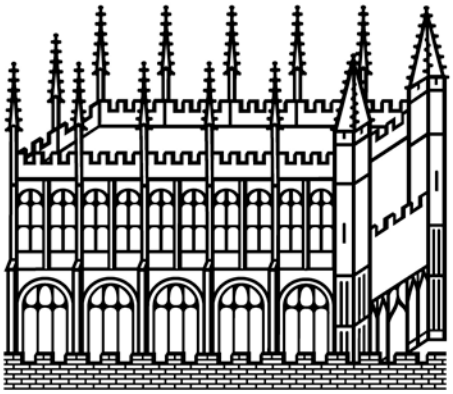

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STANDARD

NOVELS.

N° XIX.

THE PASTOR'S FIRESIDE.

BY MISS JANE PORTER.

COMPLETE IN TWO VOLUMES.

LONDON:
HENRY COLBURN AND RICHARD BENTLEY,
NEW BURLINGTON STREET:
BELL AND BRADFUTE, EDINBURGH;
CUMMING, DUBLIN; AND
GALIGNANI, PARIS.
1832.

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THE PASTOR'S FIRE-SIDE.

She pointed, without being able to speak, to the heap on the floor.

London, Published by H. Colburn, & R. Bentley, [illegible]

THE

PASTOR'S FIRE-SIDE,

A NOVEL,

BY

JANE PORTER,

VOL. III.

She held a packet in her hand; Louis's heart bounded towards it, and he hastily advanced.

LONDON:
COLBURN AND BENTLEY,
CUMMING, DUBLIN.—BELL & BRADFUTE, EDINBURGH.
GALIGNANI, PARIS.
1832.

THE

PASTOR'S FIRE-SIDE,

A NOVEL.

I will confess, the ambitious projects which I once had, are dead within me. After having seen the parts which fools play upon the great stage; a few books, and a few friends, are what I shall seek to finish my days with. TWEDDELL.

BY

MISS JANE PORTER.

WITH A NEW INTRODUCTION, BY THE AUTHOR.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. II.

LONDON:

HENRY COLBURN AND RICHARD BENTLEY,

NEW BURLINGTON STREET:

BELL AND BRADFUTE, EDINBURGH;
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THE

PASTOR'S FIRE-SIDE.

CHAPTER I.

RIPPERDA was gone. Day rolled over day; and the most splendid preparations continued to be privately made for the betrothment of Maria-Theresa and the marriage of Otteline: but the Empress had still to count the hours with impatience until the ceremonial consent for the latter should arrive.

Meanwhile, the conduct of Louis, in the management of the intricate affairs confided to him, gained the universal suffrage of the ministers with whom he conferred; foreign and domestic, all united in saying that had he been the son of the obscurest individual, his talents and strict fair dealing would have insured him every honour now lavished on him as the son of Ripperda.

Routemberg, the Austrian prime minister, affected to treat him with peculiar confidence; he invited him familiarly to his house; and he was with him, one night, when a packet arrived from his father.

Louis returned home to open it. On breaking the seals, it contained the very despatches, with the jewels, which had been taken by the robbers from Castanos. The Duke accompanied the bag with a few lines, dated from a post-house in Carinthia, saying that he had recovered it in a very extraordinary manner: he would describe the circumstance in his first letters from Spain; but he now lost no

time in forwarding it to Vienna, under the safe conduct of Martini and a guard.

Subsequent considerations made Ripperda withhold this adventure; but it was briefly as follows.

Just as the Spanish suite had passed into the mountainous tracts of Carinthia, and Ripperda had entered a solitary post-house, in the forest of Clagenfurt, he was followed into the apartment prepared for him by his *avant courier*, by the master of the house. The man told him, in a mysterious manner, that a person in a strange foreign habit had been waiting for the Spanish ambassador some hours in an upper chamber; and that he now requested to speak with his Excellency, for a few minutes, on a subject of consequence: but it must be in a room without light.

Ripperda desired that the person might be told it was not his custom to admit strangers to his presence; and never to suffer dictation in the manner he was to receive them.

In a few seconds the innkeeper returned with a charged pistol, which he presented to Ripperda with this message: "The person who sent that was as little accustomed to arbitrary decisions as the Duke de Ripperda. He had matters of moment to impart to him. If he did not choose to receive them on the stranger's terms, — well! — they would rest where they were: — but if the Duke decided otherwise, he must admit the communication under the obscurity of total darkness. If he suspected personal danger, he was at liberty to stand on his guard, during the interview, either with his sword or that pistol."

There was something in the boldness of the demand, and the gift of the pistol, that stimulated the curiosity of Ripperda. He could protect his life from a single arm; and, from a more supported treachery, he had an armed guard in his suite.

Without further hesitation, he told the innkeeper to return the pistol to him from whom he had brought it; to take the lamp from the room, and to introduce the stranger.

When the door re-opened, a man was let in, the outline of whose figure and apparel the Duke caught a glimpse of in the reflected light from the outer chamber.

The person was tall; seemed in a military garb, by the clangor of a heavy sword, in an iron scabbard, which struck against the door-post as he approached. But there was a great involvement of drapery about him; and the black plumage of his head brushed the door-top, as he stooped and entered. The door closed on his back, and the two were in total darkness.

"Your business, sir?" demanded Ripperda, with a tone of superiority.

"It is to confer an obligation on the proudest man in Christendom!" returned a hoarse and rough voice. "Ten days ago your courier was stopped in these mountains, and robbed of his travelling case. The contents are a padlocked casket and a sealed bag. It fell in my way; and I restore them to you."

"Brave stranger!" returned Ripperda; "whoever you are, accept my thanks. Point but the way, and the proudest man in Christendom would feel himself prouder in being allowed to repay such an obligation."

"I doubt it not," replied the stranger; "but my taste is not man's gratitude. If it were, I should starve in this generation."

"Try the man on whom you have just conferred this favour! Pardon me, but, by your language, you appear to have been outraged by mankind? Let me make restitution? I love a brave spirit, and could employ and reward it."

The stranger laughed scornfully.

"Mine is Esau's birthright! that I have employed it manfully, witness this sword!" cried he, striking down its hilt with his hand, and rattling its steel upon the stone floor; "witness that bag of policy and of riches I despise! —which the Duke de Ripperda now holds in his hand, as the gift of an outlaw and an enemy!"

"You are a fearless man," returned the Duke, "and have proved yourself an honourable one! You know my power. Name the country that has outlawed you, and I will obtain your pardon. Name the price to make you my friend, and I will pay it."

"Ripperda," replied the stranger, "I leave that behind

which will direct you where to find its owner. If you use it wisely, it may be the lion skin of Hercules; if you reject it, the shirt of Nessus were a cooler gabardine! —Farewell."

Before Ripperda could form a reply, the stranger had opened the door, and passed through it like a gliding shadow.

The moment he had disappeared, the Duke called for lights, and the landlord brought them in.

When Ripperda was alone, he examined the case his rugged visiter had put into his hand. He broke the seals of the bag, in which he found the key of the casket; and, on looking over the contents of both, missed none of the jewels, an answering list of which was amongst the despatches. The jewels were a magnificent present from Don Carlos to the Archduchess; and a necklace, inscribed by the Queen's own hand, for Countess Otteline Altheim: but amongst none of the papers was there any trace of the expected consent. The present of the necklace seemed a presumptive proof that her Majesty did not intend to withhold it; but, until it was formally given, Ripperda could add no further sanction from himself. However, to inform the Empress, as soon as possible, of even this promise of Isabella's acquiescence, he lost no time in summoning two or three of the young noblemen, who, wearied of Vienna, had chosen to return with him to Spain. He told them of his having recovered the state bag—by the gift of a leader of banditti, he believed; and of his intention to forward it that night to Vienna.

Don Baptista Orendayn, who was present, eagerly offered a suggestion that Martini, as the most trusty person, ought to be the messenger; and Ripperda, pleased with his zeal, having ordered a sufficient suite to attend whomsoever he should select, adopted this advice, and saw the faithful Italian set off, on his return to the Austrian capital, just as the dawn tinged the distant hills.

Ripperda's equipages were getting ready for the prosecution of his own journey; and, not having found any letter or memorandum from the stranger himself in the case which had held the casket, he was wondering to what

mysterious manner of tracing him the man could have referred, — since none, certainly, had presented itself,— when the landlord, entering the apartment, carried a scarlet mantle on his arm, and, laying it on the table before the Duke,—

" My lord," said he, " the person you saw last night left this cloak in the chamber where he waited for you. He told me to bring it to your Excellency in the morning."

Ripperda's eye fell upon the mantle; it was discoloured a dark red in many places: he nodded his head, and the man withdrew. Ripperda then took it from the table, supposing a name or a direction might be affixed to it; but, on the ample folds disengaging themselves, he started: it was marked with the keys of St. Peter! — it was embroidered on the shoulder with the arms of Giovenozzo! He had seen it before. It was stained with the blood of Duke Wharton!

Ripperda cast it from him.

" Accursed Wharton!" exclaimed he, now recollecting, in the disguised tones of the stranger's voice, some notes of the Duke's,—" this insult shall not be pardoned. I am not to be cajoled nor menaced into peace with you, my most detested, most insolently triumphing enemy! We have once measured swords!"— and his eye glanced on the blood-stained scarf: " when they next meet, the blow may be surer!"

Wharton's graces of mind, body, and political management, formed the only character which had ever peered with that of his haughty rival. He was the only man who had ever foiled Ripperda by secret machination; he had made him feel that he had an equal, — that he might have a superior; he had discovered that the all-glorious boast of Spain was not exempt from the infirmities of common men; he had wrought him to commit an injury, and he had stood between him and the world's cognisance. To be so humbled in the knowledge of any living being, was the vultures of Prometheus to the proud heart of Ripperda. Wharton, by the present action, had declared his triumph — had presumed to promise or to threaten; and the hatred of his enemy was now wound up to a height that could

know no declension, till its cause was numbered with the dust.

A wood-fire burned on the hearth. Ripperda thrust the Cardinal's mantle into it, and stood over the smouldering cloth till the whole was consumed to ashes. He then quitted the scene of his new mortification; and finding his servants had been some time mounted, he sprang into his carriage, with all the passions of the Hôtel de Giovenozzo re-awakened to rage in his soul.

Comprehending that Wharton must have set his emissaries to waylay the Spanish despatches, and merely to afford him the opportunity he had boasted of conferring an obligation on his rival, Ripperda occupied the long hours with devising schemes of revenge; and, thus musing, he rapidly pursued his journey towards the seat of his power.

He met with no accident nor obstacle, till on the night of the 25th of July. The tops of the hills were laden with thunder clouds, and the turbid atmosphere laboured with the stifling sirocco. His long train of attendants had dispersed themselves amongst the narrow and shelving roads which traverse that line of the Apennines which forms the mural diadem of the Gulf of Genoa. Ripperda's equipage wound through a long and twisting defile, between two overhanging precipices. The intricacies and angular turns in the road separated him from his immediate followers. It was the darkest hour of twilight; yet enough of gleam remained in the lurid sky to show the outline of objects.

As the Duke's carriage issued to the gorge of the ravine, he felt it abruptly stop; and then heard a volley of oaths from his drivers, mingled with threatening imprecations from strange voices. While he was letting down the glasses to enquire the cause, the lash of whips accompanied the mutual swearing, and he felt the struggle of his horses to force their way forward. The next moment a pistol was fired, and a deep groan showed it had taken aim. As the window dropped, Ripperda saw his foremost postilion fall on the neck of his horse, and the whole equipage surrounded by banditti; but Ripperda saw no more. The carriage door was instantly opened; and, before he could snatch a pistol from his own belt, he was dragged from his

seat by the collected strength of several arms. Having thrown him to the ground, one man of colossal bulk cast himself upon their prostrate and struggling victim; and, kneeling upon his body, coolly and determinately put a pistol close to his temple. Ripperda now grasped his own weapon; and, with one hand, striking aside the arm of his antagonist, the pistol went off: where that ball hit, he knew not; but, with the other hand, at the same moment, he lodged the contents of his own pistol in the heart of the ruffian. The wretch tumbled aside with a convulsive recoil, and was no more.

His comrades, deeming the Duke's destruction sure, were rifling the carriage; while others had posted themselves behind, in the defile, to prevent a rescue from his attendants. One of the ruffians, turning round at the double report of the pistols, and seeing his accomplice thrown, a dead man, off the body of Ripperda, alarmed his fellows, and rushed towards their prey. The Duke, who was now on his legs, determined to sell his life dearly; and, drawing his sword, set his back against the precipice, and held them at bay. But the strength of his arm, and the bravery of his heart, could not have defended him long against so many assailants.

The men in the defile, seeing the weapons of their comrades parried by the Duke, called to them to try fire-arms: two pistols were instantly fired at him.

"He stands yet!" cried one of the ruffians; "give him another volley."

A volley did come, but from the rocks above; and three of the villains fell. The rest drew back a few paces, in surprise; and, in the moment, several men jumped from the shelving precipice to the side of the Duke. The conflict closed, and became desperate. Ripperda was bleeding fast, from the graze of a ball on his head; and though he assisted his defenders with a resolute heart, he was nearly fainting. A party of his new friends had cleared the defile for the approach of his followers; and, as they appeared, the discomfited ruffians suddenly laid hands on their wounded and dead, and, throwing them through a chasm in the rock over the precipice, were presently lost, themselves,

amongst the bushy recesses of the same perpendicular descent.

The persons, who had come thus opportunely to the rescue of Ripperda, assisted his servants to bind the wound; and to place him, now as insensible as his lifeless postilion, in the carriage. Martini was on his mission to Vienna; but another valet was put into the chariot, to support the Duke. The man respectfully enquired of him, who appeared the superior of the group, what name he must say, when his master should ask that of his deliverer?

"Some day, I may tell it to him, myself," returned he; "meanwhile, I change swords, as a memento of the circumstance."

He closed the carriage door, and ordered the trembling postilions to drive on. The valet, calling from the chariot window, implored his further protection; he nodded his head in acquiescence, and, with his train, escorted the alarmed party safe through the gorge into the open country. At the end of this terrific pass, they perceived the remainder of the suite, under the leading of Don Baptista Orendayn, approaching from another road. At this sight the gallant travellers turned their horses' heads, and, leaving Ripperda to his friends, galloped across the plain in an opposite direction.

The Duke had recovered, though only to a dreamy recollection. But his medical staff having gone before him to Genoa, when he arrived there, his wound was properly dressed, and he became sensible to all which had passed. A day's repose left him no apparent effects of his adventure, but the bandage on his head, and his regret that such immediate insensibility had deprived him of the opportunity of thanking his deliverer. He questioned Orendayn about what he might have observed of him; but the young Spaniard could give no account: he was lost among the mountains, at the time of the attack. However, he informed Ripperda, that, while enquiring his way, some goatherds told him of a noted banditti, which prowled in these parts in search of plunder; and he did not doubt these assailants were the very troop. He lamented with great

bitterness, that the stupidity of his guides should have led him so far astray, when his patron was in danger; and, while declaring his envy of them who had so happily come to the rescue, he added many encomiums on their timely valour.

Ripperda was pleased with the exchange of swords. The fabric of the one which had been left in the place of his, was of a fashion that proved its owner to be a gentleman, as well as a brave man. Strange as it may seem, the former citizen of Gröningen had now imbibed so much of Spanish prejudice, he would have been sorry to have heard that his eagle-crested rapier was suspended at the side of a man of ignoble blood, even though the hand that hung it there was that of his deliverer.

On the morning of recommencing his journey, Ripperda put the stranger's sword into his belt. It had once saved his life!—In how many a perilous scene did it afterwards defend him?

CHAPTER II.

The Duke de Ripperda no more troubled his son with a narrative of this attack in the Apennines, than he satisfied his curiosity, by the promised relation of the adventure in Carinthia. The one passed from his mind, as it was attended by no apparent consequences; and the other, though it lived in it, was connected with Wharton, and the memory of a transaction he would gladly obliterate for ever.

Martini had been enjoined silence by his master; and, when he had delivered his trust, he immediately set forth to overtake him.

When Louis examined further into the contents of the recovered despatches, he found a schedule of directions respecting the projected royal marriage, with the Queen's commands that he should be the proxy of Don Carlos, in

the betrothing ceremony with the Archduchess. He laid the papers on the table; for he thought the task would be a harder one than even his own immolation. He had seen her, lately, in most of his visits to her governess; and always, like an innocent lamb, shrinking from the knife of its destroyer. Could his be the hand to plunge that knife? He shuddered. The next morning he met her again; and she looked as if she read his horror of the deed, and thanked him for it.

But that morning did not bring, along with himself, the anticipated sanction to Countess Altheim. He had searched, though with an unwilling hand, throughout the whole despatches, for the ratification of his own condemnation; but it was not there.

The Empress was not satisfied with the Queen's slowness in expressing her consent to the marriage of Louis; and the less so, as she wanted to have had it solemnised immediately. Otteline was summoned to Brunswick, to attend her dying father; and Elizabeth would have been glad to have secured Louis, by the bonds of the church, before so many leagues should divide them.

The day that had been fixed, by the illustrious parents of the royal pair, for the celebration of the affiancing ceremony, now approached. Preparations were ready; congratulations on the tiptoe for presentation; and the adversaries of Austria's aggrandisement, with that of Spain, beheld these pledging nuptials with despair. Ripperda, with whom the whole scheme had originated, seemed omnipotent.

Indeed, the splendour of his proceedings, in his new office of prime minister of Spain, realised the visions of all its former statesmen. He moved forward with a magnificence of design, which surpassed Alberoni in grandeur, and Cardinal Ximenes in determined execution of his will. The eyes of Europe were fixed on the mighty hand, which moved all their interests, as the interests of his own country prompted; and, while a feeble prince sat on the throne, its minister bid fair to make the Spanish monarchy as vast and dominant, as under the sceptre of the Emperor Charles. The pragmatic sanction, and a marriage

between a Spanish Prince and the heiress of the German empire, might acomplish this, and other plans, which were bursting to their ripening.

But the mildew was now breathed, that was intended to blast this goodly harvest.

On the night, in which Wharton was carried insensible, and supposed mortally wounded, out of the mansion of Giovenozzo, the Cardinal had him conveyed to a monastery in the neighbourhood, where he slowly recovered to life and strength. He learned enough from his only visiters, Giovenozzo and De Richelieu, to know, that Ripperda had not merely disdained justification from his adversary, but had persisted, in every circle, to treat his name with not less pointed, though silent contempt. Wharton smiled at this littleness in so great a man, but determined that he should feel the power he despised.

With the active English Duke, it was only to will and to do. Distances were to him as nothing; and difficulties only stimulants to give his opponents a more signal overthrow. What Swift said of Lord Peterborough was as aptly adapted to Wharton; for, while his rivals, in the various courts of Europe, were hearing of him at Rome, Paris, and London, and marvelling whether he would not next be in South America, or Prestor John's dominions, —

> "Still as they talk of his condition,
> So wonderful his expedition,
> He's with them like an apparition!"

As soon as he recovered from the immediate effects of his wound, he set forward on his new pursuit; and he did not move to and fro upon the earth on a vain errand. Before his rencontre with Ripperda at the Cardinal's, he had penetrated all the secrets of the Altheim apartments. The jealousy of Count Routemberg respecting some of the objects of the Spanish policy, and the private dispositions of the Emperor on the same subject, he had also mastered, by having secured the key of Routemberg's bosom, the beautiful and avaricious Countess d'Ettrees. The secret wishes of half the nobility in Spain were also unfolded to him, by the envy of De Patinos; and the venality of Orendayn was still more at his service.

Wharton was fully aware of the disgust that Maria-Theresa had taken to Don Carlos; likewise, of her romantic prepossession for the person and manners of Louis; and of the Empress's design to hasten the betrothment on this account. The Duke saw his vantage ground; and Ripperda's last conduct determined him to storm the breach he had made in these secret counsels.

