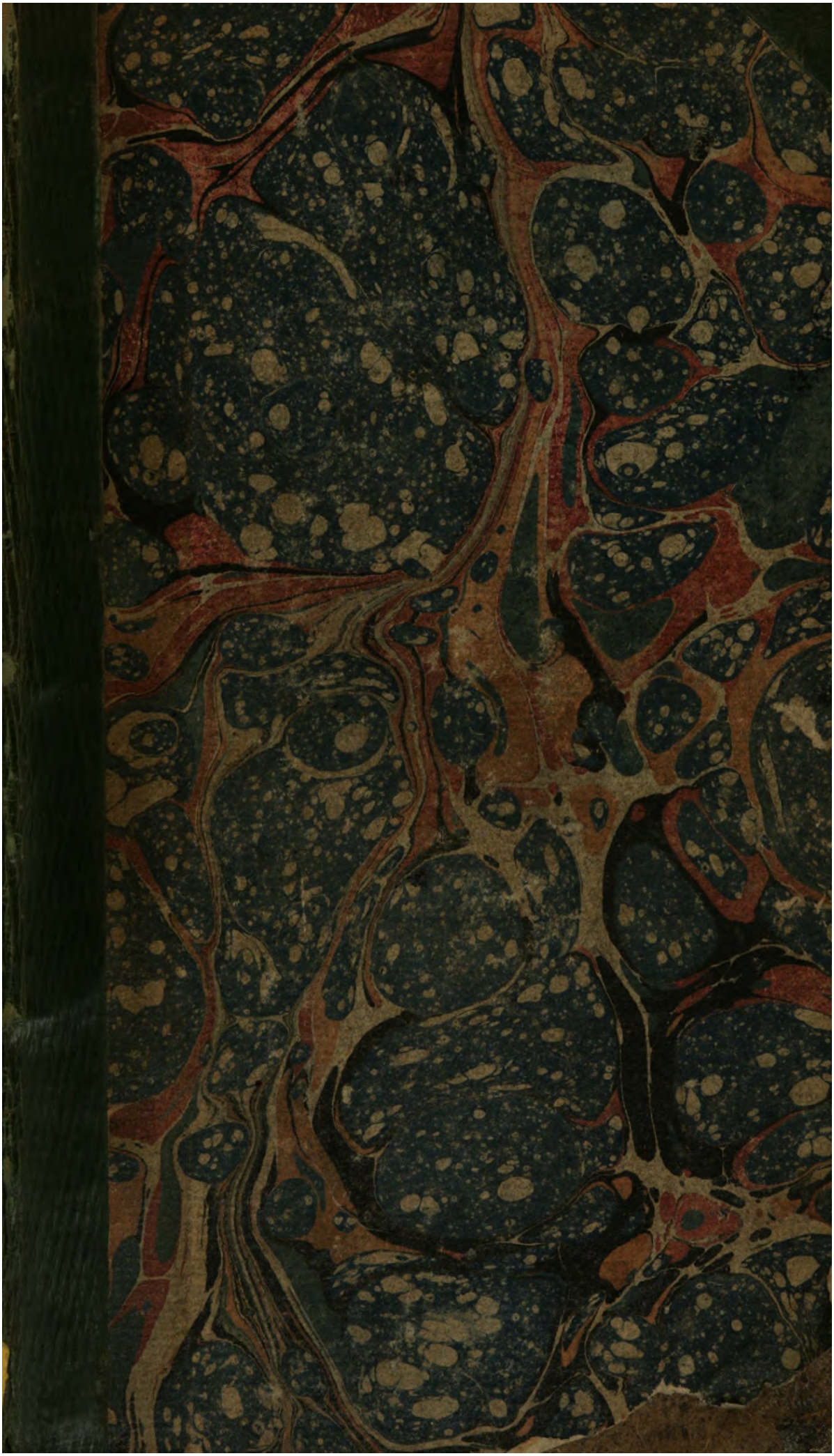

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THADDEUS

OF

WARSAW.

VOL. IV.

Oh! bloodiest picture in the book of time
Sarmatia fell, unwept, without a crime!

Campbell.

Geo. Hazard, Printer, 49, Beech-Street.

THADDEUS

OF

WARSAW.

IN FOUR VOLUMES.

Loin d'aimer la guerre, il l'abhorre;
En triomphant même il déplore
Les desastres qu'elle produit:
Et couronné par la victoire,
Il gémit de sa propre gloire,
Si la paix n'en est pas le fruit.

BY

MISS PORTER.

THE FOURTH EDITION.

LONDON:

PRINTED FOR LONGMAN, HURST, REES, AND ORME,
PATERNOSTER-ROW.

1806.

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THADDEUS OF WARSAW.

CHAP. I.

THE first week of the Count's confinement was rendered in some degree tolerable, by the daily visits of Mrs. Robson; who, having brought his drawing materials, enabled him, through the means of the printseller, to purchase some civility from the brutal and hardened people who were his gaolers. After the good woman had performed her diurnal kindness, Thaddeus used to turn to the sad circumference of his miserable apartment to seek amusement. When his pencil had accomplished its task, it wearied him: When he took up a book, having read it before, it failed to engage him. He pos-

sessed nothing to beguile the tedious day, and more tedious night. His spirit was in solitude; in the most dismal solitude; banished and shut out from all that could render life desirable.

The elasticity and enterprise of soul, inherent in youth, renders no calamity so difficult to be borne, as that which fetters its best years and most active virtues, within the walls of a prison. Thaddeus felt this benumbing conviction in every pulse of his ardent and energetic heart. He retraced all that he had been. He looked on what he was. Though he had reaped glory when a boy, his '*noon of manhood,*' his evening sun, was to waste its light, and set, in captivity.

At short and distant intervals, such melancholy reveries gave place to the pitying image of Mary Beaufort. It sometimes visited him in the day, it always was his companion during night. He courted her lovely idea, as a spell that for a while stole him from painful reflections.

With

With an entranced soul, he recalled every lineament of her beautiful face, every dissolving note of that voice, which had hurried him into the rashness of touching her hand. One moment he pressed her gold chain closer to his heart, almost believing what Lady Tinemouth had insinuated; the next, he would sigh over his credulity, and return with despondent, though equally intense love, to her bewitching recollection.

The more he meditated on the purity of her manners; the elevated principles to which he could trace her actions; and, above all, the benevolent confidence with which she had ever treated him, (a man contemned by one part of her acquaintance, and merely received on trust by the remainder,) the more he found reasons to admire her character and adore herself. When he drew a comparison between Miss Beaufort, and women of the same quality, whom he had seen in England and in other countries, he contemplated

with delighted wonder, that spotless mind, which having passed through the various dangers annexed to wealth and fashion, still bore itself uncontaminated. She was beautiful, and she did not regard it; she was accomplished, but she did not attempt a display: what she acquired from education, the graces so incorporated with her native intelligence, that the perfection of her character seemed to have been stamped at once, by the beneficent hand of Providence.

Never were her numberless attractions so fascinating to Thaddeus, as when he witnessed the generous eagerness with which, forgetful of her own almost unparalleled talents, she pointed out merit, and dispensed applause to the deserving. Miss Beaufort's nature was gentle and benevolent; but it was likewise, distinguishing, and animated. Whilst the Count saw that the urbanity of her disposition made her politeness universal, he perceived, that neither rank, riches, nor

splendour,

splendour, could extract from her bosom, one spark of that lambent flame, which streamed from her heart, like fire to the sun, towards the united glory of genius and virtue.

He dwelt on her lovely, unsophisticated character, with an enthusiasm bordering on idolatry. He recollected that she had been educated by the mother of Pembroke Somerset; and, turning from the double remembrance, with a sigh, fraught with all the bitterness and sweetness of love, he acknowledged, how much wisdom (which includes virtue) gives spirit and immortality to beauty; "Yes," cried he, "it is the fragrance of the flower, which lives after the bloom is withered."

From the like seducing day-dreams, Thaddeus was one evening awakened by the entrance of the jailor into his cell. The man presented a sealed paper, and told him that he brought it from a stranger, who, having paid the debts for which he was confined, immediately withdrew,

desiring that the packet might be delivered to Mr. Constantine.

Scarcely crediting this information, Thaddeus hastily opened the letter, hoping that it might throw some light on his benefactor: a blank cover, enclosing notes to the amount of fifty pounds, presented itself. Surprised at this, he ordered the man to leave him, who, without much ceremony, was staring at the money over his shoulder; and sitting down, he tried to conjecture, who could have acted so generously, and yet be so careful to conceal the donor.

He had seen sufficient proofs of a heedless want of charity in Miss Euphemia Dundas, to lead him to suppose, that she could not be so munificent and solicitous of secrecy. Besides, how could she have learnt his situation? He thought it was impossible: and that impossibility, compelled an erratic hope, of his present liberty's having sprung from the friendship of Miss Beaufort, to pass by him with painful swiftness.

"Gracious Heaven!" cried he, starting from his chair, "it is the indefatigable spirit of Lady Sara Roos, that I recognise in this deed! The generous, but unhappy interest which she yet takes in my fate, has discovered my last misfortune, and thus seeks to relieve me!"

The moment he conceived this supposition, he believed it; and, taking up a pen, with a grateful, though disturbed soul, he addressed to her the following guarded note.

To the Right Honourable Lady Sara Roos.

"An unfortunate exile, who is already overpowered by a sense of not having deserved the notice which Lady Sara Roos has deigned to take of his misfortunes—was this morning liberated from prison in a manner so generous and delicate, that he can ascribe the act to no other, than the noble heart of her ladyship.

"The object of this bounty, bending under the weight of obligations which he

cannot repay, begs permission to re-inclose the bills which Lady Sara's agent transmitted to him; but, as the deed which procures his freedom cannot be recalled, he accepts, with the most grateful emotions, that new instance of her ladyship's goodness.

"*Newgate.*"

Thaddeus dispatched the letter by a porter; and was preparing another, to acquaint Mrs. Robson of his release, when the good woman made her appearance. She hastened up to him with an animated countenance, and exclaimed before he had time to speak, "Dear sir! I have seen a dear, sweet lady, who promised not to sleep till you are out of this horrid place!"

The suspicions of the Count, that his benefactress was indeed Lady Sara Roos, were now confirmed: seating his landlady in the only chair which furnished the apartment; to satisfy her humility, he took his station on the table, and then said, "The lady

lady has already fulfilled her engagement; I am free; and only wait for an answer to my acknowledgements before I quit the prison."

At this assurance, the delighted Mrs. Robson, crying and laughing by turns, did not cease her ejaculations of joy, until the messenger, who had taken the letter to St. James's Place, returned with a reply written by her ladyship, and evidently blotted with tears. Thaddeus took out the re-inclosed bills with a flushed cheek, and read as follows:

"I cannot be mistaken in recognising the proud and high soul'd Constantine, in the writer of the lines which I hold in my hand. Could any thing have imparted to me more comfort, than your generous belief, that there is indeed some virtue left in my wretched and repentant heart, it would have arisen from the consciousness of having been the happy person, who has succoured you in your distress.

But no; that enjoyment was beyond my deserving. The bliss of being the lightener of your sorrows was reserved by heaven for a less criminal creature. I did not even know that you were in prison. Since our dreadful parting, I have never dared to inquire after you; and much as it might console me to serve one so truly valued, I will not insult your nice honour, by offering any further instance of my friendship, than what will evince my soul's gratitude to your prayers, and my acquiescence with the commands of duty.

"My husband is here, without perceiving the ravages, which misery and remorse have made in my unhappy heart. Time, perhaps, may render me less unworthy of his tenderness: at present I detest myself.

"I return the bills; you may safely use them, for they never were mine.

"S. R."

The noble heart of Thaddeus, bled over every line of this letter. He saw that it bore

bore a stamp of truth, which did not leave him a moment in doubt that he owed his release to some other hand. Whilst he folded it up, his suspicions next lighted on Lady Tinemouth. He had received one short letter from her ladyship, since her departure, mentioning Maria's staying in town to meet Mr. Montresor; Miss Beaufort's detention on account of Mrs. Dorothy's accident; and closing with the intelligence of her own arrival at the Wold. He was struck with the idea, that as he delayed answering this letter, in consequence of his late embarrassment, must have made inquiries after him; and probably Miss Egerton was the lady who visited Mrs. Robson; and, finding the information true, had executed the Countess's commission to obtain his release.

According to these suppositions, he questioned his landlady about the appearance of the lady whom she had seen. Mrs. Robson replied, "She was rather tall, but so wrapped up, I could neither see

her face nor figure, though I am certain, from the softness of her voice, she must be both young and handsome. Sweet creature! I am sure she wept two or three times. Besides, she is the most charitable soul alive, next to you, sir, for she gave me a purse with nineteen guineas; and she told me, that she knew your honour's English friends."

This narration, substantiating his hope of Lady Tinemouth's being his benefactress, that the kind Maria was her agent, and the gentleman who defrayed the debt, Mr. Montresor; he was easier under an obligation, which a mysterious liberation would have doubled. He knew the Countess's maternal love for him. To reject her present benefaction, would be to sacrifice gratitude, to an excessive and haughty delicacy. Convinced, *that nothing can be great, that it is great to despise;* he no longer hesitated to accept Lady Tinemouth's bounty, but smothered in his breast, the embers of a proud, repulsive ardour,

ardour, which having burst forth in the first hour of his misfortunes, was ever ready to consume any wish that might oppress him with the weight of obligation.

Thaddeus quitted his cell. He ordered a coach to the great gate of Newgate; and with thankfulness to Heaven, for again being permitted to taste the wholesome breeze of a free atmosphere, handed his delighted land-lady into the vehicle.

So true it is, that advantages are only appreciated by comparison; when the Count re-entered his humble apartment in St. Martin's-lane, he considered it a palace of luxury, opposed to the dungeon he had left.

"Ah!" cried Mrs. Robson, pointing to a chair, "there is the very seat in which that dear Lady sat! Sweet creature! If I had known that I durst believe all she promised, I would have fallen on my knees, and kissed her feet, for bringing back your dear self!"

"I thank you, my good madam," returned

turned Thaddeus, with a smile, and a tear at such ardent demonstration of affection; "but where is little Nancy, that I may shake hands with her?"

The child welcomed the Count with those animated expressions of joy, inseparable from a good and unexperienced heart. It being late, he retired at an early hour to his pillow, where he found that repose, which had been sought in vain, within the gloomy and (he supposed) eternal walls of a prison.

In the morning, he was awakened by the light footsteps of his pretty waiting-maid entering the front room. His chamber door being open, he asked her what was the hour? she replied nine o' clock; adding that she brought a letter, which one of the waiters from Slaughter's coffee-house had just left, with the information that he did so by the orders of a footman in rich livery.

Thaddeus desired that it might be given to him. The child obeyed, and quitted

ted the room. He saw that the superscription was in Miss Dundas's hand; and opening it with pleasure, because every thing interested him which came from the house which contained Mary Beaufort, to his amazement and consternation, he read the following passionate and intemperate lines:

"*To Mr. Constantine.*

"Mr. Constantine,

"By a miraculous circumstance, this morning, your deep and daring plan of villainy has been discovered to Lady D— and myself. The deluded victim, whom your arts and falsehoods, would have seduced to dishonour her family by connecting herself with a vagabond, has at length seen through her error, and now detests you as much as ever your insufferable presumption could have hoped that she would distinguish you with regard. Thanks be to Heaven! you are completely

pletely exposed! This young woman of fashion (whose name I will not trust in the same page with yours) has made a full confession of your villainous seductions; of her own reprehensible weakness, in ever having deigned to listen to so low a creature. She desires me to assure you, that she hates you; and commands you never again to attempt the insolence of appearing in her sight. Indeed, this is the language of every soul in this house, Lady D——, Mrs. D—— S——, Miss B——, besides that of

"*Harley-street.* "D—— D——."

Thaddeus read this ridiculous letter twice, before he could perfectly comprehend its meaning. In a paroxysm of indignation at the vile subterfuge under which he did not doubt that Euphemia had screened some accidental discovery of her absurd passion, he hastily threw on his clothes, and determined, though in defiance of Miss Dundas's mandates, to

fly

fly to Harley-street, and clear himself in in the eyes of Miss Beaufort, and her venerable aunt.

Having flown rather than walked, he arrived in sight of Lady Dundas's house, just as a coach, full of her ladyship's maids and packages drove from the door. Hurrying up the step, he asked the porter who was standing in the hall, if Mrs. Dorothy Somerset were at home.

"No," replied the man; "she and Miss Beaufort, with Miss Dundas and Mr. Somerset, went out of town this morning by eight o'clock; and my lady and Miss Euphemia, about an hour ago, set off for Dumbarton, in Scotland, where they mean to stay all the summer."

At this information, which seemed to be the sealing of his condemnation with Mary, the heart of Thaddeus was pierced to the core. Unacquainted, until this moment, with the torments attending the calumniated, he could scarcely subdue the tempest in his breast, when forced to receive

receive the conviction, that the woman whom he loved above all the world, now regarded him, as not merely a villain, but the meanest of villains.

He returned home indignant and agitated. The knowledge that Pembroke Somerset had probably listened to the falsehoods of Euphemia, without suggesting one word in defence of him, who once was his friend, inflicted a pang more deadly than the rest. Shutting himself within his apartment, tossed and tortured in soul, he traversed the room, until, resolving to seek redress from the advice of Lady Tinemouth, he descended the stairs, and telling Mrs. Robson, that he should leave London next morning for Lincolnshire, begged her not to be uneasy on his account, as he went on business, and would return in a few days.

The good woman almost wept at this intelligence; and when she saw him depart, followed the wheels of the stage-coach with sighs and blessings. His long

journey

journey passed in resentful reveries; and affectionate anticipations of the moment, in which he should pour out his gratitude to the maternal tenderness of Lady Tinemouth, and learn from her delicacy and experience, how to efface from the minds of Mrs. Dorothy Somerset and her lovely niece, sentiments of him, so dishonouring, torturing, and false.

CHAP. II.

THE porter at Lady Dundas's was strictly correct in his account, respecting the destination of the dispersed members of her ladyship's household.

Whilst Pembroke Somerset was sullenly executing his forced act of benevolence at Newgate, Miss Dundas suddenly took it into her ever scheming head, to compare the merits of Somerset's rich expectancy, with the pennyless certainty of Lascelles. She considered, how high the wife of a baronet stood in the train of precedence, over the humble *cara sposa* of a man, owning no other rank, than a reflected lustre, shot from the coronet of an elder brother. Lady Somerset, she thought, would be a prettier salutation, than the empty courtsey of Honourable. Besides,

Pembroke

Pembroke was very handsome; Lascelles, only tolerably so: indeed some women had presumed to call him ugly; but they were odd mortals, who, not believing the *metempsychosis* doctrine of the taylor and his decorating adjuncts, could not comprehend, that although a mere human creature can have no such property, a man of fashion may posses an *elixir vitæ*, which makes age youth, deformity beauty, and even transforms vice into virtue.

In spite of remembrance, which reminded Diana, how often, amongst a little bevy of females, she had contended with acrimony, that all Mr. Lascelles' teeth were his own; that his nose was not a bit too long, being an exact *fac simile* of the same feature, which reared its sublime curve over the capacious mouth of his noble brother Lord Castle-Conway; notwithstanding this, the Pythagorean pretentions of fashion began to lose their ascendancy; and, in the recesses of her mind, when Miss Dundas compared the light

light elegance of Pembroke's figure, with the heavy limbs of her present lover; Pembroke's dark and ever animated eyes, with the gooseberry orbs of Lascelles, she dropped the parallel; and resolving to captivate the heir of Somerset-Castle, admitted no remorse at jilting the brother of Castle-Conway.

To this end, before Pembroke's return from Newgate, Diana told her mother of her intention to accompany Mrs. Dorothy down to the Baronet's; where she would remain, until her ladyship should think, that Euphemia might be trusted to rejoin her in town. Neither Mrs. Dorothy nor Miss Beaufort liked this arrangement; and, with an aching heart, the latter prepared to take her seat next morning, at an early hour, in the travelling equipage, which was to convey them all into Leicestershire.

At supper, Pembroke sullenly informed his cousin of the success of her commands;—that Mr. Constantine was free.

This

This assurance, though imparted with so ungracious an air, laid her head with less distraction on her pillow: and as she stepped into Sir Robert's carriage next day, enabled her, with more ease, to deck her lips with smiles. She felt that the penetrating eyes of Mr. Somerset, were never withdrawn from her face; offended with his perverseness, and their scrutiny, she tried to baffle their inspection. She attempted gaiety, when she gladly would have wept. But when the coach mounted the top of Highgate-Hill, and discovered a last view of that city, which contained the being, whose happiness was the sole object of her thoughts and prayers, she leaned out of the window, to hide a tear which she could not repress; feeling that another and another would start, she complained of the dust, and pulling her veil over her eyes, drew back into the corner of the carriage. The trembling of her voice and hands during the performance of this little artifice, too well explained to

Pembroke

Pembroke what was passing in her mind: At once dispelling the gloom which shrouded his own countenance, he turned towards her with compassionate tenderness in his words and looks; he called her attention, by degrees, to the happy domestic scene she was to meet at the castle; and thus gradually softening her displeasure, into the easy conversation of reciprocal affection, he rendered the remainder of their long journey less irksome.

When at the end of the second day, Miss Beaufort found herself in the old avenue leading to the base of the hill which sustains the revered walls of Somerset-Castle, a mingled emotion took possession of her breast; and when the carriage arrived at the foot of the highest terrace, she sprung impatiently out of it, and hastening up the stone stairs into the front hall, met her uncle at the door of the breakfast parlour where he held out his arms to receive her.

"My Mary! My darling!" cried he, embracing

embracing her now wet cheek, and straining her throbbing bosom to his own, "Why, my dear love," added he, almost carrying her into the room, "I am afraid that this visit to town has injured your nerves! Whence arises this agitation?"

She knew that it had injured her peace; and, now that the flood-gates of her long repelled tears were opened, it was beyond her art, or the soothings of her affectionate uncle, to stay them. A moment afterwards, her cousin entered the room, followed by Mrs. Dorothy and Miss Dundas. Miss Beaufort hastily rose to conceal what she could not check, and, kissing Sir Robert's hand, asked permission to retire, under the pretence of regaining those spirits which had been dissipated by the fatigues of her journey.

In her own chamber, she did, indeed, struggle to recover herself. She shuddered at the impetuosity of her emotions, when once abandoned of their reins; and, resolved from this hour to hold a stricter

guard over the consequences of her ill-fated passion.

She sat down in the window of her apartment; and, looking down the extensive vale of Somerset, watched the romantic wanderings of the Witham, winding its course through the domains of the castle, and nourishing the roots of those immense oaks, which still wave their expanded branches over its quiet stream. She reflected on the revolution which had taken place in her mind, since she walked on its banks, the evening that preceded her visit to London. Then, she was free as air, and gay as the lark; each object was bright and lovely to her eyes: hope seemed to woo her from every green slope, every remote dingle: all nature breathed of joy, because her own breast was the abode of gladness. Now, all continued the same, but she was changed. Surrounded by beauty, she acknowledged its presence; the sweetness of the flowers bathed her senses in fragrance; the setting sun, gilding

ing the heights, shed a yellow glory over the distant hills; the birds were hailing the fallen dew which spangled every leaf; she gazed around, and sighed heavily when she said to herself, "Even in this paradise I shall be wretched. Alas! my heart is far away! My soul lingers about one, whom I may never more behold! about one, who may soon cease to remember that such a being as Mary Beaufort is in existence, "He will leave England!" cried she, raising her hands and eyes to the glowing heavens. "He will live, he will die, far, far, from me! In a distant land he will wed another, whilst I shall know no wish that strays from him."

Whilst she indulged in these soliloquies, she forgot both Sir Robert and her resolution, until he sent her maid to beg, that if she were better, she would come down and make tea for him. At this summons, Miss Beaufort dried her eyes, and descended with an assumed serenity, to the saloon, where the family were assembled. The

Baronet having greeted Miss Dundas with an hospitable welcome, seated himself between his sister and his son; and, whilst he received his favourite beverage from the hands of his beloved niece, he found that comfort, once more re-entered his bosom.

Sir Robert Somerset was a man whose appearance alone attracted respect. His person bore the stamp of dignity; and his manners. which possessed the exquisite polish of travel, secured him universal esteem. Though little beyond fifty, the various perplexities which distressed his youth, not only rendered his hair prematurely grey, but by clouding his once brilliant eyes, with thoughtfulness, marked his aspect with old age and melancholy. The baronet's entrance into gay life, was celebrated for wit and vivacity: He was the animating spirit of every party; when, strange to tell, an inexplicable metamorphosis took place. Soon after his return from abroad, his marriage with Miss Beaufort

fort (a woman whom he loved to madness) taking place, excess of happiness seemed to change his nature, and gave his character a gradual tinge of sadness. After his wife's death, the alteration in his mind produced still more extraordinary effects, and shewed itself more than once in all the terrors of approaching insanity.