It was easy to gain the ear of Routemberg through the woman he worshipped. By her insinuations, and the graver representations of his Excellency's confessor, (who knew the value of Wharton's gold,) the minister was made to suspect much dangerous matter in Ripperda's complicated influence at Vienna. Claudine d'Ettrees accused him of more sway with the Empress than was consistent with her high station; that his designs in marrying a prince of Spain to the heiress of the empire were very apparent; while a secret connection he had with the leader of the Bavarian faction was totally inexplicable. To circumvent his prime movement, the confessor gave hints of the wisdom of uniting the Archduchess to a prince whose interests would be wholly German; and Francis of Lorraine, a ward of the Emperor, and who was just returning from his travels in Italy, was suggested as the properest person. Routemberg detested Ripperda; and gave such efficient credibility to every representation, that he beset the Emperor night and day, till he brought him to accord with all his new views.

Proof was given to him of Elizabeth having admitted Ripperda to private political discussions in the Altheim apartments. Also, that her daughter was desperately attached to Louis; and that the worst consequences might be anticipated, which the ambition of the father, and the power of the son, could achieve, when the innocent Princess should be entirely in their hands.

Wharton had recently seen the Prince of Lorraine at Venice. And the circumstance which inspired the idea of his supplanting the Spanish match, was a general resemblance in his person, countenance, and manner, to him who now filled the heart of the youthful Princess. The Duke found no difficulty in awakening the wishes, which were necessary to his scheme, in the mind of young Lorraine.

His ambition was easily aroused to aspire to the heiress of an empire; and his imagination was not displeased with the picture Wharton drew of his proposed bride.

"In your progress," rejoined the Duke, "you may consult me, as the ancient heroes did their gods; but I must be equally invisible."

Every impression was made on the Emperor's mind that Wharton desired. And, to carry forward his measures against the Spanish minister, and his Empress, without a chance of impediment, Charles kept all that had been discovered to him locked in his breast.

Elizabeth, meanwhile, was filled with alarms respecting her daughter's unhappy infatuation. Her former placid temper had changed to irritability; and her conduct, at times, became so wild and extraordinary, the anxious mother was in hourly fear of her doing something rash with regard to Louis. Since the departure of Otteline, by unlucky accident, she had met him twice alone in the Altheim boudoir; and her repugnance to the Prince of Spain seemed so to increase, the Empress saw no resource but in hastening the day of affiance.

The Emperor was no sooner informed of her intentions, than he made a feint of sparing his daughter's feelings during the preparations; and took her with him to pass the intermediate time at the summer palace.

Elizabeth had always intended that the marriage of her favourite should be solemnised the morning of the day in which the young bridegroom was appointed to represent Don Carlos at the Imperial altar. Louis had always understood this; and she feared to give his dislike of Otteline such advantage, as to yield him opportunity to retract his engagement, should she reserve no great political object to hold him in check. In this dilemma, she determined to throw herself upon his honour; and, from her knowledge of his romantic generosity, she thought she could easily bring him to pledge it; and then she believed Otteline secure.

She told him she was anxious to comply with a private letter from the Queen of Spain, to hasten the union between her son and the Princess; and she would do so, provided

he would promise to perform his engagement with Otteline as soon as she should arrive. Isabella had already implied her consent, though its formalities were yet to be declared. On the strength of this, and his father's granted approbation, Elizabeth demanded of him to say, that he would raise no obstacles to his own nuptials; and, on such a pledge, she would allow the betrothment to proceed. All hope of escaping this hated union had long been over with Louis; and on Elizabeth representing, that some strange clouds had lately hung over her husband's brow, which might burst she knew not where, to the subversion of all the Spanish plans, the young patriot was the more readily persuaded to give the word of honour she required.

"But," added Louis, with a smothered sigh, "in the august ceremony of next week, I conjure your Majesty, not to command me the proxy!"

The Empress turned round.

"De Montemar! that is a bold petition. By what presumption dare you offer it, to the mother of the Archduchess Maria-Theresa?"

"Her Highness is young, and fearful of the engagements to which that rite will bind her; and as, in spite of myself, my heart will dare to compassionate even a Princess in a moment of such awful responsibility, I dread my weakness might dishonour the solemnity."

"And you have no weakness, but compassion for your future Princess?" asked Elizabeth, turning her Pallas-like eyes full upon him.

Louis felt their appeal; and while a blush of mingled sensibility and modesty coloured his manly cheek, he laid his hand on his breast and answered, "None; on the life I would dedicate to her service, and to that of her illustrious mother!"

The Empress turned from him, and walked up the room. Her own discretion seconded his plea; and when she approached him again, it was with a gracious countenance, and to say, that his petition should be considered with indulgence.

But when the Emperor returned with his daughter from the Laxemburg, a competitor more formidable than the

image of De Montemar had taken its station in the breast of the young Princess. Accident had seconded the policy of Wharton. Maria-Theresa was used to accompany her father in his field sports; but rather as a companion, because he wished it, than as a pleased spectatress; for she was too gentle to delight in the torture of any thing. One morning, in a boar hunt, by some strange mismanagement of her attendants, she became entangled in a part of the thicket, which exposed her to personal danger. At this crisis, even in the moment of her most imminent peril from the furious animal, fortune, or rather Providence, conducted the Prince of Lorraine into the wood, and to her rescue. He shot the boar, and she fell into his arms. In the confusion of her terrors, believing her preserver to be Louis, she clung to his bosom in speechless gratitude. Her alarmed father approached: he knew the person of the Prince; and, full of joy, explained to her, that he who had saved her from the wild animal, was Francis of Lorraine. She had risen from his breast, agitated, and overwhelmed: but, every day afterwards, during her residence at the Laxemburg, she gladly admitted him to her presence. The young Prince was of the same age with Louis; and possessed so much of his grace of mind, as well as of person, that he had no difficulty (by tender and unobtrusive attentions) to transform her fanciful attachment to De Montemar, into a grateful passion for himself.

The understanding of Maria-Theresa was beyond her years, and her affections warm and delicate. To unite herself to a stranger was always repugnant to her sensibility; but when that sensibility pointed ardently and tenderly towards a dear familiar object, the former idea was intolerable. The Emperor, apparently moved by her abhorrence of the Spanish Prince, and her predilection for the German one, sanctioned their mutual vows, but engaged her, by all her hopes of happiness, and dread of the misery she would avoid, to keep the whole affair secret from her mother, until he could find a safe opportunity of breaking with the Spaniard. This adjuration, and from the lips of her father, was conclusive with the Princess; and that it was his counsel, sanctified to her the enjoined reserve. He en-

couraged her natural timidity to the resolution of an unswerving opposition, and exhorted her to persist in refusing the smallest appearance of yielding her consent to be present on the day of betrothment. He promised that, if she would be firm, he would secretly support her resistance, and throw obstacles in the way of the Empress's measures, until all should be obtained from Spain, and they might safely throw off the mask.

The resolute opposition which Elizabeth now met from her, who had hitherto appeared like a drooping lily, bowing submissive to every blast, amazed and perplexed her. As Charles had been careful to conceal his daughter's interviews with the Prince of Lorraine, and Francis did not come to Vienna, the Empress could trace no cause for this extraordinary change; and when she talked to her husband of Maria-Theresa's stubborn refractoriness, he coldly replied,—

"The Marquis de Montemar has been admitted too familiarly to her presence. He is as seeming fair as his father: he may be equally false."

Surprised at this unexpected, and, she was sure, unprovoked aspersion on the Duke, the Empress cautiously took up the defence of his honour, at least.

"He is unworthy of your confidence," replied the Emperor; "for, after all his affected hostility to Wharton, as the instigator of every vexatious act from the Bavarian conspiracy, I have discovered, from unquestionable evidence, that he has secret intelligence with him. On what subjects, ambition, boundless and wild as his own, can alone guess. Look to his son, Elizabeth, and to our daughter."

Charles would not explain further, and left the Princess in increased perplexity.

In vain she interrogated her daughter; in vain she insisted on her union with Don Carlos: the Princess was firm in adhering to her father's lesson, — not to answer a word to any of the charges her mother would put to her, as the reason of her refusal. When the Empress was angry, Maria-Theresa remained respectfully resolute; when

her mother was tender and imploring, the hapless Princess wept in silence, but would not yield.

One morning, Elizabeth entered her daughter's apartment, self-prepared not to leave it until she had brought her to the point, whence she was resolved there should be no escape. She spoke, persuaded, threatened, implored; but the Princess was more determined than ever, though so agitated by her mother's language, that she fell back in hysterical emotion into her chair. The violence of her disorder discomposed her dress, and the vest of her robe bursting open, the eye of her mother caught the glitter of something like the setting of a picture. With an immediate impulse she snatched it from the bosom of her daughter, and beheld, what she believed, the portrait of De Montemar.

Her eyes, for a moment, fixed themselves with a horrid conviction of a wide and nameless treachery. She looked from the picture to her daughter with a frightful glare in their before mild aspect. Maria-Theresa, alarmed out of her hysterics, had sprung from her seat, and stood before her mother, with her hands clasped, in speechless supplication.

"And when did he give you this?" demanded Elizabeth, in a hollow and almost suffocated voice.

The Princess dropped, trembling, on her knees, without power of utterance; for, not aware of her mother's mistake, she thought the discovery of the Prince's picture in her breast had betrayed the secret of her father; and, on its preservation, again and again he had told her, depended her future happiness.

"Theresa, I command you to confess to me the whole of De Montemar's treachery. When did he dare to give you this? — and — unhappy, degenerate girl! how did you dare to give the encouragement to warrant such treasonable presumption?"

Every word that now fell from the agitated Empress was balm to the affrighted nerves of her daughter. Her father's secret was, then, safe; and, still retaining her humble position, she said, in faltering accents, "Spare De Montemar, my gracious mother! As I hope to see Heaven,

he is guiltless of all my offences against you. But ask me no more — I dare not answer it."

"He has bound you by a vow! or, wretched dupe, you have disgraced ——"

The mother's lips could not finish the charge she was about to put upon her innocent child. She paused, and threw herself into a chair; for her own heart recollected its youthful and chaste admiration of the father of this very De Montemar; and she burst into tears. The picture fell to the floor. Theresa looked where it lay, but forbore to touch it. Her heart was softened at her mother's silent tears; and her own trickling down her cheeks, she ventured to take the Empress's hand, and put it to her lips. Elizabeth pressed the filial hand that trembled in hers; and then Theresa faintly articulated,—

"Oh, my mother! release me from this horrid betrothment, and you shall know every thought and deed of this agonised heart!"

The Empress dried the tears from her eyes, and turning gently on her child,—"I pity you, Theresa", said she, "but I can do no more. You are born a Princess; and your inevitable fate is to marry, not where your inclinations may prompt, but where the interests of your country dictate. Your birthright gives you a sceptre; ordains you to be the dispenser of good or evil, to millions of dependent subjects; and you have nothing to do with love, with private, selfish joys. We, that are born to such destinies, must forswear the one or resign the other."

"Then let the Electress of Bavaria take the reversion of the German empire!" exclaimed the Princess, ardently; "let me resign all state and power, and only make me the happy wife of ——"

She checked herself, and buried her head in her mother's lap.

"Of him you must never see again!" returned the Empress, rising from her seat, and kissing the burning forehead of her daughter as she replaced her in her chair.

"I pardon your youth and innocence; and yet was it innocence to forget the claims of Otteline? Oh, my child, how deep must have been his wiles! That unblushing face

of falsehood; that affected champion of honour! Never, never, will I forgive him. Theresa, you have seen De Montemar for the last time, till you are the wife of his prince."

As she spoke, she moved back, and found something crash under her foot. She stepped aside. It was the portrait; crushed, crystal and ivory, into one shattered mass. The half smothered cry of Theresa at the sight of the destruction, and the tears which gushed from her eyes, as she involuntarily sprang forward to save the obliterated relics, confounded and penetrated her mother. "Oh, my lost child!" cried she, and wringing her hands, she quitted the apartment.

In passing to her own chamber, she met the Emperor; and, in the agitation of her maternal fears, told him all that had passed. Her heated prepossession changed the tacit acquiescence of her daughter, in the portrait having been that of Louis, into a positive confession that it was so. Charles was rather surprised, at so direct a falsehood from his daughter; but as it was to maintain his secret, he rather wondered at her presence of mind, than blamed its obliquity.

The Empress talked herself into every suspicion of Louis's arts towards the Princess, and insulting coldness to his own affianced bride. While the Emperor stimulated her wrath, he tried to spread it from the son to the father by new insinuations against the sincerity of both. He dwelt upon certain documents he possessed, of the quarrel at the Cardinal's having been concerted between Ripperda and Wharton, to blind the French minister, who had suspected their private friendship. He also mentioned the stolen glances which the Electress of Bavaria was often observed to give to De Montemar; and, that he generally replied to them in the same clandestine way. They had been noticed in the *Prato;* and particularly at the assemblies of the Countess Lichtenstein, where, one night, the Electress evidently dropped her fan, that he might take it up; and, as he presented it, she closed her hand over his, — "and gave it a quick pressure, and a glance," continued the Emperor, "that pretty plainly declared they were no strangers."

The Empress listened to all, with greedy, because prejudiced, attention. But nothing he could urge, affected her with regard to Ripperda; a partial spirit presided in her mind, when he was accused; and her reason told her, he must have lost his, before he could engage in such aimless treachery. Of Louis, she now entertained the very worst opinion; and, full of indignation, declared her intention of commanding him instantly into her presence; when she would tax him, at once, with all that she had heard, both against his father and himself.

Charles remarked, that he knew from one or two of his young chamberlains, that Louis's profligacy was equal to his talents; that he was a constant frequenter of the most dissipated circles in Vienna; therefore, her Majesty must see the impropriety of committing the reputation of the Archduchess, by even implying, to so vain and unprincipled a young man, the least hint of her preference for him; or allowing the possibility of his daring to turn an eye of passion upon her.

Elizabeth perceived the delicacy of this caution. But, while she consented to restrict her reproaches to political subjects alone, she determined to avenge the dignity of the Princess, and her own feelings as a mother, by precipitating the marriage which would make him her slave.

CHAPTER III.

While this was passing at the palace, despatches arrived from Madrid. On opening the packet of latest date, Louis perceived that the Queen supposed the Archduchess was now the betrothed of her son, for it contained a congratulatory letter on the event. But there was also a packet of an earlier date, from her Majesty, which might not be quite so pleasing to Elizabeth, although Louis felt

it came too late for him. He received copies of these from his father; therefore read, with a bitter pang, this from Isabella to the Empress, which retracted any consent she might have implied, to the Marquis de Montemar's marriage with Countess Altheim. It was written with apologies for the necessity, but it was positive.

Ripperda accompanied this unexpected refusal, with a laboured epistle to his Imperial friend. He excused the Queen's changed sentiments, by pleading a great point, which she hoped to gain, by uniting his son in a different direction. With sincerity, he expressed his own distress at being obliged to yield his wishes in favour of the Empress's beautiful *protégée*, to the duty he owed his sovereign; but he concluded, with repeating, that in all essential circumstances, Elizabeth should find she had put no vain trust in Ripperda.

After all the polite cunning of Isabella's letter, and the hard-wrung finesse of her minister's, it was easy to discern that truth was conveyed in neither.

The fact was simply this: — De Patinos's correspondence with his friends at Madrid, and the whisperings of Orendayn, when he arrived there, had gradually made their way to the royal cabinet, with insinuations and representations of the Empress's personal power over the Duke and his son. So much was said, that the Queen was at last excited to try how far it could cope with her own influence in the same quarter; and, as a touchstone, she told Ripperda, it was her intention, that Louis should break with the Countess Altheim, and marry one she should hereafter name. Not suspecting her motive, he represented the hazard of putting so great an affront on the favourite of the Empress. Isabella was a passionate woman; and, when self-will urged her, she often acted as pertinaciously against her judgment, as against her counsellors. On this subject she would hear no reasoning, no representation of the vexatious resentments that might be anticipated from Elizabeth. The more he dwelt on the Empress's mortification, the more she was resolved to put it to the test. She felt something of female vanity, as well as of sovereign pride, in this opportunity of showing her rival, Elizabeth,

that she could make Ripperda sacrifice his early firiend's wishes, to his new mistress's commands.

Isabella was peremptory, and the despatch was sent off, and with additional triumph, too, from Vienna, to some of the attendants at court, mentioning the departure of a messenger to Madrid, with accounts of the royal betrothment. In vain Ripperda protested against acting on such vague information, or, indeed, on any information that did come in the regular official train. Isabella laughed at his fears, and derided the idea, that a rupture between his son and the favourite of the Empress, could have any effect on the marriage of her son, with the heiress of the empire.

The messenger set off, and the issue soon followed.

While Louis was reading these despatches, he received a summons from Elizabeth, to attend her immediately. He took the packet that was for her Majesty, and proceeded to the Altheim apartments. The Empress was there, but she hardly noticed him, when he entered the room. She had caught a glimpse of his face, as he approached, and the sight of its seeming nobleness incensed her the more against his actual dishonour.

She gave no credence to the story that had been told her of his father's insincerity. She knew the slanderous inventions of envy, and she confided, without a shadow of doubting, in the friend she had trusted from her youth. But, for the delinquency of his son, she had ocular demonstration; and her indignation was hardly to be repressed.

Louis presented the Queen's and his father's letters. Elizabeth commanded him to read them. He obeyed without remark, though with an unsteady voice, as he uttered communications, he knew, were so hostile to her expectation. She listened in speechless amazement, first to the one, and then to the other. When he had finished, she took them from his hand, and turning them round in silence, examined their seals and writing.

"It is his hand," cried she, in a tone, from which, the convictions of her bosom had rifled all its sweetness. Then, turning to Louis, with all her lately suppressed wrath flashing from her eyes, "It is meet, that a false

tongue should have read such false language! Louis de Montemar, you are a traitor to me and mine! — and your father — *he* abets his treacherous son, to the ruin of a name, of fifty years' unblemished honour!"

Louis was not less surprised at this charge, than the Empress had been at the communication which had aroused it. But, attributing her displeasure to a suspicion, that he had wrought on his father, to influence the Queen, to prevent his marriage; he mildly and respectfully answered; — "that he was as faithful to all his bonds made under the sanction of her Majesty, as, he believed, were the dictates of his father's heart. He regarded his promises to her, and his engagements to the Countess Altheim, as now too sacred to be broken by him, even at the command of his sovereign."

"Indeed?" answered Elizabeth, hardly attempting to conceal her scornful doubt of his sincerity.

Her manner amazed him; it was so unlike the aspect of fair interpretation, with which she usually discussed a dubious subject.

"And you will marry the Countess Altheim?" continued she.

"Assuredly, madam."

"And, knowing my affection for her, you will generously leave her with me? You will follow the suite of my daughter to Spain; and you will become the bosom counsellor of the wife of your Prince? I apprehend your honour and your loyalty?"

She paused, and fixed her eyes on the calm astonishment of his. There was a haughty condemnation in her looks, he could not misunderstand; but still, he was at a loss, to account for the origin of so unmerited a judgment: and, with the confident appeal of an unburthened conscience, he entreated to be told how he had incurred the displeasure he read in her words and manner.

She too well remembered the Emperor's caution to explain the offence; though the resentment of a suffering mother could not be entirely repressed. She cast down her indignant eyes, and, with petrifying coldness, replied, —

"*Your* offence is of no moment. The shadow of an

eclipse, which leaves no stain on the fair disc it would have darkened!—But your father! He cannot start from his sphere, without troubling nations, and quenching his own rays, which should have shone to eternity!"

While the Empress spoke of Ripperda, it was rather to utter the lamentations of her heart over the dereliction of the coadjutor, in whom she had gloried, than addressing his son, who she now thought too worthless for remonstrance. She sat, for a few minutes, looking abstractedly down, grasping the letter she had received. Louis did not interrupt her reverie. Conscious of no blame in himself, and equally convinced of his father's uprightness, with patient respect he awaited her further explanation. At last she looked towards him, with an austere, but calm countenance. "Son of Ripperda," said she, "there might be more dignity, in my banishing all of that name from my presence, without a word; but there would be less justice to myself:—and, you shall hear me."

She then opened her charge against the Duke, by repeating what the Emperor had told her, of the pretended exchange of insults between Wharton and Ripperda at the table of Giovenozzo. She avowed, that she had repelled the story, as a slander; but the letter she held in her hand, proved that Ripperda could surrender her dearest wishes, to his own fancied interests. She warmed in resentment, as she dwelt on his base compliance with the caprice of Isabella.

"One failure in fidelity," continued she, "is a sufficient earnest. I believe the rest."

As the empress had proceeded in her allegation, Louis's countenance brightened at the unfounded tale; and, begging her permission to speak, without reserve, he unfolded to her, all his father's hostility to Wharton: all, at least, that he knew; for he was yet ignorant that the contention at the Cardinal's had ended in blood. He acknowledged his own attachment to the English Duke; but added, that, by the commands of his father, he had passed him by as a stranger; and in the same behest, was admonished never to consider him as a friend. Ripperda, having extracted such a sacrifice from his son, and having politically opposed

every measure of Wharton's during his life, was it credible that he would now stake the grand objects of his existence, by forming a clandestine union with a man with whom he had no common interest, and whose personal self he determinately hated?

"If my father ever had a sin in his son's eyes," continued Louis, "it was, and is, the inveteracy of that hatred."

During this defence, the Empress frequently shook her head, and, when it was finished, she rose from her chair.

"It will not do!" said she; "I see the brink on which I stood, and the consequences must come."

"Madam," replied Louis, "I conjure you, by the completion of your own object, in supporting my father in his labours for the peace of Europe; I conjure you not to permit the accusations of real traitors to turn your confidence from as true a benefactor of the human race as ever devoted his life to man! Their tongues, when credited by your ears, are of more mortal stroke than all the daggers which struck at him under the garb of the Sieur Ignatius."

"And what is your tongue? dissembling De Montemar!" cried she; "had you been true, those words, that voice, would have been evidence to outweigh a multitude. But you are false;—and your father suffers by his advocate."

"In what am I false?" cried Louis, "not in affirming my father's integrity; for I am ready to seal my evidence with my blood!—Not in re-affirming my resolution to marry the Countess Altheim; for I am ready to pass through the ceremony, whenever your Majesty commands!—But I should be false indeed, were I to say, that I perform my hard-wrung word of honour, with my heart, as well as my hand."

"Then you dare avow——?" demanded the Empress, turning rapidly towards him, but checking herself.

"No more, than what I once presumed to tell your Majesty, on the same knee, with which I now bend before this incomprehensible displeasure. I then said, and I now repeat, that, finding all her principles discordant to mine, it is her own exaction, and my honour alone, that compels me to make her my wife. Truth urges me to this last

avowal, and self-defence, that her benefactress may judge, whether he can be false, who redeems his honour at the price of his happiness."

"Happiness! honour!" cried the Empress, and she laughed bitterly; "young hypocrite, I penetrate thy artifice!—But, if you can yet have a hope, that I can pardon, what *I know!*—meet my Otteline, and at the altar, on the very day she returns from Brunswick? That over, treat her with the duties of a husband, and the respect due to my friend, and, once more, the name of De Montemar may be heard by me without detestation."

With these words, the Empress left the chamber.

Louis returned home, appalled and distressed:—Elizabeth's indignation against his father, breathed the sort of jealousy, that might be as readily appeased as it had been aroused. But her conduct to Louis himself showed there were charges against him, in her bosom, which she did not choose to deliver. To rest under them might be dangerous; and how could he confute, what she disdained to utter?

CHAPTER IV.

In the midst of this confusion of mind, Louis arrived at the *Palais d'Espagne;* and was immediately involved in a host of perplexing discussions. Ministers, and messengers, awaited him in various apartments. As supereminent talent, united with virtue and power, has a force almost omnipotent; the powers of Europe, which aimed at aggrandisement by circumventions, or aggressions, dreaded the master-hand of the new minister of Spain.

This was a fact enforced on Louis in each succeeding audience; but while remonstrances, and even threats, from the representatives of these Princes, assailed him in their different hours of conference, other applicants, in the

shape of consuls, factors, and agents, passing to various countries, crowded around him, to propitiate the power of which he was the medium.

They spoke of the Spanish trade, which now embraced the habitable globe, and added to their account, that, while Ripperda, like the sun spreading its rays over the whole earth, sent the influences of his genius forth, warming, cheering, and fructifying to the distant poles, he bent his careful eye with all a parent's interest on the internal policy of Spain.

By his exhortations, and his example, he persuaded the grandees to come down from their sterile heights of indolent enjoyment, to disperse their riches, by the patronage of genius; and to excite the people to industry, by generously rewarding their labours. As for the people themselves, (they whom the golden tides from America had intoxicated with stupid pride, and at last left to squalid poverty,) he aroused them from their lethargy and laziness, by appearing to take pleasure in their interest; by visiting them in their towns and villages, and stimulating them to bring prosperity to them all, by the active labours of agriculture, manufactures, and commerce.

For nearly two centuries, the Spanish people had been a nation of drones; they were now a commonwealth of bees, and the hive was full of honey. He who caused the change was honoured as a god; and, while

"He raised his voice, and stretched his sceptred hand,"

perhaps, he sometimes forgot that he was yet mortal.

But there is a pinnacle of human success, and of human opinion, on which human foot was never yet permitted to rest. He who has attained it, grows giddy, and the fiercest winds are ready to blow him from his eminence. Man's enthusiasm for a fellow-mortal is soon damped by the original sin of nature — rebellious pride! and where he cannot find a mote in the eye he once thought omniscient, he will fancy a beam; and proclaiming the discovery, the supposed blind guide is at once thrust into utter darkness.

Such spirits were now at work against Ripperda, both in

Spain and in the rival countries; and their labours, in undermining and laying trains, were equal to the great object of their overthrow. Routemberg, in the German court, and De Castallor, (the father of De Patinos,) in the Spanish, permitted neither sun, nor stars, to set upon a pause in their deep and dangerous machinations. Their agents were indefatigable and subtle; and, as they were various, and apparently insignificant, the work moved onward as surely, as invisibly, to its aim.

The Empress was soon assailed with informations, which none would have dared to hint, had she not betrayed to her husband some signs of doubting the perfect sincerity of Ripperda. Circumstances were brought forward, to prove his entire devotion to his new country, the devotion of ambition; for it was made apparent to her, that he was now its actual sovereign. Philip was a puppet in his hand; and the queen, who had exalted Ripperda to such despotic power, was to be propitiated by every sacrifice. One of her humours was to unite the son of her minister, with a niece of the widowed Queen of Saint Germain's. It was represented to Elizabeth, that Ripperda had sanctioned the pragmatic deed, not so much to gratify her, as to flatter the ambition of Don Carlos, in making him the husband of the future Empress; and that his reconciliation with Duke Wharton, who was alike the emissary of the Stuart and of the Bavarian factions, might now be accounted for, in the Saint Germain marriage; though the termination of such complicated, and opposing views, were certainly beyond calculation. These, and other innuendoes, and references to the remaining articles, public and private, of the late treaty, were amply descanted on; and the misled and irritated Elizabeth (the more irritated on account of her personal regard for Ripperda,) was wrought to so high a pitch of resentment, that she did not deign to answer either his or the Queen's letters, on the premature congratulation, and withdrawn consent.

She resolved to harass them on one object, and to disappoint them in the other; and, while she countermanded the preparations for the betrothment of her daughter, she hurried every arrangement for the marriage of her favourite.

From the hour of her last interview with Louis, she had never admitted him to her presence, but she wrote to Otteline to hasten her return to Vienna, although she knew that, at that time, her venerable father lay at the point of death.

Elizabeth now took as much pains to proclaim the intended union of the Countess of Altheim with the son of the Duke de Ripperda, as she had before been cautious to conceal it. The astonishment it excited broke out in wonder from some and lamentations from others. It was the conversation of every circle, and discussed according to the dispositions or views of the speakers. Princess de Waradin wept over her disappointed wishes for her daughter, and Countess Lichtenstein railed at the mortification of hers. The women in general were incensed at such a triumph, for the woman they despised; and the men smiled on each other at the young minister's folly. Count Sinzendorff alone felt no surprise; for he had foreseen this result from the moment he knew of Louis's renewed visits at the Altheim apartments. Letters arrived from Otteline, which told her patroness, that Monsieur de Blaggay was no more, and that a certain day should see her at the feet of her mistress. Elizabeth suppressed the death of the old man, resolved that nothing should delay the ceremony, which would gratify her favourite's ambition, and, she believed, justly avenge herself on the double treachery of Louis and his father.

Full of these thoughts, she went into the King's closet, where she knew she would find the young minister; and the only time she condescended to notice him before the arrival of his bride, was to name the day, and command him to prepare for his nuptials. He bowed in silence, and she passed on.

He had written a distinct account to his father of the Empress's charges against him, and of her inexplicable conduct to himself. He had also enforced the necessity of fulfilling their mutual engagements to Countess Otteline, and he affirmed it to be his own intention to obey the commands of Elizabeth to that effect. Her commands were now received, and he prepared to go through the

unavoidable sacrifice with propriety and composure of heart.

From these meditations he walked abroad into the open air of a retired glade, which diverged from the gardens of the *Palais d'Espagne* towards the Danube. The evening gale was fresh and cheering, but the load was on his soul: no breeze could waft it hence; no sigh could shake it from its deep adhesive lodgement.

"I contemned love," said he to himself; "I despised the tranquil and blissful joys of heart meeting heart, in the tender and pure relation of wedded affections. I must aspire to the agitating transports of self-devotion, in scenes of sacrifice and of peril! I must be all for glory, or be nothing! And now I bleed in soul for glory; and the result to this proud, unnatural heart, will be nothing! Oh, no; the worm is there that never dies! The consciousness of having taken to my bosom a creature I despise; a woman whom the world derides, and who paralizes every feeling within me, of father, husband, friend. Yes, ennobling love, honourable marriage," cried he, "you are revenged!"

He went on ruminating on the vain shadow into which his over-heated ambition to act and to be distinguished had involved him. He had been bewildered in its depths, but not intimidated by its thunderings or its lightnings; he had pressed forward in the visionary atmosphere till the gulf met him; and, alas! in what early youth did it betray him to this black destruction!

He was returning homewards through an umbrageous aisle of chestnuts, which passed along at the backs of the gardens belonging to that suburb of palaces, when he saw Duke Wharton turn suddenly into the same avenue. Not a creature was in it but themselves. Wharton and he were approaching each other; but the Duke was walking forward, without raising his eyes, as, in the abstraction of thought, he struck away the pebbles in his path with the point of his cane.

The instant Louis beheld him, Elizabeth's accusations against his father, with regard to Wharton, rushed to his mind; but their confutation came in the same moment. He remembered how his father had execrated this noble

enemy, even at the time he declared his worth. He remembered his father had acknowledged to him, that the wine he drank at the Cardinal's had affected him, as wine never did before, and had maddened his blood. In this mood, he had pressed insult upon Wharton; and Wharton revenged himself by screening his adversary from blame, and apologising as the offender! Ripperda, having brought himself to relieve his proud sense of obligation, by this avowal to his son, had commanded his silence on the subject; but the remembrance was anchored in his heart.

At sight of this generous enemy, this faithful friend, how could he restrain the grateful impulse, to fling himself into his arms! Wharton was alone; no one was near to report the momentary recognition!

"Duke Wharton!" cried he.

Wharton looked up, and, for an instant, around: his face lightened with the flash of joyful surprise, and opening his arms, Louis did indeed throw himself into them.

"Oh, this hug," cried the Duke, as he strained him to his bounding heart; "it is the resurrection of confidence in man. You are true, and it matters not who is false."

"True! for ever true!" cried Louis, grasping the hand of his friend, with unutterable feelings. In proportion to his conviction, that love would henceforth be denied him, his sensibilities pointed all to friendship, and poured into that sacred flame the collected blaze.

"I needed these honest throbs to tell me so!" replied Wharton; "but the world has *reported and slandered* Louis de Montemar, as I once prophesied."

"Oh, Wharton, how much is on my soul, that you have so generously endured for me and mine! Again, and again, I have turned from you, when that soul followed you. I fled from you in the palace; but you know that my residence at Vienna was then to be concealed. I treated your clinging friendship with harshness, and yet you pardoned me; you risked your safety, to preserve me and the Sieur Ignatius from danger. And, when wine had unselfed my noble father, you received his passionate insults with forbearance, and forgave him! Wharton, had I a thousand

hearts, they should be yours, for this unconquered friendship."

"And had I as many, dear De Montemar, to transfer into your breast, they would be insufficient to repay the life you saved to me, in that of Maria of Bavaria."

The Duke then hastily recapitulated the Electress's account of the transaction, and her increased gratitude to her preserver for his having maintained it so profound a secret. Louis listened with pleasure; and dwelt with delight on the interesting Princess and her son. Wharton smiled at his animation; and, with all his former sparkling archness, softly repeated,—

"Dum tu, Lydia, Telephi
Cervicem roseam, et cerea Telephi
Laudas Brachia, væ meum
Fervens difficili bile tumet jecur."

Louis smiled also; but it was accompanied by a mantling cheek. The praises of women might, now, have passed unnoticed, from their familiarity; and, in general, it would have been so, but he respected the Electress; and admiration from her, recalled the blush of modest consciousness. The Duke intimated a possibility of contriving a meeting between her, Louis, and himself, at her villa on Mount Calenberg.

"I have much to say to you, De Montemar," added he; "much of importance. That rare voice of thine has conjured a devil out of Philip Wharton; and now you must have the arcana of his heart."

Louis looked on him;—"And could you, indeed, doubt me?"

"I will tell you more anon," replied Wharton; "come to-morrow night, at ten o'clock, to Mount Calenberg. There will be no danger in that place, though something of mystery; and," added he, with gaiety,—

"As veiled charms are fairest,
So stolen joys are dearest."

Before Louis could answer in the negative, he heard voices in the adjoining garden. The friends were standing close to the wall; but, on these sounds, they moved away; and a key presently turned in the door.

"You come?" cried Wharton, as his hand gave the pressure of farewell.

"Impossible," returned Louis.

Wharton stood for a moment.

"You must!" said he, "since she will dare it!"

"I dare not, for my life and honour."

"For your father's life and honour?" demanded Wharton: "*Osez* is my badge, and you will be wise to make it yours." Wharton uttered this, with a peculiar force of voice, and an awful expression in his countenance. Louis was thunderstruck: and yet, how could his father be really involved in this adjuration? He was in Spain; therefore no longer in personal danger from his former enemies!

"My father's honour forbids my compliance;" replied he; "I dare not go to the Electress's villa; I dare not meet even you, by design."

The garden-door at that moment opened; and a bevy of persons issued from it. Wharton dropped the hand of his friend. "Faithless, deluded De Montemar!" cried he; and, breaking away, the friends severally disappeared.

CHAPTER V.

The influence of Ripperda, over the minds of the King and Queen of Spain, had reached its acmé. Isabella's enthusiasm for the new minister was more like passion than patronage; and Philip's deference to him possessed all the fanatic zeal of a devotee, who worships the object he has beatified. The King believed he had converted Ripperda to the Catholic faith, and he exulted in the reclaimed heretic as a future saint.

The minister's eye kept steady to one point — to raise the country he governed to the utmost pinnacle of earthly grandeur. But his manner of conducting his projects, and demeaning himself after their accomplishment, had suffered

a rapid and extraordinary change since his return from Vienna. During his voyage from Genoa to Barcelona, he had been attacked by a delirious fever, the effect of the wound he had received in his rencontre with the banditti of the Apennines. It seemed to have jarred his nerves, and affected his temper; or, rather, to have taken off the curb, which his self-control had hitherto kept on the motions of his passions: but this alteration did not appear at first. His habits of universal suavity prevailed for a time; indeed, till he launched so deeply into business, as to forget all minor considerations in its great results. He then became, not merely zealous, but impetuous in the prosecution of his objects; not merely determined on a point, but dogmatical in its assertion. He did not, now, persuade the Lords of the Council by his always subduing eloquence; but he commanded, from the consciousness of mental superiority, and the conviction of power, to execute all his designs. The pride of the grandees was incensed; and the precipitation with which he urged forward all degrees of persons, rather offended than served them. There is a restiveness in human nature that resists compulsion, even to its own manifest advantage.

Ripperda saw no will but his own: he was sure of its great purpose; therefore, stopped not to solicit the good from others, he believed he could do more shortly himself. He went on careering to his point, overturning and wounding; but as he speeded on, he left a train of enemies behind him.

Even the King and Queen began to start from the patriotic despot they had raised. Enamoured of his vision of happiness for Spain, he snatched the prerogrative too openly from their hands, and conceded privileges to the people, novel to the Spanish laws. He dared to oppose the extirpating power of the Inquisition, by protecting certain Jewish merchants from its fangs; and this being represented to Philip as a proof of Ripperda being a heretic in his heart, the monarch considered it unanswerable, and determined to watch him narrowly. His most active enemy with the Queen was Donna Laura, her nurse, and confidante, an old Italian, totally abandoned to avarice.

Being irritated by his late disdain of propitiating her favour as formerly, by successive presents, she sold her interest to another quarter, and studied day and night to destroy him in the opinion of her mistress. She knew where Isabella was particularly vulnerable, her vanity as a woman; and the crafty dame had many stories to recount of Ripperda's early devotion to Elizabeth. She insinuated that it was rather to be near her, than to negotiate for Spain, that he so willingly consented to go to Vienna in disguise; and she easily corroborated her assertion, by turning Isabella's attention to his gradually changing manner since his return. But Isabella did not require to be reminded of the cessation of his homage. Ripperda had lately omitted all those gallant attentions, which spoke the lover, who dares only devote his heart to the pure object of his wishes, while she moves above him in unsullied light, like Cynthia in her distant heavens!

Without adulation of this kind, Isabella could not exist; and it never came so sweet from any lips as those of Ripperda; it never beamed with so graceful a homage from other eyes. It was her delight to mingle politics and chivalric devotion in their long conferences. It was her triumph, in the crowded court, to see his eyes fixed alone on her, and to behold herself as much envied by her ladies as a woman, as she was the object of their respect as their Queen. But when the change took place, and, regardless of these useful arts, he became absorbed in public duties, then Laura taught her to believe he thought only of Elizabeth.

His enemies in the cabinet were quick to perceive when their devices had taken effect on the King and Queen. Amongst the most formidable of these illustrious conspirators, was the hoary-headed Marquis de Grimaldo, whose disgrace had preceded Ripperda's taking the supreme chair. The old Grandee held a strict watch over his successor's proceedings, making it the business of his life to collect observations on their minutest actions, and to misrepresent or aggravate them to the ears of jealous Majesty. The Marquis de Castallor, who had lost the office of secretary at war when the new minister absorbed it in his ample

grasp, joined with Grimaldo, heart and hand, to overthrow his colossal power. To this end they devised a distorted epitome of Ripperda's favourite schemes; and, having printed it off in various copies, disposed of them to their retainers. These persons disseminated the papers to the people, with commentaries, in dark hints and distant observations. Ripperda was represented as the son of a rebel; one who had been born in a heretic country, and educated in its faith; who had embraced the true church, merely from ambition; who was depriving the Grandees of their privileges, and inventing plans to reduce the gentlemen of Spain to the rank of bourgeois and of slaves, by turning them to bodily labour and mechanic trades, and abridging them of their evening siesta and morning revels, under the shade of their groves.

While the fortress was undermining at home, they were not idle who were preparing to storm it from abroad. France saw, with apprehension, his Catholic Majesty drawing such strict bonds with the house of Austria. The States-general were alarmed at the treaty of commerce. England proclaimed a rough indignation at the demand for Gibraltar, which Austria had made in behalf of Spain. And, it being reported amongst the nations, that Ripperda's views were to arrest by force, what he could not obtain by negotiation, his overthrow was considered a common cause. The various silent armaments which commenced under this apprehension were represented in appalling colours to Philip; and as the court of Austria so slowly fulfilled its part in the late treaty, his alarms were more easily awakened. The insincerity and insult of this delay were doubled in effect by the private correspondence of De Patinos to his father, which spoke mysteriously of the determination of Charles's cabinet, *from some hidden cause,* not to perform any more of the treaty.