The latest attack of that kind which assailed him, was about the middle of the last winter; it seized him under the appearance of a swoon, as he sat reading the newspaper at breakfast; he was carried to bed, and awoke in a delirium, which threatened, either immediate death, or the total extinction of his intellects. However, neither of these dreads being confirmed; in the course of several weeks, to the wonder of every body, he recovered both his health and his sound mind. Notwithstanding this happy event, the circumstances of his danger, so deeply affected his family, that he continued to be an object of very anxious attention. Indeed

solicitude did not terminate with them: the munificence of his disposition, having spread itself through every county in which he owned a rood of land, as many prayers ascended for the repose of his spirit, as ever petitioned heaven, from the mouths of '*monkish beadsmen,*' in favour of power or virtue.

Since the demise of Lady Somerset, this excellent man drew all his comfort from the amiable qualities of his son Pembroke. Sometimes in his livelier hours, which came '*like angel visits, few and far between,*' he amused himself with the playfulness of the little Earl of Arun, the pompous erudition of Mr. Loftus (who was become his lordship's tutor) and with giving occasional entertainments to the gentry in his neighbourhood.

Of all the personages contained within this circle, (which the hospitality of Sir Robert, extended to a circumference of thirty miles,) Lord Berrington was the most respected.

The

The numerous visitants that attended the Somerset-hunt, were too gay to be admitted with intimacy. A son of one of these itinerant families, (which, ever on the full chace of pleasure, had fixed itself at Wood-hill Lodge, on the right of the little town of Grantham,) by calling at the castle, soon after the arrival of the London party, caused a trifling change in its social arrangement.

When Richard Shafto was ushered into the saloon, he nodded to Sir Robert, and, turning his back on the ladies, told Pembroke, that he had ridden to Somerset, on purpose to bring him to Woodhill Lodge.

" Upon my soul,' cried he, " if you don't come, I will leave my mother. Would you believe it, that on account of Sir Hallerand having gone out plenipotentiary to some damned place on the continent, she has taken into her head to rusticate till his return? Upon my soul, I am moped to death! There is not a creature, but yourself, within twenty miles, to whom I would

speak; not a man worth a sixpence. I wish to heaven, my father had broken his neck, before he accepted that rascally embassy, which encumbers me with the charge of an old woman!"

After this dutiful wish, which brought down a weighty admonition from Mrs. Dorothy, the young gentleman promised to beg her pardon for his filial irreverence, provided that she could persuade Pembroke to accompany him to the lodge. Mr. Somerset did not shew much alacrity in his consent; but purposely to rid his family of such a noisy guest, he rose from his chair, and acquiescing in the sacrifice of a few days to good-nature, bade his father farewell, and gave orders for a ride to Grantham.

As soon as the gentlemen left the saloon, Miss Dundas ran up stairs, and, from her dressing-room window in the west tower, pursued the steps of their horses, as they cantered down the winding steep, into the high-road. An abrupt angle of the hill hiding

hiding them at once from her view, she turned round with a toss of the head, and, flinging herself into her chair, exclaimed, "Now I shall be bored to death by this abominably stupid family! I wish the devil had taken Shafto before he thought of coming hither!"

In consequence of the humour, which engendered the above no very flattering compliment, to the society at the castle, Miss Dundas descended to the dining-room, with sulky looks and a chilling air. She ate what the baronet laid on her plate, with an indolent appetite; cut her meat carelessly, and dragged the vegetables over the table-cloth. Mrs. Dorothy coloured at this indifference to the usual neatness of her damask covers; but Miss Dundas was so completely in the sullens, that, heedless of any other feelings than her own, she continued to pull and knock about the things just as her ill humour dictated.

The petulance of this lady's behaviour,

did not in the least assimilate with the customary decorum of Sir Robert's table; and, when the cloth was drawn, he could not refrain from expressing his concern, that Somerset Castle appeared so little calculated to afford satisfaction to a daughter of Lady Dundas. Miss Dundas attempted some awkward declaration, that she never was more amused, never happier. But the small credit which Sir Robert gave to her assertion, was fully warranted the next morning, by the ready manner in which she accepted a casual invitation, to spend the ensuing day and night at Lady Shafto's. Her ladyship called on Mrs. Dorothy, and intending to have a party in the evening, invited the two young ladies to return with her to Grantham, and be her guests for a week. Miss Beaufort, whose spirits were far from tranquillized, declined her civility; but, with a gleam of pleasure, she heard it accepted by Miss Dundas, who departed with her ladyship for the the lodge.

Whilst

Whilst the enraptured Diana, all life and glee, bowled along with lady Shafto, anticipated the delight of once more seating herself at the elbow of Pembroke Somerset; Mary Beaufort, relieved from a load of ill-requited attentions, walked out into the park, to enjoy, in solitude, the intoxicating sorrow of thinking on the unhappy and far distant Constantine. Regardless of the way, her footsteps, though robbed of elasticity by nightly watching and daily regret, led her beyond the park, to the ruined church of Woolthorpe, its southern boundary. Her eyes were fixed on the opposite horizon. It was the extremity of Leicestershire; and far, far behind those hills, was that London which contained the object dearest to her soul. The wind seemed scarcely to breathe as it floated towards her; but it came from that quarter; and, believing it laden with every sweet which love can fancy, she threw back her veil to inhale its balm; then blaming herself for such baby weak-

ness, she turned, blushing, homewards, and wept at, what she thought, her unreasonably tenacious passion.

The arrival of Miss Dundas at the lodge, was communicated to the two young men on their return from a traverse on foot, of half the country in quest of game. The news drew an oath from Shafto; but rather pleased Somerset, who augured some amusement from her attempts at wit and judgment. Tired to death, and dinner being over when they entered, with ravenous appetites they devoured their uncomfortable meal in a remote room; then, throwing themselves along the sofas, they yawned, and slept for near two hours.

Pembroke waking first, suddenly jumped on the floor, and shaking his disordered clothes, exclaimed, "Shafto! Get up. This is abominable! Efaith, I cannot help thinking, that if we spend one half of our days in pleasure, and the other in lolling off its fatigues, we shall have passed thro'

thro' life more to our shame than our profit!"

"Then you may take the shame, and leave me the profit;" cried his companion, turning himself round: "so good night to you."

Pembroke rang the bell. A servant entered.

"What o'clock is it?"

"Eight, Sir."

"Who are above?"

"My lady, Sir, and a large party of ladies."

"There now!" cried Shafto, yawning and kicking out his legs. "You surely won't go to be bored with such damned maudlin company?"

"I choose to join your mother,;' replied Pembroke. "Are there any gentlemen, Stephen?"

"One, Sir; Doctor Denton."

"Confound you!" roared Shafto, "what do you stand jabbering there for? You won't let me sleep. Can't you send away the fellow, and go look yourself?"

"I

"I will, if you can persuade yourself to rise off that sofa, and come with me."

"May the devil catch me if I do! Get about your business, and leave me to mine."

"You are incorrigible, Shafto!" returned Pembroke, as he closed the door.

He went up stairs to change his dress; and before he gained the second flight, he resolved, not to spend two other whole days, in the company of such an ignorant, unmannerly cub.

On Mr. Somerset's entrance into Lady Shafto's drawing-room, he saw many ladies; but only one gentleman, who was the before-mentioned Dr. Denton; a poor, shallow-headed, parasitical animal. Pembroke, having seen enough of him, to despise his pretentions both to science and sincerity, returned his wide smirk and eager inquiries, with a ceremonious bow, and took his seat by the side of the now delighted Miss Dundas. The vivid spirits of Diana, which she used all her art to render

render peculiarly sparkling when he made his appearance, entertained him;—when compared with the insipid sameness of her ladyship, or the brutal ribaldry of her son, her mirth was wit, and her remarks wisdom.

"Dear Mr. Somerset!" cried she, "how good you are to break this sad solemnity. I vow, until you shewed your face, I thought the days of paganism were revived, and that, lacking men, we were assembled here to celebrate the mysteries of the *Bona Dea*."

"Lacking men!" replied he, smiling, "You have overlooked the assiduous Doctor Denton?"

"O, no; that is a camelon in man's clothing. He breathes air, he eats air, he emits air; and a most pestilential breath it is; only observe how he is pouring nonsense into the ear of yonder sable statue."

Pembroke directed his eyes as Miss Dundas desired him; they fell on Doctor Denton,

Denton, who stood whispering, and bowing before a lady in black, who sat, almost concealed by the window curtain. The lady put up her lip, the Doctor proceeded; she frowned, he would not be daunted; the lady rose from her seat, and slightly bending her head, crossed the room. Whilst Mr. Somerset was contemplating her majestic figure, and fine, though pale features, Miss Dundas touched his arm, and smiling satirically, repeated, in an affected voice:

"Hail pensive Nun! devout and holy!
"Hail, divinest Melancholy!"

"If she be melancholy," returned Pembroke, unconsciously, sighing, "I would for ever say,

"Hence, unholy Mirth, of Folly born!"

Miss Dundas reddened. She never liked this interesting woman, who was not only too handsome for competition, but possessed an understanding, whose temper would

would not tolerate ignorance and presumption. Diana's ill-natured impertinence, having several times received deserved chastisement from that quarter, she was vexed to the soul, when Pembroke closed his animated response with the question, "Who is she?"

Miss Dundas, rather too bitterly for the success of her design on his heart, iterated his words, and then answered, "Why, she is crazed. She lives in a place called Harrowby Abbey, at the top of that hill;" continued she, pointing through the opposite window, to a distant rising ground, on which the moon was shining brightly; "and, I am told, frightens the cottagers out of their wits by her midnight strolls."

Hardly knowing how to credit this wild account, Pembroke asked his informer if she were serious.

"Never more so. Her eyes are uncommonly wild."

"You must be jesting," returned he; "they seem perfectly reasonable."

Miss

Miss Dundas laughed. "Like Hamlet's, they '*know not seems, but have that within which passeth shew!*' believe me, she is mad enough for bedlam; and of that I could soon convince you. I wonder how Lady Shafto thought of inviting her at all."

"Well," cried Pembroke, "if those features announce madness, I shall never admire a look of sense again."

"Bless us," exclaimed Miss Dundas, "you are wonderfully struck! Don't you see she is old enough to be your mother?"

"That may be," answered he, smiling; "nevertheless, she is one of the most lovely women I ever beheld. Come, tell me her name."

"I will satisfy you in a moment," rejoined Diana; "and then away with your rhapsodies! She is the very Countess of Tinemouth, who brought, as her most particular friend, that vagabond foreigner to our house, who would have run off with Phemy."

"Lady Tinemouth!" exclaimed Pembroke, "I never saw her before. My ever lamented mother met her, whilst I was abroad, and she esteemed her highly. Pray present me to her!"

"Impossible," replied Diana, vexed at the turn which his curiosity had taken; "I wrote to her about the insidious wretch, and now we don't speak."

"Then I will introduce myself," answered he: he was moving away, when Miss Dundas (whose delight lay in tormenting those whom she could not subjugate,) caught hold of his arm, and, by some attempts at badinage and raillery, held him in his place, until the Countess made her farewell curtsey to Lady Shafto, and the door was closed.

Disappointed at this manœuvre, Pembroke re-seated himself; and wondering why his aunt and cousin had not heard of her Ladyship's arrival at Harrowby, he determined to wait on her next day. Regardless of every word which the provoked

Diana

Diana addressed to him, he remained silent and meditating, until the loud voice of Shafto roaring in his ear, made him turn suddenly round. Miss Dundas tried to laugh at his reverie, though she knew that such a flagrant instance of inattention was death to her hopes; but Pembroke, not inclined to partake in the jest, coolly asked his bearish companion what he wanted?

"Nothing, upon my soul," cried he, "but to hear you speak. What the devil were you looking at on the carpet; Miss Dundas tells me, that you have lost your heart, to yonder grim Countess, whom my mother wanted me to gallant up the hill?"

"Shafto!" answered Pembroke, rising from his chair, "you cannot be speaking of Lady Tinemouth?"

"Efaith I am," roared he: "and if she be such a *scamp* as to live without a carriage, I won't be her lacquey for nothing. Two miles are not to be tramped over by me,

me, with no better companion than an old painted woman of quality."

"Surely you cannot mean," returned Pembroke, "that her ladyship was to walk from this place?"

"Without a doubt," cried Shafto, bursting into a horse laugh: "you would be clever to see my Lady Stingy in any other carriage than her clogs."

Irritated at the malice of Miss Dundas, and despising the vulgar illiberality of Shafto, Pembroke, without deigning a reply, abruptly left the room; and, hastening out of the house, ran, rather than walked, in hopes of overtaking the Countess, before she reached Harrowby.

He crossed the little wooden bridge which lies over the Witham; he scoured the fields; he leaped every stile and gate in his way, gained the inclosure that leads to the top of the hill; where he descried a light moving, and very rightly conjectured that it must be the lantern carried by her ladyship's attendant. Another

spring

spring over the shattered fence, cleared all obstacles; and he found himself close to Lady Tinemouth, who was leaning on the arm of a gentleman. Pembroke stopped at this sight; supposing that she had been met by some person belonging to the town, whose readier gallantry, now occupied the place, which Miss Dundas prevented him from filling, he was preparing to retreat, when Lady Tinemouth happening to turn her head, imagined from the hesitating embarrassment of his manner, that he was a stranger who had lost his way, and accosted him with that inquiry.

Pembroke bowed in some confusion, and related the simple fact, of his having heard, that she quitted Lady Shafto's house without any guard but the servant; and, that he had hurried out, the moment he learned the circumstance, to proffer his services. The Countess not only thanked him for such attention, but, constrained by a civility which at that instant she could have wished not to have been necessary,

asked

asked him to walk forward with her to the Abbey, and partake of some refreshment.

"But," added she, "though I perfectly recollect having seen another gentleman in Lady Shafto's room, besides Doctor Denton, I have not the honour of knowing your name?"

"It is Somerset," returned Pembroke: "I am the son of that Lady Somerset, who, during the last year of her life, had the happiness of being intimate with your ladyship."

Lady Tinemouth declared her pleasure at this meeting; and turning to the gentleman, who was walking in silence by her side, "Mr. Constantine," said she, "allow me to introduce to you, the cousin of the amiable Miss Beaufort."

Thaddeus, who had too well recognised the voice of his false friend, in the first accents which he addressed to the Countess, with a swelling heart, bent his head to the cold salutation of Somerset. Hearing that her ladyship's companion was the same

same Constantine whom he liberated from prison, Pembroke was stimulated with a desire to unmask his double villainy to Lady Tinemouth; and conceiving a curiosity to see the man, whose person and meritricious qualities, blinded even the judgment of his aunt; he readily obeyed the second invitation of the Countess, and consented to go home and sup with her.

Meanwhile, Thaddeus was agitated with a variety of emotions. Every tone of Pembroke's voice reminding him of happier days, pierced his heart, whilst a sense of his ingratitude, awakened all the pride and indignation of his soul. Full of resentment, he determined, that whatever might be the result, he would not shrink from an interview, the anticipation of which, Pembroke (who had received from himself an intimation of the name he assumed,) seemed to regard with such indifference.

Lady Tinemouth not imagining that Somerset and the Count had any personal knowledge

knowledge of each other, begged the gentlemen to accompany her into the supper parlour. Pembroke with no inconsiderable degree of rudeness, pushed by Thaddeus, and entered the room before him. The Count was so shocked at this instance of ungrateful defiance, and so insulted in every nerve, that he was obliged to pause a moment in the hall, to summon coolness, to follow him with a composed step, and dispassionate countenance. He accomplished this conquest over himself; and taking off his hat, laid it down on the Sofa. Lady Tinemouth began to express her joy at his arrival. The eyes of Pembroke, fixed on the calm, but severe aspect, of the man before him: he stood by the table with such an air of princely greatness, that the candid heart of Pembroke Somerset soon whispered to him, "*Surely, nothing ill can dwell in that breast!*"

Still his eyes followed him, when he turned round, and when he bent his head

to answer the Countess, in a voice so low, that it escaped his ear. Pembroke was bewildered. There was a something in the features, in the mien of this foreigner, so like his friend Sobieski! But then Sobieski was all frankness and animation; his cheek bloomed with the rich colouring of youth and happiness; his eyes flashed pleasure, aud his lips were decked with smiles. On the contrary, the person before him was not only considerably taller, and of more manly proportions, but his face was pale, reserved, and haughty: besides, he did not appear even to recollect the name of Somerset; and, what at once destroyed the supposition, his own was Constantine.

These reasonings having quickly passed through the mind of Pembroke, they left his heart unsatisfied. The conflict of his mind flushed his cheek; his bosom beat; and, keeping his searching and ardent gaze rivetted on the man, who was either his friend, or his counterpart, Lady Tinemouth withdrew from the table, and the

eyes

eyes of the two young men met. Thaddeus turned paler than before. There is an intelligence in the interchange of looks, which cannot be mistaken; it is the communication of souls, and there is no deception in their language. Pembroke flew forward, and catching hold of his friend's hand, exclaimed in an impetuous voice, "Am I right? Are you Sobieski?"

"I am," returned Thaddeus, almost inarticulate with emotion, and hardly knowing what to understand by Somerset's behaviour.

"Gracious Heaven!" cried he, still grasping his hand, "and can you have forgotten your friend Pembroke Somerset?"

The ingenuous heart of Thaddeus, acknowledged the words and manner of Pembroke, to be the language of truth; and, trusting that some mistake had involved his former conduct, he at once cast off all suspicion, and throwing his arms around him, strained him to his breast, and burst into tears.

Lady Tinemouth, who, during this scene stood mute with surprise, now advanced to the friends, who were weeping on each other's necks, and taking a hand of each, "My dear Sobieski," cried she, "Why did you withhold the knowledge of this friendship from me! Had you told me that you and Mr. Somerset were acquainted, this happy meeting might have been accomplished sooner."

"Yes," replied Pembroke, turning to the Countess, and wiping away the tears which were trembling on his cheek, "nothing could have given me pain at this moment, but the conviction, that he who was the preserver of my life, and my most generous protector, should, in this country, have endured the most abject distress, rather than let me know that it was in my power to be grateful."

Thaddeus took out his handkerchief, and for a few minutes concealed his face. The Countess looked on him with tenderness; and believing that he would sooner

regain

regain composure, were he alone with his friend, she stole unobserved out of the room.

Pembroke affectionately resumed; "But, I hope, dear Sobieski, that you will never leave me more. I have an excellent father, who, when he is made acquainted with my obligations to you and your noble family, will glory in loving you as a son."

Thaddeus having subdued '*the woman in his heart,*' raised his head, with an expression in his eyes, far different from that, which chilled the blood of Pembroke, on their first encounter.

"Circumstances," said he, "dear Somerset, have made me greatly injure you. A strange neglect on your side, since we separated at Villanow, gave the first blow to my confidence in your friendship. Though I lost your direct address, I wrote to you often, and yet you persevered in silence. When I came to England, after having witnessed the destruction of all that was dear to me in Poland, and then

of Poland itself, I wished to give your faithfulness another chance; I addressed two letters to you; I even delivered the last at your door myself, and I saw you in the window when I sent it in.

"By all that is sacred," cried Pembroke vehemently, and amazed, "I never saw any letter from you! I wrote you many. I never heard of these you mention. Indeed, I should even now have been ignorant of the Palatine's, and your mother's cruel fate, had it not been too circumstantially related in the newspapers."

"I believe you," returned Thaddeus, drawing an agonizing sigh, at the dreadful picture which the last sentence recalled; "I believe you; though at the time of which I speak, I thought otherwise; for, next day, both my letters were re-inclosed in a blank cover, directed as if by your hand, and brought by a servant, with a message, that there was no answer."

"Powers

"Powers of Heaven!" exclaimed Somerset, "there must be some villainy in this!—-Dearest Thaddeus!" cried he, breaking off abruptly, and grasping his hand, "I would have flown to you, had it been to meet death! But why did you not come in yourself? Who prevented you? Then no mistake could have happened. Why did you not come in yourself?"

"Because I was uncertain of your sentiments; my first letter remained unnoticed; and my heart, dear Somerset, added he, pressing his hand, "would not stoop to solicitation."

"Solicitation!" exclaimed Pembroke with warmth, "you have a right to demand my life! But there is some rascally business in this affair; nothing else could have carried it through: if any of my servants have dared to open these letters —Merciful Heaven," cried he, interrupting himself, "how you must have despised me!"

"I was afflicted," returned Thaddeus, "that the man whom my family so warmly loved, could prove so unworthy; and afterwards, whenever I met you in the streets, which I think was once or twice, I confess, to pass you, cut me to the heart."

"And you have met me!" exclaimed Pembroke, "and I not see you! I cannot comprehent it."

"Yes," answered Thaddeus, "and the first time was going into the playhouse. I believe I called after you."

"It is now ten months since," returned Pembroke; "I remember very well, that somebody called out my name, while I was handing Lady Coningsby and her sister into the porch. I looked about, and not seeing any one whom I knew, thought I must have been mistaken. But why, dear Sobieski, why did you not follow me into the theatre?"

Thaddeus shook his head, and smiling languidly; "My poverty would not permit me," replied he, "but I waited in the hall

hall, until every body left the house, in hopes of intercepting you as you passed."

Pembroke sprung from his chair at these words, and, with the most vehement voice and action, exclaimed, "I see it! That rascal Loftus is at the bottom of it! He followed me into the theatre; he must have seen you, and his cursed selfishness was alarmed. Yes, it must be he! He would not allow me to return that way; when I said I would, he told me a thousand lies about the carriages coming round and, like a fool, I went out by another door."

"Who is Mr. Loftus?" inquired Thaddeus, surprised at his friend's suspicion; "I do not know the man."

"What," returned Pembroke, walking about the room in a heat, "don't you remember, that Loftus is the name of the scoundrel, who persuaded me to volunteer against Poland? to screne his baseness, I have brought all this upon myself."

"Now I recollect it," replied Thaddeus; "but I never saw him."

"Yet I am not less certain that I am right," replied Somerset; "I will tell you my reasons. After I quitted Villanow, you remember I met him at Dantzic. Before we left the port, he implored, almost on his knees, that in pity to his mother and sisters, whom he supported out of his salary, I would refrain from incensing my parents against him, by relating any circumstance of our visit to Poland. The man shed tears as he spoke; and, like a fool, I consented to keep the secret, till the vicar of Somerset (a poor soul, ill of the dropsy) dies, and he be in possession of the living. When we landed in England, I found that the cause of my sudden recal was the illness of my dear mother. But Heaven denied me the happiness of beholding her again: she had been burried two days before I reached the shore." Pembroke paused a moment; and then resumed—"For

near

near a month after my return, I could not quit my room; a fever seized me; but, on my recovery, I wrote both to you and to the Palatine. I repeated my letters, at least every six weeks, during the first year of our separation; yet you persisted in being silent. Hurt as I was at this neglect, I believed that gratitude demanded some sacrifices from pride, and I continued to write, even till the spring following. Meanwhile, the papers of the day teemed with Sobieski's actions, Sobieski's fame; and, supposing that increasing glory had blotted me out of your memory, I resolved, thenceforth, to regard our friendship as a dream, and never to speak of it more."

Confounded at this double misapprehension, Thaddeus, with a glowing countenance, expressed his regret for having doubted his friend; and, repeating the assurance, of having been punctual to his promise of correspondence, even when he deemed him inconstant, acknowledged,

that nothing but a premeditated scheme could have effected so many disappointments.

"Aye;" returned Pembroke, reddening with awakened anger; "I could swear that Mr. Loftus has all my Letters in his bureau at this moment! No house ever gave a man a better opportunity to play the rogue in than our's. It is a custom with us to lay our letters in a morning on the hall table, whence they are sent to the office; and, in the same way, when the post arrives, they are spread out that their several owners may take them as they pass to breakfast. From this management, I cannot doubt the means by which Mr. Loftus, under the hope of separating us for ever, has intercepted every letter to you, and every letter from you. I suppose the wretch feared that I might repent my engagement, if our corespondence were allowed. He trembled, lest the business should be blown before the vicar died, and in consequence lose both the expect-

ed

ed living, and his present situation about Lord Arun. A villain! for once he has judged rightly; I will unmask him to my father; and shew him what it is to purchase subsistence at the expence of honour and justice."

Thaddeus, who could not withhold immediate credit to these evidences of chicanery, tried to calm the violence of his friend; who only answered, by insisting on having his company back with him to Somerset-Castle.

"I long to present you to my father;" cried Pembroke, "when I tell him who you are; of your kindness to me; how rejoiced will he be! How happy, how proud, to have you as his guest; to shew the warm gratitude of a Briton's heart! Indeed, Sobeiski, you will love him; for he is generous and noble, like your inestimable grandfather. Besides." added he smiling with a sudden recollection, "there is my lovely cousin Miss Beaufort, who, I verily

verily believe, will actually fly into your arms!"

The blood rushed over the cheeks of Thaddeus at this speech of his friend, and, half suppressing a sigh, he shook his head.

"Don't look so like an infidel," resumed Somerset. "If you have any doubts of possessing her affections, I can put you out of your pain by a single sentence!—When Lady Dundas's household, with myself amongst them, (for little did I suspect, that I was joining the cry against my friend!) were asserting the most flagrant instances of your deceit to Euphemia, Mary, alone, withstood the whole tide of malice, and compelled me to release you."

"Gracious Providence!" cried Thaddeus, catching Pembroke's hand, and looking eagerly and with agitation in his face, "Was it you who came to my prison! Was it Miss Beaufort who visited my lodgings?"