Louis, meanwhile, unconscious of the storm that was circling round his father's head in Spain, was stemming his way through the traversing movements of his enemies at the Austrian court. He contended firmly for political objects; but resigned himself, with gloomy despair, to the current which bore his private happiness to destruction.

He had obeyed an intimation from the Empress, that Countess Altheim was arrived, and ready to name the day and hour of their nuptials; and he went to her apartments to receive the abhorred appointment from herself.

With unaffected rapture, she met his ceremonious salute, and softly whispered that she knew the object of his visit. It was soon discussed: for Louis had hardly begun to falter out in words what his promise to Elizabeth extorted, before her eager favourite named the evening of the following day. He felt the paleness of his countenance spread to his heart, and, without pulsation in his veins, his lips parted in a vacant smile.

At this moment the Empress entered, and Otteline prevented any involuntary exhibition of her resentment at the demeanour of her lover, by rising hastily, and, as hastily informing her Majesty, that she had obeyed her commands in naming the morrow for her nuptials. Elizabeth read the despair of his countenance, as he started from his seat at her approach, and, triumphing in her victory, she seemed in that hour to forget all her inexplicable harshness, and to be as gracious as ever. She embraced Otteline, and gave him her hand to kiss, with repeated expressions of future confidence in the husband of her friend.

The marriage was to be solemnised with unexampled magnificence in the chapel of the palace, and the equipage which was to convey the favourite to her husband's residence was to be the gift of her patroness. Louis summoned himself as well as he could, to perform that with cheerfulness, which it was right to do at all; and he conducted himself, during the remainder of the interview, with respect to his future bride, and extorted gratitude to her mistress.

The remainder of the day was passed in his official duties; but, when evening came, he could not endure his own thoughts: the anticipations of to-morrow sickened and distracted him; and he rushed out, to fly himself, and the image of her who had blighted all his prospects.

He hurried to the *Hôtel d'Etrées;* but the scenes of careless gaiety he saw there seemed only to chafe his mind. The sight of young men of his own years, — some with

similar pursuits moving on with honour, and others worthlessly wasting their time, but all free and untortured by bonds like his, — barbed him to the quick; and he was hurrying from the splendid mockery, when, in the outward saloon, which was almost solitary, he was met by the Countess Claudine. She accosted him with reproaches for his early flight. In his eagerness to escape, he made some senseless excuse. Laughing, she put her fair hand upon his arm, and told him, "a little more civility to her, and a little less impatience towards his intended bride, would at that moment be more becoming in the representative of the most gallant and decorous nation in Europe!"

Louis rallied himself, to reply in her own way: she rejoined; and, putting her arm through his, drew him back into the room. In her brilliant discourse, so sparkling with wit, so exquisite in sentiment, she united all the varied powers of "*bland Aspasia, and the Lesbian maid;*" and Louis felt grateful for the kindly interest with which she evidently tried to amuse him, during the long-protracted evening. But, ere they parted, while she was walking with him down an illuminated, though solitary, avenue of orange-trees, that led from the supper-room, she contrived to let him know that every body wondered at his having persuaded Countess Altheim to so indecorous a step, as to meet him at the nuptial altar, before the ashes of her father were cold in the grave. Louis repelled this charge from himself; and declared his belief, that Claudine had received wrong information respecting the death of Monsieur de Blaggay, as it had never been intimated to him. His fair companion shook her head; and, while she turned her full bright eyes upon his face, she calmly said,—

"Were you convinced of this fact, would you marry the woman who could commit so unfeeling a sacrilege on the memory of her parent?"

Louis could make only one answer, and he did it with downcast eyes. "These are questions, madam, to which I can give no reply. At this moment, I consider Countess Altheim as having every claim on me, and her character is under my protection."

"Generous De Montemar!" replied Claudine; "how

have you been entangled in this engagement! Forgive me, that I lament such a destiny for such a man! Had all men your honour ——"

She interrupted herself with a convulsive sigh; and, wringing rather than pressing the hand she had unconsciously snatched, she parted from him. Louis disbelieved the story of Monsieur de Blaggay's death; but he was affected by the manner of his accomplished informer, and, slowly withdrawing through the now almost deserted rooms, mused on the varieties of human misery.

CHAPTER VI.

When that sun arose which Louis believed was to set on him a completed wretch, he turned from its beams with a loathing sense of what his vain credulity had brought upon him,—a joyless youth, an old age of desolation! How different from his hopes in Lindisfarne! He could not bear the reflection; and, with fevered impatience, hurried to the business of the morning.

At three o'clock, just as he had shut himself into his study, to consecrate these last hours of his liberty to the unburthening of his full soul in a letter to his venerable uncle, a billet was brought to him from the Empress. It contained these lines: —

"A circumstance, which shall be explained hereafter, delays your nuptials: Otteline is gone for a few days to the Laxemburg. To-morrow, at noon, be in the boudoir, and you will meet Elizabeth."

This was Heaven's reprieve to Louis: suspension was life; and, with almost hope of some unlooked-for escape, he repaired in the evening to the Château de Phaffenberg. His object, in visiting that lonely habitation, was to consult papers which remained there on a despatch he was making up for Sweden.

While the gorgeous sunset by which he had extracted the

memorandums dissolved into a gloomy twilight, and the summer moon was rising in silvering glory over the hills, Louis felt the soothing aspect of nature; and, gliding through the garden door, which stood half open, he stood, for a moment, viewing the scene before him.

"How beautiful is Nature!" exclaimed he: "how unobtrusive her loveliness, how guileless all her charms!"

He gently descended the steps of the terrace. All was still. Not a zephyr ruffled the leaf of a rose, and a soft-breathing fragrance bathed his reposing senses. He walked on, and enjoyed the rapt liberty of the soul in the sweet serenity of beautiful solitude. No rebellious feeling of any kind then agitated his placid bosom: every passion was at rest; his ambition slept in its thorny bed, and his remembrances of Otteline were quenched in the balmy dews of a resigned spirit. Such power has the divine hand of Nature on the son that loves her! and thus did he glide along, with the ethereal temper of his soul beaming in every feature, like the reflected face of heaven.

In such blessed calm, his meditations had ascended far above this sublunary world, when he observed a man spring from the battlements into the garden. A second glance assured him it was Wharton. He recognised Louis, and hastened towards him. An exulting smile was on the Duke's face, as he hailed the object of his search.

"Well met, De Montemar," cried he: "this is safer ground than the *Horti Adonidis* I offered for our conference! No envious demon would think of tracing Philip Wharton to a desolate region like this!"

"I have found it a garden of peace," replied Louis, putting out his hand to him with glad surprise; "and, but for fear of the consequence of this rash seeking me, I should call it the garden of happiness too."

"De Montemar," cried the Duke, "it does not become friendship like ours to be always fearing consequences, and skulking past each other, as if our meetings had guilty errands. How different are you, in this detested court of finesse, from the free-hearted, independent De Montemar, who won my soul on his own unbondaged mountains! Louis, where is that open eye — that open heart — that

fearless, brave, uncuirassed bosom? All that you can gain in Vienna, or at Madrid, is not worth one of those proofs of manhood!" Louis turned on him a countenance, in which all that Wharton had conjured up in that noble soul shone bright in the moonlight.

"If I have fear, it is to do wrong; and that is no change of my nature. If I shroud my heart, it is from them who cannot understand it; if I shroud my eye, it is from them who are not worthy to read my thoughts; and, for my shut bosom, Wharton, would it gratify you to hear it was unlocked to fools? You hold the key of it, my friend! A triangle encases my heart," continued he, with one of his wonted smiles; "and you have one of its sides."

Wharton pressed his hand.

"Then Cæsar has quite forgiven Brutus?"

"What could I not forgive him?" replied Louis. All the trust of his partial and enthusiastic heart, spoke in those words; and he thought within himself, — "Oh, that I might give my whole life to filial love and friendship!" As the hopeless wish passed through his soul, the *iron entered* with it, but did not pass away.

They walked together to the recess in the garden, where they sat down, under the full radiance of the unclouded moon.

"De Montemar," said Wharton, "this hour is portentous. Hear me to an end, and you will then have an ample reply to your question, of why I adjured you in the name of your father, when you broke from me in the avenue."

Louis was ready to listen; and his friend unfolded to him a scene in the German court, which petrified him with astonishment, and made him, indeed, maintain a breathless silence during the recital. Wharton displayed the insincere character of the Emperor; and explained his manœuvres, in delaying the fulfilment of the great articles of the treaty, while he only executed the small, and managed to draw every resignation from the Spanish side. The Duke next imparted to Louis, the secret arrangement between Charles and the Prince of Lorraine, (though he withheld his own share in the transaction;) and showed,

that the Archduchess was never intended by her father to be the wife of Don Carlos. He also declared, that the Emperor derided the investiture he had sent to the Spanish Prince, and had remarked, that swords would cut through parchments.

But the worst information was to come. Wharton knew, that a plan was laid to accomplish the political ruin of the Duke de Ripperda, and, by that achievement, at once obliterate every engagement that was made through him.

At this intimation, Louis was all ear; for, during the varied disclosure, he could connect its details with circumstances which had embarrassed his diplomatic proceedings; and, internal evidence stamped the veracity of every assertion of his friend.

Wharton then explained the Empress's change towards Ripperda: first, from her womanly jealousies respecting the Queen of Spain; and, lastly, from her having given entire belief to the calumnies of his rivals. She secretly abetted the Emperor's duplicity; and only waited the completion of Louis's marriage with her heartless favourite, to dare her former friend in the face of Europe.

Louis's brain was in a whirl. He could not doubt Wharton's proofs of these facts; but, in the midst of a son's bitter anathemas against the faithless Elizabeth, and her deceitful husband, he yet found comfort, in asserting the adherence of his own sovereigns to their chosen minister.

"You cannot judge of his security there," replied Wharton, "till you know the machinery his enemies have planted, even in that quarter."

And then he urged to Louis the necessity of obtaining this information; and taking the justice of revenge, on the whole of the proud conspirators, which would confound them, and excite the admiration of all honest men. The information lay in the power of one, who could furnish him with the names of persons in Austria and in Spain, who were sworn to compass the ruin of Ripperda. But, could the conspiracy be laid open, with its train of signatures, before it took effect, the eyes of the public would be opened, and the Spanish minister secured.

Louis declared his eagerness to seek such information, at any hazard. "But how is it to be obtained?" cried he.

"A bribe!" answered Wharton.

"Means, base as our enemies!"

"When a besieged city suspects a mine, do not the inhabitants dig under ground, to meet the enemy at his work?"

"Poniards to poniards!" returned Louis, with a cheerless smile.

"Even so!" answered Wharton: shall I give your invisible friend *carte blanche?*"

"Grant him every thing, in my name," replied Louis, "which can be done with honour. This conspiracy must be in my possession."

"Then," returned Wharton, "in this spot, to-morrow evening, and at the same hour, you shall see me again."

"With the document, and its train of signatures?" demanded Louis.

"Doubtless;" replied the Duke, "with perchance a postscript, to free you in another quarter!—I have my hand on many springs; and one has started Countess Altheim."

"Hush!" replied Louis, his former eager countenance contracting into gloom; "nothing can free me there."

"Why, you would not hug your chains?"

"No, but they will clasp me until death. I am bound to her by every tie of honour."

"Show her what I will bring you to-morrow night, and your honour will release you."

"There is but one thing that could release me!" cried Louis; the ingenuous suffusion of virtue mantling his face: "is it any charge, any proof of her dishonour?"

Wharton laughed.

"If you mean by *dishonour*,—a breach of truth, of honesty, of delicacy, of every principle respectable to man, and graceful in woman; you know, she is dishonoured below contempt. But, if you restrict it to the sense in which it is commonly applied to the angelic sex, I am not prepared to answer. She may be as chaste as unsunned snow; she is certainly as cold; but for warm, inspiring

virtue! she knows it not, and she will wither it in every bosom to which she clings."

Louis's hand was now pressed on his aching forehead. The Duke continued.

"See, what she has done with the noble-hearted Empress! And did you know the effects of her example on the innocent Maria Theresa; how that young creature conceals a passion for the Prince of Lorraine, by affecting the appearance of one for you ——"

"Impossible!" interrupted Louis.

"It is the fact," replied Wharton; "and, on this argument, Elizabeth accuses you of aspiring to her daughter, and urges your marriage with the favourite, against every opposition."

A strange emotion shook the frame of Louis: starting from his seat, he exclaimed —

"Wharton, my only friend! Bring me the double documents; and I will save my father and myself, or fall with him at once, into the interminable ruin!"

"To-morrow night," cried Wharton, "you shall be master of your fate."

Louis clasped the Duke in his arms; who, as he felt the full heart of this anxious son, throbbing against his side, said, in a cheering voice, "Courage, De Montemar! These conspiring fiends, have not yet found Jove's thunderbolt. Pay his ransom, and not a point of thy father's glory shall suffer by their shears."

"Nothing can rob him of the glory of his virtues," replied Louis; "but by your aid, my tried, my faithful Wharton, he shall not lose even an earthly ray." Louis's face, bathed in tears, leaned for a moment on that faithful breast, while he added, "May the Providence which brought me such a friend, and fastened my soul to him, may it bless your exertions, in this crisis of our fate!"

A burning crimson flushed over the cheek of Wharton, as Louis uttered this ardent appeal to friendship and to Heaven.

"Hero-fashion!" cried the Duke; "but thy prayer is for a graceless! — and, half at least, will be dispersed in empty air."

"I will stand the hazard!"
Again they embraced, and separated.

CHAPTER VII.

HAD not Louis been forewarned by Wharton, and enabled to compare what he saw with what he had heard, the events of the succeeding day were calculated to lull him to security.

Elizabeth explained the delay of his marriage; and it was, what the Countess d'Etrées had intimated, the death of Monsieur de Blaggay having transpired. The Empress attributed to herself the concealment of the event, alleging to Louis, that she had done so to prevent further impediment in the way of a ceremony essential to the happiness of her friend. She then insinuated, to her almost silent auditor, what a proof she would regard it of his general devotion to her, if he would urge Otteline, and petition the Emperor to permit the celebration of the marriage before the expiration of another week.

Louis ventured to say, that, after so awful an event as the death of a parent, the haste her Majesty recommended would seem so irreverent in the eyes of the world, he could not persuade himself to commit such an outrage on propriety, unless she would permit him, at the same time, to present some adequate apology to society, for such a breach of its laws. While the Empress was speaking, it had occurred to him, how he might show his innocence with regard to Maria-Theresa, without implicating her secret, or her happiness; (for he was well assured, that what he was going to demand would not be granted;) and he added, that he would make his petition to the Emperor, provided her Majesty would consent that the Archduchess should be affianced on the same day. Elizabeth started at this unexpected request: but, whatever were its motive, she thought she could put it to silence; and, with a well-

feigned graciousness, replied, "Yes; if you will stand the proxy!"

"I am ready, Madam; for I have sufficiently experienced the folly of my presuming to decline it."

Baffled by this prompt assent, and astonished at the calmness with which he continued to enforce the remonstrances of Spain, on the same head, and on other delays of the Austrian cabinet, she listened to him to the end; and then rising from her chair, fixed her eyes on him, and said—

"Had I required any thing more, to assure me of the nature of the man, who has so coolly and comprehensively argued all these points, I should find it in that coolness and those arguments on one of them. Marquis, I will reply to these subjects hereafter."

During his interviews with the different ministers, this day, he could not but wish to have had a window in their breasts, to read who amongst them were the enemies of his father. Observation on men, however, had given him knowledge sufficient to guess, that the most obsequious, the fullest in smiles and complacency, and the most elaborate in compliment to the supreme minister in Spain, were the persons whose names were most likely to be found in the confederation against him. The president of the council, the crafty and luxurious Routemberg, overpowered Louis with assurances of his peremptory demands on the executive government, for the fulfilment of every article in the treaty; and, but for the information of Wharton, the young *chargé des affaires* would have quitted the chamber, in the fullest confidence of his father's entire influence in the Austrian cabinet. The same game of finesse was played at his own table; for there De Patinos had for some time assumed an air of civility. But Louis would not trust the Spaniard's lurking and fierce eye; neither could he relish the sycophants who followed the tone of their leader: yet he was polite to all; and a common observer would not have guessed, that treachery was on the one side, and antipathy on the other. Louis had no suspicions, mingled with his dislike; for he could not suppose, that young men, domesticated at his table, and

sanctioned by his father's patronage, could be cloaking an arm to stab him to the heart.

Notwithstanding these numerous avocations, the hours seemed to move on leaden pinions, till the sun set, and he descried the moon's fair crescent silvering the gilded dome of San Carlo Borromeo. Then was the moment of his appointment with, he believed, the only bosom which beat true to him, in that wide metropolis; the only tongue that spoke to him without guile; the only hand that would venture to shield his father from the professing friends, who, like those who slew his great ancestor, the Prince of Orange, pressed on him with caresses, to destroy him more securely.

On the answer which Wharton was to bring him, from the too well-informed oracle of all this evil, depended the success of the conspiracy, or its failure! In short, in a few minutes, he might have the safety of his father, and the preservation of Europe, in his hand. He could not disconnect these two ideas in his mind; and when they were united with the magnanimous friendship of Wharton, hope in that union silenced every argument to fear.

The friend in whom he trusted did not make the heart sick by delay. He was mounting the parapet, at the moment Louis appeared on the terrace.

"Brother of my soul!" cried the latter, as their hands met; "to meet you thus;—proving the disinterestedness of that misjudged spirit! I would endure again, all the pain your information gave me last night, to purchase to my father and my uncle, conviction of this unexampled friendship!"

"Root the conviction in your own heart, De Montemar, and I care not who plucks at the branches."

Louis urged his friend to the history of his embassy; and Wharton told him, he had seen the written memorandum of the whole plot. He informed him, there were persons at the Austrian court, who were to accuse Ripperda, to the King of Spain, of a plan of self-aggrandisement as bold as it was dangerous. He was to be represented, as playing a double game at Vienna and at Madrid; and that the interests of both nations were alter-

nately to bend, according to the veering of his own personal views. He was to be charged with clandestine communications with France and Portugal; and of being the secret instigator of the late attempt to poison his royal master. His object, in so nefarious an act, was supposed to be, the certainty he had, of being dictator of the kingdom, while under the sceptre of a minor. In short, every wild, preposterous, and sanguinary instigation of ambition was to be alleged against him. The charges were to be supported at Madrid by a powerful majority of grandees; and should the scheme go on, there could be no doubt of the impeachment of Ripperda, under a cloud of false witnesses; and the usual consequence,—some iniquitous sentence against his life. The signatures at the bottom of this memorandum were hidden from Wharton's view, when he was allowed to read it.

"The possessor," added he, "will reveal them, to no eyes but your own. However, I read enough in the body of the document, to see that Charles and Elizabeth, and her Hanoverian cousins, are deep in the plot."

The suspense with which Louis listened to this perfidious confederation was almost insufferable.

"And this it is," exclaimed he, "to put our trust in princes!—Ungrateful, treacherous Elizabeth!"

Wharton seized the moment of speechless indignation, which followed this agonised apostrophe; and portraying in vivid colours, the utter selfishness of Charles, and the house of Brunswick, he urged Louis, by every consequent argument, to abjure the worthless cause; and to take a powerful and noble revenge, by embracing that of legitimacy, in the rights of the Electress in Germany, and those of James Stuart, in the land of his maternal ancestors. The reasoning of Wharton was forcible and clear, full of energy and conviction, and an eloquence that might have charmed an angel from its orb, "*to list his sweet and honeyed sentences.*"

He urged, that the discovery of the plot to the King and Queen of Spain, before it could be brought to bear against Ripperda, would give him just the advantage of turning a full-charged battery upon the enemy, who had planted it

for his destruction. In that instant, of proved fidelity to the royal pair, and in their proud shows of perfect confidence in him, he might change their politics from the north to the south pole! A word from him to Philip, would revoke his guarantee to the Pragmatic Sanction; the Electress's son would have a direct path to the throne on the death of the Emperor; and a brave army of Spaniards, would put Philip in possession of Gibraltar! While this was transacting on the Continent, England itself might shrink under the foot of Ripperda; for Wharton intimated, that by the armed assistance of some powers, whose politics he had turned into the same direction, it would be no difficult achievement, to replace James Stuart on the throne of his ancestors.

"Here, Louis de Montemar," exclaimed the Duke, "is a revenge worthy the descendant of heroes and of sovereigns! Though you wear not crowns, you may dispense them; Cæsar can do no more!"

Louis wrung the hand of his friend. "Oh, Wharton! I am weary of sovereigns, and crowns, and sceptres. They are the price of men's souls, of all their earthly happiness, of all their future felicity! Talk not to me, of embracing the cause of any one of them. When I clasp the splendid nothings, they crumble into dust in my hands."

Louis walked forward, with a rapid pace. His soul was tossed on the billows of a tempestuous ocean, in the midst of which he saw his father perishing. He stopped abruptly. "But where is this document?"

"It is yours, on a condition; and, with it, the implement of your release from Otteline!"

"I care not for my own release, but my father! my betrayed, my virtuous father! Name the condition."

Wharton did not answer immediately; but walked a few moments, by the side of his friend, with his eyes bent downwards; then looking suddenly up, he gaily said —

"Is there any thing possible for me to propose, that could move you to precipitate yourself over that stone wall, as you did from the rocks of Bamborough?"

"No," replied Louis, with a wan and wintry smile; "nothing that you *would* propose."

"Having met my novice, at the Eleusinian mysteries," cried Wharton, laughing, "I marvel I should seem to question his initiation! The way is now plain before us. Go with me to-night, when that blabbing duenna in the sky is gone to bed, and you shall have the whole policy of Austria in your bosom."

"Where?" said Louis, not understanding the Duke, and strangely doubtful of his manner.

"That disclosure is beyond my credentials. But the awful secret, will not be revealed in caverns, dungeons, and darkness. You may find it in a place, to take the grateful soul, and lap it in Elysium!"

The pulse in Louis's temples beat hard, yet he was determined not to anticipate, but make Wharton explain himself.

"I do not understand you; who is it I am to see?"

"A woman!"

The manner of his saying this, was a stroke like that of an iron rod on the heart of his friend; and he cast the hand from him, which now clasped his arm.

"What, for another leap?" cried the Duke, "but you are out of practice, and may break more necks than your own!"

"And what is my resource?" desperately demanded Louis.

"A simple one; to smile upon a woman. A pleasant one; to be beloved by one, who *can fix no bonds on you,* but those of love! while she bestows herself upon you, and gives you the life and honour of your father!"

"With the loss of my own, and the perdition of my soul! Is this the alternative, I expected from the lips of my only friend, in this fearful extremity of my fate!"

Louis had covered his raging temples with his hand, and he hastened forward with distracted swiftness.

"De Montemar, the day for this folly is gone by!" cried Wharton. "You have been in the world, and you know that it is the privilege of manhood to make all nature subservient to his interest or his pleasure."

Louis stopped to speak; but his parched lips denied their office, and his eyes only reproached his friend. Wharton understood them, and replied, "No, Louis;

check-mate, to that move! What took you, night after night, to the scenes in which you know I met you? Anchorites are not accustomed to pay those courts a second visit; and you are not the better, in my honest eyes, for preserving the cowl, when I know its vows have been broken."

Louis knew that his apparent conduct had deserved this inference, and he inwardly upbraided the policy which had thought it wisdom to incur such suspicion on his blameless life. How would the involuntary accusation against his father have been embittered, had he known that the Empress had drawn the same conclusion to his disadvantage! He would then have doubly felt that his sacrifice to such vile appearances, instead of propitiating his rivals, had dishonoured him with his friends, and become an instrument in the hands of his enemies. Humbled to the soul, he merely replied,—

"Wharton, you injure me."

"It may be so, and I am sorry for it," answered the Duke; "though I cannot guess how. I offer you the sublime duty of rescuing your father from treason, and the enjoyment of a banquet rifled from the sanctuary of your deadliest foe! Can you be a man, and proof against revenge?"

Louis hurried on, in perturbed silence. Wharton continued his arguments, with vehemence and subtle consistency, on the supposition that he must admit his friend's repugnance to be sincere. Still Louis did not reply; but proofs of inward contention convulsed his pallid features. The Duke, as well as his friend, had much at stake in bringing this part of his negotiation to bear. He tried the effect of ridicule, and to one of his arguments he at last extorted a reply.

"I will not purchase even the life of my father by my own conscious guilt. If I am proof against my own heart in so dear a cause, shall I not be proof against the poor allurements of vanity and sense? And are such arguments yours? Oh, Wharton! I cannot call that peculiarly manly, which are the peculiar pursuits of the lowest of our species. Any man may succumb to his appetites, or his passions!

You say most men do; and that you, even you, sometimes find it policy and pastime to follow in the track!" He paused; and then added, with a piercing look, and a smile of despair, "What if the boy De Montemar has ambition to go beyond ye!"

"Yes, I know you do not want ambition," replied the Duke, with an answering smile. "I remember, some dozen months ago, with that same eagle glance you likened yourself to Ammon's godlike son! He did not reject the torch that fired the palace of his enemies, nor the Thais that gave it to his hand!"

"Wharton," said Louis, looking on him with severity, "had Clytus been such a counsellor, he would have deserved the javelin of his friend!"

"My breast is ready," cried the Duke, "if thou hast the heart to throw it!"

"I would I could, and cut away the worser part of thine!" answered Louis. "I have seen more of it to-night than I wish to remember."

"But what message," returned Wharton, "am I to remember to carry to her, who is awaiting your slow appearance? Is she to give you, herself, your father's safety, and your own freedom? Or do you reject all? For *all* you must accept, or none; and then the scrupulous De Montemar may go wash his hands of the double parricide—his father's fame, and his father's life!"

This demand was made with scornful seriousness—with a ruthless application to the feelings of a son. Louis felt the firm collectedness of a man, determined to live or die by one line of action. He turned on Wharton, with a fixed eye.

"Tell her," returned he, "that father and son may perish together,—that their names may be followed by falsehood to the scaffold and the grave: but I never will purchase exemption from any one of these evils by the prostitution of my heart, and my conscience, to man or woman!"

Wharton grasped his arm.

"What superstition is this? what madness? This message would undo you!"

"With whom, Wharton?"

"With the woman you scorn. Her revenge would exasperate your enemies."

"Let it," returned Louis, "since she has bereft me of my friend. Wharton, we are no more to each other!"

"De Montemar?"

"In my extremest need, when I threw myself on your breast, for counsel and for aid, — when I believed you Heaven's delegated angel, to save my father and myself,— you would have betrayed him, to the dishonour of being bought by the guilt of his son: you would have betrayed me, to hell's deepest perdition!"

As Louis spoke with the stern calmness of a divorced heart, Wharton became other than he had ever seen him. With the fires of resentment flashing from his resplendent eyes, he, too, collected the force of his soul in the mightiness of a last appeal. He spoke with rapidity for many minutes. He repeated and redoubled his arguments; and then he added, in a calmer voice,—

"My heart is a man's heart; therefore is sensible to this stroke from ungrateful friendship: but, you now know that I can shame your superstition, by bearing insult upon insult, when my patience may recall you to yourself."

"I am recalled to myself," returned Louis; "and my superstition is to depend on God alone for the preservation of my father. If he fall, God has his wise purpose in the judgment, and I shall find resignation. For you, Wharton, that I have loved so long and so steadily, there may be a pang there, when he I trusted above all men has proved himself my direst enemy!"

"Your enemy, De Montemar, — your direst enemy? The words have passed your lips, were engendered in your heart, and my ears have heard them! It is easier to hate than to love; to discard a friend, than to accept a mistress; to plunge into the gulf of ruin, than to avoid it through a path of happiness! Madman! did I not pity the folly I marvel at, I would rouse you by a tale. But no more. When you next hear of or see Philip Wharton, you will understand the import of your own words. You shall know

what he is, when he proclaims himself the enemy of Ripperda and De Montemar!"

His auditor stood immovable, with his eyes on the ground, while Wharton vehemently uttered this denunciation. Louis remained some time, like a pillar transfixed in the earth, after the Duke had disappeared. The first thing that recalled him to motion was the profound stillness around, after the sounds of that voice, which, till now, was ever to him the music of heaven. The horrible conviction of all that had passed pressed at once upon his soul,—the dear and agonising remembrance of how he had loved that false friend! and, raising his arms to the dark heavens, with a fearful cry of expiring nature, he threw himself upon the ground.

The falling dew, and the howling wind, raised him not from that bed of lonely despair; and, when he did leave the dismal scene of this last act of his miseries, it was like the spectre of the man who had entered it.

CHAPTER VIII.

Wharton left Vienna, the morning after his separation from Louis in the garden of the château. From that day, Louis moved through his duties like a man in a dream. He had despatched a special courier to his father, with as much of the conspiracy as he had collected from his now estranged friend; and he confessed how the whole might have been in his possession, could he have brought his conscience to accord with the condition.

Hoping that even this obscure intimation might be some beacon to his father, himself went perturbedly on; racked with suspense, and feeling alone and unarmed amidst a host of ambushed foes. Except when obliged to go abroad on business, he shut himself within the walls of his house; for he now doubted every man who approached him; and the specious courtesies of women were yet more intolerable.

The Empress did not condescend to intimate how she had considered his proposition respecting the ceremony of her daughter; but she sent her chamberlain to inform him, that the Emperor had fixed the day of her favourite's nuptials, which were to be solemnised in a private manner, in the Imperial chapel. Louis loathed the very characters of Otteline's name; and shuddered at any new bonds to a court, associated to him with every disastrous remembrance. His soul was stricken; and the evils which appeared in visionary approach before his father's path, and his own, seemed too big for conflict. He felt he could have sustained the fiercest fields of war; could have died with an upward eye, and an exulting spirit, on its honourable bed. But to be a hero under the attacks of the coward breath of man; to stand before an obloquy that threatened the annihilation of his father's glory, and his own respected name, was more than he dared to contemplate; and, in appalled expectation, he mechanically prepared to obey the unwelcome behests of Elizabeth.

He was giving his slow orders to a *maître d'hôtel,* respecting some arrangements for his future bride, when a letter was put into his hands, which had come by a circuitous route from Sardinia; and which he ought to have received a month or two ago. It was from Don Ferdinand d'Osorio. Until the public reception of Ripperda at Vienna, Don Ferdinand was ignorant where to address the cousin of his beloved Alice; and to express (what he felt) his sense of the justice of her appeal against his extorted bonds; and to acknowledge the delicacy with which Louis had seconded her remonstrances. When he heard that the Marquis de Montemar was in Germany with his father, he lost no time in writing; and intrusted his letter to a Sardinian gentleman going to Vienna. But the traveller took a wide tour; and did not bring the letter to its destination until two months after its date.

Louis dismissed his servant, and breaking the seal, read as follows:—

"My dear De Montemar,

"I should be ashamed to confess the justice of all your

remarks on my conduct with regard to your too charming cousin, could I not at the same time assure you, that I have obeyed her wishes to the fullest extent, and followed your advice implicitly. I have written to her, and to Mrs. Coningsby; and she is perfectly free; every bond is relinquished, but that of the heart. If hers be as firmly attached as mine, we may confidently await the holy vows, which, I trust, will yet unite us.

"You must have seen enough of my excellent father, to know that he has one error amongst his many perfections; and that is an irreconcileable abhorrence of the Protestant religion. However, though I should despair of ever bringing him to tolerate its tenets, I have a hope of compassing his consent to my marriage with its gentle professor. Marcella, my only, and very dear sister, (and who was intended from her cradle for a nunnery,) must be the agent of this hope.—She loves me ardently; and her power with my father, except on one point, has always been irresistible. But on that point, strange as it may seem, I ground my hope.—It is the only subject that has ever been contested between them; but Marcella must yield. Her doom was fixed by an irrevocable vow before she was born. My father's youthful passions, (which are now hushed to such monastic stillness!) were the cause of her dedication. I will tell you the story; and then you may judge of my chance of success through her means.

"When the Marquis Santa Cruz was a very young man, his character too much resembled my own—self-willed, and impetuous; and in affairs of love, as you will see by the sequel, he was even more determined than his son. At an early age, he acquired a great reputation in the army; and at the conclusion of one of the wars in Italy, went on a party of pleasure to Vienna, then, as now, the gayest city in the world.

"During the reign of the Austrian monarchs in Spain, many of our grandees intermarried with the German nobility. It so happened between our family and that of the Austrian Sinzendorff's. My father, then full of life and enterprise, went to the old Count Sinzendorff's. The present chancellor of that name was then young and thoughtless; and boasted to his cousin, of the great beauty of his

youngest sister, whom his family had chosen to sacrifice to the fortunes of the elder branches, by consigning her to a nunnery at the age of nineteen. My father accompanied Sinzendorff to the convent, where they passed some hours with the beautiful novice. The visit was repeated: — and suffice it to say, a mutual passion was conceived between the two cousins, and my father persuaded her to elope with him. They fled into Switzerland, where they were married. In the course of time, absolution for the sacrilege was obtained from the Pope; but my father could never obtain it from himself. His wife's first and second children died in the birth. They were both daughters. He believed it a judgment on his crime, and tried to reconcile offended Heaven, by making a vow that, should his next infant be spared, and of the same sex, and he live to the appointed period, he would dedicate it to a monastic life, at the same age in which he seduced her mother from the altar. The next child was myself. Two or three more infant deaths intervened before the birth of Marcella. But from the hour in which she saw the light, and continued to live, my father hung a golden crucifix to her neck, and always addressed her by the name of the little nun.

"My mother could not see the justice of expatiating the parent's offence by the immolation of the child; but her husband was inflexible. However, she, too, made a vow; and that was, never to be separated from her daughter, till the inevitable hour of her dedication. During our youth, my father travelled through most of the countries in Europe; and every where Marcella was my mother's companion. But at Naples, while she was quite a child, by a most unhappy fatality, the governess my mother engaged for her, was the widow of one of the illustrious cavaliers who came to the Continent with your James II. She was a learned and a pious woman, and brought my sister up in in all her own principles. My father led too busy a life to investigate deeper than the fruits; and those he saw were good. He often compared the beatific expression of Marcella's countenance, with the heavenly forms of the Vatican; and I have heard him whisper my mother, that he saw the future saint in their beloved child. But

after two years the English lady died; and on her death-bed she declared herself a Protestant! In short, Marcella had been too long under her tuition, to become a willing *devotee* to the monastic rites of the Romish church. A superstitious horror of this discovery prevented my father questioning her on the subject; but he proposed her immediate removal to a convent; and at once taking the irrevocable veil. My sister cast herself on her knees, and implored, by every thing sacred in earth and heaven, that he would not compel her to make vows, against which her soul revolted. She engaged to pass her life in celibacy, and never to see any persons but her own family, if he would spare her those dreadful oaths, and allow her to live and die with her mother. But my father's conscience was alarmed for her eternal salvation and his own, and his firmness could not be shaken. I never shall forget the distress of my poor sister. My mother was in agonies; and the young Duke di Savona, who adored the dear victim, was frantic with despair. He was the Pope's favourite nephew; and he threw himself at my father's feet, petitioning for Marcella's hand, and presenting him with a full absolution from his Holiness.

"'No, no,' cried my sister; 'no marriage,— no Duke di Savona! It is my mother, — the society of my mother, that I want ——' and throwing herself into her arms, she was carried, fainting, from the apartment.

"Strange as it may seem in one so young, and so delighting in all she saw and heard, she yet spoke truly; for though the most affectionate of daughters and of sisters, I believe she never looked on man with one softening emotion. She was gentle and kind to the admiring circle around her,— like the *sweet south over a bank of violets;* but never thought of love: and when I have seen her turn away from her silent idolaters, tenderly pitying the sighs she neither could nor wished to share, I have thought of the lovely Marcella of Cervantes, who had only to look on a man to deprive him of his senses. Equally beautiful, and equally cold, had my father been persuaded, by the Pope's offered absolution to the cession of his vow, my sister's rejection of every proffer of marriage would have aban-

doned the amiable Savona to the same despair. However, my father was inexorable, and we quitted home.

" A dangerous illness succeeded the conflict in my sister's mind. My mother opposed to my father's her own vow not to suffer Marcella to leave her before the originally intended time for her profession. To this plea he assented; and he granted that my sister should remain under the parental roof, till the year of her noviciate. But that year must come, and it will commence next January.

" Being aware, from my father's pertinacity on these subjects, that if my sister do not then resign herself to her fate, she will be dragged to meet it, (though he would rather purchase her consent at any price,) I have determined on trying to turn her sad destiny to my happiness. When I pledged my faith to your dear cousin, I did it under a belief that I could persuade Marcella to do that willingly, which she knows she must do, even under violence. And yet had she loved Savona, I would perish sooner than breathe a word of how she might avert my doom. But as the case stands, — she, too much an angel to think on man, and I, too much a mortal not to adore an angel in a woman's form; I feel the less repugnance in making her, even now, the saint of my destiny! In short, I want to have my father's sanction to my marriage with Alice, to be the condition of Marcella performing all his vows without further hesitation!

" On my return from Lindisfarne, (without then venturing to open my whole mind to her on the subject,) I prepared the way, by describing the dear family at the Parsonage, in such colours as to excite her particular interest for the fair and tender Alice. My mother's gratitude was eloquent towards Mr. Athelstone and Mrs. Coningsby; and again and again she wished to see the latter and her daughters in Spain, that she might in some way duly acknowledge their cares of her son. Time showed other alterations, besides that of restored health; — certain changes in my habits, wrought, indeed, by my visit to your holy isle! and I did not hesitate in attributing them to its happy influence. You cannot have been so long in Vienna, (to me, fatal and detested Vienna!) without having learned

that I needed the reformation, and the peace of heart, I imbibed at the fire-side of Lindisfarne. If I may, I will repay, to your sweet cousin, all that heart owes to her — to her uncle — and to you — my jealousy and my emulation! I will not cheat you of your friendship, by withholding the confession, that when I quitted Lindisfarne, I hated you, because I feared your influence with my Alice. But I now honour that influence, so worthy of her, and of all that is noblest in man. And feeling myself not totally unworthy of the amnesty I ask, I offer you my esteem and confidence. But to return to my project for future happiness. To make it clear to your apprehension, I must apologise for my having occupied you so long with this piece of family history.

"My father and I came to Sardinia on public affairs; but we are to be recalled to Spain in the autumn. I shall then unbosom myself to Marcella; and I doubt not she will concede that to secure my felicity, which, should she withhold it, would only leave me to misery, without prolonging the time of her own liberty.

"At present, she is leading an almost monastic life; and the difference cannot be great, whether it be past in a real cell, amongst the Ursulines, and daily cheered by visits from her mother, or in a cloistered apartment at home, which is fitted up with every similar austerity, and has no advantage but the nominal distinction of being in her father's house.

"I hope every thing from Marcella's *free consent,* and consequent influence with my father; and, when it is given, dear De Montemar, (if you are not too much absorbed in politics and Imperial favour, to continue your interest in the happiness of faithful love!) you shall hear again from your sincerely grateful friend,

"Sardinia." FERDINAND D'OSORIO.

Louis closed the letter, with every warm wish for the happiness of his endeared Alice, even at the expense of the fair victim by which it was to be purchased. He hardly pitied the amiable Marcella, in the destiny she appeared to deprecate; for, from the state in which he found himself,

between man's perfidy and woman's wiles, any refuge from the world seemed a heaven to him. The passions and opinions of youth are in extremes; consummate delight, or total misery — perfect virtue, or abandoned crime — no happiness but in rapture, no grief but in despair. But Louis's griefs were now heavy enough not to need the overcharging of fancy; and, when he thought of all that he had suffered since his last fearful meeting with Wharton in the garden, his heart was wrung with unutterable anguish; and taking the miniature of his dead parent from its near neighbourhood to that virtuous and afflicted heart, he pressed it to his lips and exclaimed — "Oh, my mother! would that I were fast locked within thy peaceful arms, while I am yet innocent, and not unworthy to be called thy son!"