"Indeed it was," returned his friend,

"and

"and I blush for myself, that I quitted Newgate without an interview. Had I followed the dictates of common decency, I should have seen you; and then, what pain would have been spared my dear cousin! What a joyful surprize would have awaited myself!"

Thaddeus could only reply by pressing his friend's hand. His brain whirled. He could not decide on the nature of his feelings; one moment he would have given worlds to throw himself at Miss Beaufort's feet, and the next, he trembled at the prospect of meeting her so soon.

"Dear Sobieski!" cried Pembroke, "how strangly you receive this intelligence! Is it possible that the love of Mary Beaufort can be rejected?"

"No," cried the Count, looking up, his fine face flushed with emotion; "I adore Miss Beaufort. Her virtues possess my whole heart. But can I forget that I have only that heart to offer? Can I forget that I am a beggar? That even now,

now, I exist on her bounty?" The eyes of Thaddeus, and the sudden tremor which shook his frame, finished this appeal to his fate.

Pembroke found it enter his soul. To hide its effect, he threw himself on his friend's breast, and exclaimed, "Do not injure me and my father by these sentiments! You are come, dearest Sobieski, to a second home. Sir Robert Somerset will consider himself ennobled in supplying the place of your lamented grandfather!—and my cousin Mary, as you love her, shall bind us still closer; you must be my relation as well as my friend."

Thaddeus replied with animated acknowledgements of Pembroke's affection, —"But," added he, "I must not allow the generous spirit of my dear Somerset to believe, that I can live a dependant on any power, but the Author of my being. I consider nothing so degrading as an existence wasted in idleness; therefore, if Sir Robert Somerset will assist me to support,

procure some honest means of acquiring support, I shall thank him from my soul. In no other way, my kindest friend, can I ever be brought to tax the gratitude of your father."

Pembroke coloured at this, and exclaimed, in a voice of displeasure, "Gracious Heaven, Sobieski, what can you mean? Do you imagine, that ever my father or myself can forget, that you were little less than a prince in your own country? That when in such a high station, you treated me like a brother? That you preserved me, even when I lifted my arm against your life? Can we be such monsters as to forget all this? or think that we acted justly by you, in permitting you to labour for your bread? No, Thaddeus, my very soul spurns the idea. Your mother sheltered me as a son; and I insist, that you allow my father to perform the same part by you! Besides, you shall not be idle; you may have a commission in the army, and I will follow you."

The

The Count pressed the hand of his friend, and looking gratefully in his face, shook his head, and replied, "Had I a hundred tongues, my generous Pembroke, I could not express my sense of your friendship; it is indeed a cordial to my heart; it imparts to me an earnest of happiness, which I thought had fled for ever; but it shall not allure me from my principles. I am resolved not to live a life of indolence; and I am resolved, at this period not to enter the British army. No," added he, emotion elevating his tone and manner, "rather would I toil for subsistence by the sweat of my brow, than be subjected to the necessity of acting in concert with those ravagers who destroyed my country! I cannot fight by the side of the Russians! I cannot inlist under their allies! I will not be led out to devastation! Mine was, and ever shall be, a defensive sword;——and, should danger threaten England, I would be as ready to withstand her enemies, as I ardently,

dently, though ineffectually, opposed those of unhappy Poland."

Pembroke recognized the high-souled Thaddeus of Warsaw in this lofty burst of enthusiasm aware that his father's munificence, and manner of conferring esteem and obligations, would go farther towards removing these scruples, than all his arguments, he did not attempt to combat a resolution, which he knew that he could not subdue; but tried to prevail with him to become his guest, until something could be arranged to suit his wishes.

Thaddeus consented to accompany Somerset to the castle, the day after that on which Sir Robert should be apprised of his coming. Pembroke perceived that the morning had surprised them; and, shaking his friend warmly by the hand, bade him farewell: then, hastening down the hill, he arrived at the lodge, just as the servants were opening the shutters.

Having given orders to the groom, whom he met in the passage, he wrote a slight

slight apology to Shafto for his abrupt departure; and, mounting his horse, gallopped, full of delight, towards Somerset Castle.

Chap. III.

NEXT, morning, when the Countess and Thaddeus were seated at breakfast, she expressed surprize and pleasure, at the scene which she had witnessed on the preceding night; at the same time intimating some mortification, that he had withheld any part of his confidence from her. Sobieski soon obtained her ladyships pardon, by relating the manner of his first meeting with Mr. Somerset, and the consequent events of that momentous period.

Lady Tinemouth wept over the distressful fate, that marked the residue of his narrative, with a tenderness which endeared her to his soul. But when, in compliance with his inquiries, she informed him how it happened that she was at Harrowby

Harrowby Abbey, when he supposed her to be on the Wolds; it was his turn to pity; and to shudder at his consanguinity with Lord Harwold.

"Indeed," added the Countess, "you must have had a most tedious journey from Harwold Park to Harrowby; and nothing but my pleasure could exceed my astonishment, when I met you last night on the hill."

Thaddeus declared, that travelling a few miles farther than he intended, was no fatigue to him; yet were it otherwise, the happiness which he then enjoyed, would have acted as a panacea for worse ills, could he have seen her ladyship looking as well as when she left London.

Lady Tinemouth smiled. "You are very right, Sobieski; I am worse than when I was in town. My solitary journey to Harwold, harrassed me much; and when my son sent me orders to leave it, because his father wanted the place for the autumnal months, I was labouring under

under a severe cold, which I caught in travelling. Nevertheless I obeyed him, and, in great distress of heart, arrived here last week. How kind you were to follow me! Who informed you of the place of my destination; hardly any of Lady Sophia's household?"

"No," returned Thaddeus, "I luckily had the precaution to inquire at the inn where the coach stopped, what part of Lord Tinemouth's family were at the Park; and when I heard, that the Earl himself was there, my next question was, where then is the Countess? The landlord very civilly told me of your having engaged a carriage from his house a day or two before, to carry you to one of his Lordship's seats, within a few miles of Somerset Castle. Hence, from what I had heard you say of the situation of Harrowby, I concluded that it must be the abbey; and so I sought you at a venture.

"And I hope that a happy issue" replied she "will arise from your wanderings!

ings! This rencontre, with so old a friend as Mr. Somerset, is a pleasing omen. For my part, I was ignorant of the arrival of the family at the castle until yesterday morning, when I sent off a messenger to apprise my dear Miss Beaufort, that I was in her neighbourhood. To my great dissatisfaction, Lady Shafto found me out immediately; and when, in compliance with her teizing invitation, I walked down, to sit an hour with her last night, little did I expect that I should meet with the amiable cousin of our sweet friend. So delightful an accident, has amply repaid me for the pain that I endured, in seeing Miss Dundas in her ladyship's house: an insolent and reproachful letter, which she wrote to me on your account, has rendered her an object of my most decided dislike."

Thaddeus smiled and bowed, "Since, my dear Lady Tinemouth, her groundless malice, and Miss Euphemia's folly, have failed, in estranging, either your confidence,

or

or the esteem of Miss Beaufort, from me, I despise and pardon them both. Perhaps I ought to pity them; for is it not difficult, to pass through the enchantments of wealth and adulation, and emerge as pure as when we entered them? Unclouded fortune is, indeed, a trial of spirits; and how brightly does Miss Beaufort rise from the blaze! Surrounded by spledour, homage, and indulgence, she is yet all nature, gentleness, and virtue!"

The Countess who wished to appear cheerful, rallied him on the warmth of his expressions; then rising from her seat, she left him to his meditations, and retired to dress.

The family at Somerset were just drawn round the breakfast table, when Pembroke arrived. During the repast, they expressed their surprise at the suddenness of his return. Miss Beaufort, after repeating the contents of the note, which she had received the preceding day from Lady Tinemouth,

requested, that her cousin would be kind enough, to drive her in his curricle, that morning to Harrowby.

"I will, with pleasure," answered he. "I have seen her ladyship, and even supped with her last night."

"How came that?" asked Mrs. Dorothy.

"I shall explain it to my father, whenever he will honour me with an audience," returned he, addressing the baronet, with all the joy of his heart looking out at his eyes; "will you indulge me, dear sir, by half an hour's attention, any time before noon?"

"Certainly," replied Sir Robert; "at present I am going into my study, where I must settle my stewards books; but the moment I have finished, I will send for you."

Mrs. Dorothy walked out after her brother, to attend on her aviary; and Miss Beaufort remaining alone with her cousin, made some inquiries about the Countess's reasons for coming to the abbey.

"I

"I know nothing about them," replied he, gaily, "for she went to bed almost the instant I entered the house. Too good to remain where her company was not wanted, she left me to enjoy a most delightful *tete-a-tete* with a dear friend, from whom I parted four years ago. In short, we sat up the whole night together, talking over past scenes,—and present ones too, for I assure you, you were not forgotten."

"I! what had I to do with it?" replied Mary, smiling, "I cannot recollect any friend of yours, whom you have not seen these four years."

"Well, that is strange!" answered Pembroke, "he remembers you perfectly; but, true to your sex, you affirm what you please, tho' I know that there is not a man in the world whom you prefer before him."

Miss Beaufort shook her head, laughed, and sighed; and withdrawing her hand

from his, threatened to leave him, if he would not be serious.

"I am serious," cried he, pulling her back to her chair: "Would you have me *swear* that I have seen him whom you most wish to see?"

She regarded the expression of his countenance with a momentary emotion; and, taking her seat again, "You can have seen no man," said she, "that is of consequence to me; so, whoever your friend may be, I have only to congratulate you on a meeting, which affords you such delight."

Pembroke burst into a laugh at her composure. "So cold," cried he, "So cautious! Yet I verily believe that you would participate my pleasure, should I tell you who he is. However you are such a sceptic, that I won't hint even one of the many fine things that he said of you.

She smiled incredulously.

"I could beat you, cousin," exclaimed he,

he, " for this oblique way of saying that I am telling lies! But I will have my revenge on your curiosity, for, on my " honour, I declare, added he emphatically, " that last night, I met with a friend at Lady Tinemouth's, who, four years ago, saved my life; who entertained me several weeks in his house; and who has seen, and adores you! 'Tis true, on my hopes of heaven; and I have promised, that you will repay these weighty obligations by marrying him. What do you say to this, my sweet Mary? "

Miss Beaufort looked anxious at the serious and energetic manner in which he made these assertions: even the sportive kiss that ended the question, did not dispel the gravity, with which she prepared to reply.

Pembroke perceiving her intent, prevented her by exclaiming, " Cease, Mary, cease! I see you are going to make a false statement. Let truth prevail, and you will not deny, that I am suing for a

plighted faith? You will not deny who it was that softened and subdued your heart? You cannot conceal from me, that the wanderer Constantine possesses your affections?"

She reddened with pain and displeasure; and, rising from her seat, "I did not expect this cruel, this ungenerous speech from you, Pembroke!" cried she, averting her tearful eyes; "What have I done to deserve so rude, so unfeeling a reproach?"

Pembroke threw his arm round her waist. "Come," said he in a tender voice, "don't be tragical. I never meant to reproach you, child: I dare say, if you gave your heart, it was only in return for his. I know you are a grateful girl; and, I verily believe, that you won't find much difference between my friend, the young Count Sobieski, and the forlorn Constantine."

A suspicion of the truth, flashed across Miss Beaufort's mind: unable to speak, she

she caught hold of her cousin's hands, and looking eagerly in his face, her eyes declared the question that she would have asked.

Pembroke laughed triumphantly; but a servant entering, to tell him that Sir Robert was ready, he strained her to his breast, and exclaimed, "Now I am revenged! Farewell! I leave you to all the pangs of doubt and curiosity!" He then flew out of the room, with an arch glance at her distressed countenance, and hurried up stairs.

She clasped her trembling hands together, as the door closed on Pembroke. "O Gracious Providence!" cried she, "What am I to understand by this mystery, this joy of my cousin's? Can it be possible, that the illustrious Sobieski, and my contemned Constantine, are the same persons?" A burning blush overspread her face and bosom, at the expression *my* which had escaped her lips.

Whilst the graces, the sweetness, the dignity of Thaddeus, captivated her notice; his sufferings, his virtues, and the mysterious interest which involved his history, fixed her attention, and awakened her esteem. From these grounds the step is short to love. 'When the mind is conquered, the heart surrenders at discretion.' But she knew not, that she had advanced too far to retreat, until the last scene at Dundas-house, by forcing her to defend Constantine against the charge of loving her, made her confess, how much she wished that the charge were true.

Poor and lowly as he seemed, she found that her whole heart and life were wrapped in his remembrance; that his worshipped idea was her most precious solace; her property, the dear treasure which was her secret and supreme felicity. It was the companion of her walks, the minitor of her actions. Whenever she planned, whenever she executed, she asked herself,

herself, How would Constantine consider this? and accordingly did she approve or condemn her conduct.

Though separated far from this idol of her memory, thus was the impression, which he had stamped on her heart, ever present. The shade of Laura visited the solitude of Vaucluse; the image of Constantine haunted the walks of Somerset. The loveliness of nature; its leafy groves, and verdant meadows; its blooming mornings, and luxurious sunsets; the romantic shadows of twilight, or the soft glories of the moon and stars; as they pressed beauty and sentiment upon her heart, awoke it to the remembrance of Constantine: she saw his image, she felt his soul, in every object. Subtile and undefinable is that ethereal chord, which unites our tenderest thoughts with their chain of association!

Before this conversation, in which Pembroke mentioned the name of Constantine, with such badinage and ambiguity, he

never heard him spoken of by Mary or his aunt, without declaring a displeasure nearly amounting to anger. Hence, when he now so strangely altered his tone, Miss Beaufort necessarily concluded, that he had seen in the person of him she most valued, some one whom he loved. Before this time, she more than once suspected, from the opinions which Somerset occasionally repeated, respecting the affairs of Poland, that he could only have acquired so accurate a knowledge of its events, by having visited the country itself. She mentioned her suspicion to Mr. Loftus: he denied the fact; and she thought no more on the subject, until the present ambiguous hints of her cousin, conjured up these doubts anew; and led her to suppose, that if Pembroke had not disobeyed his father so far as to go to Warsaw, he must have met with the Count Sobieski in some other realm. The possibility that this young hero, of whom fame spoke so loudly, might be the mysterious

rious Constantine, bewildered and delighted her. The more she compared what she had heard of the one, with what she witnessed in the other, the more was she reconciled to the probability of her ardent hope. Besides, she could not for a moment believe, that her cousin would so cruelly sport with her delicacy and peace, as to excite expectations, which he could not fulfil.

Agitated by a suspence, which bordered on agony, with a beating heart she heard his quick step descending the stairs. The door opened, and Pembroke, flying into the room, caught up his hat: as he was darting away again, Miss Beaufort, unable to restrain her impatience, with an imploring voice ejaculated his name. He turned round, and displayed to her amazed sight a countenance in which no vistige of his former animation could be traced; his cheek was flushed; and his eyes full of distraction, shot a wild fire that struck to her heart. Unconscious what she did,

she ran up to him; but Pembroke pushing her back, exclaimed, "Don't ask me any questions, if you would not drive me to madness."

"O Heaven!" cried she, catching his arm, and clinging to him while the eagerness of his motion dragged her into the hall; "tell me! Has any thing happened to my guardian? to your friend? to Constantine?"

"No;" replied he, looking at her with a face full of desperation; "but my father commands me to treat him like a villain."

She could hardly credit her senses, at this confirmation, that Constantine and Sobieski were one: turning giddy with the tumultuous delight that rushed over her soul, she staggered back a few paces, and, leaning against the open door, tried to recover breath to regain the room she had left.

Pembroke having escaped from her grasp, ran furiously down the hill, mounted his

his horse, and, forbidding any groom to attend him, gallopped towards the high road with the impetuosity of a madman. All the powers of his soul were in arms. Wounded, dishonoured, stigmatised with ingratitude and baseness, he believed himself to be the most degraded of men.

Sir Robert Somerset, founded a hatred of the Poles and Hungarians, on the recollection of an injury which he received, in early youth, from some of those people. In this instance, his dislike was implacable; and when his son set out for the continent, he positively forbade him to enter either Poland or Hungary. Nevertheless, when Pembroke joined the Baronet in his library, he did it with confidence. With a bounding heart, and animated countenance, he recapitulated, how he had been wrought upon by the Russian noblemen, to take up arms in their cause, and march into Poland. At these last words, the brow of his father contracted.

Pembroke,

Pembroke, who expected some marks of displeasure, hastened to obliterate his disobedience, by narrating the event which introduced, not only the young Count Sobieski to his succour, but the consequent friendship of the whole of that princely family.

Sir Robert made no reply to this, than by a deeper frown; and, when Pembroke, with all the ardour of grief, attempted to describe the calamitous death of the Palatine, the horrors which attended the last hours of the Countess,and the succeeding misery of Thaddeus, who was now in England, no language can paint the rage which at once burst from the Baronet. He stamped on the ground, he covered his face with his clenched hands; then turning on his son with the most tremendous fury, he exclaimed, "Pembroke! You have outraged my commands! And never will I pardon you, if this young man ever blast me with his sight."

"Merciful Heaven!" cried Pembroke, thunder-

thunder-struck at a violence, which he almost wished might proceed from any cause but intention; "Surely something has agitated my father! What has discomposed you, Sir?"

Sir Robert shook his head, whilst his teeth ground against each other. "Don't mistake me," replied he in a firm voice, "I am perfectly in my senses. It depends on *you* that I shall continue so. You know my oath against those accursed Polanders; and, I repeat again, if you ever bring that young man into my presence, you shall never see *me* more."

A cold dew overspread the body of Pembroke. He would have caught hold of his father's hand, but he held it back. "O, Sir!" said he, "You surely cannot intend, that I shall treat with ingratitude, the man who saved my life?"

Sir Robert did not vouchsafe him an answer, but continued walking up and down the room, until his agitation increasing at every step, he opened the door

door of an interior apartment, and retired, bidding his son remain.

The horror-struck Pembroke, waited for near a quarter of an hour, before his father re-entered. When he did appear, the deep gloom of his eye gave no encouragement to his son, who, hanging down his head, recoiled from speaking first. Sir Robert approached with a composed but severe countenance, and said, "I have been seeking every palliation that your conduct will admit, but I can find none. Before you quitted England, you knew well my abhorrence of the Polish nation. One of that country, many years ago, wounded my happiness in a way I shall never recover. From that hour I took an oath, never to enter its borders; and never to suffer one of its people to come within my doors. Rash, disobedient boy! You know my disposition, and you have seen the emotion with which this dilemma has shaken my soul! But, be it on your head: you have incurred

incurred obligations which I cannot repay. I will not perjure myself, to defray a debt contracted against my positive and declared principles. I never will see this Polander you speak of; and, it is my express command, on pain of my eternal malediction, that you break with him entirely."

Pembroke, with the most agitated feelings, fell into a seat. Sir Robert proceeded.

"I pity your distress, Pembroke, but my resolution cannot be shaken. Oaths are not to be broken with impunity. You must either resign him or resign me. We may compromise your debt of gratitude; I will give you deeds to put your friend in possession of five hundred pounds a year for life, for ever, but, from the hour in which you tell him so, you must see him no more."

Sir Robert was preparing to quit the room; when Pembroke, starting from his chair, threw himself in agony on his knees, and catching by the skirt of his coat, implored him, for God's sake, to recall his words;

words; to remember, that he was affixing everlasting dishonour on his son! "Remember, dear sir!" cried he, holding his struggling hand, "that the man, to whom you offer money as a compensation for insult, is of a nature too noble to receive it. He will reject it, and spurn me; and I shall know that I deserve his scorn. For mercy's sake, spare me the agony of harrowing up the heart of my preserver; of meeting reproach from his eyes!"

"Leave me!" cried the Baronet, breaking from him; "I repeat, unless you wish to incur my curse, do as I have commanded."

Thus outraged, thus agonized, Pembroke had appeared before the eyes of his cousin Mary, more like a distracted creature, than a man possessed of his senses. Shortly after his abrupt departure, her apprehension was petrified to a dreadful certainty of some cruel ruin to her hopes, by an order, which she received in the hand-writing of her uncle, commanding her

her not to attempt visiting Lady Tinemouth, whilst the Count Sobieski continued to be her guest.

Hardly knowing whither he went, Pembroke did not arrive at the ruined aisle, which leads to the habitable part of the Abbey, until near three o'clock. He inquired of the servant who took his horse, whether the Countess and Mr. Constantine were at home. The man replied in the affirmative; but added with a sad countenance, that he feared neither of them could be seen.

"For what reason?" demanded Somerset.

"Alas! sir," replied the servant, "this day at noon, while my Lady was dressing, she was seized with a violent fit of coughing, which ended in the rupture of a blood vessel. It continued to flow so long, that Mr. Constantine told the apothecary, whom he had summoned, to send for a physician. The Doctor is not yet arrived. and Mr. Constantine won't leave my lady."

Tho'

Though Mr. Somerset was truly concerned at the illness of the Countess, the respite it afforded him, from immediately declaring the ungrateful message of Sir Robert, gave him no inconsiderable degree of ease. Some little relieved by the hope of being for one day spared the anguish of displaying his father in a disgraceful light, he entered the Abbey, and commissioned a maid-servant to inform Thaddeus that he was below.

In a few minutes the girl returned with the following lines, scrawled on a piece of paper.

"I am grieved that I cannot see my dear Somerset to-day; I fear that my revered friend is on her death-bed. I have sent for Dr. Cavendish, who is now at Stamford; doubtless you know he is a man of the first abilities; if human skill could preserve her, I might yet have hopes; but her disorder is a consumption, and its stroke is sure. I am now sitting by her

her bed-side, and writing what she dictates to her husband, her son, and her daughter: painful, you may believe, is the task! I cannot, my dear Somerset, add more, than my hope of seeing you soon; and that you will join in prayers to Heaven for the restoration of my inestimable friend, with your faithful

"SOBIESKI."

"Alas! unhappy, persecuted Sobieski!" thought Pembroke, as he closed the paper; "To what art thou doomed! Some friends are torn from thee by death; others desert thee in the hour of trouble!"

He took out his pencil, to answer this distressing epistle, but he stopped at the first word; he durst not write, that his father would fulfil any one of those engagements, which he had so largely promised; and, throwing away the pencil and the paper, he left a verbal declaration of his sorrow at what had happened, and an assurance of calling next day. Turning his

his back on a house, which he had left in the morning, with such animating hopes, he remounted his horse, and, melancholy and slow, rode about the country until evening; so unwilling was he to return to that home, which now threatened him with the frowns of his father, the tears of Mary Beaufort, and the miserable reflections of his own wretched heart.

CHAP. IX.

DOCTOR Cavendish not having quitted his friend at Stamford, set off for Harrowby the instant Mr. Constantine's messenger arrived; and before midnight alighted at the Abbey.

When he entered Lady Tinemouth's chamber, he found her supported in the arms of Thaddeus, and struggling with a second rupture of her lungs, which seemed to threaten immediate dissolution. As he approached the bed, Thaddeus turned his eyes on him, with an expression, that powerfully told his fears. Dr. Cavendish silently pressed his hand; then taking from his pocket some styptic drops, which he brought on purpose, he made the Countess swallow them, and soon saw that they succeded in stopping the blood.

Thaddeus

Thaddeus and his friend remained by the side of the suffering Lady Tinemouth, until ten in the morning, when she sunk into a gentle sleep. Complete stillness being necessary to continue this repose, the Doctor proposed leaving a maid to watch by her Ladyship; and drawing the Count out of the room, descended the stairs.

Mr. Somerset, who had been arrived half an hour, met them in the breakfast parlour. After a few kind words exchanged between the parties, they sat down with dejected countenances, to their melancholy meal. Thaddeus was too much absorbed in the scene that he had left, to take any thing but a dish of coffee.

"Do you think Lady Tinemouth is in imminent danger?" inquired Pembroke of the Doctor.

Dr. Cavendish sighed and turning to Thaddeus, directed to him the answer, which his friend's question demanded. "I

am

afraid, my dear Mr. Constantine," said he, in a reluctant voice, " that you are to sustain a new trial! I fear her Ladyship cannot live eight-and-forty hours."

Thaddeus threw down his eyes, and shuddered, but made no reply. Further remarks were prevented by a messenger from the Countess, who desired Mr. Constantine's immediate attendance at her bedside. He obeyed. In half an hour he returned, with the tears yet wet on his cheek.

" Dear Thaddeus!" cried Pembroke, rising and taking his hand, " I trust that the Countess is not worse? This emotion of your's is too distressing: it afflicts my very heart." Indeed it rent it; for Pembroke could not help internally acknowledging, that when Sobeiski should close the eyes of Lady Tinemouth, he would be paying the last sad office to his last friend. That dear distinction, he durst no longer arrogate to himself. Denied the fulfilment of its duties, he thought, that to retain

the title would be an assumption without a right.