Scared from the world by its vices, it was not to be wondered that he sometimes longed to repose his wearied spirit in the grave. But he was, now, only entered into the lists; the contest was only begun; and he must brace his sinews to continue the combat, for which his ambitious soul had panted in the untroubled shade of his native home!

On the very morning, the evening of which was to see him perform his extorted vows, to her who had once been the object of D'Osorio's passion, two couriers arrived from Spain. The one was Castanos, who came to Louis; the other was from the Marquis de Castellor, and went direct to Count Routemberg.

The volcano had burst; and all the power, and all the honours, of Ripperda were swept away! De Castellor was now in his seat; and, when Castanos came off, the Duke was stunned into stupor, overcome by the illimitable ruin.

Of the particulars of the catastrophe, Louis did not hear till he could question Castanos; for the Spaniard, knowing the tidings of the packet he brought, had presented it in silence, and withdrew. Louis opened it impatiently, and took out his father's letter. He could hardly expect it to be an answer to his warning epistle, for the time appeared too short for an interchange of messengers; but, eager to know the complexion of things in Spain, he broke the seal. The letter was brief, and scarcely legible; but it was sufficient

to announce the completion of his worst fears: — that his father was no more the minister of Spain: that he was abandoned by the King; insulted by the nobles; and outraged with every species of ingratitude by the people he had served, to his own destruction!

The bolt was then fallen! And every hand, in which his father trusted, had assisted to launch it.

Louis was transfixed, with the letter in his hand. Now it was, that he saw the world unmasked before him; now it was, that he saw the views of life unveiled; now it was, that all creation seemed to pass from before him with a frightful noise, and he stood alone in chaos. The smiling face of man was blotted out; gratitude, virtue, were annihilated; and life had no longer an object! What had his father been? All that was noble and disinterested. What had he done for Spain? Redeemed her from poverty, contempt, and suffering, and planted her at the well-spring of riches, honour, and happiness. And what was his reward? He was cast, like the reprobate angel, from on high; and trampled upon by his conquerors, as though his actions had been like those of him whom he resembled in his fall!

How long Louis sat in motionless, sightless gaze upon the fatal letter, he knew not; but he was aroused by the entrance of his secretary; who came to inform him that Count Sinzendorff waited in the next chamber.

Louis saw he was now called upon to breast the first wave that was to break on him from the deluge which had overwhelmed his father. He rallied his mental strength; and looking upwards, to implore the staying hand from above, he proceeded, with the composure of inevitable ruin, to the presence of the chancellor. The virtuous statesman advanced to meet him, while his countenance proclaimed, that he knew all, and sympathised with its victim.

Their conference was short; but it implied to Louis that his delegated reign, as well as that of his father, was at an end. Sinzendorff had been in the Imperial cabinet, when Routemberg laid his despatches before the Emperor; and, to spare the upright son of Ripperda some rude disclosure of their contents, the chancellor took upon himself to in-

form him, that he was to transfer his portfolio to the Count de Monteleone, who had just arrived at Vienna.

On Louis thanking the minister for his generous interference, Sinzendorff took his hand.

"I will always bear my testimony to the fair dealing of the son, and to the disinterested conduct of the father; though we should never meet again."

Even while the words were on the lips of the chancellor, a message arrived from the Empress to Louis, to hasten his attendance at the Altheim apartments. He smiled gloomily, in answer to Sinzendorff's smile of dubious meaning.

"I had forgotten!" said the chancellor; "you have yet a fair bond to Vienna; and this need not be a parting day."

"It is a portentous day, of most unpropititious nuptials!" replied Louis, hardly knowing what he uttered; "but every day, and every where, I must be honoured in the approbation of Count Sinzendorff."

The hour was beyond the time, in which Louis ought to have been in the Imperial boudoir, to await the hand of his intended bride. In a postscript to his father's letter, he had found hastily written, —

"Events prove that you have done right, with regard to the Empress's friend, if she be now your wife."

This approbation was a new bond on the sacrifice; and Louis threw himself into his carriage, to obey the peremptory summons of Elizabeth!

All was solitude in the first three chambers of the Altheim apartments. As he hurried forward, with the desperate step of a man, who had lost so much, that the last surrender was a matter of no moment, he saw the Empress under the fourth arcade; but she sat alone. Louis bowed at the entrance, and again, as he drew near. She was pale as himself; and did not look up while she addressed him.

"You are come, thus tardily, to ratify your vows? To redeem your pledged honour?"

"I come to obey your Majesty's commands," replied he.

"Your vows may be returned to you," answered Eliza-

beth; "but the honour, that was never yours, cannot be redeemed."

"Dare I say," replied Louis, "that I do not understand your Majesty?"

"And yet the words are plain," returned she; "they are to tell you, that, low as Ripperda has fallen, he never can reach the depths of his son."

"Madam," exclaimed he, "I am now a ruined man! the intrigues of my father's enemies have cast my fortunes, with his, to the ground, but he shall not be humbled in his son. Virtue is the soul of his being, virtue is my inheritance; and I implore of your Majesty, to say, of what I am accused? Who are my accusers?"

She looked up, and mistaking the ravages of anguish on his fine countenance, for the lines of guilt, she shuddered with a loathing sensation, and answered indignantly, —

"How dare that false tongue profane the name of virtue, by connecting it with that of your father and yourself? The world teems with your accusers; and he bears witness to their veracity, by not having ventured one line to me in his defence."

She then steadily enumerated the Duke's imputed treacheries. That his clandestine coalition with the Duke of Wharton was past a doubt; that their secret meetings had been traced; that he had commenced a correspondence with James Stuart; and that, from what motives, his mad ambition could alone tell, it was well known he was playing in Madrid the counterpart of Wharton's political game at Vienna. In short, he was covertly abetting every machination against the empire and the house of Brunswick: — "and," concluded the Empress, "I am constrained to believe, that, to me and mine, his overthrow is as timely as it is irrevocable."

This charge on his father transported Louis beyond the forms of ceremony; and, with all the eloquence of truth and filial piety, he burst forth into a defence of his father's integrity; which, to any other than the possessed ears of Elizabeth, must have carried resistless conviction; — but, with an impetuosity equal to his own, she interrupted him: —

"Cease!" cried she, "dissembling, cozening De Montemar! Hard, unblushing parricide of all thy father's fame! In every word, and look, and gesture, I see the tempter of Ripperda's ruin! He was honour's self, till he brought the serpent to his bosom, in the shape of his perfidious son. Shame to thee, young man! behold the price for which you sold him to Duke Wharton!"

Louis was confounded by this imputation on himself, as the instigator of his father's asserted treasons; but he did not shrink, nor withdraw his assured eye from the face of the Empress.

"That Wharton was my friend," said he, "I did not withhold from your Majesty; that my father was, and is, his implacable enemy, I have just affirmed: — and that it is not in the power of Duke Wharton, nor of any man, to draw us from our allegiance to Spain, or our fidelity to you; — name our accusers, and I am ready to maintain this truth with my blood."

Elizabeth had now restrained the feelings which some pleading recollection of Ripperda had awakened, and with haughty composure she replied, —

"You may revenge the discovery of your falsehood, by the lives of your accusers; but the times are past, when truth was proved by bloodshed. Yet, as you challenge it, you shall know your crimes. They are simple, but they are comprehensive. First, your nightly visitation to the Electress of Bavaria, under the disguise of the Chevalier de Phaffenberg! —"

"It is false!" cried Louis, placing his hand on his heart, and looking up to heaven: "by the eternal judgment, I swear it is false!"

Elizabeth raised her hands in horror.

"Matchless villain!" cried she.

Then frowning terribly — as, with an indignant step backwards, he had to remember it was a woman who thus spoke to him; but his eye had given the defiance of his soul! — She rapidly continued, —

"And have you the audacity to swear, that you did not steal from her house, by a secret passage, on the night of the destruction of the Opera House; that you have not had

clandestine meetings with the arch-counsellor of her treasons; and that this seditious pair have not stimulated your presumption to draw my daughter to disgrace her rank, by listening to a passion from *you?*"

Louis was too much appalled by the two leading charges, to show any surprise at the third. Had Wharton betrayed that they had met? — that the preserver of his mistress had once entered her palace? The blood which burned on Louis's cheek, at the accusation, faded before this direful suspicion; and his eyes, dropping under the proud beams of the Empress, told her that, in this instance at least, his face was honest.

"You do not dare to repeat the injury," cried she: "leave my presence!"

"Not as a guilty man!" cried he, looking up, with the bold desperation of innocence. "I have now nothing to gain or to lose with the Empress of Germany, but my honour; and again I affirm, that under no name but that of Louis de Montemar, did I ever enter the palace of the Electress of Bavaria. I never did enter it but once; and that was on the night your Majesty mentions. I have also, by accident, met the Duke of Wharton in the courts of this palace, and in various assemblies; and, by compulsive necessity, twice I saw him in the garden of the château: but we never meet again!"

Here Louis stopped; for these charges had so struck on his heart (as he believed they could only have been inflicted by the threatened vengeance of his friend), that he forgot the one respecting the Princess.

"You own that you have visited the Electress, and communed with her emissary," cried Elizabeth: "avow your object, and it will answer to the point, to which your effrontery has not yet spoken. Was it to dethrone my husband, and make my daughter a prisoner to the Bavarian Empress? It would have crowned the adventure, to have rewarded her champion with the hand of a captive Princess!"

Stung to the soul, Louis threw himself at the Empress's feet, to proclaim his innocence of all these inferences before Heaven and her. But she started back, as from a viper.

"Base hypocrite!" cried she, "I am not to be moved by subtilty. I know how you dedicated that attitude, to the dishonour of your future sovereign; but she is now rescued from your arts. This foot crushed your pernicious resemblance, as the Heaven you outrage will one day do yourself. You may grovel in the dust; but I will hear no more."

Louis rose from his knee.

"Empress," said he, "I solicit for justice no more; but I owe it to my honour to vindicate my innocence, even against the commands of frowning Majesty! To you, and to all the world, I aver, that my presence in the Bavarian palace was occasioned by a service I had accidentally performed to one of its inhabitants. My meetings with Duke Wharton were an attempt to penetrate into a conspiracy, which I knew was forming against my father; but I failed in my purpose. The enemies of the Duke de Ripperda have annihilated his political life, and plunged his son into the same abyss of calumny; but I am not yet sunk to baseness, nor hypocrisy. Nor was it to the Empress of Germany I knelt, but to the power of justice in her person. But that is past; and I feel, that could birth give dignity, my ancestors of Nassau reigned in this very palace! And, if devotedness to their successor be a virtue in the posterity of Adolphus, my father has been faithful to the Emperor, to the last article in the treaty; and I have been devoted to your Majesty, to the sacrifice of my happiness. This we have done. But, young as I am, I have lived to see that when power is lost, birth is nothing; and virtue nothing, but to the possessor's heart!"

The face of Elizabeth blazed with resentment.

"And thus you defend your daring passion for my daughter?"

"The Emperor knows I never dared to love the Princess," replied Louis; "and to the honour of his Imperial word, I refer your Majesty."

Louis bowed, as he was preparing to withdraw.

"Incomparable insolence!" exclaimed she; "stop, and know that the Emperor is your accuser!"

Louis smiled, and with so insufferable an air of scornful

superiority, that she was momentarily struck dumb; but, violently extricating her powers of speech, she sternly replied,—

"Every aim of that towering spirit is known to him, and to me; but every aim is crushed!"

"Human power cannot crush my aims!" rejoined Louis: they are to uphold my father's honour, and my own truth. And while he deserves the reverence of the world, what can prove that they are lost!"

The Empress's hand was on her beating forehead; but she turned, even fiercely, to his question.

"The position in which he now lies, by the determined falsehoods of his son! Execrable traitor!" cried she; "foiled, but bequeathing mischief in thy ruin! Return to him, covered with thine own dishonour! Return to him, bearing the curse of the friend of his virtue — of the mother of Maria-Theresa! Return to him, spurned by the Countess Altheim, and abhorred and stigmatised by all honest men!"

Elizabeth left the blameless victim of all this wrath standing in the middle of the floor. Every word she breathed, every anathema she denounced, seemed urged by the quick revenge of Duke Wharton. All justice, all fair inference, were denied him: his father and himself were alike shut out from the bosom of friendship — were alike betrayed by them in whom they had most confidently trusted! The burden was almost too much for him to bear; and, rushing from the apartment, he knew no more of what he said or did, till he found himself thrown upon a chair, and alone, in his own chamber.

CHAPTER IX.

THE official transfers were soon made. Monteleone received the diploma of *chargé d'affaires*. The Emperor and the Empress refused the usual forms of admitting the recalled

minister to a parting audience; and not a man, Spaniard nor Austrian, appeared within the gates of the *Palais d'Espagne,* to pay a farewell compliment to the son of their benefactor or friend.

The finger of royal disgrace was affixed to the names of Ripperda and De Montemar, and all fled the spot on which it lay. Solitude was around those lately crowded courts; silence in every room; and when business took Louis abroad, avoidance met him in every passing countenance. The ladies, who had opened their houses to him, now shut up their daughters till he had left the city. But few needed the precaution; for, with his fortunes, had vanished the most powerful charms, even of Louis de Montemar. This mortification, however, was spared him; as, in the lofty consciousness of his own integrity, and a high disdain of the injustice he had received, he went no where, to solicit compassion, nor propitiate candour. But, had he known the present sentiments of these venal women, as he was also assured that Countess Altheim breathed the same, that would have been sufficient, in his eyes, to transform the deed of general banishment to one of welcome liberty. In the midst of all this gloom of misery, his freedom from her shone like a star in the dark hemisphere, and it promised that night should not remain for ever.

When his lonely carriage passed the barrier (for all his state attendants were left to the new ambassador), he threw himself back, and exclaimed, "How did I enter you, proud, ungrateful city? Full of hope, of enterprise, and honour! How do I quit you? Bereft, by you, of all! —ruined, dishonoured, desolate!"

The barb was in his heart: it was there, in the image of Wharton; and it corroded with a slow and deadly poison. Yet, as he journeyed forward, and compared events with their time of action, he could not but derive a double satisfaction from his blameless conscience, when he found, by calculation, that had he been weak enough to accept the discovery of the authors of this vast destruction, at the price of his innocence, it would still have been too late to prevent his father's overthrow. The Empress had shown herself too entirely prejudiced, to have been affected by

any document Louis could have presented: and while he thought on this, with gratitude to Heaven for his firmness, he conceived a deeper horror of the false friend, who might have seduced him to such guilt, and left him no other payment than unavailing remorse and deserved infamy.

In his own person, Louis was now convinced of the truth of his father's charge against this once beloved Wharton — that *he could bereave, but not bestow!* In the garden of the château, he had promised a preservation he could not have performed: on the same spot, he had threatened a vengeance he had now taken! Louis attributed all Elizabeth's accusations to the resentment of his treacherous friend; and, by that act, considered himself despoiled, by Wharton, of all that was most dear to him.

"I will forget him!" cried he to himself: "my honoured father, I come to thee, to stand by thee alone! To uphold and cheer thee! To uphold and cheer myself, with the conviction, that I yet possess thee! To glory in the virtue, that has given thee the fate of Aristides!"

In a pass of the Apennines, Louis's solitary vehicle was met by a courier from Spain. He brought a credential from Martini, which introduced him as his brother, who had lately been received by the Duke de Ripperda in the quality of a page. Lorenzo, the young man, came full speed, to meet the recalled minister; and to hasten his arrival at Madrid; where his father lay, in a state to hear no other counsellor, to receive no other comfort.

Lorenzo got into the carriage, at the command of his master's son; and detailed the particulars of his mission, as they proceeded rapidly to Genoa. Louis listened with unshrinking fortitude.

Immediately on Ripperda's return from Vienna, the King had published an edict, that a revision of all sentences, and a review of all transactions by judges, governors, collectors, and every other kind of royal officers, should be subjected to the cognizance of the Duke of Ripperda. This immense accession of authority put the individual interest of every man in Spain in the Duke's hands; and made him no less terrible in the city, and provinces, than formidable to the grandees, and an object of jealousy to

the King's sons. In short, he was such a minister as never had been seen before; a kind of vicar-general, whose power wanted nothing of supreme sovereignty, but the permanency of a throne.

Lorenzo observed, that his brother had owned to him, that from the Duke's free exercise of one branch of this extensive authority, might have been foreseen the rupture between his master and the majority of the Spanish nobility. Since his return from Vienna, his manner to them, and to society at large, was completely changed. He no longer conciliated, but compelled. He summoned the greatest and most powerful of the grandees before his tribunal, whether the appeal came from prince or peasant; and did such strict justice, that none could reproach, though all murmured: the great, for being made to feel there was a power above their wills; and the little, that the laws of Spain should be dispensed by a man who had been born out of her dominions. While his home policy was acknowledged good, and his outward politics were only held in the balance by the tergiversation of Austria, there were yet men in the cabinet, who privately ridiculed his plans as mere political romance. The end proved them so. What is speculatively right, is generally practically wrong: for men's probable actions are calculated by the law of reason; but their performance is usually the result of caprice.

In the midst of the universal discontent excited by the agents of his numerous rivals and enemies, the main mine was sprung, and Ripperda's fortunes received their final blow. The King and Queen of Spain were induced to believe the most contradictory, preposterous, and terrible things of his private intentions. And in one hour, he received three successive messages from the King, to inform him, that his offices in the state, the army, and the commercial interests of his country, were taken from him. That Grimaldo, the Marquis de Castellor, and the Count de Paz, filled his places; and that a courier was despatched to Vienna to recall his son.

Lorenzo related, that the intelligence which announced his fall, and, as a first measure, took from him the office of

prime minister, was delivered in such a manner as to excite the indignation of the Duke; which he betrayed in so unguarded a way, as to extend his reproaches from his enemies to the King: and in the tempest of his wrath, he uttered things of his Majesty, the report of which doubly incensed the Monarch and his Queen. The messenger of this first deprivation was Baptista Orendayn, the nephew of the Count de Paz. The new ministers were well aware of his insidious powers, to insult and to provoke; and they selected him to convey their triumph to the Duke. Ripperda, having exhausted himself under the influence of the young sycophant's irritating sympathy, remained in gloomy silence during the communications of the two succeeding messengers. When they were all departed from him, he sat for an hour motionless, in intense thought, with his hands clasped in each other, and his eyes fixed on the floor. Martini passed to and fro in the room, without notice from his master. At last the Duke suddenly started up, as one from a trance.

"I will go to the Queen!" cried he.

It was now about nine o'clock, in a fine autumnal evening. Ripperda threw himself into his carriage, and ordered it to the *Buen Retiro*. He arrived, but was refused admittance. He returned to his palace, and called for his secretary; but no secretary was to be found. Not one of the officers of any of his late numerous offices, were now in attendance. All were fled with the stream of power; and nothing but amazed and alarmed family domestics were seen gliding about the galleries, in silence and dismay.

Castanos, however, presented himself; and by him Ripperda wrote to his son and the Empress, and despatched him to Vienna. In this part of his narrative, Lorenzo could not relate what he did not know; but after events proved that Monteleone had encountered Castanos on the way. He found the old Spaniard had a price: and having purchased the perusal of the packet, suffered the fallen minister's hurried billet to his son to pass; but the resistless appeal to Elizabeth, Monteleone committed to the flames.

No casualty in the journey interrupted the recital of

Lorenzo, or withdrew for a moment the close attention of his auditor. Lorenzo continued. While Ripperda was writing other letters, his fixed occupation was at last diverted by an unusual sort of tumult in the square before his palace. He had been accustomed, at his return, or issuing from his gates, to be hailed and lackied by the acclamations of the populace. His largesses were abundant, and the uproar of vehement thanksgiving had been ever on the watch from the venal multitude. But for the purpose of the time, a similar dole, but in double quantity, had lately been dispensed at the porches of the new ministers: and the same mob, who, four and twenty hours before, had rent the air with shouts of *Long live the great Duke Ripperda!* now tore their lungs with curses on his name, and threats of vengeance for the ruin of their country.

The violence of the people lashed itself into madness, and the fury with which they assailed his gates, with torches, clubs, and hatchets, left little doubt that they meant to fire the palace, and massacre its inhabitants. Martini urged his master to withdraw privately from the danger.

"What!" cried Ripperda, "fly like a coward, and a criminal, before the ungrateful rabble of Madrid? Never; though their King were at their head, to urge the murder of their benefactor. I am dispossessed, but am not fallen; and that, myself will show them."

As he spoke, he rushed towards the open balcony, which projected over the great gate, and extended his arm to the people in the act to speak. The blazing lights in the apartment behind him, and the broad glare from the torches beneath, showed in a moment the noble figure of the Duke, and his commanding gesture.

Struck with surprise, the silence of profound awe, for an instant, stilled the assembly. But before the big words of vehement indignation could burst from the lips of Ripperda, a watchful emissary of his enemies fired a carabine at the balcony. Aggression once committed, every restraint of reverence and of shame were cast away; and others, near the assassin, echoed his cry of "Death to the heretic!" Martini threw his arms round his master, and dragging

him within the balcony, forcibly shut the doors. The Duke turned on him a look of unutterable meaning.

"You would be more in fashion," cried he, "if you stabbed your patron!"

Martini urged his lord, on the only plea to which he would now listen, to save himself for future vengeance! His carriage was brought round to a door in the back street, and Ripperda was at last persuaded to enter it. But there was a spy in the house; and before the vehicle, which contained only the Duke and Martini, could pass into the second street towards Segovia, it was met by the howling populace. The windows and doors were quickly beaten in; and Martini, who had hastily covered his livery with one of his master's cloaks, was dragged out amidst the imprecations of his determined murderers. Ripperda would not tamely witness the sacrifice of his faithful servant; and with a pistol, with which he had armed himself, he shot the man who had seized Martini. He then snatched the fellow pistol from his belt, and fired it, but without effect, upon the ruffians who attacked himself. He heard Martini groan under his feet, while he had to grapple with countless miscreants, as they threw themselves upon him. Death flashed in his eyes at the point of every poniard.

But a shield was yet held over the head of Ripperda. The tumult increased in the rear; the clattering of horses was heard, mingled with the cries of the mob, who evidently were flying in terror before the gleaming swords of several horsemen. Ripperda had already received several flesh wounds, when the stroke of a sabre beat down a huge rough hanger, aimed at his life by a pardoned galley slave —who thus struck at the man, whose chief offence was resistance to oppression!

These horsemen sufficiently dispersed the mob, to allow their leader to dismount; and advancing to Ripperda, who had extricated himself from the writhing limbs of the wounded wretches beneath him, "Duke," said he, "follow me, and these cavaliers will guard you to safety."

Ripperda, at the same moment, felt a hand on his garment. It was Martini, bruised and bleeding, lying beneath

the shattered carriage. He drew himself out, and stood though feebly, by the side of his master. The horsemen formed around the group, and charging before it, made a clear way amongst the flying populace, till they conducted Ripperda to the side of a plain travelling chariot.

Their leader, in a suppressed voice, requested the fallen statesman to enter it. Suspicion of some refined species of treachery glanced upon his mind. By a feigned rescue, he might be betrayed to an interminable captivity!

"To what asylum would that carriage convey me?" demanded he, in a tone that intimated his doubts.

"To the honour of an open enemy," was the reply; "I am Duke Wharton!"

At this part of Lorenzo's narrative, a cry, unutterable in words, burst from the oppressed heart of Louis. It was light breaking upon chaos! Regardless of the presence of the Italian, he fervently clasped his hands, and inwardly exclaimed,—

"I thank thee, my God, for this!" Then covering his face, he gave way to the balm of tears.

Lorenzo gazed on him with sympathy; but it was under a belief that the young Marquis was thus powerfully affected by the simple fact of his father's rescue. The amiable page knew not that it was for the rescue of all his future fellowship with man. The sun was again in the heavens to Louis, in the fidelity of Wharton; in the generous revenge he had taken of both son and father!

Strange, inconsistent, noble, erring Wharton! The good was so blended in thee with the ill, that the soul of affection hovered about thy erratic steps, with the watchful tenacity of a guardian angel.

"Oh!" cried Louis to himself, "the germs of the tree of life, are in that misguided but noble heart! He has saved my father, and I may weep upon his bosom again!"

The happy agitation of Louis was so great; so preeminently did he prize the real virtue of the beings he loved before their appendages of fame or power; that it was with an upraised countenance, and an open eye, he listened to the remainder of Lorenzo's narrative.

Ripperda no longer hesitated to step into the carriage of

his preserver. Wharton made the bruised Martini enter also; and accompanying them himself, the voiture set off, escorted by his servants.

The whole party remained silent for some minutes. Ripperda was the first that broke the pause.

"Duke Wharton," said he, "you have at last accomplished your object! The *proudest man in Christendom* has found no friend in his necessity, but you, his bitterest enemy! This is not a time in which I can express my sense of the obligation you have laid upon me. You have saved my life; you must now save my honour. One of the treasons alleged against me, is collision with you. If I seek refuge at your lodgings, I abet my slanderers! No; I will perish by their bullets or their daggers, rather than give them the advantage of witnessing one of their perjuries, by a dubious action of my own!"

Wharton approved of this caution; and observing that the Duke's villa at Segovia would now be as unsafe as his palace at Madrid, he proposed to him the bold measure of proving his sincerity to the house of Brunswick, by throwing himself at once on the protection of General Stanhope, the British ambassador in Spain. Ripperda saw the advantage of this suggestion; and the carriage was turned towards the residence of this gentleman, which was a mile out of the city, on the road to St. Ildefonso.

On arriving there, the ambassador was from home; but Ripperda did not hesitate to assume the rights of hospitality, at the house of the representative of a sovereign, to whose legal accession to the throne of England he had obtained the acknowledgment of half Europe.

Wharton went in with his companions. And while some of the servants were gone to arouse the medical attendants of the English ambassador, to examine the wounds of his guest, the two Dukes remained in private conference for half an hour. When Wharton withdrew, Martini, who, with the assistance of an honest North Briton, was binding up his own wounds in the ante-room, remarked that their preserver's countenance was clouded, and even stern; but he smiled when he passed him, and bade him take care of "Cæsar and his fortunes!"

General Stanhope arrived a few hours after the departure of the English Duke (whose name had not been mentioned in the house), and was not less surprised than perplexed at finding who had claimed his sanctuary.

The hurts of Ripperda were more serious than those of his servant, and sufficient to authorise the surgeons in recommending immediate repose; but the Duke would not hear of any rest for himself, until he had seen the ambassador. When Stanhope entered to his guest, he found him lying on a sofa, in a high state of fever, both from his wounds and agitation. Ripperda rose at his appearance, and in the name of honour, and the privileges of his station, claimed his protection from the immediate attack of his enemies.

What more passed between his master and the ambassador, Lorenzo could give no account; only that General Stanhope re-ordered his carriage as soon as he left the chamber of his guest, which was then within an hour of daybreak. He set off for Madrid, and did not return till the morning was far advanced. He was then closeted with Ripperda for two hours; and Martini heard the voice of his master very high. However, it appeared he was to remain unmolested in the house of the ambassador, though it must undergo the form of a Spanish guard. The bustle of these proceedings proclaimed the asylum of the Duke; and Lorenzo, who had only arrived that day from the Segovian villa, (when to his great consternation he had found the house at Madrid deserted by the servants, and its bureaus ransacked by the police,) lost no time in seeking his brother, and their persecuted master, in his reputed sanctuary.

The Duke saw him; and while he walked the room, (for the perturbation of his mind would not permit him to take the repose his wounds demanded), he told Lorenzo to go instantly and meet the Marquis de Montemar.

"You will find him," said he, "somewhere between this and Vienna. Describe to him what you have heard and seen. My pen would consume the paper, should I attempt to write my injuries. Tell him, that my life has been assailed by those who now sit in my seat! Not by

their own coward hands:—they spirit up the rabble, to do their bloody work, that they may throw my murder on the indignation of the people! There, however, my fortune baffled them. Now they insult my protector: they demand his promise that I shall not escape; and when that is given, they set guards on his house, as if he were a gaoler, and I a prisoner for high-treason! But they venture not to charge it on me: their own infamy is all they dare proclaim; to treat me like the worst of criminals, before I am convicted—before I am accused! Show my son these things; and let him hasten to my support. Tell him, when he is by my side, I will confront them face to face; I will let Spain and all Europe know, that though honour is banished from the world, it lives and reigns in the bosom of William de Ripperda."

Louis listened to all these details with various inward emotions; but he was now braced, to quell the smallest outward appearance of any. He spoke little in return; but his step was firm, his eye clear, and his port erect, as he gave his orders at the port of Genoa, for immediate embarkation. A vessel was ready to sail; the wind fair, but boisterous; and, under a heavy gale, he launched on the ocean that was to convey him to the land of his forefathers.

CHAPTER X.

MEANWHILE the cabal against the ruined Ripperda raged with redoubled fury in the Spanish cabinet. No appeals from him were suffered to reach his Majesty, while he was accused of every political crime that could criminate a minister. One of the most offensive was that of bribery from the merchants of Ostend; and this Baptista Orendayn protested on oath, having seen the golden caskets in the hands of Ripperda's son! Charge after charge was brought forward by the Spaniards; and Baron Otho de Routemberg,

(a brother of the Austrian minister, and his envoy at Madrid) supported those which related to Austria by a show of evidence; till, at last, the King believed them all; and even was so far persuaded of the attempt to poison him having originated with Ripperda, that he privately summoned a committee of the Council of Castile, and laid the proofs before their judgment.

With equal secresy, they declared it expedient to commit the regicide to some stronger hold than the English ambassador's; till the full council could be assembled, and a solemn judgment denounced on the offender.

General Stanhope afterwards learnt, that while the new ministers affected indignation at what they represented to be Ripperda's clandestine intelligence with the emissaries of James Stuart, they were severally giving private audiences to Duke Wharton. Philip was entirely in the dark, as to this avenue of their intelligence; for the Duke's presence in Madrid was not generally known; though the Queen, herself, was more than suspected of having admitted him to a conference in the disguise of a priest. But Stanhope had proof given him that Wharton passed several hours alone with Grimaldo on the evening of his rescuing Ripperda from the populace; and that on the night of the sitting of the committee of the Council of Castile, he was seen gliding out of the chamber of the Queen's confessor; who immediately after went to her Majesty; and thence carried a message from her to the King, just as he was passing into the cabinet to decide on the compulsive removal of Ripperda.

The sentence that was then determined on, and sanctioned by the royal assent, was executed the following morning soon after dawn. While all was profoundly tranquil in the city, the chief alcaid of the court got into a carriage equipped for travelling, and, with a strong escort, set forth towards the British residence. A double detachment of soldiers was already there, with orders to support him in case of resistance.

It happened that the house porter had risen before his accustomed time; and supposing, from a stir he heard without, that the recent guard was going to be relieved, he

opened the door to amuse himself with the ceremony. The alcaid and his officers seized the favourable moment, and entered the house without opposition. Some of the soldiers secured the porter from creating an alarm; and the rest, filling the hall, fastened the door.

The alcaid, having learned from the terrified domestic in what part of the residence the Duke de Ripperda slept, went, with his alquazils and a military guard, up stairs in the described direction. The tumult they made in hurrying along the passages, awoke General Stanhope; who, hastening out of his room to know the cause, met the officer of justice in the lobby. A few words explained his errand; but the brave Englishman would hardly hear it to an end. He had received the royal word, that the Duke de Ripperda should remain unmolested in the British residence, until he was demanded to public trial; and Stanhope declared, that, on the peril of his life, he would resist all illegal proceedings to the contrary.

The alcaid presented a letter from the Count de Paz, begging his Excellency to read it, at least, while an officer went forward to apprise the ex-minister of the sentence against him. Stanhope, having no other covering than his dressing gown, took the letter, and retired in angry haste, to run it over, and hurry on his clothes. Its contents were to this effect; and they were addressed to him.

"His Majesty, knowing the integrity of the British ambassador, appeals to that, and to his good understanding. His Excellency must be too well acquainted with the Duke de Ripperda's delinquency, not to see fatal consequences to all royal authority, should his Majesty bear any longer with the temerity of the Duke, in braving his sovereign with propositions in the language of a prince, rather than in that of a subject; and all, from being in the fancied security of a foreign ambassador's house.

"Such a reflection ought to engage his Excellency to surrender the Duke de Ripperda on the first summons; and that summons is now made in the name of the King, who commands it to be imparted to the British ambassador, that if he insists on the sanctuary of his house, he places the Duke equally out of the reach of his Majesty's mercy,

as of his justice. If, on a further impartial inspection of the Duke de Ripperda's ministry, it should appear that he had not only betrayed the interests of the state, but had devised the death of the King; when the delinquent is in the power of justice, then his Majesty will either make him a great example of deserved punishment; or, what is infinitely more precious in the royal sight, show the world as great an example, in pardoning so formidable a criminal."

While Stanhope was reading these, and other arguments, to persuade, where force was already determined, not merely an officer, but the alcaid and his guards, had approached the door of the Duke's ante-chamber. On their opening it, rather rudely (for all now depended on despatch), Martini sprang from his mattress, and seeing the armed men, demanded what they wanted?

"We must speak with your master," replied the alcaid.

Martini had now approached; and recognising the officer of police, amidst the drawn swords of his attendants, the faithful servant was at no loss to guess the purpose of the visit; but placing himself before the entrance of the interior chamber, he replied, with firmness,—

"My master is not accustomed to intrusion at an hour like this. You must await his commands till noon."

"Seize that fellow," returned the alcaid, motioning to his men. Two of them obeyed; and Martini was held pinioned between them, while the officer, followed by the rest, passed into the chamber. Since his misfortunes, the Duke's slumbers had become peculiarly profound, and he now lay in a deep sleep. But the alcaid, fearing resistance from the ambassador, should he rejoin them before Ripperda had surrendered himself, darted towards the bed; and, drawing back its curtains, roughly awoke the Duke. Ripperda started up in the bed, and beheld it surrounded by gleaming sabres. Before he could speak, the officer of justice proclaimed his errand: "that he arrested him for high-treason, and came to carry him to the state prison of Segovia."

"It shall be my corpse!" cried the Duke, snatching a sword from the unprepared hand of the soldier who stood nearest to him, and attempting to spring from the bed.

But the alcaid had concerted a sign with the men below; and while those present threw themselves upon the Duke, the other guards hastened up stairs, and filled the chamber. Stanhope came into the room at the same instant, and called loudly against the illegal proceeding; against the breach of his privileges as an ambassador; against such shameful violation of the claims of honour, and the sacred rights of hospitality!

The Duke was now insensible, from a blow he had received on the temple, in the scuffle. This sight redoubled the indignation of the upright Englishman; but the alcaid drew forth his own order, signed by the King; "to take Ripperda, dead or alive;" and then the minister found himself obliged to resist no longer. However, though he stood quiescent, while the lifeless Duke was wrapped in the coverlid, and carried to the carriage, he called on all around, to witness, "that he protested against a deed, so contrary to the law of nations, and to the commonest bonds of faith between man and man."

When the insensible body was conveyed through the hall, Martini, who had been forced thither, seeing his master in so lost a condition, (for the veins of one of his hardly closed wounds had opened afresh, and bled through the coverlid,) broke from his guards, and, with a dreadful malediction on his murderers, rushed towards him. The soldiers attempted to strike this faithful servant away from his clinging hold on the mantle which wrapt Ripperda; but, struggling amongst their swords, he so affected General Stanhope by such proof of attachment, that the kind-hearted Englishman said to the alcaid, —

"If it be not against your positive orders, let me see, sir, that you have some regard to humanity, in respecting the fidelity of that man. — Let him accompany his master."

The alcaid replied, he had no orders but what related to the person of the Duke; and therefore, to oblige his Excellency, he would permit Martini to attend his master.

"Not to oblige me," returned the English minister, "but to lessen the account of outrages, I shall immediately charge upon this court to my own! Therefore, on the

peril of your safety, pretend to augment that sum by your own authority alone."

The alcaid bowed to Stanhope, and ordered Martini to be placed in the carriage with his master, between a soldier and an officer of the police. The vehicle then drove off at a rapid gallop, followed by the alcaid and a grand escort of cavalry, towards the dismal alcazar of Segovia.

CHAPTER XI.

STANHOPE'S indignation continued as manifest, as it was sincere, against what had been done; and to every one of the royal ministers, separately and collectively, he spoke his mind with corresponding boldness. Indeed, his protest was so strong, and what he urged in the Duke's favour so powerful, that as it came repeatedly before the King, they began to fear the issue. Difficulties in substantiating their various allegations against Ripperda were starting up every hour, and the charge of poisoning was completely disproved. From all these considerations, the new rulers saw the necessity of keeping the ruined minister from any chance of gaining the royal ear; which they augured could hardly be prevented, when his son should arrive, whose high character, notwithstanding the aspersions of his enemies, was whispered about from the written representations of Sinzendorff. Indeed, those of the party, who had seen Louis, and knew the foibles of the Queen, were afraid, should she see him, that she might transfer those favours to the son, which personal jealousy alone had withdrawn from the father. Impelled by these apprehensions, they moved every engine to convict Ripperda of heresy, before Louis could arrive; and in that case, should the Inquisition once claim the condemned criminal as its victim, they knew the bigotry of Philip would abandon his former favourite, without another question.

While these machinations were going on at Madrid, Ripperda found the alcazar at Segovia answer every purpose of his triumphant rivals, but that of subduing his spirit. They had placed him in the charge of a creature of their own. And though the noble prisoner lay for several days in such extremity, that, for as many nights, the faithful Martini despaired of his master ever seeing the light of another morning, yet no physician was permitted to enter those dismal walls. A dungeon was the Duke's chamber, and the coarsest fare his support. The men, who would not dare to administer poison or strangulation, calculated, without remorse, on this way of ridding themselves of an obnoxious life. When they thought him sufficiently reduced, by sickness and bodily hardships, to allow his firm soul to feel their torture, they sent a well-tutored priest to extort a confession of his crimes. The demand was backed by an insulting assurance, that, on such a proof of penitence, he should be permitted the indulgence of the state apartments, and the range of the garden for exercise.

Ripperda rejected these insidious proffers, with merited indignation. They were repeated again and again, with aggravating propositions, and threats; and sometimes the language of his inquisitor provoked him beyond all self-control. Between the delirium of illness, and the phrensy of despair, he more than once was left raving, or insensible, in the arms of his servant. As time wore away, and no tidings of Louis or of Lorenzo arrived, his enemies took advantage of this circumstance; and, on Martini incautiously dropping a hint of the young Marquis's future revenge on the injurers of his father, the priest intimated, that "Louis was in too good an understanding with his own interests, to unite them again with a discarded traitor, though he were his parent."

This imputation on his son was too much for the small remnant of patience that remained in the Duke. He was now reduced to a maddening state of mental irritation — to an exasperated hatred of human nature — and, denouncing Austria and Spain in one wide malediction, he fiercely commanded their agent to leave his presence. The man, however, sat unmoved in soul or in countenance; while

Martini looked with anguish on his master, as on a noble galley, he had lately seen proudly stemming its steady way through the raging sea, but now beheld, bereft of rudder and compass, and at the mercy of the weakest blast.

The malignant priest waited for a momentary calm, and then threw out some dark hints, that, in a few days, Ripperda would be removed to a surer durance. New matters had come to light, which convicted him of the double charge, of secretly maintaining the principles of heresy in himself, and of having intrusted the interests of Catholic Spain to his son, whom he knew to be a professed heretic. All this was listened to in gloomy silence; but when the subtle agent proceeded to say, that Louis de Montemar had offered his evidence to witness the same against his father, Ripperda started from his chair. He now knew no bounds to his wrath; and he proclaimed it in such a manner, that the terrified priest flew before him. Insult and outrage seemed to have given that bodily vigour to the Duke, which medicine and surgery had taken no pains to restore.