Thaddeus drew his hand over his again overflowing eyes; "The Countess herself," said he, "feels the truth of what Dr. Cavendish told us. She sent for me, to beg, that, as I loved her, or would wish to see her die in peace, to devise some means of bringing her daughter to the Abbey to night. As for Lord Harwold, she says, his behaviour, since he arrived at manhood, has been of a nature so cruel and unnatural, that she would not draw on herself the misery, or he the added guilt, of a refusal: But with regard to Lady Albina, who has been quiescent in all their barbarities, she trusts, that she might be prevailed on to seek a last embrace from a dying parent. It is this request," continued he, "that agitates me. When she pictured to me, with all the fervour of a mother her doating fondness for this daughter, (on whom, whenever she did venture to hope, all her fairy dreams rested;) when she wrung

my

my hands, and beseeched me, as if I had been the sole disposer of her fate, to let her see her child before she died; I could only promise every exertion to effect it; and, with an aching heart, I came to consult you."

Dr. Cavendish was opening his lips to speak, but Somerset in his eagernes to relieve his friend, did not perceive it, and immediately answered: "I will undertake this very hour, what you have promised. I know that Lord Tinemouth's family are now at the Wold. It is only thirty miles distant, I will send a servant, to have relays of horses ready. My curricle, which is at the door, will be more convenient than a chaise; and I will engage to be back before to-morrow morning. Write a letter, Thaddeus," added he, "to Lady Albina; tell her of her mother's situation; and, though I never have seen her ladyship, I will give it into her own hand; and carry her off directly, even were it in the face of her villainous father."

The pale cheeks of Sobieski, were flushed with a momentary hectic; turning to Dr. Cavendish, he begged him to write, whilst he walked out with his friend to order the carriage. Pembroke was thanked for his zeal, but it was not by words; they are too weak vehicles to convey strong impressions; Thaddeus pressed his hand, and accompanied the action with a look, which spoke volumes. The withered heart of Pembroke, expanded under the animating gratitude of his friend: he sprung into his seat, and forgot, until he lost sight of Harrowby Hill, how soon he must appear to that friend, as the most ungrateful of men.

It was near four in the afternoon, before Mr. Somerset left his curricle, at the little inn, which skirts the village of Harthorpe. The paling belonging to Lord Tinemouth's park, was only a few yards distant; but, fearful of being observed, Pembroke sought a more obscure part; and, scaling a wall, which was covered by the branches of high trees, he found his way

to

to the house, through an almost impassible thicket.

He watched two hours, for the appearance of Lady Albina, (whose youth and elegance, he thought, would unequivocally distinguish her from the rest of the Earl's household,) but in vain. Desponding of success, he was preparing to change his station, when he heard a sound among the dry leaves, and the next moment, a beautiful young creature passed the bush, behind which he was concealed. The fine symmetry of her profile, assured him that she must be the daughter of Lady Tinemouth. She stooped to gather a china-aster: Pembroke, knowing that no time should be lost, gently, emerged from his recess; but not in so quiet a manner as to escape the ear of Lady Albina, who instantly looking round, screamed, and would have fled, had he not thrown himself before her, and exclaimed, "Stay, Lady Albina! For Heaven's sake, stay! I come from your mother!"

Her

Her Ladyship gazed fearfully in his face, and tried to release her hand, which he had seized to prevent her flight.

"Do not be alarmed," continued he; "no harm is intended you. I am the son of Sir Robert Somerset; and the friend of your mother, who is now on the point of death. She implores to see you this night, (for she has hardly an hour to live,) to hear from your own lips, that you do not hate her."

Lady Albina, now wholly given up to his relation, trembled dreadfully; and, with faded cheeks, and quivering lips, replied, "Hate my mother! O, no! I have ever dearly loved her!"

A flood of tears prevented her speaking further; and Pembroke perceiving that he had gained her confidence, put the Doctor's letter into her hand. The gentle heart of Lady Albina bled at every word, which her almost blinded eyes read over; turning to Pembroke, who stood contemplating her lovely countenance with

with the deepest interest, she said, "Pray, Mr. Somerset, take me, now, to my mother. Were she to die before I arrive, I should be miserable for life. Alas! alas! I have never been allowed to behold her! Never been allowed to visit London, because my father knew that I believed my poor mother innocent, and would have seen her, had it been possible."

Lady Albina wept violently as she spoke, and giving her hand to Pembroke, timidly looked round, towards the house, and added, "You must take me this instant. We must hasten away, in case we should be surprised. If Lady Sophia were to know that I have been speaking with any body out of the family, I should be locked up for months."

Pembroke did not require a second command, from his beautiful charge; but conducting her through the unfrequented paths by which he had entered, seated her in his curricle; and whipping his horses,

set off, full gallop, towards the melancholy goal of his enterprize.

The tender Lady Albina, (whose ingenuous mind, had ever been proof against the malicious insinuations of Lady Sophia to the prejudice of Lady Tinemouth,) sat by the side of Mr. Somerset, sometimes mute with sorrow; sometimes lamenting, with all the artless eloquence of nature, the injuries of her dying parent, and her own unhappiness, in having been so long withheld from paying duty, where she owed so much affection.

Whilst these two anxious travellers were pursuing their sad journey, the inhabitants of the Abbey, were distracted with apprehension, that the Countess would expire before their arrival. Ever since Lady Tinemouth received information that Mr. Somerset was gone to the Wold, hope and fear, agitated her almost to suffocation; at length, wearied out with solicitude and expectation, she turned her dim eyes upon Thaddeus, and said,

said, in a languid voice, "My dear friend, it must be near midnight. I shall never see the morning; I shall never in this world see my child. I pray you, thank Mr. Somerset for all the trouble I have occasioned; and my daughter, my Albina!" added her ladyship, hardly able to articulate. "Oh! Father of mercies!" cried she, holding up her clasped hands, pour all thy blessings upon her head! she never wilfully gave this broken heart a pang!"

The Countess had hardly ended speaking, when Thaddeus heard a bustle on the stairs; suspecting that it might be the arrival of his friend, he made a sign to Dr. Cavendish to go and inquire. His heart beat violently, whilst he kept his eye fixed on the door, and held the fainting pulse of Lady Tinemouth in his hand. The Doctor re-entered, and, in a low voice, whispered, "Lady Albina is here."

The words acted like magic on the fading senses of the Countess; with pre-

ternatural strength she started from her pillow, and catching hold of Sobieski's arm with both her's, cried, "O! give her to me whilst I have life."

Lady Albina appeared, led in by Pembroke, but instantly quitting his hand, with an agonizing shriek she rushed towards the bed, and flung herself into the extended arms of her mother. Those arms closed on her, and the head of the Countess rested on her bosom.

Dr. Cavendish perceived, by the struggles of the young lady, that she was in convulsions; and taking her off the bed, he consigned her to Pembroke and Thaddeus, who carried her into another apartment: he remained to assist the Countess.

Albina was removed; but the eyes of her amiable and injured mother, were never again unclosed: she had breathed her last sigh, in grateful extacy, on the bosom of her daughter; and Heaven had taken her spotless soul to itself.

Being convinced that the Countess was indeed

indeed no more, the good Doctor left her remains in charge with the women; and repairing to the adjoining room, found Lady Albina yet senseless, in the arms of his two friends. She was laid on a sofa, and Cavendish was pouring some drops into her mouth, when he descried Thaddeus gliding softly out of the room: desirous to spare him the shock of suddenly seeing the corpse of one whom he loved so dearly, he said, "Stop, Mr. Constantine! I conjure you, do not go into the Countess's room!"

The eyes of Thaddeus turned with quickness on the distressed face of the physician; one glance explained what the Doctor durst not speak; and hastily saying, "I shall obey you," he hurried from the chamber.

In the Count's rapid descent from Lady Albina's room to the breakfast parlour, he too plainly perceived, by the tears of the servants, that he had now another sorrow to add to his accumulated load.

He darted from the clamorous laments of these honest people, into the parlour, and shutting the door, threw himself on a sopha; but rest induced thought, and thought harrowed up his soul. He started from his position; he paced the room in a paroxysm of anguish; he would have given worlds for one tear to relieve his oppressed heart. Ready to suffocate, he threw open a window and leaned out. Not a star was visible to light the darkness; the wind blew freshly; and, with parched lips, he inhaled it, as the reviving breath of heaven.

He was sitting on the window-seat, with his head leaning against the casement, when Pembroke entered unobserved: walking up to him, he laid his hand upon his arm, and ejaculated in a tremulous voice, "Thaddeus, dear Thaddeus!"

Thaddeus rose at the well known sounds; they reminded him, that he was not yet alone in the world; and throwing himself upon the bosom of Mr. Somerset, he exclaimed

claimed, "Heaven has still reserved thee, my dear Pembroke, to be my comforter! In thy friendship" added he, wiping away the tears which relieved his bursting heart; "I shall find an affection, similar with those which are gone for ever: my friend, my brother! you are the last cord that binds me to the world."

Pembroke received the embrace of his friend; he felt his tears upon his cheek; but he could neither return the one, nor sympathize with the other. The conviction, that he was soon to sever that cord, which bound them to each other; that he was to cut asunder that knot, which ought to have united them for ever; that he was to deprive the man who had preserved his life, of the only stay of his existence, and abandon him at once to despair! all these ideas struck to his soul; and, grasping the hand of his friend, he gazed at his averted and dejected features, with a look of desperate horror. "Sobeiski," cried he, "whatever may happen, never forget, that

that I swear, that I love you dearer than my life! And when I am forced to abandon my friend, I shall not be long abandoning what will then be worthless to me."

Not perceiving the phrenzy of eye which accompanied this energetic declaration, Thaddeus gave no other meaning to the words, than the belief, that it was the most expressive assurance of affection, which the forceful nature of his friend could devise.

The entrance of Dr. Cavendish, disturbed the two young men; to whom he communicated with concern, the increased indisposition of Lady Albina.

"The shock," said he, "which she received from the meeting, and death of her mother, has so materially shaken her delicate frame, that I have ordered her to bed, and administered an opiate, which I hope will procure her some repose:—and you my dear Sir," added he, addressing the Count, "you had better seek a little

little rest! The stoutest constitution, might sink under what you have lately endured. Pray allow Mr. Somerset and myself to prevail with you, on our accounts, if not on your own, to retire for half an hour!"

Thaddeus in disregard of his personal comfort, never infringed on that of others; he felt that he could not sleep, but he knew it would gratify his benevolent friends to suppose that he did; and, accordingly, without opposition, he went to a room, and throwing himself on a bed, lay for near an hour, ruminating on all that had passed.

There is an omnipresence in thought, or a celerity producing nearly the same effect, which brings within the short space of a few minutes, the images of many foregoing years. In almost the same moment, Thaddeus reflected on his strange meeting with the Countess; her melancholy story; her forlorn death-bed; the fatal secret, that her vile husband and son were

were his father and brother; and that her daughter, whom his warm heart acknowledged as a sister, was with him under the same roof, and like him, the innocent inheritor of her father's shame.

Whilst these multifarious and painful meditations were agitating his perturbed mind, Dr. Cavendish found repose on a couch; and Pembroke Somerset, every instant conceiving greater abhorrence to his ungrateful task, resolved once more, to try the influence of entreaty, on the hitherto, generous spirit of his father. With mingled hope and despondence, he commenced this last attempt, to shake, if possible, so fatal a resolution:

"*To Sir Robert Somerset, Bart.*
"*Somerset-Castle.*

"I have not ventured into the presence of my dear father, since he uttered those dreadful words, which I could give up my existence to believe, I had never heard.

heard. You denounced a curse upon me, if I opposed your will, to have me break all connexion with the man who preserved my life. When I think on this; when I remember, that it was from *you* I received a command so inexplicable in yourself; so disgraceful to me; I am almost mad:—and what I shall be, should you, by repeating your injunctions, force me to obey them, Heaven only knows! but I am certain that I cannot survive the loss of my honour; I cannot survive the sacrifice of all my principles of virtue; which such conduct must for ever destroy.

"O, my father! I conjure you! reflect, before, in compliance with an oath, which it was almost guilt to make, you decree your only son, to everlasting shame and remorse! Act how I will I shall never be happy more. I cannot live under your malediction; and should I give up my friend, my conscience will reproach me every instant of my existence. Can I draw the breath which he prolonged, and

cease

cease to remember, that I have abandoned him to want and misery? It were vain to flatter myself that he will condescend to escape either, by the munificence which you offer as a compensation for my friendship. No; I cannot believe that his sensible and independent nature is so changed; circumstances never had any power over the nobility of his soul.

"Misfortune, which threw the Count Sobeiski, friendless, on the bounty of England, cannot make him appear otherwise in my eyes, than as the idol of Warsaw, whose smile was honour, and whose friendship conferred distinction.

"Though deprived of the splendour of command; though the eager circle of friends, no longer cluster round him; though a stranger in this country, and without a home; though in place of an equipage and retinue, he is followed by calamity and neglect; yet, in my mind, I still see him in a car of triumph: I see, not only the opposer of his nation's enemies,

mies, but the vanquisher of his own desires; I see the heir of a princely house, who, when mankind have deserted him, is yet encompassed by his virtues; I see him, though cast out from a hardened and unjust society, still surrounded by the lingering spirits of those, who were called to better worlds!

"And this is the man, my dear father, (whom I am sure, had he been of any other country than Poland, you would have selected from all other men, to be the friend and example of your son;) this is he whom you command me to thrust away!

"I beseech you to examine this injunction! I am now writing under the same roof with him: it depends on you, my ever revered father, whether I am doing so for the last time; whether this is the last day, in which your son is to consider himself a man of honour; whether he is henceforth to be a wretch, overwhelmed with shame and sorrow!

"I

"I have not yet, dared to utter one word, of what your cruel orders dictate, to my unhappy friend; he is now retired to seek some rest, after the anguish of having witnessed the death of Lady Tinemouth, who died this night, in consequence of an illness, which lasted only eight-and-forty hours. Should I have to tell him that he is to lose me too,—but I cannot add more. Your own heart, my dear father, must tell you, that my soul is on the rack, until I have an answer to this letter.

"Before I shut my paper, let me implore you on my knees! whatever you may decide, do not hate me; do not load my breaking heart with a parent's curse! Whatever I may be, however low and degraded in my own eyes, still, that I have sacrificed what is most precious to me, to my father, will impart the only consolation which will then have power to reach your dutiful son,

P. SOMERSET.

"*Harrowby-Abbey,*
five o'clock in the morning."

Dr.

Dr. Cavendish remained in a profound sleep, whilst Pembroke, with an aching heart, having written the above letter, and dispatched it with a man and horse, tried to compose himself, to half an hour's forgetfulness of life and it's turmoils; but he found his attempts as ineffectual as those of his friend.

Thaddeus tossed and tumbled on his restless pillow. Reluctant to disturb the Doctor and Somerset, who he hoped, having less cause for regret, had found that repose he sought for in vain, he remained in bed. He longed for morning. Any change of situation seemed to his irritated nerves, better than the state in which he was; and with some gleams of pleasure, he watched the dawn, and the rising of the sun, behind the opposite hill. He got up, opened the window, and looking out, saw a man throw himself off a horse, which was all in foam, and enter the house.

Surprised at this circumstance, he descended

scended to the parlour, where he found the man; who, being Pembroke's messenger, had returned express from the castle, bearing an order from Sir Robert, (who was taken alarmingly ill,) that his son should come back immediately.

Dismayed with this new distress, Mr. Somerset pressed the Count so closely to his breast, when he bade him farewell, that a more suspicious person, might have apprehended that it was to be a final parting; but Thaddeus discerned nothing more in the anguish of his friend's countenance, than fear for the safety of Sir Robert; and fervently wishing his recovery, he bade Pembroke remember, that should more assistance be necessary, Dr. Cavendish would remain at the Abbey until Lady Albina's return to the Wold.

Mr. Somerset being gone; towards noon, when the Count was anxiously waiting the appearance of the physician from the room of his sister, he was surprised at the abrupt entrance of two gentlemen.

gentlemen. He rose, and bowing, inquired what was their business? The elder of the men, with a fierce countenance, and a voice of thunder announced himself to be the Earl of Tinemouth, and the other, his son.

"We are come," continued he, standing at a haughty distance, "we are come, to carry from this nest of infamy, Lady Albina Stanhope, whom some one of her mother's paramours,—perhaps, you, Sir? dared to steal from her father's house, yesterday evening. And I am here, to give you that chastisement, which your audacity deserves."

With difficulty the Count Sobieski suppressed the passions which were rising in his breast. He turned a scornful glance on the person of Lord Harwold, (who, with an air of insufferable derison, was coolly measuring his figure through an eye-glass;) and then replying to the Earl, said in a firm voice; "My Lord, whoever you suppose me to be,

be, it matters not; I now stand in the place of Lady Tinemouth's executor; and, to my last gasp, I will prove myself the defender of her injured name."

"Her lover!" interrupted Lord Harwold, turning on his heel.

"Her defender, Sir!" repeated Thaddeus, with a tremendous frown; "and shame and sorrow will pursue that son, who requires a stranger to supply his duty."

"Wretch!" cried the Earl, forgetting his assumed loftiness, and advancing passionately towards Thaddeus,, with his stick held up; "How dare you address such language to an English nobleman?"

"By the right of Nature, which holds her laws over all mankind:" returned he, calmly looking on the raised stick. "When an English nobleman forgets that he is a son, he deserves reproach from his meanest vassal."

"You see, my lord," cried Harwold, sliding behind his father, "what we bring

bring on ourselves by harbouring these democratic foreigners! Sir," added he, addressing himself to Thaddeus, "your dangerous principles shall be communicated to the alien-office! Such fellows ought to be hanged."

Sobieski eyed the enraged little lord, with contempt; and turning to the Earl, who was again going to speak, he said in an unaltered tone, "I cannot guess, Lord Tinemouth, what is the reason of this attack on me. I came hither by accident; I found the Countess ill; and, from respect to her excellent qualities, I remained with her, until her eyes were closed for ever. She desired to see her daughter before she died. What human heart could deny a mother such a request? and my friend Pembroke Somerset undertook to bring Lady Albina to the Abbey."

"Pembroke Somerset!" echoed the Earl, "A pretty guard for my daughter truly! I have no doubt that he is just such a rascal as his father; just such a

person as yourself! I am not to be imposed on by your falsehoods: I know Lady Tinemouth to have been a disgrace to me; and you, to be that German adventurer, on whose account I sent her from London."

Surprised at this unexpected calumny on the memory of a woman, whose fame, from any other mouth, came as unsullied as purity itself, Thaddeus gazed with horror at the furious countenance of the man whom he believed to be his father. His heart swelled; but not deigning to reply to a charge, as unmanly as it was false, he calmly took out of his pocket the two letters, which the Countess had dictated to her husband and her son.

Lord Harwold tore his open, cast his eyes over the first words, then crumpling it in his hand, threw it from him, exclaiming, "I am not to be frightened, either by her arts, or the lies of her fellows."

Thaddeus, no longer master of himself, sprung towards this unnatural son, and seizing

seizing his arm with the strength of a Hercules, "Lord Harwold!" cried he, in a dreadful voice, "were it not that I have some mercy on you, for that parent's sake, to whom, like a parricide, you are giving a second death, by such murderous slander, I would resent her wrongs at the hazard of your worthless life!"

"My lord! my lord!" cried the trembling Harwold, quaking under the gripe of Thaddeus, and shrinking from the terrible brightness of his eyes; "my lord! my lord, save me!"

The Earl, almost suffocated with rage. called out, "Ruffian! Let go my son!" and again raising his arm, aimed a blow at the head of Thaddeus, who, wrenching the stick out of the foaming lord's hand, snapped it in two, and threw the pieces out of the window.

Lord Harwold took this opportunity to ring the bell violently; on which summons, his own two servants entered the room.

"Now, you low-born, insolent scoundrel!', cried the disarmed Earl, stamping with his feet, and pointing to the men who stood at the door; "You shall be turned by the neck and heels, out of this house. Richard, James, collar the fellow instantly."

Thaddeus only extended his arm to the men, (who were looked confusedly on each other,) and calmly said, "If either of you attempt to obey this command of your lord, you shall have cause to repent it."

The men retreated. The Earl repeated his orders.

"Rascals! Do as I command you, or instantly prepare to quit my service. I will teach you," added he, clenching his fist at the Count, who stood resolutely and serenely before him, "I will teach you how to behave to a man of high birth."

The footmen were again deterred from approaching, by a glance from the intimidating

dating eyes of Thaddeus; who, turning with stern dignity to the storming Earl, "You can teach me nothing about high birth," said he, "that I do not already know. Could it be of any independent benefit to a man, then had I not received the taunts and insults which you have dared to cast upon me."

At that moment, Dr. Cavendish having heard a bustle, made his appearance. Amazed at the sight of two strangers, who from their enraged countenances, and the proud elevation with which Thaddeus was standing between them, he rightly judged to be the Earl and his son, he advanced towards his friend, intending to support him in the attack, which he saw was menaced, by the violent gestures of his visitors.

"Dr. Cavendish," said Thaddeus, speaking to him as he approached; "your name must be a passport to the confidence of any man; I therefore shall gratify the husband of my ever-lamented friend, by

quitting this house; but I delegate to you the office with which she entrusted me. I leave you in charge of her sacred remains; and of the jewels, which you will find in her apartment. She desired that half of them might be given, with her blessing, to her daughter, and the other half, with her pardon, to her son.

"Tell me, Dr. Cavendish," cried the Earl, as Thaddeus was passing him to leave the room; "Who is that insolent fellow? By heaven, he shall smart for this!"

"Aye, that he shall," added Lord Harwold, "if I have any interest with government."

Dr. Cavendish, was preparing to speak, when Thaddeus, turning round at this last threat of the Viscount's, said, "If I did not know myself to be as high above Lord Harwold, as heaven is above the earth, perhaps he might provoke me to treat him as he merits; but I spurn such resentment, as I despise him. For you, my lord," added he, addressing the Earl, with

with an agitated countenance and voice, "there is an angel in heaven, who pleads against the insults you have obstinately heaped upon an innocent man."

Thaddeus disappeared as he uttered the last word; and, hastening from the house and park, stopped at a farmer's cottage, near the brow of the hill. The owners of this humble little place, being the parents of one of Lady Tinemouth's maids, gladly welcomed the so highly-praised Mr. Constantine; and offered him the command of their house, until he might find it convenient to quit the neighbourhood.

Any prospect of repose, promised elysium to him: with harassed and torn nerves, he took possession of an apartment, which looked down upon the road that led from the Abbey to the town. The rapidity of the late events, bewildered his senses like the illusions of a dream. He had seen his father, his brother, his sister; and, most probably, he had parted from them for ever! At least,

he hoped, that he should never again be tortured with the sight of Lord Tinemouth or his son.

"How!" thought he, whilst he walked up and down his solitary apartment, "how could the noble nature ofmy mother love such a man? And how could he have held so long an empire over the pure heart of the Countess?"

Over and over again, he asked himself the question, but could return no answer: He could no where discern in the bloated visage, and passionate gestures of the Earl, any of that beauty of countenance, or grace of manners, which had alike charmed Therese Sobieski, and the tender Adeliza. Like those hideous chasms, which are dug deep in the land by the impetuous sweep of a torrent,—the course of violent passions, leaves vast and irreparable traces in the soul, and on the features. So it was with Lord Tinemouth.

"Gracious Providence!" ejaculated Thaddeus; "How legibly does vice or virtue

virtue write itself on the countenance! The Earl's figure and face, may have been fine, but the lineaments of profligacy have now degraded every part of him. Good God! Can he be my father! Can it be his blood that is now running in my veins? Can it be his blood, that rises at this moment, with detestation against him?"

Before the sun set, Thaddeus was aroused from these painful soliloquies, by still more painful emotions: He saw from his window, a hearse driving at full gallop up the road, which ascended to the Abbey; and, presently return, with a more solemn pace, followed by a post-chaise, and the Earl's coach.

"Inhuman wretches!" cried Thaddeus, leaning out of the window; and, pursuing, with his eye, the tips of the sable plumes, as the cavalcade wound round the road; "Could you not allow this poor corse a little rest? Must her injuries be extended to the grave? Must her cold

relics be insulted, be hurried to the tomb, without reverence, without decency?"

"The noble heart of Thaddeus was convulsed with horror, at this climax of the Earl's barbarity. Dr. Cavendish entered: he spoke of the perpetrators of an act, which he deemed sacrilege against the dead; but Thaddeus could not bear it, and he interrupted him by inquiring, how Lady Albina had borne the removal of her mother's remains.

"Very ill, returned the Doctor; "and though I warned the Earl, that to compel her Ladyship to follow the hearse, would be at the peril of her life, yet he would not be softened. He put her into the coach in a state of insensiblity, with no other assistant than a woman servant; and then, loaded with the secret curses of every honest heart, I saw him set off in a post-chaise, which was already occupied by his detestable son. Heaven's malediction must follow them!"

The

The Doctor pursued the subject. Sobieski's wearied spirits listened to him with patience; for nothing could now be said, to increase an abhorrence, which had gained its height. He acknowledged to himself, that he hated the Earl; and he heard, in gloomy silence, the new crimes, recounted by his friend.

In the midst of this depressing conversation, a courier arrived from Dr. Cavendish's Stamford patient, desiring that he would return immediately. The gentleman having suffered a relapse, Cavendish, with some reluctance to quit the Count, (whom he still knew by no other name than Constantine,) ordered the chaise to the door. He shook hands with Thaddeus, requested he would let him hear from him, and bidding him many affectionate adieus,—looked out of the carriage window, until the faint light of the moon, and the fading glimmer of the cottage candles, failed to make the little spot, which contained his friend, even discernable.

CHAP. V.

FOR the first time during many nights, Thaddeus slept soundly; but his dreams were disturbed; and he awoke from them at an early hour, unrefreshed, and in much fever.

The simple breakfast which his cottage host and hostess set before him, was hardly touched. Their nicely drest dinner met with the same fate. He was ill, and possessed neither appetite nor spirits to eat. The good people being too civil to intrude upon him, he sat alone in his window from eight o'clock, (at which hour he had arisen,) until the cawing of the rooks, as they returned to the Abbey woods, reminded him of the approach of evening. He was uneasy at the absence of

of Somerset; not so much on his own account as on that of Sir Robert, whose encreased danger might have occasioned this delay: However, he hoped otherwise. Longing earnestly for a temporary asylum under the roof of his friend, he trusted, that the sympathy of Pembroke would heal all his wounds, and fit him, (if it were required,) yet farther to brave the buffets of adverse fortune. Nor was Miss Beaufort forgotten. If ever one idea more than another, sweetened the bitterness of his reflections, it was the remembrance of the lovely Mary. Whenever her image rose before him; whether he were standing with folded arms, and looking with vacant gaze on the valley beneath; or when cast upon his watchful pillow, he opened his aching eyes to the morning light; still, as her beautiful figure presented itself to his mind, he sighed; but it was a sigh laden with balm; it did not tear his breast like those which were wrung from him by the hard hand of calamity and insult; it

was the soft breath of love, which makes man dream of heaven, whilst it betrays him to the grave. Thaddeus thought it delightful to recollect how she had looked on him; it was happiness, to know that he owed his liberty to her; and the anticipation, that he should again dwell in her smiles; again draw bliss from her eyes, swelled, agitated, and intoxicated his soul.

"Sweet Mary!" murmured he, "I shall see thee once more! I shall again experience thy kindness! I will thank thee with my heart; and think myself blest, in being allowed the priviledge of loving thee in silence, and for ever."

The sight of Pembroke riding through the farmer's fields towards the cottage, agreeably recalled the wandering mind of Sobeiski. He went out to meet him; Mr. Somerset, putting his horse on a gallop, was at his friends side, and had alighted, before he could cross the first meadow. Thaddeus inquired after the Baronet's health. Pembroke answered the question, with

with an incoherency, devoid of all meaning. Thaddeus looked at him with surprise. They walked towards the house, but he did not seem to recover himself; his absence of mind, and the wild rambling of his eyes whenever he was spoken to, were so striking, that the Count entertained no doubt of some dreadful accident.

As soon as they entered the little parlour, Pembroke threw himself into a chair, and, throwing off his hat, wiped the perspiration from his face, which though a cold October evening, was streaming down his forehead. Thaddeus endured a suspence almost too painful to be borne.

"What is the matter, dear Pembroke? Is Miss Beaufort well?"

"Perfectly:" returned he, "Every body is well, excepting myself and my father, who, I verily believe, has lost his senses; at any rate he will drive me mad."

The manner in which this reply was uttered, astonished Thaddeus so much, that he could only gaze with wonder, on the

the convulsed features of his friend. Pembroke observed his amazement, and laying his hand on his arm, "My dear, dear Sobieski!" said he, "What do I not owe to you? Good Heaven. how humbled am I in your sight! But there is a Power above, who knows how intimately you are woven with every artery of this heart."

"I believe it, my kind Pembroke;" cried Thaddeus, yet more alarmed than before; "Tell me what it is that distresses you? If my counsel, or my sympathy, can offer any thing to comfort or assist you, you know I am your own."

Pembroke burst into tears, and covering his streaming eyes with his handkerchief, exclaimed, "I am indeed distressed! Distressed, even beyond your comfort. O! How can I speak it! You will despise my father, Thaddeus! You will spurn me?"

"Impossible:" cried he, with energy; though his flushed cheek and fainting heart, immediately declared that he had anticipated what he must hear.

"I

"I see," cried Pembroke, regarding the altered features of his friend with a glance of agony; "I see, that you think it is possible, that my father can sink me below my own contempt."

The benumbing tonch of ingratitude ran through the veins of Thaddeus; his frame was chilled, was petrified; but his just affection and calmed countenance, proclaimed how true a judgement he passed on the whole. He took the burning hand of Mr. Somerset in his own hand, and, with a steady and consoling voice, said, "Assure yourself, dear Pembroke, whatever be the commands of your father, I shall adhere to them. I can understand by these generous emotions, that he objects to receive me as your friend. Perhaps," added he, a flash of suspicion gleaming through his mind; "perhaps Miss Beaufort may have perceived the devotedness of my heart, and disdaining my———."

"Hush, for Heaven's sake!" cried Pembroke, starting from his chair; "Do not implicate

implicate my poor cousin! Do not add to her disapointment, the misery that you suspect her! No Thaddeus," continued he in a calmer tone, " Mary Beaufort loves you: she confessed it in an agony of grief on my bosom, just before I came away; and only through her, I dare ever expect to meet forgiveness from *you*. In spite of my father, you may marry her. She has no curse to dread; she need not sacrifice all that is most precious in her sight, to the obstinate caprice of criminal resentment."

" A curse!" re-iterated Thaddeus. " How is this! What have I done to deserve such hatred from your father?"

" O! nothing;" cried Pembroke, " nothing. My father never saw you. My father thanks you for all that you have done for me; but it is your country that he hates. Some Polander, years back, injured him; and my father took a fatal oath against the whole nation. He declares, that he cannot, he will not break it, were he

he by so doing, to save his own life, or even mine; for, (Heaven forgive me!) I was this morning wrought up to such a pitch of phrenzy, that I threatened to destroy myself, rather than sacrifice my gratitude and honour to his cruel commands! Nay, to convince you that his is no personal enmity to yourslf, he ordered me to give you writings, which will put you in possession of five hundred a year for ever. I have them with me."

All the pride of his princely house, rose at once in the breast of Thaddeus. Though full of indignation at this insult of Sir Robert's, he regarded the averted face of his friend with compassion, whilst in a firm voice, he rejected the degrading compromise.

"Tell your father," added he, addressing Pembroke in a tone, which even his affection could not soften from a command; "that my absence is not to be bought with money, nor my friendship so rewarded."

Pembroke

Pembroke covered his burning face with his hands. This sight, at once brought down the haughty spirit of the Count, who continued, in gentler accents; "Whatever be the sentiments of Sir Robert Somerset, they shall meet with due attention from me. He is your father, therefore I respect him; but he has put it out of his power to oblige me: I cannot accept his bounty. Though your heart, my dearest Pembroke, is above all price, yet I will make it a sacrifice to your duty."—And by so doing, put the last seal on my misfortunes! was the meaning of the heavy sigh which accompanied his last words.

Pembroke traversed the room in an agony. "Merciful Providence!" cried he, wringing his clasped hands; "direct me! O! Thaddeus, if you could read my tortured heart, you would pity me; you would see that this affair, is tearing my soul from my body. What am I to do? I cannot, I will not, part with you for ever."

The Count went up to him, and drew him

him to a seat: "Be satisfied," said he, "that I am convinced of your affection. Whatever may happen, this assurance will be sufficient fo give *me* comfort; therefore, I entreat you, dear Pembroke, by that affection, not to bring regret to me, and reproach on yourself, by disobeying the will of your father! If we separate for life, remember my beloved friend, that the span of our existence here, is short; we shall meet again in a happier world; perhaps more blest, for having immolated our wishes to hard duty in this."

"Cease, Sobieski, cease!" cried Pembroke, "I can draw no consolation from this reasoning. It is not duty to obey a hatred little short of distraction; and, if we now separate, I feel, that I shall never know peace again. Good Heaven! what comfort can I find, when you are exposed to all the indignities, which the world levels against the unfortunate? Can I indulge in the luxuries of my father's house, when I know that you have neither a home nor

nor subsistence? No, Thaddeus, I am not such a villain. I will not give you up, though my father should load me with curses;—I trust there is a just power above who would avert them."

Perceiving that argument at this time, would not only be fruitless, but might probably incense his friend's irritated nature, to the commission of some rash action, Thaddeus pretended to overlook the frantic gesture and voice, which terminated this speech; and, assuming a serene air, replied: "Let this be the subject of future conversation. At present, I must conjure you, by the happiness of us both, to return to the Castle. You know my message to Sir Robert. Present my respects to your aunt; and," added he after a pause, "assure Miss Beaufort, that whilst I have life, her goodness will be its most animating principle."

Pembroke interrupted him. "Why these messages, dear Thaddeus? "Do not suppose, though I fulfil my father's order

to

to return to Somerset to-night, that it is our separation. Gracious Heaven! Is it so easy to part for ever?"

"Not for ever! O no:" replied Thaddeus, grasping his hand; "we shall see each other again; only meanwhile, repeat those messages to your aunt and cousin. Go, my dear Pembroke, to your father; and may the Lord of Heaven bless you!"

The last words were spoken in almost a stifled voice, as he opened his arms and strained his friend to his breast.

"I shall see you to morrow?" cried Pembroke; "on no other condition I leave you now."

Thaddeus made no farther answer to this demand, (which he determined should never be granted,) than a second embrace. Pembroke went out of the room, to order his horses; then returning he stood at the door, and holding out his hand to the Count, said, "Farewell, till to morrow." Thaddeus shook it warmly, and he disappeared.

The

The outward gate closed after his friend, but the Count remained on the seat into which he had thrown himself. He did not venture to move, lest he should by chance catch a second glance of Pembroke from the window. Now that he was gone, he acknowledged the full worth of what he had relinquished. He had resigned a man who loved him; one who had known, and revered his ever-lamented grandfather and his mother; the only one with whom he could have discoursed of their virtues! He had severed the link, which united his present state with his former fortunes! and throwing his arms along a table that stood near him, he leaned his aching head upon them, and in idea, followed, with a bleeding heart, the progress and reception of his friend at the Castle.

The racking misery which tortured the mind of Mr. Somerset, was not borne with equal resignation. Conscious of his having inflicted fresh wounds on the breast of his noble friend, his spirits were so ill

adapted

adapted to society, that he was pleased rather than disappointed, when he found the supper-room at the Castle quite vacant, and only one cover on the table awaiting his arrival.

He asked a few questions of the servants, who informed him that it was past twelve o'clock; and that Sir Robert, who was worse, had retired to bed early in the evening.

"And where are my aunt and cousin?" demanded Pembroke.

One of the men replied, that in consequence of Miss Beaufort's having been suddenly indisposed, both the ladies left the room before eleven. Pembroke readily guessed the cause of this disorder: he too truly ascribed it to Mary's anxiety respecting the reception, which the Count Sobieski would give to his disgraceful errand; and sighing bitterly, he said no more, but went to his chamber.

The restless state of his mind awoke Mr. Somerset by times. Anxious for the

success of an application, which he intended to make to Miss Beaufort, he traversed the terrace for an hour before he was summoned to breakfast. The baronet continuing unwell, the ladies only, were in the parlour when he entered. Mrs. Dorothy, who learnt the particulars of the late events from her niece, longed to ask Pembroke how his friend would act on her brother's command; but every time that she moved her lips, his inflamed eye and wan countenance, made her stop, and fear to venture on the subject. Mary sat in mute dejection, watching the agitation of her cousin; and when he rose, and took his hat to leave the room, she looked wistfully towards him. Pembroke turned round at the same moment, and holding out his hand to her, said, "Come, Mary, I want to say something to you. Will you walk with me on the terrace?"

Miss Beaufort, with trepidation, and a beating heart took his arm, and proceeded in silence, until they reached the gravel walk.

walk. A mutual and deep-drawn sigh, was the first opening of a conversation, on which the souls of both hung with interest, hope and dread. Pembroke was the first who began.

"My dear, dear Mary," said he, "you are now my sole dependance. From what I told you yesterday of my father's stubborn inflexibility, we can have no hope of his relenting: indeed, after what has passed, I could not flatter myself that Thaddeus Sobieski would, on any account, submit to an obligation at his hands. Already he has refused, with all the indignation I expected, Sir Robert's offer of an annuity. My dear cousin, how can I exist, and yet witness this noble friend in distress, and living without the succour of my friendship? Heaven knows, this must be the case; for I would sooner perish than venture to insult the man, whom my father has treated so ill, with any pecuniary offers from me! Therefore, dear girl, it is on you alone that I depend. Thaddeus adores

you, and you love him. Marry him, my beloved cousin," cried he, pressing her hand to his lips, "and relieve my heart from a load of misery! Be generous, my sweet Mary," added he, supporting her now trembling frame against his breast; "act up to your noble nature, and offer him, by me, that hand, which his calamities and disinterestedness preclude him from requesting."

Miss Beaufort, hardly able to articulate, from the emotions which prevented her utterance, replied, "I would give him all that I possess, could it purchase him one tranquil hour; I would serve him for ever, could I do it and be unknown; but ——"

"O, do not hesitate! Do not doubt!" interrupted Pembroke, "To serve your friends, I know you are capable of the most extraordinary exertions; I know there is nothing within the verge of possibility, that your generous disposition would not attempt: then, my beloved Mary,

Mary, dare to be what you are, by having the magnanimity to act as you know you ought; by offering your hand to him, shew the noble Sobieski, that you really deserve the devotion of a hero's heart."

"Dear Pembroke," replied Miss Beaufort, wiping the still gliding tears from her burning cheek, "after the confession which you drew from me yesterday, I will not deny, that to possess the esteem of your friend, would render me the happiest of created beings; but I cannot believe what your sanguine affection tells me. I cannot suppose, situated as I was at Lady Dundas's, under a cloud of fashion, and surrounded by frivolous and contemptible society, that he should discover any thing in me to respect: every way embarrassed as I was, disliking my companions, afraid of my own interest in him, a veil was drawn over my mind, through which he could neither judge of my good nor bad qualities. How then can I flatter myself, or do the Count

Sobieski such an injury, as to imagine that he could conceive any preference for such an insignificant character as I must have appeared?"

It was some time before Pembroke could shake the hold which this prepossion had taken of Miss Beaufort's mind. After having set in every possible light, the terms with which his friend had spoken of her, he at length convinced her, of what her heart so earnestly wished to believe, that she was not entirely indifferent to Sobieski.

Mr. Somerset's next achievement was to overcome her scruples against commissioning him with the message he was desirous to communicate to Thaddeus. From the continual recurrence of her fears, that the warmth of her cousin might have too highly coloured the first object of debate, this task was not more easy to accomplish than the former. In vain she remonstrated, in vain she doubted, in vain demurred; Pembroke would not be denied;

denied; and as with faultering lips, she assented to the permission which he almost extorted; she threw her arms round his neck, and implored him to be careful of her honour; to remember, that she put into his charge, all that was most precious to her,—the modesty of her sex, and her own delicacy.

Pembroke, delighted at this consent, notwithstanding he received it through the medium of many tears, embraced his cousin with ten thousand animating promises of future happiness; and having allowed her to enter the house, mounted his horse, and set off on full gallop, towards Harrowby-Hill.

CHAP. VI.

WHEN Thaddeus recovered from the reverie, into which he fell on the departure of Mr. Somerset, he considered how he might remove out of a country, in which he had only met, and occasioned, distress.

The horrid price that Pembroke's father had set on the continuance of their friendship, rendered it necessary that his flight should be immediate. Averse to a second interview with his friend, which could only produce them pain, he determined that not another morn should rise upon him in Lincolnshire; and taking a pen, with all the future loneliness of his fate painted on his heart, he wrote two letters.

One he addressed to Mr. Somerset, bidding him that farewell, which he confessed

he

he could never take. As he wrote, his hand trembled, his bosom swelled; and he hastily shut his eye-lids, to withhold his tears from shewing themselves on the paper: his emotion, his grief, were driven back, were concealed; but the tenderness of his soul flowed over the letter. He forgave Pembroke's father, for Pembroke's sake; and in spite of their personal disunion, he vowed, that no earthly power, should restrain his love from following the steps of his friend, even into the regions of eternity. He closed his melancholy epistle, with informing Mr. Somerset, that as he should quit England directly, any search after him, which his generous nature might dictate, would be in vain.

Though Thaddeus Sobieski would have disdained a life of dependance on the greatest potentate of the world; though he rejected with the same sincerity, a similar proposal from his friend; and despised the degrading offer of Sir Robert;

yet he did not disparage his dignity, nor infringe on the disinterested nature of friendship, when he accepted, and resolved to retain, the money which Pembroke had conveyed to him in prison. Thaddeus never acted but from principle. His honourable and penetrating mind, knew exactly at what point to draw the tender thread of delicacy. Pride and independence, were with him, distinct terms. Receiving assistance from a friend, and leaning on him wholly for support, have different meanings: he accepted the first with gratitude: he would have thought it impossible to live and endure the last. On these premises, Pembroke was never pained by an attempt to return his bounty. Indeed, Thaddeus would have considered himself unworthy to confer a benefit, if he had not known how to receive one. This spirit left no part of Miss Beaufort's obligation on his mind, but its sweetness; and with these impressions, and a throbbing heart, he began a short address to her.

" *To*

"*To Miss Beaufort.*

"My faculties seem to lose their power, when I take up my pen to address, for the first and the last time, Miss Beaufort. I hardly know what I would say—what I ought; I dare not venture to write all that I feel. But have you not been my benefactress? Did you not assert my character, and give me liberty, when I was calumniated and in distress? Did you not ward from me the scorn of unpitying folly? Did you not console me with you own compassion? You have done all this; and surely you will not despise the gratitude of a heart, which you have condescended to sooth and to comfort? At least, I cannot leave England for ever, without imploring blessings on the head of Miss Beaufort; without thanking her on my knees, on which I am writing, for that gracious and benign spirit, which discovered a breaking heart under the mask of serenity; which penetrated through the garb of

poverty and dependance, and saw that the contemned Constantine was not what he seemed! Your smiles, Miss Beaufort; your voice, speaking commiseration, were my sweetest consolations during those heavy months of sorrow, which I endured at Dundas-House: I contemplated you as a pitying angel, sent to reconcile me to a life, which had already become a burthen. These are the benefits which Miss Beaufort has bestowed on a friendless exile; these are the benefits which she had bestowed on me! and they are written on my soul. Not until I go down into the grave shall they be forgotten. Oh! not even then, for when I rise again, I shall find them still registered there!

"Farewell, most respected, most dear Miss Beaufort. May the Father of Heaven bless, with his choicest care, her, whose name shall ever be first in the prayers of her most grateful, most devoted servant,

THADDEUS CONSTANTINE SOBIESKI.

"*Harrowby-Hill,*
eleven o'clock at night."

When

When he finished this epistle, with a trembling hand he inclosed it in the cover, which contained Somerset's; then writing a few lines to the good old farmer, he begged him to accept the note which they contained, as a small compensation for his great hospitality; and, having sealed both packets, he disposed them so on the table, that they might be the first things seen on entering the room.

It now being midnight, he thought it high time to set out on his dismal journey. Having tied some linen in a grey silk handkerchief, (which had formerly been wrapped round his neck by Lady Sara, one wet evening in Grosvenor-Place;) he put all his remaining money into his pocket. It did not exceed thirty pounds; the rest having been expended in his way to the Abbey, and in defraying little expences attending the illness of the Countess, to which her purse, (ever kept low by the tardiness of the Earl's payments)

payments) was not prepared to answer. However, as he determined to walk to London, where he intended to embark for America, he hoped that it would at least hold out, until he landed on a shore, whence he trusted never to return.

"Ah!" cried he, as he gently closed the window by which he leaped into the little garden, "What accumulated sins, O Russia, will be heaped upon thy head! Every hasty sigh that rebels in my breast, against the almighty hand, which is again driving me out a wanderer on the wide world, calls vengeance upon thee! How many, wretched country!" added he, resting on the bar of the outward gate; "how many hast thou driven from their homes! how many hast thou made vagabonds, and murderers, for that scanty pittance, of which, with remorseless and wanton gripe, they were deprived by thee!—Oh, righteous Power of Justice and Mercy!" cried he, stretching his arms towards that heaven, over which the piercing winds of

a bleak October night were scattering the thick and gloomy clouds; "grant me fortitude to bear, with resignation to thy will, the miseries I may yet have to en-encounter. Oh!" added he, his heart melting as the idea presented itself; "teach me to forget what I have been! Teach me to forget, that on this dreadful night, last year, I clasped the dying body of my dear grandfather in these arms!"

He could not speak farther; but leaning his pale face against the gate, remained for a few mintes dissolved in painful recollection: then recovering himself by a sudden start, he proceeded with hasty steps through the different meadows, until they conducted him into the high road.

It was on the tenth of October, 1795, that the Count Sobieski commenced this lonely and melancholy journey. It was on the tenth of October 1794, that he found the Palatine, bleeding to death, in the midst of a heap of slain. The co-incidence of his present sufferings, with those of a twelve-

twelve-month past, powerfully affected Thaddeus; they recalled remembrances to him in their most vivid colours, which time, and the many intermediate events, had considerably softened.

Distressed by these sorrowful scenes, which memory, ever true to her nature, raised before his mind's eye in rapid and long succession; he quickened his pace; he slackened it; he quickened it again; but nothing could rid him of those tormenting images, which seemed to glide around him like visible spirits of the departed.

When the dawn broke, and the sun rose, he found himself advanced several miles on the south side of Ponton Hill, The spiry aisles of Harrowby Abbey were discernable through the mist; and the towers of Somerset Castle, from their height and situation, were as distinctly seen as if he had been at their base. Neither of these objects were calculated to raise the spirits of Thaddeus. The sorrows of the Countess, whose eyes he so recently had closed;

closed; and the treatment which he afterwards received from the man to whom he owed his life, were recollections which made him turn away from the abbey with a pang, and fix his eyes on Somerset. He looked towards its ivied head, with all the regret and all the tenderness which can overflow a human heart: under that roof, he believed the eyes of his adored Mary were sealed in sleep; and in an instant his agitated soul addressed her as if she had been present.

"Farewell, most lovely, most beloved! The conviction, that I resign even the hope of ever again beholding thee, to the peace of my friend, shall give me comfort, when I am drawing my breath in a far, far distant region."

In this way, thus communing with his own troubled spirit, he walked forward the whole day on his way to London. Totally absorbed in meditation, he did not remark the gaze of curiosity which followed his elegant yet distressed figure,

as

as he passed through the different towns and villages. Musing on the past, the present, and the future, he neither felt hunger nor thurst; but, with a fixed eye and abstracted countenance, pursued his route, until night and weariness overtook him in the midst of the high road, far from any house.

Thaddeus looked around, and above: the sky was clear, and glittering with stars; the moon, shining on a near branch of the Ouse, which divides Huntingdonshire from Cambridgeshire, lit the green heath which skirted its banks. He wished not for a more magnificent canopy; and, placing his wallet under his head, he lay down beneath a hillock of furze and broom, and slept till morning.

When he awoke from a sleep, which fatigue and fasting had rendered more oppressive than refreshing, he found that the splendours of the night, were succeeded by a heavy rain, and that he was very wet. He rose, with a stiffness in his limbs,

limbs, a pain in his head, and a dimness over his eyes, which almost disabled him from moving. He readily judged that he had caught cold; and every moment feeling himself grow worse, he thought it necessary to seek some house, where he might purchase rest and assistance.

To this end, leaning on his stick, but no longer able to incumber himself with even the light load of his bundle, he threw it amongst the brambles; thinking from the symptoms which he felt, that he had not many hours to endure the ills of life, he staggered a few yards farther: no habitation appeared; his limbs became more feeble, his eyes seemed totally obscured, and he sunk down on a bank. For a minute he attempted to struggle with the cold grasp of death, which he believed was fastening on his heart.

"And are my days to be so short! Are they to end thus?" thought he; "Merciful Providence, pardon my repining!"

These were the last movements of the lips

lips of Thaddeus, whilst his blood seemed freezing to insensibility. His eyes closed, his head fell back; and pale and without animation, he lay at the foot of the tree near which he had dropt.

The Count remained a quarter of an hour in this death-like state before he was perceived; at length a gentleman, who was passing that road in his way to a country seat in Cambridgeshire, thought he perceived a man lying amongst the grass a little onward on the heath. The traveller stopt his carriage, and ordering one of the out-riders to alight, bade him examine whether the object he saw were living or dead.

The man obeyed; and presently returning, with an affrighted countenance, informed his master, that it was the body of a man, who by his dress appeared to be a gentleman; and who, being quite senseless, he supposed had been murdered by robbers. The features of the benevolent stranger instantly reflected the distress of his

his servant's but ordering the chariot door to be opened, he took in his hand a bottle of drops, (which from his own invalid state, was his travelling companion,) and alighting, hastened to the side of the lifeless Thaddeus.

By this time, all the servants were collected round the spot; and the good man himself, whilst he gazed with pity on the marble features of the Count, observed with pleasure, that he saw no marks of violence. Supposing that the present accident might have been occasioned by a fit; and thinking it possible. by proper means to recal life, he desired that the unfortunate person's waistcoat might be unclosed; and, taking off his hat he contrived to pour some drops into his mouth. Their warmth renewed pulsation in the heart; for one of the servants who was stooping, declared that it beat under his hand. When the benevolent gentleman was satisfied that this report was true, he ordered his servants to place the poor traveller

veller in his carriage; having only another mile to go, he said he hoped that his charge might be restored at the end of their journey.

Whilst the postilions drove in full gallop towards the house, the cold face of Thaddeus rested on the bosom of the stranger, who continued to chase his temples with lavender water, until the chariot stopped before the gates. Two men carried the Count to the house; and having left him with their master, and a medical man who resided near, other restoratives were applied, which succeeded in recovering his lost senses. When he was completely recalled to recollection, and was able to look around, and distinguish objects, he saw that he was supported by two gentlemen, and in a magnificent bed-chamber.

Gratitude, was an active virtue in the soul of Thaddeus. At the moment of his awakening from that sleep, which, when it fell upon him, he believed would last until

til time should be lost in eternity,—he pressed the hands of them who held his own; not doubting but that they were the good Samaritans who had preserved him from perishing.

The younger of the gentleman, perceiving by the animated lustre which spread over his patient's eyes, that he was going to speak, put his hand on his lips, and said, "Pardon me, sir! you must not speak. Your life at present hangs on a thread; the slightest exertion would snap it: but, as all you want, is rest and resuscitation, to supply some great expence, which the vital powers have sustained; I must require, you neither to speak, nor be spoken to, until I give permission. Meanwhile, be satisfied, sir, that you are in the most honourable hands. This gentleman," addhe, pointing to his friend, "saw you on the heath, and brought you to his house, where you now are."

Thaddeus bowed his head to them both in sign of gratitude and compliance; and the elder left the room.

Chap. VII.

NEXT morning, when the seal was taken off the lips of Thaddeus, he expressed, in the most animated terms, his deep sense of the humanity, which actuated both the gentlemen, to take such a generous interest in his fate.

"You owe no thanks to me," replied the one who had injoined, and released him from silence, and who was alone with him; "I am only the agent of another. Yet, I do not deny, that in obeying the benevolent orders of Sir Robert Somerset, I have frequent opportunities of gratifying my own heart."

Thaddeus was so confounded at this discovery, that he could not speak, and the gentleman proceeded.

"I

"I am apothecary to Sir Robert's household; and, as my excellent master has been long afflicted with an ill state of health, I live in a small lodge at the other end of the park. He is the boast of the country; the best landlord, and the kindest neighbour. All ranks of people love him; and when he dies (which his late apoplectic fits, make it too probable will be soon), both poor and rich will lose their friend.—Ill as he was this morning, when I told him that you were out of danger, he expressed a pleasure, which did more good to him than all my medicines.

Thaddeus, not considering the wildness of the question, hastily demanded, "Does he know who I am?"

The honest apothecary stared at the look, and tone of voice, with which these words were delivered, and then replied, "No; is there any reason, sir, to make you wish that he should not?"

"Certainly none:" replied Thaddeus,

recollecting himself, and sighing; and I shall be impatient, until I have an opportunity of telling him, how grateful I am for the goodness which he has shewn to me as a stranger."

The apothecary surprised at these hints, (which the Count, not considering their tendency, allowed to escape him), gathered sufficient from them, united with the speaker's superior mein, to make him suppose that his patient was some emigrant of quality, whom Sir Robert would rejoice in having served. These surmises, and conclusions having passed very quickly through the honest gentleman's brain, he bowed his head, with that respect, which the generous mind is proud to pay to nobility in ruins, and resumed:

"Whatever you may be sir, a peasant or a prince, you will meet with British hospitality from the noble owner of this house. The magnificence of his spirit, is equalled by the goodness of his heart; and Deerhurst will afford every comfort

to

to you, that benevolence and wealth can bestow; and I am certain, that Sir Robert will consider the dreadful apoplexy, which brought him from Somerset for change of air, rather fortunate, than otherwise, as it has afforded him an opportunity of serving, and of knowing you."

Thaddeus blushed at the strain of this speech; and, readily understanding what was passing in the mind of the apothecary, hardly knew how to reply. He paused for a moment, and then said, "All you have declared, sir, in praise of Sir Robert Somerset, I cannot have a doubt of his deserving. I have already felt the effects of his humanity, and shall ever remember that my life was prolonged by his means; but I have no pretensions to the honour of his acquaintance. I only wish to see him, that I may thank him for what he has done; therefore, if you will permit me to rise this evening, instead of to-morrow morning, you will oblige me."

To this request, the apothecary gave a

respectful, yet firm denial; and went down stairs, to communicate his observations to his patron.

The anxiety which agitated the Count's mind, when he reflected, that he was receiving these obligations from his most implacable enemy, so occupied and disturbed him, that he spent a sleepless night. The dawn found his fever much augmented; but no corporeal sufferings could persuade him to abandon the resolution of seeing the Baronet, and immediately leaving his house; believing, as he did, that all his kindness would have been withheld, had his host known on whom he was pouring such benefits, he thought that every minute which passed over him, while he was under Sir Robert's roof, inflicted a new outrage on his dignity and honour.

To this end then, as soon as Mr. Middleton the apothecary retired to breakfast, Thaddeus rose from his bed, and was completely dressed before he returned.

The

The good man expostulated on the rashness of what he had done, and augured no less than a relapse from the morning symptoms of his patient. Thaddeus once in his life was obstinate, though civilly so; and desiring a servant to request that Sir Robert would indulge him with an audience for a few minutes alone in his library, he soon convinced Mr. Middleton, that his purpose was not to be shaken.

The Baronet returning his compliments, that he should be happy to see his guest, the still anxious apothecary offered him his assistance down the stairs. Thaddeus needed no help, and gratefully declined it. The exertion necessary to be summoned for this interview, imparted as much momentary strength to his frame as to his mind, and though his colour was heightened, he entered the library with a firm step.

Sir Robert met him at the door, and, shaking him by the hand, with many warm assurances of pleasure at his recovery,

would have led him to a seat; but Thaddeus drawing back, only supported himself against the back of it with his hand; whilst in a steady voice, he expressed the most animated thanks for the benefits he had received; then pausing and casting the proud lustre of his eyes to the ground, lest their language should tell all that he thought, he continued, "I have only to regret, Sir Robert, that your benevolence has been lavished on a man whom you regard with abhorrence. I am the Count Sobieski, that Polander, whom you commanded your son to see no more. Respecting, even the prejudices of my friend's parent, I was hastening to London, meaning to set sail for America with the first ship, when I swooned on the road. I believe I was expiring; your humanity saved me: and I now owe to gratitude, as well as to my own satisfaction, the fulfilment of my declaration. I shall leave Deerhurst immediately, and England, as soon as I am able to embark."

Thaddeus,

Thaddeus, with a second bow, and not quite so firm a step, without venturing a glance, at what he supposed were the abashed looks of the Baronet, was preparing to quit the room, when Sir Robert, with a pale and aghast countenance, exclaimed, "Stop!"

Thaddeus looked round, and regarded him with wonder. The Baronet, incapable of saying more, pointed to a chair for him to sit down; then sinking into another himself, took out his handkerchief, and wiping away the large drops, which stood on his forehead, panted for respiration. At last, with a desperate kind of haste, he said:

"Was your mother, indeed, Therese Sobieski?"

Thaddeus, still more astonished, replied in the affirmative; and Sir Robert threw himself back on the chair with a deep groan. Hardly knowing what he did, the Count rose from his seat, and advanced towards him: Sir Robert, hearing his ap-

proach, stretched out his hand, and, with a look and tone of agony, said—" Who was your father?" and then, without waiting for a reply, covered his convulsed features with his handkerchief.—The Baronet's agitation, which now shook him like an earthquake, became contagious: Thaddeus gazed at him with a palsying uncertainty in his heart; and laying his hand on his bewildered brain, he answered, " I know not. I believe the Earl of Tinemouth. But here is his picture." With a trembling hand he took the case which held it, out of his pocket; and, tearing open the clasps, gave it to Sir Robert, who had started from his seat at the name of the Earl. The moment the Baronet's eyes rested on the miniature, he threw it from him, and fell senseless upon the chair.

Thaddeus, hardly more alive, sprinkled some water on his face, and with throbbing temples and a beating heart, stood in wordless expectation over him. Such excessive emotion told him, that something more

more than Sir Robert's hatred of the Polanders had stimulated his late conduct; and too earnest for an explanation, to ring for assistance, he rejoiced to see, by the convulsion of the Baronet's features, and the heaving of his chest, that animation was returning. In a few minutes he opened his eyes, but when he met the anxious gaze of Thaddeus, he closed them as suddenly, and rising from his seat, staggered against the chimney-piece, exclaiming, "O God, direct me."

Thaddeus, whose conjectures were now wrought almost to wildness, followed him, and whilst his exhausted frame was ready to sink to the earth, implored him to speak.

"O, Sir," cried he, "If you know any thing about my family? If you know any thing about my father, in pity answer me! Or, only tell me: am I so wretched as to be the son of Lord Tinemouth?"

The violence of the Count's emotions, during this agonizing petition, totally

overcame him; before he finished speaking, his limbs withdrew their support; and, sinking down on his knees, his head dropped breathless against the side of a chair: Though incapable of standing, his beseeching and eager eyes were yet riveted on the Baronet's averted face.

Sir Robert turned hastily round. He saw him sunk, like a beautiful flower, bruised and trampled on, by the wanton foot of him who had given it root: unable to make any evasive reply, to this last appeal of virtue and of nature, he threw himself with a burst of tears upon his neck, and exclaimed, "Wretch that I have been! O, Sobeiski! *I* am thy father. Dear, injured son of the unhappy Therese!"

The first words which carried this avowal to the heart of Thaddeus, deprived it of motion; and, when Sir Robert expected to receive the returning embrace of his son, he found him senseless in his arms.

The cries of the Baronet brought Mr. Middleton and the servants into the room.

When

When the former saw the state of the Count, and perceived the agonized position of his patron, (who was supporting and leaning over his son,) the honest man declared, that he expected nothing less from the gentleman's disobedience of his orders. The presence of the servants having recalled Sir Robert's wandering faculties, he desired them to remove Thaddeus to his chamber. Then following them in silence when they had laid their charge on the bed, he watched, in extreme but concealed anxiety, until Mr. Middleton, by opening a vein, again brought animation to his patient.

The moment the Count unclosed his eyes, they fixed themselves on his agitated father. He drew the hand which held his, to his lips. The tears of paternal love again bathed the cheeks of Sir Robert; he felt how warm at his heart was the affection of his deserted son; (and making a sign for Mr. Middleton to leave the room, who obeyed;) he bent his streaming eyes

upon the other hand of Thaddeus, and said in a faultering voice, "Can you pardon me?"

Thaddeus threw himself on his father's bosom, and wept profusely; then raising Sir Robert's clasped hands in his, whilst his, eloquent eyes seemed to search the Heavens, he said, "My dear, dear mother, loved you to her latest hour, and I have all my mother's heart: whatever may have been your faults, I love my father."

Sir Robert strained him to his breast. After a pause, whilst he shook the tears from his silver eye-lashes, he resumed, "Certain, my dear son, that you require repose, and assured that you will not find it, until I have offered some apology for my unnatural conduct, I will now explain the various circumstances which impelled my actions, and drew distress upon that noble creature, your mother."

Sir Robert hesitated a moment to recover breath and then went on.

"Keep your situation;" added he putting

ting down Thaddeus, who at this opening was raising himself; "I shall tell my melancholy story with less pain, if your eyes be not upon me. I will begin from the first."

The Baronet proceeded to say, "That very early in life he attached himself to Miss Beaufort, the only sister of the late Admiral Beaufort, who was Mary's father; they were then wards of Sir Fulke Somerset. Mr. Beaufort had been in the navy from a boy; but his sister remaining always at the Castle, an affection as strong as it was mutual took place between herself and her cousin Robert. When the young people applied to Sir Fulke for his consent to their marriage, he refused it on the plea of their youth. In vain the passionate Robert declared the reasonablenes, and ardour of his affection; his father urged his being only a younger son; and, indeed that he was totally unworthy of his ward, unless he would consent to undergo the polish of a three years tour over the continent.

continent. After much altercation, this arrangement was complied with; and Robert and Miss Beaufort bade each other a melancholy adieu. Indignant at the unfeeling whim of Sir Fulke; and, provoked with his elder brother, for seconding his father's arguments, Robert Somerset set off for Dover; where he was joined by the present earl of Tinemouth, (then Mr. Stanhope,) who was banished the country on a similar errand: but his was to forget a mistress; Somerset's to deserve one. Stanhope's mother and Robert's having been sisters, the young men met as relations; mutually enraged at their fathers, (their mothers having been long dead,) they determined to change their names, and to let no one know anything about them during their travels, except the two women who they best loved. To this end, as soon as they crossed the Channel, and landed in France, they gave themselves out to be brothers; which their great personal resemblance corroborated, and called themselves Sackville.

ville. This business settled, they travelled pretty amicably until they reached Naples: Here Mr. Stanhope involved himself in a very dishonourable intrigue, with the only daughter of an old British officer, who had retired to that climate for his health. Somerset remonstrated on the villany of seducing an innocent girl, when he knew that his heart and hand were absolutely devoted to another; and Stanhope, enraged at finding a censor in a companion, whom he considered as headstrong as himself, ended the argument by striking him. Somerset drew his sword; and it is likely if the servants of the hotel had not interfered, the affray would have terminated with one of their lives. Since that hour, they never met again. Mr. Stanhope left his shame, and his bleeding friend; and fearful of consequences, fled to Palermo. Robert Somerset, when recovered from his wounds, still retaining the name of Sackville,) took the way to Florence; in which beautiful

beautiful city, determining to stay some time, he rather sought than repelled the civilities of the inhabitants. Here he became acquainted with the Palatine, and the lovely Therese, whose affections he so completely won. Soon after this intimacy commenced, Miss Beaufort ceased to answer his letters. Desperate with jealousy, he was on the point of going to England, when he received packet from home. On opening it, he found a letter from Miss Beaufort, in which she informed him, that having long considered their attachment, as a childish entanglement, she had tried to wean him from his former folly, by an obstinate silence. Having hardly a doubt that she had succeeded, she now broke through her resolution, as it was to shew him at once, the unreasonableness of making such early engagements. Soon after his departure, a journey up to town taught her to know her own heart; and in consequence she had yielded her hand to Mr. Somerset,

his

his elder brother; who had always been averse to her marriage with Robert. This shameless declaration, concluded with a long homily of advice against similar fetters——and the insult of subscribing herself his "affectionate sister," &c. Having read the letter to the end, he forswore his family for ever, and flying to Therese Sobieski, in a paroxysm of madness and revenge, married her. This rash act perpetrated, he in vain sought for tranquillity; he saw that she idolized him, but his thoughts were always fixed on his ungrateful Mary; were always deploring her lightness, and execrating the perfidy of his brother. In this temper a second packet found him. Again he saw Miss Beaufort's hand-writing, but he dropt it with horror into the envelope, and tore open the black seal which was affixed to a letter from his father. Here Sir Fluke confessed such a plan of deceit as petrified his son. He declared. that all which had passed, was devised by Mr. Somerset,

in

in hopes of tempting him to revenge the affront which Mary had put upon him, by a hasty marriage. The wretched old man, with many prayers for pardon, acknowledged that this bitter confession was wrung from him by the sudden death of his eldest son, who now lay a corpse in the house. The disconsolate father having related the particulars of Mr. Somerset's death, (which happened after three days illness,) added, it was in compliance with his entreaties to preserve Miss Beaufort for him, that he had agreed to drive Robert from the kingdom. To further the scheme, of making the separation be for ever, he had intercepted all their mutual letters; and, Mr. Somerset himself, had forged that one in Miss Beauforts name, which carried the intelligence of their union. By the same means, a similar effect was wrought upon the abused Mary; believing Robert unfaithful, she fell into a melancholy, and evinced a carelessness to exterior objects, which they hoped might, in time, induce her,

her, through mere weakness of mind, to give her hand to the persecuting passion of Mr. Somerset. "But," continued Sir Fulke, "death has put an end to this unnatural rivalry; and my poor girl, undeceived, in her opinion of you, pants to see you, and to give you that hand, which my ill-fated son, and your unhappy father, so unjustly detained."

On the receipt of this packet, with a soul divided between love, humanity, and honour, Robert Somerset sacrificed all to his passions. He adored the woman on whose account he had left his country; and, though every tie of Heaven and earth bound him to his deceived and injured wife, he consigned her to the full horrors of such desertion, and hastened to England.

"Shameful to relate," added Sir Robert, "immediately on my landing I married Mary Beaufort. In her arms I forgot for a while, Therese and her agonies. But when my dear Pembroke first saw the light,

when

when I prest him to my heart, it seemed as if at the same instant I stabbed it with a dagger. When I would have breathed a blessing over him, the conviction struck me, that I durst not; that I had deluded the mother who gave him birth; and that at some future period, he might have cause to curse the author of his existence. Well," continued the Baronet, wiping his forehead, " though the birth of this boy conjured up the image of your mother, which haunted me day and night; I never could summon courage to inquire respecting her fate. When the troubles of Poland commenced, what a dreadful terror seized me! The success of the Russians, and the consequent distresses of the nobility, overwhelmed me with fear: I knew not, but they might be forced, like the French noblesse, to fly their country; and the bare idea of meeting your grandfather, or the injured Therese, in England, precipitated me into such a series of apprehensions, as menaced my life. I became melancholy and ill;

I avoided the sight of the newspapers; and, as far as I could, (under the plea of the story which you have heard,) I withheld my family from speaking on a subject which manifestly gave me pain. But I could not prevent the tongues of our visitors from discoursing on a theme, which at that period, interested every thinking mind. I heard of the valiant Kosciuszko, the good Stanislaus, and the Palatine Sobieski with his brave grandson, spoken of in the same breath. I durst not surmise who this grandson was; I durst not ask; I dreaded to know. At length," added he, quickening his voice, "the idol of my heart, she for whom I had perhaps sacrificed my eternal peace, died in my arms! I received the shock as became a christian; I bent beneath the blow with humility; for I embraced it as the expiation of a crime, which, till then, even in the midst of my felicity, sat on my soul like the hand of death. I bore this trial with resignation. But, when two years afterwards,

wards, my eye fell, by accident, upon the name of Sobieski, in one of the public papers, I could not withdraw it; my sight was fascinated as if by a rattlesnake; and, in one column I read, how bravely the Palatine fell; and, in the next, the dreadful fate of his danghter. She was revenged!" cried Sir Robert, eagerly grasping the hand of Thaddeus, who could not restrain the groan which burst from his breast. "I was deprived of that reason which had abused her noble nature, for near three months afterwards. When I recovered my senses," continued he, after a pause, "and found that I had so fatally suffered the time of restitution to go by, I began to torment myself, that I had not, on the death of Lady Somerset, hastened to Poland, and intreated Therese's pardon on my knees. This period of vivid remorse was soon terminated, by the same arguments, which, on the first year of my wife's loss, deterred me from being just. I reconsidered, that the Countess Sobieski having

having possessed a prior claim to my name, such restitution on my part, must, in consequence, have illegitimized my darling Pembroke. It was this horrid conviction," exclaimed Sir Robert, a sudden distraction agitating his before affectionate eye, " that caused all my cruelty to you. When my dear son described the danger from which you had rescued him; when he told me, that Therese had fostered him with a mother's tenderness; I was probed to the heart: but when he added, that the young Count Sobieski was now an alien from his country, and relying on my friendship for a home, my terror was too truly manifested. Horror drove all natural remorse from my soul. I thought an avenging power had sent my deserted child to discover his father, to claim his rights, and to publish me as a villain: and when I saw my innocent son, even on his knees, petitioning for the man, who I believed, was come to undo him, I became almost frantic. Under this temper," added he, putting

ting the trembling hand of Thaddeus to his streaming eyes, "I drove out my first born, to be a guiltless wanderer on the face of the earth; not for his own crimes, but for those of his father: and heaven punished my injustice. When I thought that the evidence of my shame, was divided from me by an insuperable barrier; when I believed that the ocean would soon separate me from all my fears, a righteous Providence brought thee before me, forlorn and expiring. It was the son of Therese Sobeiski, that I had exposed to such wretchedness! It was the darling of her heart, that I had consigned to the beating elements! O, Thaddeus," cried he, "can I be forgiven for all this?"

Thaddeus lulled the wakeful remorse of his venerable father, with such kind arguments of excuse for his conduct, as at least imparted to him, a consoling assurance in the generous affection of his son.

When this long and interesting conversation terminated, Sir Robert, well remembering

membering the violent effects of Mr. Somerset's grief, at Sobieski's flight and declared abjuration of England, pardoned his son the outrageous reproaches, which had driven him from his own house; and very joyfully dispatched a messenger to desire his presence at Deerhurst.

CHAP. VIII.

THAT sickness, which is the consequence of mental pain, usually vanishes with its cause. Long before the evening of the ensuing day, Thaddeus quitted his chamber, and related to his father the rapid incidents of his brief and eventful career. The voice of fame had blazoned him abroad, as "*the plume of war, with early laurels crowned;*" but it was left to his own eloquent tongue, to prove, with all the pathos of modesty and feeling, that the most desperate conflicts are not those which we sustain in the field.

Sir Robert listened to him with affection, admiration, and delight. He was answering the interesting detail, with many grateful apostrophes to that Providence, which

which had crowned his old age with pardon and peace, when the servant opened the door, and anounced, that Mr. Somerset was in the library.

Thaddeus instantly rose; but Sir Robert put him down again. "Remain here, my dear son," said he, "until I apprise your brother how nearly you are related to him. That door leads into my study; I will call you when he is prepared."

The moment Sir Robert joined Pembroke, he read in his pale and harassed countenance, how much he required the intelligence which he came to communicate. Mr. Somerset bowed coldly on his father's entrance, and begged to be honoured with his commands.

"They are, what I expect will restore to you, your usual looks and manner, my dear boy," answered his father, taking his passive hand, and seating him by him; "so attend to me."

Pembroke listened to the beginning of the Baronet's narrative with respectful at-

tention; but when the name of Therese Sobieski was mentioned as the woman whom he had married and deserted; the ready apprehension of his son conceiving the rest, he had only to affirm his eager demand, that Thaddeus was indeed his brother. Pembroke looked wildly around him.

"O, my father!" cried he, "what have you done? Where is he? For what have you sacrificed him?"

"Hear me to an end," rejoined the Baronet, who, then, in as few words as possible, repeated the consequent events, with the recent meeting.

Pembroke's raptures were now as high as his despair had been deep. He threw himself on his father's breast; he asked for his friend, his brother; and begged to be conducted to him. Sir Robert did no more than open the door which divided the library from the dining-room, and in one moment the brothers were locked in each others arms.

Their father, with a speechless tongue, but

but an eloquent heart, stood over them with uplifted hands, invoking the spirits of their beatified mothers, to behold this heavenly scene.

The transports of the young men for a long time denied them words, but their eyes, their tears, and their united hands, imparted to each breast a consciousness of mutual love, unutterable, if not to be expressed by those looks, which are indeed the true heralds of the soul.

Sir Robert wept like an infant whilst contemplating these two affectionate brothers; in a faultering voice he exclaimed, "How soon may these plighted hands be separated by the harpies of the law! Alas, Pembroke, you cannot be ignorant that I buy this son at the price of your legitimacy!"

At this speech, the blood rushed over the cheek of the ingenous Pembroke; but Thaddeus turning instantly to Sir Robert, said, with a smile,

"On this head, I trust that neither my

father nor my brother will entertain one thought to trouble them. Had I even the inclination to act otherwise than right, my revered grandfather has put it out of my power to bear any other name than that of Sobieski. He made me swear never to change it; and, as I hope to meet him hereafter," added he, with solemnity, "I will obey him! Therefore my beloved father, in secret only, can I enjoy the conviction that I am your son, and Pembroke's brother: yet, the happiness I receive with the knowledge of being so, will ever live here; will ever animate my heart with gratitude to Heaven and you."

"Noble son of the sainted Therese!" cried Sir Robert, "I do not deserve thee?"

"How shall I merit your care of my honour! of my dearest feelings?" exclaimed Pembroke, pressing the hands of his brother to his heart, "I can do nothing, dearest Thaddeus. I am a bankrupt in the means of evincing what is passing in my soul.

soul. My mother's chaste spirit thanks you from my lips; yet I will not abuse your generosity; though I retain the name of Somerset, it shall only be the name; the inheritence entailed on my father's eldest son belongs to you."

Whilst Thaddeus embraced his brother with affection, he calmly and firmly replied, that he would rather encounter all the probable miseries, from which his father's benevolence had saved him, than rob his brother of any part of what he believed to be justly his due.

Sir Robert, with hatred of himself, and admiration of his sons, attempted to stop this generous contention, by saying, that should be determined by an equal division of his estates.

"Not so, my dear father," replied Thaddeus; "I will never consent that the title of Somerset shall want wealth to support the munificence of its possessor."

After a few more arguments, of the same tendency the controversy was set-

tled; and the remainder of the evening passed in that sweet reciprocity of confidence and bliss, which the imagination can best picture.

According to the decisions of this night, Sir Robert wrote next morning to his sister, informing her, that accident had introduced Pembroke's friend, the Count Sobieski, to his presence; when, to his amazement and joy, he discovered, that this celebrated young hero, though of a nation to which he had declared an abhorrence, was the only remaining branch of a family to which he owed unnumbered obligations. He added, that five-and-twenty years ago, having contracted an immense debt with the Palatine of Masovia,—as a small compensation, he now signed over to the Count, (who would resume all the distinctions of his rank,) the house and estates of Deerhurst, to the amount of three thousand a year. He told her, that Pembroke did not deem such substraction from the rent-roll

of

of Somerset, any loss; for twelve thousand annually, would yet remain; and could his wishes have been complied with, he would have divided his whole patrimony with his friend. He closed his letter, with many expressions of impatience, to present to his sister and niece, their interesting *emigre* under a character which reflected honour on their discernment.

This epistle was put into the hands of Mrs. Dorothy, by a courier, as she was following Miss Beaufort and Lady Albina Stanhope into the travelling coach. Mrs. Dorothy having seated herself, read it aloud to both the young ladies; at every welcome word, the heart of the amazed and overjoyed Mary throbbed with exultation, hope, and gratitude. The good old lady was not backward in demonstrating astonishment. Surprised at her brother's rencontre with Thaddeus, but more at his avowal of obligations to any of that nation, about which he always had

asserted directly the reverse; she was so wrapped in wonder and pleasure, that her ever-cheerful tongue, lightened her happy heart, by relating to the attentive Lady Albina, the public, as well as private history, of the Count Sobieski.

When the carriage arrived at Deerhurst, it was past midnight; and, to the no small disappointment of the ladies, the family were retired to bed. Mrs. Dorothy, who would not suffer her brother to be disturbed, sent the girls to their rooms; and was crossing one of the galleries to her own apartment, when a door opening, Pembroke, in his night-gown and slippers, looked out. Having heard a bustle in the house, he was going to inquire the reason, just as his aunt appeared. She kissed him, bade him good night, told him to prepare for something pleasing in the morning; and, smiling, hurried to her chamber.

Pembroke thought so little of Mrs. Dorothy's lively promise, that he was

almost

almost the last who descended to the breakfast-parlour. Mrs. Dorothy reproached him for his undutiful laziness; while Miss Beaufort, with a glowing cheek, embraced her cousin, who whispered, "Now, I shall see the two dearest friends I possess, happy in each other."

Mary's vivid blush had not subsided, when the sudden enterance of Thaddeus, and his agitated bow, overspread her neck and bosom with crimson. A dimness obscured her faculties; she hardly heard the animated words of Sir Robert, whilst he presented him as the Count Sobieski, the darling son of one who had deserved the highest place in his heart. Whatever he was, she was conscious that he was lord of her's; and withdrawing her hand hastily, from the timid and thrilling touch of him she would have lingered near for ever, she glided back towards an open casement, where the fresh air helped to dispel the faintness which seized her.

After Mrs. Dorothy, with all the urbanity of her nature, had declared her welcomes to the Count, she put away the coffee that was handed to her by Pembroke, and said, with a smile, "Before I taste my breakfast, I must inform you, Sir Robert, that you have a guest in this house whom you little expect. I forbade Miss Beaufort saying a word, because, as we are told that '*the first tellers of unwelcome news have but a losing office;*' *vice versa,* I hoped for a *gaining* one; therefore detained such a pleasing piece of intelligence for my own promulgation. Indeed, I doubt, whether it will not intoxicate some folks here!"—added she, glancing archly on Pembroke who looked suddenly round at this whimsical declaration: "suffice it to say, that yesterday morning, Lady Albina Stanhope, more dead than alive, accompanied by her maid, arrived in a post-chaise at Somerset-Castle, and implored my protection. Our dear Mary embraced the poor weeping

ing young creature, who, amidst many tears, recapitulated the injuries which she had suffered, since she parted with the Count Sobieski at the Abbey. The latest outrage of her cruel father, was his immediate marriage with the vile Lady Sophia Lovel; and his commands, that Lady Albina would treat her as became a daughter. Ill as her ladyship was, when she received these disgraceful orders, she determined to escape them, and the degradation they would otherwise cast on the memory of her own mother, by instantly quitting the house. To this end, she engaged her maid to assist her flight; '*and,*' added she, '*Whither could I go? Who would receive the unfortunate victim of the profligate Lady Sophia? I could think of none so likely as the father of the generous Mr. Somerset. He told me we were relations; I beseech you to be my friends!*' Certain of your benevolence, my dear brother," continued Mrs. Dorothy, "I stopped this sweet girl's petition,

tion, with my caresses, and promised her a kinder father in Sir Robert Somerset."

"You did right, Dorothy," returned the Baronet, "though the Earl and I must ever be strangers, I have no enmity against his children. Where is this amiable Lady Albina?"

Mrs. Dorothy informed him, that in consequence of her recent grief and ill-treatment, her ladyship found herself too unwell to rise with the family; but that she hoped to join them at noon.

Pembroke was, indeed, deeply interested in this intelligence. The simple graces of the lovely Albina, on the first interview, had penetrated his heart. Her sufferings at Harrowby, and the sensibility which her ingenuous nature exhibited without affectation or disguise, had left her image in his soul, long after she disappeared. He now gave the reins to his eager imagination, and was the first in the saloon to greet his lovely mistress.

Sir Robert Somerset welcomed her with the

the warmth of a parent: but his animated and enraptured son, broke out into the most vehement expressions of joy, which she received with timid and grateful bows.

During this scene, Miss Beaufort, no longer able to bear the restraint of company, nor even the accidental glances of Sobieski, (whose presence, dear as it was, disconcerted and oppressed her,) walked out into the park. Though it was the month of October, the weather continued fine. A bright sun tempered the air, and gilded the yellow leaves, which the fresh wind drove before her in a thousand glittering eddies. This was Mary's favourite season. She found its softness diffuse the tenderest melancholy through her soul. The rugged form of Care, seems to dissolve under the magic touch of beautiful Nature. Forgetful of the world's anxieties, the tranquillizing spirit of meditation shades the heart of sorrow with a veil, which might well be called the twilight of the mind; and the entranced soul, happy

happy in delusion, half closes its bright eye, reluctant to perceive that such sweet repose rests in error

Such were the reflections of Miss Beaufort, after her disturbed thoughts had tossed themselves in a sea of doubts, relative to the interest which she might probably possess in the heart of Sobieski. Wearied out with suspense, she resolved to resign her future fate to Providence; and, turning her gaze on the lovely objects around, soon found the genius of the season absorb her wholly. Her cheeks glowed, her eyes became humid, and casting their mild radiance on the fading flowers beneath, she pursued her way through a cloud of fragrance. It was the last breath of the expiring year. Love is full of imagination. Mary easily glided from the earth's departing charms to her own waning beauty: the chord once touched, every note revibrated: and hope and fear, joy and regret, again dispossessed her late acquired serenity.

It being almost three o'clock, Lady Albina having expressed a wish to walk out in search of Miss Beaufort, the two brothers offered their attendance. Before her ladyship had passed through the first park, she complained of fatigue; Pembroke, alarmed, urged her to enter a shepherd's hut, close by, whilst the Count Sobieski would proceed alone in quest of his cousin.

Thaddeus, with a beating heart, undertook this commission; and bounding over the rustic bridge, which crosses the Witham, hastened along the nearest dell. With the lightness of a young hunter, he mounted the heights, descended to the vallies, traversed one woody nook, and then another, but could see no trace of Miss Beaufort. Induced to suppose that she had returned to the house, he was slackening his pace, to abandon the search, when he caught a glimpse of her figure, as she turned the corner of a thicket leading to the terrace above. In an instant

he

he was at her side; and with his hat in his hand, and a glowing cheek, he repeated his errand.

Mary blushed, faultered, and was alarmed at finding herself alone with Thaddeus. Though he now stood before her in a quality, which she ever believed was his right, yet remembrance of what had passed between them, when in other circumstances, confounded and overwhelmed her. When Constantine was poor and unfriended, it was delicious to pity and to love him. When the same Constantine appeared as a man of rank, invested with a splendid fortune, and extensive fame, she was lost, annihilated. The cloud which had obscured, not extinguished his glory, was dispersed. He was that Sobieski whom she had admired unseen; he was that Constantine whom she had loved unknown; he was that Sobieski, that Constantine, who, seen and known, she now adored.

Weighed down by the weight of these reflections,

reflections, she only bowed to what he said; and gathering her cloak from the winds, which blew it around her, was hurrying, with downward eyes, to the stairs of the terrace, when her foot slipping, she must have fallen, had not Thaddeus caught her on his arm. She rose from it with a face blushing like scarlet; and that colour did not recede, when she found that he had not relinquished her hand. Her heart beat violently, her head became giddy, her feet trembled; and finding that, after a slight motion of her arm he still held it fast, nearly overcome by inexplicable distress, she turned away her face to conceal its confusion.

Thaddeus saw all this, and, with a fluttering hope, instead of surrendering the hand he had retained, he made it a yet closer prisoner, by grasping it in both his; and, pressing it earnestly to his breast, said, in a hurried voice, whilst his eloquent eyes poured all their beams upon her averted cheek, "Surely, Miss Beaufort will

will not deny me the dearest happiness possess? The privilege of being grateful to her."

He paused: his soul was too full for utterance; and raising Mary's hand from his heart to his lips, he kissed it fervently. Almost fainting, Miss Beaufort leaned her head, which she was now unable to support, against a tree of the thicket where they were standing, and waved her other hand, in sign for him to leave her.

Such extraordinary agitation palsied the warm and blissful emotions of the Count. Dreading that he had offended her, that she might suppose he presumed on her kindness, he stood, for a moment, in silent astonishment; then, dropping on hisknee, (hardly conscious of doing so,) with an energy of action and voice, declarative of all the impetuous passion, which he had so long smothered in his heart, he implored her pardon for what had passed.

"Forgive me," added he, with encreased earnestness; "forgive me, in justice to

to your own virtues. I meant only to thank you for your goodness to an unfortunate exile; but if my words or manner have obeyed the more fervid impuse of my soul, and declared aloud, what is its glory in secret, blame my nature, most respected Miss Beaufort, not my presumption. I have not dared to look steadily on any aim, higher than your esteem."

Mary knew not how to receive this address. The position in which he uttered it, his countenance, when she turned to answer him, were both demonstrative of something less equivocal than his speech. He was still grasping the drapery of her cloak: and his eyes, from which the wind blew back his fine hair, were beaming upon her, full of that piercing tenderness, which at once dissolves and seizes the soul.

She passed her hand over her eyes. Her soul was in tumults. She too fondly wished to believe that he loved her; to trust the evidence of what she saw. His words

words were ambiguous, and that was sufficient to fill her with uncertainty. Jealous of that delicacy, which is the parent of the purest love, and its best preserver, she assumed a coldness, which was foreign to her heart, and whilst her concealed face streamed with tears, conjured him to rise. Instinctively she held out her hand to assist him. He obeyed: and hardly conscious of what she said, she continued:

"You have done nothing, my Lord, to offend me. I was fearful of my own conduct—that you might have supposed—I mean, unfortunate appearances might lead you to imagine, that I was influenced—was so forgetful of myself——"

"Cease, Madam! Cease, for pity's sake!" cried Thaddeus, starting back, and dropping her hand. Every emotion which faultered on her tongue, had met an answering pang in his breast.

Fearing that he had set his heart on the possession of a treasure totally out of his reach, he knew not how high had been his hope,

hope, until he felt the depth of his disappointment. Taking up his hat, which lay on the grass, with a countenance, from which every gleam of joy was banished, he bowed respectfully, and, in a lowered tone, continued—" the dependent situation in which I appeared at Lady Dundas's, being ever before my eyes, I was not so absurd as to suppose, that any lady could then notice me from any other sentiment than humanity. That I excited this humanity, where alone I was proud to awaken it, was, in those hours of dejection, my sole comfort. It consoled me for the friends I had lost; it repaid me for the honours which were no more. But that is past! Seeing no farther cause for compassion, you deem the delusion no longer necessary. Since you will not allow me an individual distinction in having attracted your benevolence, though I am to ascribe it all to a charity as diffused as effective, yet, I must ever acknowledge with the deepest gratitude, that I owe my present

present home and happiness to Miss Beaufort. Farther than this, I shall not—I dare not, presume."

These words, shifted all the Count's anguish to Mary's breast. She perceived the offended delicacy which actuated every syllable as they fell; and fearful of having lost every thing, by her cold and haughty reply, she opened her lips to say something, which might better explain what she meant; but her heart failing her, she closed them again, and continued to walk in silence by his side. Having allowed the opportunity to escape, she believed that all hopes of exculpation were at an end; and, not daring to look up, she cast a despairing glance at Sobieski's graceful figure as he walked near her. His arms were folded, his hat pulled over his forehead, and his long dark eyelashes shading his downward eyes, imparted a dejection to his whole air, which wrapped her weeping heart round and round with regretful pangs. "Ah!" thought she, "though the

offspring

offspring of but one moment, they will prey on my peace for ever."

At the turning of a little wooded knoll, this silent and pensive pair heard the sound of some one on the other side, walking fastly through the heaps of dried leaves. In a minute after, Sir Robert Somerset approached them.

Whilst his father advanced smiling towards him, Thaddeus attempted to dispel the gloom of his countenance; but not succeeding, he bowed abruptly to the agitated Mary; and hastily said, "I will leave Miss Beaufort in your protection, sir; and go myself and see whether or not Lady Albina be recovered from her fatigue."

"I thought to find you all together," returned Sir Robert; "Where is her ladyship?"

"I left her with Pembroke in a hut by the river;" said Thaddeus, and bowing again, he hurried away, whilst his father called after him to return in a few minutes, and accompany him in a walk.

This immediate desertion of Sobieski, when he had come expressly to attend her to lady Albina, nearly overwelmed Miss Beaufort's before exhausted spirits: hardly knowing whether to remain or to retreat, she was attempting the latter, when her uncle caught her by the arm.

"Stay?" cried he, "why Mary, you surely would not leave me alone?"

Miss Beaufort's tears had gushed over her eyes, the moment her back was turned; and as Sir Robert drew her towards him, to his extreme amazement he saw that she was weeping. At a sight so unexpected, the smile of hilarity left his lips. Putting his arm tenderly round her waist, (for now that her distress had discovered itself, her agitation became so great that she could hardly stand,) he inquired in an affectionate voice, what afflicted her?

She answered by sobs only; until finding it impossible to break away from her uncle's arms she hid her face in his bosom, and gave a loose to the full tide of her tears.

Sir

Sir Robert, recollecting the strange haste in which Thaddeus hurried from them; and remembering Miss Beaufort's generosity to him in town, followed by her succeeding melancholy, at once united these circumstances with her present confusion; and conceiving an instantaneous suspicion of the reality, pressed her with redoubled affection to his bosom.

"I fear my dearest girl," said he, "that something disagreeable has happened between you and the Count Sobieski? Perhaps he as offended you? Perhaps he has found my sweet Mary too amiable?"

Miss Beaufort, alarmed at this supposition; after a short struggle, answered, "O no, sir! It is I who have offended him. He thinks that I pride myself on the insignificant services which I rendered to him in London."

This reply convinced the Baronet that he had not been premature in his judgment; and, with a new-born delight springing in his soul, he inquired why she thought

so? Had she given him any reason to believe so?

Mary trembled at saying more. Dreading that every word she might utter, would betray how highly she prized the Count's esteem; she faultered, hesitated, stopped. Sir Robert put the question a second time in different terms.

"My loved Mary," said he, seating her by him on the trunk of a tree, which had been newly felled, "I am sincerely anxious that you and this young nobleman should regard each other as friends: he is very dear to me; and you cannot doubt, my sweet girl, my affection for yourself. Tell me, therefore, the cause of this little misunderstanding?"

Miss Beaufort took courage at the kindness of this speech. Drying her glowing eyes, though still concealing them with a handkerchief, she replied in a firmer voice, "I believe, sir, the fault lies totally on my side. The Count Sobieski met me on the terrace, and thanked me for what

I had done for him. I acted very weakly; I was confused. Indeed, I know not what he said; but he fell upon his knees, and I became so disconcerted,— so frightened, of his having attributed my behaviour to indelicacy or forwardness, that I answered something which offended him. And I am sure, he now thinks me inhuman and proud."

Sir Robert kissed her throbbing forehead, as she ended this rapid and hardly articulate explanation.

"Tell me candidly, my dearest Mary!" said he, "Can you believe that a man of Sobieski's disposition, would kneel to a woman whom he did not both respect and love? Simple gratitude, my dear girl, is not so earnest. You have said enough to convince me, whatever may be your sentiments, that you are the mistress of his fate: and, if he should mention it to me, may I tell him the scene which has now passed between us? May I tell him that its just inference would requite his ten-

derness with more than your thanks and best wishes?"

Sir Robert ended the sentence in a gay tone; but Miss Beaufort, whose nice sensibility believed that the Count must now despise her, looked down to conceal the wretchedness which spoke through her eyes, and with a half-suppressed sigh, answered; "I will not deny that I deeply esteem the Count Sobieski. I admired his character before I saw him: and when I saw him, although ignorant that it was he, my respect increased. Yet, I never have aspired to any share in his heart, or even his remembrance: I could not have the presumption. Therefore, my dear uncle," added she, laying her trembling hand on his arm, "I beseech you, as you value my feelings, my peace of mind! never to breathe a syllable of my weakness to him. I think," added she, clasping her hands with energy, and forgetting the force of her expression, "I would sooner suffer death than lose his esteem."

"And

"And yet," inquired Sir Robert, "you will at some future period give your hand to another man?"

Mary, who did not consider the extent of this insiduous question, answered with fervour, "Never.—I never can be happier than I am," added she, with breathless haste, seeing by the smile on Sir Robert's lips, that far more had been declared by her manner, than the words intended. Fearful of betraying herself farther, she begged permission to retire to the house.

The Baronet, now looking very serious, took her hand; and reseating her by him, said, "No, my dearest Mary; you shall not leave me, unless you honestly avow what are your true sentiments of the Count Sobieski. You know, my sweet girl, that I have tried to make you regard me as a father; to induce you to receive from my love, the treble affection of your deceased parents, and my lamented wife. If my dear niece do not

deny this, she cannot treat me with reserve?"

Miss Beaufort was unable to restrain her tears. Sir Robert continued.

"I will not overwhelm your delicacy by repeating the inquiry, whether I have mistaken the source of your recent emotion; only allow me to bestow some encouragement on the Count's attachment, should he claim my services in its behalf?"

Mary snatched her uncle's hand to her lips, and kissing it, whilst her dropping tears fell upon it, threw herself impetuously on her knees, and replied in a timid voice; "I should be a monster of ingratitude, could I hide any thing from you, my dearest sir, after all this kindness! I confess, that I do regard the Count Sobieski more than any being on earth. Who could see and know him, and think it possible to love another?"

"And you shall be his! my darling Mary!"

Mary!" cried the Baronet, mingling his own blissful tears with her's; I once hoped to have contrived an attachment between you and Pembroke, but Heaven has decreed it better. When you and Thaddeus are united, I shall be happy; I may then die in peace."

Miss Beaufort sighed heavily. She could not participate in her uncle's rapture. She thought that she had insulted and disgusted the Count by her late behaviour; and was opening her lips to urge it again, when the object of their conversation appeared at a little distance coming towards them. Full of renewed trepidation, she burst from the Baronet's hand: and, taking to flight, left her uncle to meet Sobieski alone.

Sir Robert's anxious question received a more rapid reply from Thaddeus, than had proceeded from the reluctant Miss Beaufort. The animated gratitude of Sobieski; the ardent, yet respectful manner with which he declared her eminence

above all other women, soon convinced the Baronet, that Mary's retreating delicacy had misinformed her. A complete explanation was the consequence; and Thaddeus who had not been more sanguine in his hopes, than his lovely mistress was in her's, allowed the clouds over his sunny eyes to disappear.

Sir Robert, impatient to see these two beings, so dear to his heart, repose confidence in each other's affection, the moment he returned to the house, asked his sister for Miss Beaufort. Mrs. Dorothy having replied, that she had seen her about half an hour ago retire to her own apartments, the Baronet sent a servant up stairs, to beg that she would meet him in the library.

This message found her in a paroxysm of distress. She reproached herself for her imprudence, her temerity, her unwomanly conduct, in having given away her heart to a man who never had required it. She remembered, that her weakness,

not

not her sincerity, betrayed this humiliating secret to Sir Robert; and, nearly at her wit's end, with a beating heart, she was traversing the room, almost hoping that she was in a miserable dream, when her maid entered with the Baronet's commands.

Disdaining herself, and determining to regain some portion of her own respect, by steadily opposing all her uncle's deluding hopes, with an assumed serenity she arrived at the study door. She laid her hand on the lock, but the moment it yielded to her touch, all her firmness vanished; and trembling and pale as death, she appeared before him.

Sir Robert having supported her to a chair; with the most affectionate and delicate expressions of paternal affection, repeated to her the sum of his conversation with the Count. Mary was almost wild at this discourse. So inconsistent and erratic is the passion of love, when it reigns in a woman's breast; she forgot

in an instant, the looks and voice of Thaddeus; she forgot that tender parting letter, which even then she treasured in her bosom; she forgot her terror of having forfeited him, by her affected coldness alone; and dreading that the first proposal of their union, had proceeded from her uncle, she burried her agitated face in her hands, and exclaimed; "O sir! I fear that you have made me for ever hateful in my own eyes, and despicable in those of the Count Sobieski!"

Sir Robert tried to assure her, that she alarmed herself without a cause; but she would not, she could not be pacified: she believed that her delicacy had been made a rash sacrifice; and was sitting gloomily weeping on a window-seat, when the Baronet gently added, "Well, Mary, since I cannot prevail over this strange incredulity, I will call in a more powerful pleader."

He rose and opened the door which led to the dining-room. Miss Beaufort instantly got

got up, and flying to the opposite door, would have retreated, had not Sir Robert suddenly thrown himself in her way. He threw his arm about her waist, and turning her round, she saw the Count, who had entered, standing, and regarding her with an anxiety, which covered her before pale features with blushes.

His father bid him come near. Sobieski obeyed, though with a step that expressed how reluctant he was, to oppress the woman whom he so truly loved. Mary's face was now hidden in her uncle's bosom. Sir Robert put her almost lifeless hand into that of his son, who dropping on his knee, said in an agitated voice, "Dearest Miss Beaufort, do you really recal those cruel words, which you directed to me this morning? May I indulge myself in the idea that I am blessed with your esteem?"

She could not reply, but whispered to her uncle, "Pray Sir, desire the Count to rise! I am already sufficiently overwhelmed."

"My

"My sweet Mary!" returned the Baronet, pressing her in his arms, "this is no time for deception on either side. I know both your hearts. Rise Thaddeus;" said he to the Count, whilst he locked both their hands within his; "take him, Mary: receive from your uncle his most precious gift; my matchless and injured son."

The shock which the first part of this speech occasioned Miss Beaufort, would have sunk her exhausted spirits to insensibility, had not the extraordinary assertion at its end, aroused and surprised her.

"Gracious Providence!" exclaimed she, "What do you mean, my dear uncle?"

"Thaddeus will explain all to you," returned he, "May heaven bless you both! I leave you together; and from him you will be confirmed in the truth of what I say."

Mary was too much astonished to think of following her uncle out of the room. She sunk on a seat, and turning her eyes full of amazement towards the Count,

Count, seemed to demand an explanation. Thaddeus, who still retained her passive hand pressed it warmly to his heart; and whilst his effulgent eyes were beaming transport and love, he imparted to her, a concise, but impressive narrative of his relationship with Sir Robert, and their late arrangement. He touched with short, yet ardent enthusiasm, on the virtues of his mother; he acknowledged the unbounded gratitude which was due to that God who had so wonderfully conducted him to find a parent and a home in England; and with renewed pathos of look and manner, ratified the proffer which Sir Robert had made of his heart and hand.

Mary listened with uncontroulable emotion to this interesting detail. Her eyes overflowed: their ingenuous language, enforced by the eloquent blood which glowed on her cheek, did not require the medium of words to declare what was passing in her mind. Thaddeus gazed on her with a certainty of bliss, which penetrated

trated his soul until its raptures almost amounted to pain. The heart may ache with joy: neither sighs nor language could express what passed in the Count's; he held her hand to his lips; his other arm fell unconsciously round her waist; and in a moment he found that he had pressed her to his breast. His heart beat violently. Miss Beaufort rose instantaneously from her chair; but her pure nature needed no disguise; she looked up to him, whilst her blushing eyes were raining down tears of delight, and pronounced in a trembling voice, "Tell my dear uncle, that Mary Beaufort glories in the means by which she becomes his daughter."

She moved to the door: Thaddeus, whose full tide of transport denied him utterance, only clasped her hands again to his lips and bosom; then relinquishing them with reluctance, he suffered her to quit the room.

CHAP. IX.

CONCLUSION.

THE magnificent establishment which this projected union offered to Sobieski, seemed to heal the yet bleeding conscience of Sir Robert Somerset. Although he had acquiesced in the Count's generous surrender of the family honours, his heart remained ill at ease. Every dutiful expression from this long neglected son, stabbed him with availing remorse. Conscious that his criminal marriage with Pembroke's mother deprived the son of Therese of his just inheritance, he could never meet Sobieski's filial attentions, without enduring pangs of self-reproach which imbittered all his joy. Miss Beaufort's avowed and returned affection, at once removed the sting of this incessant recollection: Mistress

Mistress of immense wealth, her hand would not only put the injured Thaddeus in possession of those pure delights dependent on mutual sympathy of soul, but would empower his munificent spirit, again to exert itself in the disposal of an almost princely fortune.

Such meditations having followed the now tranquillized Baronet to his pillow, they brought him into the breakfast parlour next day, full of that calm pleasure, which promises a steady continuance. The happy family were assembled. Mrs. Dorothy saluted her brother, whose brightened eye declared that he had something pleasant to communicate; and he did not keep her a moment in suspense. With the first dish of coffee which was poured out, his grateful heart unburthened itself of the delightful tidings, that before the present month should expire, Miss Beaufort would give her hand to the Count Sobieski.

Pembroke was the only hearer who did not

not express surprise at this declaration: the transported Thaddeus had flown to his bed-side the preceding night, and with a bounding and enraptured heart, related the whole of the recent scenes.

During Sir Robert's animating speech, Mary's blushing, yet triumphant eyes, sought a veil in a branch of geranium, which she held in her trembling hand, and affected to smell.

Mrs. Dorothy rose from her chair; her heightened colour, and glittering eyes, spoke more than her lips, when she pressed, first her niece, and then the Count Sobieski, in her venerable arms.

"Heaven bless you both!" cried she, "This marriage will be the glory of my age."

Miss Beaufort turned from the embrace of her aunt, to meet the warm congratulations of Pembroke. Whilst he kissed her burning cheek, he whispered loud enough for every one to hear; "And why may I not participate in my good aunt's triumph?

umph? Attempt it, dear Mary! If you can persuade my father to allow me to make myself as happy with Lady Albina Stanhope, as you will render Sobieski, I shall for ever bless you!"

Lady Albina coloured like scarlet. Sir Robert took her hand with a smile of pleased surprise. "Do you, my lovely guest? Do you sanction what this bold boy has just said?"

Lady Albina made no answer; but blushing deeper than before, cast a side-long glance at Pembroke, as if to petition his support. He was at her side in an instant; then seriously, and earnestly intreating his father's consent to an union with her ladyship, (whose approbation of his passsion, he had obtained the preceding day in the shepherd's hut;) he awaited with hoping anxiety, the sounds which seemed faultering on Sir Robert's lips.

The Baronet, quite overcome by his darling Pembroke, having, like his brother, disposed of his heart so much to his own honour,

honour, found himself unable to say what he wished; and joining the hands of the two young people in silence, he hurried out of the room. He ascended to the library, where, kneeling down, he returned devout thanks to that all-gracious Being, who crowned one so unworthy, with blessings so conspicuous.

Thaddeus, no less than his father, remembered the hand, which having guided him through a thorny but short path of sorrow, had in the end conducted him to an Eden of bliss; his heart did not forget, even in the midst of gaiety and smiles, the ardent gratitude which was due to the beneficent Dispenser of his happiness.

Before the lapse of a week it was discovered, that Sir Robert must hasten the marriage of Pembroke with Lady Albina, or be forced by law, to yield her to the demands of her father. After some search, Lord Tinemouth learned that his daughter was under the protection of Sir Robert Somerset. Inflamed with rage and revenge,

venge, he sent to order her immediate return, under pain of an instantaneous appeal to the courts of judicature.

Too well aware that her non-age laid her open to the realizing of this threat, Lady Albina fell into the most alarming fits on the first communication of the message. Sir Robert urged, that in her circumstances, no authority could be opposed to the Earl's, except that of a husband's; and on this consideration, she complied with his arguments and the prayers of her lover, directly to give that power into the hands of Pembroke.

Accordingly next morning by daybreak, accompanied by Mrs. Dorothy and the enraptured Mr. Somerset, the terrified Lady Albina commenced her journey to Scotland; that being the only place where in her situation, the marriage could be legally solemnized.

Whilst these young run-aways chaperoned by an old maiden aunt, were pursuing their rapid flight to Gretna Green,

Sir

Sir Robert sent his steward to London, to prepare two houses near his own in Grosvenor Square, for the reception of his children. During these necessary arrangements, a happy fortnight elapsed at Deerhurst. Thrice happy to Mary, because its tranquil hours imparted to her captive heart, "*a sober certainty of that waking bliss,*" which had so often animated the visions of her imagination. Morning, noon, and evening, the companion of the Count Sobieski, she saw, with added enthusiasm, that the sublime and princely virtues did not reign alone in his bosom. Their insufferable brightness, was rendered less intense, was beautifully veiled, by the softening shades of those gentle amiabilities, which are the soothers and sweeteners of life. His breast seemed the residence of love: of a love, that not only infused a warmer existence through her soul, but diffused such a light of benevolence over every being within its influence, that all appeared happy who caught a beam of his eye;

eye; all enchanted, who shared the magic of his smile. Under what different effects had she seen this man! Yet how consistent! At the first period of their acquaintance, she beheld him, like that glorious orb, which her ardent fancy told her he resembled, struggling with the storm, or looking with steady grandeur through the clouds which obscured his path: But now, like the radiant sun of summer amidst a splendid sky, he seemed to stand, the source of light, and love, and joy.

Thus did the warm fancy, and warmer heart of Mary Beaufort, paint the image of her lover; and when Sir Robert received intelligence that the Gretna Green party were arrived in town, and were impatient for the company of the dear inhabitants of Deerhurst, she confessed that some embers of human frailty did sparkle in her bosom, at the anticipation of witnessing the homage, which they who had despised the unfriended Constantine, would pay to the declared and illustrious Sobieski.

The

The news of Lady Albina's marriage, enraged the Earl of Tinemouth almost to madness. Well aware, that his withholding her ladyship's fortune, would occasion no uneasiness to a family of Sir Robert Somerset's vast possessions, he gave way to still more vehement bursts of passion; and, in a fit of impotent threatening, embarked, with all his household, to spend the remainder of the season on his estates in Ireland.

This abrupt departure of the Earl's caused Lady Albina little uneasiness. His unremitted cruelty, her brother's indifference, and the barbed insults of Lady Sophia Lovel, wrankled too deeply to leave any filial regret behind. Considering their absence a suspension of pain, rather than a punishment, she did not stain the kiss, which she imprinted on the venerable cheek of her new parent, with one tear to the memory of her unnatural father.

Whilst all was preparation, splendour, and happiness in Grosvenor-square, Thad-

deus did not forget the excellent Mrs. Robson. He hastened to St. Martin's-lane, were the good woman received him with open arms: Nancy hung, crying for joy, upon his hand: and sprung rapturously about his neck, when he told her, that he was now a rich man, and that she and her grandmother should live with him for ever. "I am going to be married, my dear Mrs. Robson; that angel, who visited you when I was in prison, has *wiped away all tears from my eyes;*" said he, and drying the cheek of his weeping landlady with his own handkerchief, he continued; "she commanded me not to leave you, until you had assured me, that you will brighten our happiness, by taking possession of a pretty cottage, which is close by her house in Hampshire. It is within Beaufort-park; and there, my Mary, and myself, will visit you continually."

"Blessed Mr. Constantine!" cried the worthy woman, pressing his hand, "myself, my Nancy,—we are yours;—take us whither

whither you would;—for wherever *you go, there will the Almighty's hand lead us, and there will his right hand hold us.*"

The Count rose and turned to the window; his heart was full; and he was obliged to take time to recover himself, before he could resume the conversation, to propose the proper dispositions for the speedy removal of Mrs. Robson and her grand-daughter, to their new residence. He saw her twice after this; and on the day of her departure for Hampshire, he put into her hand the first quarterly payment of an annuity, which would henceforward afford her every comfort; and raise her to that easy rank in society, which her gentle manners, and rare virtues, were so admirably fitted to adorn. Neither did he neglect Mr. Burnett. It was not in his nature to allow any who had served him, to pass unrequited. He visited him on the day of his arrival; and having repaid him, with a generosity, which astonished even the good money-lender, he took his

sword, with the other relics of what were once so dear, and pressing them mournfully, yet gratefully, to his breast, reentered Sir Robert's carriage and drove home.

Thaddeus next directed his steps to Dr. Cavendish's. He found his worthy friend at home, who received him with a welcome, which was increased to transport, when Thaddeus told him, with a smiling countenance that he was that Sobieski, about whose wayward fate he had asked so many ill-answered questions. The astonished and delighted doctor, embraced him with an ardour, which spoke better than language, his admiration and esteem. His amazement having subsided, he was discoursing with animated interest, on events, at once so fatal and so glorious to Sobieski, when a gentleman was announced by the name of Mr. Hopetown. He entered, and Dr. Cavendish, at the same time, introducing Thaddeus as the Count Sobieski, Mr. Hopetown fixed his eyes upon him,

with

with an expression which neither of the friends could comprehend. Dr. Cavendish, a little disconcerted at the merchant's rudeness, attempted to draw off the steadiness of his gaze, by asking how long he had been in England.

"I left Dantzic," replied he, "about a fortnight ago' and I should have been in London five days since, but a favourite horse of mine, which I brought with me, fell sick at Harwich, and I waited until he was well enough to travel."

Whilst he spoke, he never withdrew his eyes from the face of Thaddeus, who at the words *Dantzic* and *horse*, recollected his faithful Saladin; and almost hoped that this Mr. Hopetown, might prove to be the Briton, to whom he had consigned the noble animal, he now took a part in the conversation, by inquiring of the merchant, whether he were a resident of Dantzic.

"No, my lord;" replied he, "I live within a mile of it. Several years ago I

quitted the smoke and bustle of the town, to enjoy fresh air and quiet."

"Last year," rejoined Sobieski, "I passed through Dantzic, in my way to England. I believe I saw your house, and remarked its situation: the park is beautiful."

"And I am indebted, Count," resumed the merchant, "to a nobleman of your country, for its finest ornament. I mean the very horse I spoke of just now. He was sent to me one morning, with a letter from his brave owner, requesting me, by virtue of my ancestors, to give him shelter in my park. He is the most beautiful animal I ever beheld; and, unwilling to leave so sacred a deposit behind me, when I came to England, I brought him with me."

"Poor Saladin!" cried Thaddeus, his heart overflowing with remembrance; "how glad I shall be to see thee!"

"What! was the horse your's?" asked Dr. Cavendish, surprised at this apostrophe. "Yes;"

"Yes;" returned Thaddeus, "he was mine! and I owe to Mr. Hopetown, a thousand thanks, for his generous acquiescence with the prayers of an unfortunate stranger."

"No thanks to me, Count Sobieski. The moment I entered this room, I thought that I recollected you to be the same Polish Officer, whom I had observed on the beach at Dantzic. When I described your figure to the man who brought the horse, he said it was the same who gave him the letter. I could not learn your lordship's name, but I hoped one day or other, to have the pleasure of meeting you again; and of returning Saladin into your hands, in as good condition as when he came to mine."

Tears started into the eyes of Thaddeus.

"That horse, Mr. Hopetown, has carried me through many a bloody field; he alone, witnessed my last adieu to the bleeding corpse of my country! I shall receive him again, as an old and dear

friend; but to his kind protector, how can I ever demonstrate the whole of my gratitude?"

"To have had it in my power to serve the Count Sobieski, is a privilege of itself;" returned Mr. Hopetown; "I am proud of that distinction: and to be called the friend of a man, whom all the world honours, will be a title, which John Hopetown would not exchange to be made sovereign of the Indies!"

Before the worthy merchant took his leave, he promised Thaddeus to send Saladin to Grosvenor-square that evening; and to accompany Doctor Cavendish, to meet the Count, the following day at dinner, at Mr. Somerset's.

Lady Albina Somerset's arrival in London, was greeted by the immediate visits of all the people in town, who had been acquainted with the late Countess of Tinemouth, or known to the Baronet's family. Amongst the earliest names, whose tickets appeared at her ladyship's door, were those

those of Lord Berrington, Captain and Mrs. Montresor, and Dr. Blackmore. Lady Albina did not propose opening her gates to the gay world, until Miss Beaufort and the Count were married, and they and she had been presented at Court; but having heard Pembroke speak of the before-mentioned persons with particular respect, (when she took the list of her numerous visitors out of the porter's hand, she selected them as the first which should grace her table. To this groupe of Friends, Thaddeus informed the fair bride, that he had taken the liberty to add Dr. Cavendish, and Mr. Hopetown of Dantzic.

When the Count alighted at Mr. Somerset's door on the appointed day, he was rejoiced to see so many happy countenances. Lady Albina received Dr. Cavendish and Mr. Hopetown with graceful hospitality. But the lovely Mary, taking the hand of the generous protector of Saladin, pressed it warmly, and accompa-

nied the action with a sincere avowal of her interest in every thing that was attached to the Count. Sobieski turned towards Lord Berrington, and the ever lively Maria Egerton, (now Mrs. Montresor,) who both ran up to him at the same instant, to express their joy at not only seeing him again, but in a situation so consonant to his fame and quality.

Thaddeus replied to their felicitations, with a frankness and grace peculiarly his own; and was not a little surprised when Dr. Blackmore, a moment afterwards, recognized him to be the stranger, who had so much engaged his attention about a twelvemonth before. The Count did not recollect the circumstance, until the good doctor brought the very hour to his remembrance, by mentioning the Hummums; and recapitulating the rudeness of the man in black, whose name he said, he had since learnt, was Loftus.

Pembroke could hardly hear the worthy clergyman to an end. He exclaimed against

against his vile tutor's indefatigable villainy; and turning to Sir Robert, exclaimed, "My dear sir, the recent happy events have hitherto averted justice from seizing this man; but I must beg, that his connection with any thing belonging to us, may end to-morrow. Write to him, and order him to resign his situation at Arun-house immediately.

The Baronet promised; and Sobieski, trying to change a conversation which agitated his brother, addressed Mrs. Montresor on some general topic. Capt. Montresor joined them, and expressed great regret at the loss he should shortly suffer in the absence of his friend Captain Roos.

"How? Whither is he going?" demanded his wife.

Montresor replied, by lamenting the ill state of Lady Sara Roos's health, and the necessity which her husband found to carry her to Italy for its restoration.

"I met him this morning," continued he, "in despair about her."

Thaddeus too well divined, that this in-

creased indispostion owed its rise to his return to town; and inwardly petitioning heaven, that absence might complete her cure, he could not suppress the sigh, which her fatal devotedness to him, wrung from his pity and his gratitude.

No one present, except the affectionate Mary, marked the trencient melancholy which passed over his countenance. She, who had suspected the unhappy Lady Sara's attachment, loved Thaddeus, if possible, still dearer, for the compassion that he bestowed on the victim of a passion, which is as inscruitable as destructive.

When the party descended to dinner, Mrs. Dorothy, who sat next to Thaddeus, rallied him upon the desertion of one of his most dauntless admirers .This strange attack, following so closely, the information relating to Lady Sara Roos, summonned a fervid colour into the face of the Count: he looked surprized, and rather confused, at the good old lady, who,

who, smiling, related what she had been told that morning by her milliner, of Miss Euphemia Dundas having married a Scotch nobleman at Hamilton.

"So much the better for Miss Beaufort!" cried Pembroke: "Her jealous fears may now be at an end: little Phemy was no contemptible rival. Besides, Albina," said he, turning gaily to her ladyship, "you may congratulate yourself on the same score. I hear that an old friend of mine, is going to take her loving sister off *my* hands. Come, Lord Berrington, you must validate my report, for I learnt it of you."

His Lordship smiled, and answered in the affirmative; adding, that a friend of his had written to him as news, that "the eldest son of Sir Halerand Shafto, was on the point of marriage with Miss Dundas, a rich East Indian heiress, who was visiting my lady Shafto, his mother."

Sobieski wished them happy. Lord Berrington protested, that the Count was more generous than just.

"I

"I vow to heaven," cried his lordship, "I never knew people, the aim of whose lives seemed so bent on mischief. Euphemia, pretty as she is, was better known by her spirit of tormenting, than by her beauty: and as for the poor squire whom Diana has conjured into matrimony, I have little doubt of his future honours."

"Ah!" cried Mrs. Montresor, "Poor Acteon! I warrant she will allot him the punishment he merits, for stepping between her and that delectable Endymion, fool Lascelles!"

"A truce, my dear madam!" intreated Miss Beaufort.

"She does not deserve it of you," returned the laughing lady, pursuing the subject, until Mrs. Dorothy, and Sir Robert Somerset, were obliged to call very loudly upon charity.

Thaddeus, who knew not the nature of that disposition, which rejoices over the probable misconduct of our enemies, thought this part of the conversation, by far the least pleasant of the day.

Pembroke's

Pembroke's wish, with regard to Mr. Loftus, was complied with next morning. Doctor Blackmore having been prevailed upon to take charge of the young Lord Arun, reluctantly bore the mandate for his predecessor's dismission, and set out the same day for the seat of his lordship's aunt.

Whilst Sir Robert Somerset denounced the guilty he was careful neither to plunge him into fresh temptations, nor to suffer his crimes to injure the innocent. In pity to age and helplessness, he settled two hundred pounds per annum, on the wretched man's mother and sisters in Wales. And shortly after, in consequence of Loftus's confessing that all Pembroke's allegations were but too just, Sir Robert adjudged one hundred more, to be yearly paid to the culprit himself; that at least, he might not be induced to obtain subsistence by new villainies. As for the living of Somerset, which had been the price of Mr. Loftus's integrity,

integrity, that, Sir Robert determined to bestow on Dr. Blackmore, whenever it should fall.

The appointed day being arrived, in which Miss Beaufort was to give herself, and her earthly happiness into the power of the only man, to whom, (having once beheld him,) she could ever have resigned them; she pronounced her vows at the altar, with unsteadiness of tongue, but a fixed heart. And when she alighted at her own paternal mansion, in Kent, she received the congratulations of the old domesticks, with a tenderness, an elevation of soul, which drowned her glowing and enraptured face in tears.

Mrs. Robson, and the joyous little Nanny, dressed in a white frock, new for the occasion, threw themselves at her feet, at the entrance of the drawing-room;—and sobbed forth their happiness, in the Count's arms; who gently raised them both; and embracing them with filial tenderness, hailed the old lady,

as

as a parent; and the sweet girl, as an adopted child.—And Sobieski was fully sensible of the favoured path which Providence spread before him. He had passed through hosts of evils, and he now looked forward to a long sabbath of peace and gratitude. He found it at Beaufort-Hall. He enjoyed its full possession, when he returned to town, and saw his beautiful wife at the head of fashion; not only adorning his house, but filling his home with all the ineffable comforts of domestic life, and domestic virtues.

One fine evening in which they were out together, she ordered the carriage to stop in Covent Garden; when it drew up, she expressed a wish to walk through the church-yard. Thaddeus complied; and before he had time to express his surprise at the strangeness of her request, she led him towards the grave of his revered friend Butzou, who was buried there. It was no longer the same; a white marble tablet occupied the place

of

of grass and yarrow. The Count bent forward, and read, with swimming eyes, the following inscription:

Stop, traveller, thou treadest on a Hero!
Here
rests the body
of
Lieutenant GENERAL BUTZOU.

Sobieski's soul was pierced. Incapable of speaking, he led his wife back to her carriage; and placing her within it, clasped her suddenly and fondly to his breast. His tears gushed out in spite of himself, and mingling with hers, poured those thanks, those assurances of animated approbation through her heart, as made it even ache with excess of happiness.

Thus mutually endeared, we leave the family of Sir Sobert Somerset. We leave Thaddeus Sobieski, blessed in the fruition of every earthly good. The Virtues, the Muses,

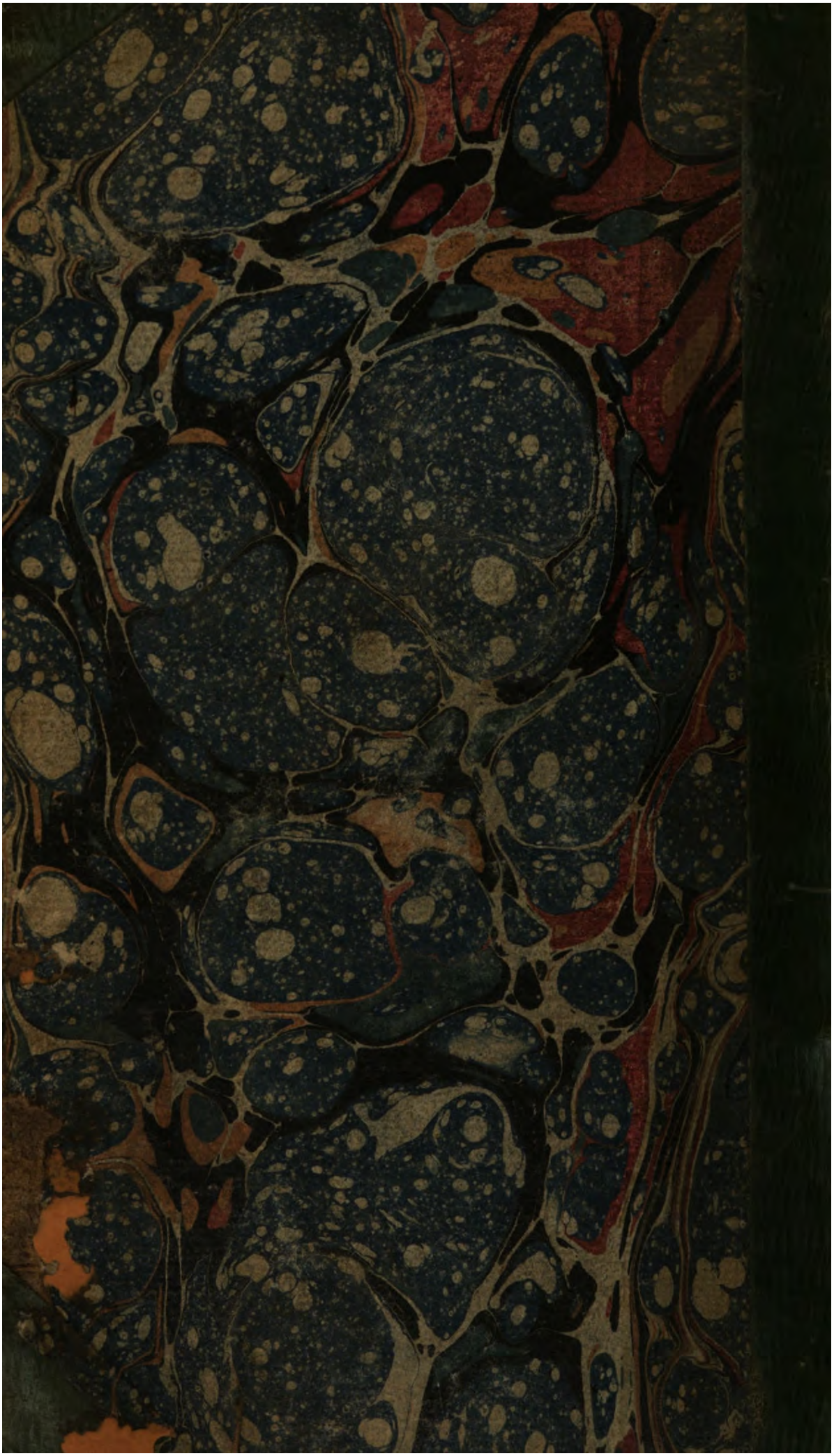
Muses, and the Charities, were the guests at his table. Misfortune could not veil Genius from his eyes; nor Calamity obscure the brightness of the Just. Though banished from his native country, where his birth gave him dominion over rich territories, now in ruins; and a once numerous and happy people, now no more; —he had not yet relinquished the love of empire:—But it was not over principalities, and embattled hosts, that he wished to extend the sceptre of command:—He wished to reign in the soul:—His throne was in the hearts of the Good, the Amiable, and the Unfortunate. The Unhappy of every rank and Nation, found refuge, consolation and repose, amongst the shades of Beaufort. No eye looked wistfully on him, to turn away and weep; no voice addressed him with the petition of distress, to close it with the sigh of disappointment: His smiles cheered the disconsolate; and his protecting arms, warded off the approach of new sorrows. *Peace was within his walls,*

and

and plenteousness within his palaces. And when a few eventful months distinguished their course with the death of the implacable destroyer of Poland, and General Kosciuszko (who was set at liberty by her successor) arrived in England, he was received with the warmest welcome, by his now happy friend.—"Ah, my dear General," said he, as he clasped the veteran to his breast; "I am indeed favoured above mortals—I see thee again, on whom I believed the gates of a Russian prison had closed for ever!—I have all that remains of my country pressing upon my heart—all its valour, virtue, and heroism, is now within my arms!—Kosciuszko, my friend, my fathor, bless your son!"

Kosciuszko did bless him; and embalmed the benediction, with a shower of tears, more precious than the richest unction that ever flowed on a royal head;—they were drawn from the heart of a Hero.—Sobieski presented his lovely wife to his illustrious friend; and while he gratefully

fully acknowledged the rare felicity of his fate, he owned that the retrospection of past misfortunes, like shade to a picture, gives to our present bliss, greater force and brightness.

The End.

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