"Revenge is here!" cried he to Martini; "a new principle of life! I will free myself; and then they shall feel the strength that lies in this single arm!"

Martini learnt, from the servants of the prison, that the priest's denunciation was no vain threat; for preparations were silently making for the Duke's removal to the Inquisition, as soon as the King could be brought to sign the warrant. All knew that warrant was the signal of death; and of such a death, that human nature shuddered at the bare idea of its horrors. Martini hastened to his master with the intelligence. He found him leaning over a map of the world, which he had spread on the table. Ripperda attended to his servant's information, with profound attention. When he had finished speaking, the Duke commanded him to withdraw for an hour, after which time, he would tell him his resolution.

Two hours elapsed, before Martini was called in from the ante-chamber, which was his usual station as his master's guard; and then Ripperda calmly told him, that it was his determination to effect his own escape, and to take

his revenge from the pillars of Hercules. As he spoke, he pointed with his finger to the spot, on the map, which marked the rock of Gibraltar. Martini readily embraced these plans for liberty; and gladly heard his master discuss them with all his former sobriety of manner, and decision of command.

"But," asked the faithful servant, "should the Marquis visit this prison when we are gone, how is he to know where to follow you?"

"My actions shall proclaim to him, and to the world, where to follow me!" replied the Duke. "If he be the parricide, these people represent, he will then repent the poor part he has now taken; and see the policy, if not the duty, of being true to the fortunes of such a father. But, if these wretches have slandered him, and he be indeed my son, then I will make that England, which fostered him, what I would have made this ungrateful, ruined country!"

Martini saw that a temporary mist clouded the mind of his master; but that noble nature had been so smitten by universal ingratitude, he did not wonder it should doubt every dubious appearance. He, however, had seen enough of Louis, to admire and to love him; and he zealously exerted himself, to overthrow the suspicions against him which occasionally arose in the mind of his father. Something influenced by his reasoning, Ripperda employed the greatest part of the day in writing a large packet for his son. He enclosed it under a cover to the Marquis Santa Cruz, who had a villa in the neighbourhood. Martini delivered it the same night, into the hands of the Marchioness, her husband being still in Sardinia; but she assured the faithful servant of her care of its contents.

Ripperda's attention was next directed to putting his plan of escape into a train of execution. It was modelled by the difficult situation of the alcazar. This prison stands on the summit of a huge rock, overlooking the city of Segovia on the one side; and on the other, which is nearly perpendicular, and covered with matted underwood, it precipitates down to a fosse, filled from the river Atayada. The castle was erected by the Moors; and is fortified

according to their ancient mode. The large, old, square towers are bound round their battlements with a heavy stonework of chains; proclaiming, from afar, the subjection in which the Moresco princes formerly held the Spanish land. This once formidable fortress, like their banished race, is, in many parts, in a state of decay; and, in others, was totally destroyed. Some of the buttresses were then mouldering away; and where one of the towers had fallen, its ruins dammed up part of the ditch; at least, it raised a causeway under the water, so high, that a person, acquainted with its direction, might pass over safely, only knee-deep in the stream.

In a dungeon of the corresponding tower, on the moat side of the castle, was the prison of Ripperda.

Martini prepared a couple of stout mules, and concealed them amongst the thickets, on the opposite side of the fosse. In that part, it was little better than a morass, from the occasional overflowing of the waters, at the rainy seasons. He also procured the habits of muleteers, for the Duke and himself; and a ladder of ropes, to descend from the window of the prison to the top of the rock; whence they were to scramble, the best way they could, down its declivity, to the edge of the ditch.

On the very morning of the day fixed for their momentous attempt, Ripperda was visited by a Jesuit of rank. He came on a special mission from the Marquis de Paz, to apprise the Duke, that the King had signed his warrant for the Inquisition; and then he proceeded to mock him with the assurance, that nothing could now save him from the extremest vengeance of the offended church, but a full acknowledgment of all his heretical and political iniquities. The gracious message continued, "that, in such a case, he should be represented to the Pope; and, possibly, might be pardoned."

The Jesuit expatiated on the curse of Heaven, which now manifested itself on the head of Ripperda, in every relation of his life: — "Whether in his public or private circumstances, all bore the marks of universal excommunication. His son had deserted him; and the fortunes on which he leaned, as on a rock, were now sinking in the

ocean; or becoming the prey of corsairs, to swell the iniquity of infidels like himself." All this circumlocution only informed Ripperda of a misfortune, unworthy his attention at the present moment: the loss of his Levant merchantmen; part, in the late heavy storms; and part, taken by the pirates of Barbary.

To impose upon this new emissary, he had received him lying on his bed, where he affected to have sustained a relapse of his illness; and, during the whole discourse, he kept a stern silence. At last, being vehemently urged for some reply to the proposition respecting an appeal to the Pope, Ripperda started on his arm, like a lion roused from his lair, and fiercely replied,—

"Tell your employers, that before they again lay hands on the Duke de Ripperda, he will have made his appeal to a tribunal which shall make them tremble! And, for your arguments,—I too have studied in the Jesuits' college. Begone!"

The priest supposed the Duke anticipated his own death, and meant the tribunal of Heaven; and, shaking his head, while he pronounced the words "reprobate!" and "accursed!" he left the apartment.

After the information which the Jesuit had brought, Martini saw the approach of *a familiar* in every shadow that flitted across the dungeon wall; and, full of terror, he continued to urge his master that nothing should delay their departure that night.

Ripperda sat a long time absorbed in thought. He heard no word of Martini's,—he saw nothing of his busy arrangements for their flight. The corsairs of Barbary, his own Moorish ancestors, and the banishment of part of their race, while his own line remained great lords in Spain, were all before his mind's eye, in fearful, prompting apparition. His warlike progenitor, Don Valor de Ripperda, two centuries ago, had married the only daughter of the Moresco King of Granada.

His son, the renowned Don Ferdinand de Valor, shook the Christian kingdoms of Spain to their centre, when the dark policy of Philip II. issued the edict to expel his Moorish subjects from their ancient seats in Spain. Aben

Humeya was the name of the Granada princes. De Valor resumed it, when he raised the rebel standard on the Alpuxara mountains.

"Another Philip shall hear that name again!" cried Ripperda to himself; and laying his head down on the traced and retraced map, to prevent any outward circumstance disturbing the current of his meditations, he sat, without word or motion, till the dungeon became wrapped in total darkness, and the hour of his attempt drew nigh.

Martini had furnished himself with gold, from his master's villa in the neighbourhood, which he had visited secretly by the Duke's directions, through ways known only to himself; and to a treasury under ground, which had escaped the scrutiny of the police, and was abundant in jewels and ingots. The wealth which Ripperda deemed necessary for his expedition was sewed into various parts of their muleteer garments. Martini appeared from his little ante-room, with a lamp in his hand, as the prison clock struck ten. It was a rough autumnal night; a bright moon, at times, showed her head through the flying clouds; and at others was totally obscured under a billowy mass of vapours, rolling over each other, and descending till they touched the hills.

The gaoler had locked his prisoners in, and retired to rest: the sentinels were planted at their posts, each on the ramparts of the curtain between the towers. Ripperda roused himself from his portentous trance, and arrayed his noble figure in the rugged habiliments of the muleteer. In vain he dyed his visage with the vista-nut; in vain he shrouded himself in the leathern jerkin, unshapely boots, and huge Sierra bonnet: still the grandeur of his air and the grace of his person proclaimed the descendant of princes, and him who was used to command and be obeyed.

The light Italian looked what he assumed — a brisk, active muleteer, full of life and merriment.

Their belts were filled with loaded pistols, which they covered from observation by the fringes of their vests; a poniard was in each well-guarded bosom, and trusty swords by their sides. Being fully equipped, Ripperda looked

around on the walls of his dungeon. It was still in the verge of possibility that his son might seek his father in that dismal chamber. He paused, and hastily wrote a few lines, to say that parent still lived, and would yet proclaim himself with honour to the world. He directed the brief letter to the Marquis de Montemar, and left it on the table.

Martini threw up his hooked rope, which caught on the iron stanchel of the window; and, clambering by it to the top, he dislodged the bars from their slight holding. A few days before, he had filed away their adhesion to their sockets. Having made open passage for his master, he fastened a rope-ladder to the opposite side of the window; and, dropping it out, slid down its sides till he reached the bottom. Here he drove its spiked extremity into the earth. By that time the Duke had mounted to the window; and, drawing up the rope by which he had ascended, remained seated on the stone casement till Martini had fixed all right below. It was no sooner accomplished, than Ripperda was on the top of the ladder, and in a few seconds at its foot.

The sentinel was singing a sequedilla above, and its notes came to the fugitives on the wind. The moon was now full upon them; and Martini, putting out his head a little from the wall, distinctly saw the musket and waving feather of the soldier, as he walked to and fro at his post. Their garments, happily, were dark; and they moved cautiously amongst the underwood at the bottom of the curtain, till they reached the ruined tower, the fallen masses of which had lessened the perpendicular of the descent. Like the rest of their track, it was covered with thicket; and they clambered down from bush to bush, and the projecting roots of trees now no more, till they arrived at the brink of the fosse.

Martini had tried the ford the night before; and, plunging in, which example Ripperda followed, both found a firm footing in the water. They crossed with safety, though in total darkness; and Martini, rolling the Duke's garments, with his own, round a loose fragment of the ruin, sunk it in the ditch. This was done to avert suspicion

of their having changed their usual dresses when they fled. The moon again shone out from the black clouds, and Martini jumped into the thicket to seek the mules.

"Fortune favours me!" cried Ripperda, as he looked up to the bright orb, and then to the frowning battlements he had so lately left. "Thy ensign may light me back to this castle in a different garb from that in which I leave it! When Spain sees me again, it will not be as a benefactor."

He turned into the wood to follow Martini, and was soon lost in the labyrinth of night and trees.

CHAPTER XII.

The second night after Louis had sailed from the port of Genoa, the vessel which contained him was blown to sea by the severity of the weather; and drove about, contending with the tempest, far from the coasts of Spain, for one and twenty days. Each succeeding day seemed an age, to the heart of a son impatient to console and to cheer a suffering parent, under his undeserved misfortunes; and sleep seldom closed those vigilant eyes, which were ever watchful for a change in the wind, or for some repose in the turbulent element that bore him along, with unstemmable fury, from the shores which contained his father.

Again and again Louis questioned the page on every particular which had occurred, propitious or adverse, to the Duke de Ripperda, during his administration. Sometimes this affectionate son's anxiety to join his father became so uncontrollable, he was ready to throw himself into the waves, and breast their torrent to the Spanish shores; at other times he called upon himself to endure this hard trial, which Providence had laid upon his filial patience, and await its good time to bring him to the side of his father.

At last the storms changed their direction, and, with

equal violence, blew the little vessel towards the Balearic Isles. To persist in stretching for Barcelona, would have been madness in such boisterous weather: the commander, therefore, determined to make the nearest Spanish port. As the ship approached the coast, and Louis, for the first time, beheld that country which had so long been the bourne of all his wishes, he gazed on it with a strange tumult of mind. It was the land of his forefathers; and with what views, with what feelings, was he first to set his foot upon its shores!

Their high and abrupt outline cut the horizon between sea and sky, like a superb citadel of mountains, guarding the rich Hesperian vale. It was evening, when he saw the golden clouds, rolling from the sides of those stupendous natural bulwarks: he thought of his father's setting sun — of his last beams gilding the country he loved — of that fair country, opening before himself, as he had anticipated, luminous in glory, like the unfolding gates of Paradise! But, even while he gazed, and mused, and felt a pleased augury in the splendid show, the golden hues faded from the ethereal amphitheatre; the clouds, darkening in their shapes, collected around the headlands: they rested, in grey and sombrous masses, on the jagged summits, till a fierce and eddying wind, blowing suddenly from the south-east, dispersed them in one wide and obscuring mist over the whole scene. Louis turned from the side of the vessel.

Next morning it anchored in the bay of Valencia. The business of disembarking, and of resuming his journey by land to Madrid, prevented all particular reflection, till he got into the carriage. Lorenzo deemed it prudent not to say, at any of the post-houses or towns he passed through, who was his companion; and, though Louis felt he was stealing into the country of his ancestors, like a stranger and a spy, yet, by this discretion, they travelled rapidly towards the capital of Castile, without any unusual impediment, or even the knowledge that Ripperda had been removed from the protection of the British ambassador.

Whether he were passing over plain or mountain, cultivated fields, or barren tracts, all were the same to Louis:

his eye was fixed alone on the one object of his journey. He entered the barriers of Madrid at midnight; but nothing could prevent him driving immediately through the city, and the northern gate, to the British residence.

When his carriage drew up to the portico, another vehicle had just driven away; and, through the yet open door of the house, Lorenzo saw the ambassador passing through the hall. In a moment the travellers were out of the carriage. Lorenzo ordered the porter to conduct the Marquis de Montemar to his Excellency. General Stanhope had just entered his saloon, when Louis was announced. Stanhope started at the name, knowing it was that of the son of Ripperda. Louis approached him; his hat was in his hand; and with hardly articulate accents, instead of what he meant to say, he could only utter the agitated words — "My father ——"

That countenance could never be once looked upon by an unprejudiced eye, without making an immediate interest in the heart. Though now worn and pallid, Stanhope felt its power. He saw all the son in its haggard lines; he heard all the son, in those few indistinct sounds.

"You expect to find your father, here, sir?" replied the General.

By the manner of this question, Louis apprehended something of what had happened, and with inexpressible alarm he replied, —

"And where is my father?"

"To the eternal disgrace of the cabinet of Spain," returned the minister, "its orders violated the sanctuary of my house; and by an outrageous execution of a most unjust decree, tore him from his bed, and have incarcerated him in the alcazar of Segovia!"

Louis did not stagger under the shock of this intelligence; he firmly replied, —

"I am to understand, he is a prisoner?—On what pretence?"

"Treason against the state," returned Stanhope; "but they cannot make their charges good. Visible facts outweigh false swearing; and though Duke Wharton has been their counsellor night and day, nothing can be proved

against your father, but that once he was a heretic, and that you are still the same."

"Duke Wharton!" repeated Louis.

"Yes," rejoined the ambassador; "he made a show of rescuing the Duke de Ripperda from the fury of the populace; but it was only to betray him to the ministry. Wharton left your father in my house, and then drove to Grimaldo, to tell where he might find him."

Louis sunk into a seat, and remained with his hands locked, and his teeth grinding on each other, in death-like ague, while the ambassador continued his account of the affair.

He assured his agonized auditor, that notwithstanding the circumspection of the present ministers, to conceal their communications with the English Duke, the fact had been ascertained; and that their correspondence with Wharton had preceded the fall of Ripperda several months. The Duke's task was to draw Ripperda into all the situations, which had now been wrested to his disadvantage. It was represented to the King, that Ripperda had privately conferred with Wharton, in a pass of the Carinthian mountains; and that, in some other place, an affair of secresy had been discussed between them, at which Richelieu, the French ambassador, was present. These things were told to Stanhope, by an authority he could not dispute, but must not mention; and the same informant added, that "whatever were the objects Ripperda had coalesced in with Wharton, the cause of James Stuart was not one; for it was in resentment of Ripperda refusing to embrace his views there, that Wharton had betrayed his correspondence with the Duke, and alleged against him treasons of other and terrible tendencies."

Stanhope observed, that from some of the present ministers being secretly inclined to the Stuart cause, he well understood why Duke Wharton had abandoned all bonds of honour to maintain them in their seats. But could he have found any signs of a changing principle in Ripperda, it was not to be doubted that he would have preferred a single auxiliary of such mental strength, to any combination of more feeble powers. Stanhope continued his re-

cital, by saying, that before he repeated to the fallen minister what he knew respecting his pretended deliverer, Ripperda had spoken of his rescue as a deed of generosity in Wharton, that left its object no words in which to express sufficient admiration. Stanhope then disclosed all that had been told him by his secret informant; and at once branded the story of the previous meetings between the two Dukes as a mere falsehood; or, the confession of them, an unexampled instance of perfidy in the English Duke. Ripperda at first listened incredulously to the charges against his deliverer; but when the rencontre amongst the Carinthian mountains was mentioned, and some other corroborating circumstances followed that disclosure, the Duke abruptly exclaimed,—

"He is perfidious! for the facts are true!"

At this part of the narrative, Louis turned his powerful eyes upon the ambassador. Stanhope thought he read their suspicions.

"Hear me to an end," continued he, "and you will find, the whole perfidy does, indeed, belong to Duke Wharton."

Louis dropped his heavy eyelids over those scathed eyes, which he would have been glad to have closed in death, and bowed without a word. General Stanhope then repeated to him all that the impassioned resentment of Ripperda had excited him to avow. He declared his ancient and inexorable hatred of Wharton, and his politics: he boasted, that the transaction to which the Duke de Richelieu was privy, had been one of mutual vengeance; that he quarrelled with Wharton at the Cardinal's table, and the same night took his revenge with the sword.

Louis again looked upon Stanhope. The ambassador continued.

"I failed reaching his heart," said Ripperda, "but my sword went so near it, we believed him slain. He was taken up for dead; and Richelieu and the Cardinal conjured me to hush the affair. I obliged them, and heard no more of Wharton, till, like my evil genius, he appeared in the very mountains he speaks of. It was under total darkness, and he returned to me the despatches, which, I

doubt not, his own emissaries had taken from my courier. I did not know it was he, till several hours after his departure. The mantle, the supposed outlaw had worn, was then brought to me, and I recognised it to be that of the Cardinal, in which I had seen him wrap the supposed dead body of Duke Wharton. His blood was on it. Stanhope, we were enemies! — always mortal enemies. Think, then, what must have been the revulsion in my breast, when he, I had assailed to such extremity, rescued me from the murderous rabble, and brought me to the unquestionable refuge of your house!"

Stanhope subscribed to the reasonableness of Ripperda's first impressions, as the immediate effect of such supposed generosity; and as warmly seconded the Duke's determination to take a statesman's revenge, since he had proved that Wharton was actuated by the reverse of a generous motive; that he had busied himself in the secret counsels of Ripperda's public enemies; that he had influenced the Queen to reject every letter from her once prime favourite; and that, not satisfied with these treacheries, he had even had recourse to representing circumstances, which contained no offence in themselves, under colours so invidious, as to wear whatever treasonable shape he chose they should assume.

Irritated by these convictions, Ripperda, without further hesitation, opened out to Stanhope the whole of Wharton's converse with him, during the half hour they were alone together in the British residence. It was to urge him to revenge himself on his implacable foes in Spain and Austria, by immediately embracing the Bavarian and Stuart claims. Wharton argued, that should Ripperda take this step, France and Prussia, three parts of Germany, and all Italy, would contend for his guiding hand.

"In short, Wharton's persuasions were such," added Stanhope, "that your father owned to me, that, did he not connect honour with revenge, he would have been tempted to have accepted the traitor's offers; but determined to die, as he had lived, by his principles, he rejected all. The consequence was, the disappointed emissary of these double treasons immediately accused him of his own crimes.

And, that he might never meet a second chastisement from the man he had betrayed, it was he that urged Grimaldo to hold your father in perpetual imprisonment."

The substance of Wharton's proffers to his father were so like those he had made to himself: and their rejection having been followed up by the very conduct he had threattened in the château garden, — " that Ripperda and De Montemar shall find what it is to have Wharton for an enemy !" — Louis could not doubt this treacherous vengeance being a fact; and, crying within his soul against him who had perpetrated so black a revenge, he started from his seat. The expression of his face was terrific; the image of sweet humanity seemed blotted from it; and with a burning eye, and a complexion of death, he turned from Stanhope, and, totally forgetful of his presence, took a pistol from his belt.

The Englishman grasped his arm.

" Marquis, what do you intend ?"

Louis scarcely moved his head as he replied,—

" To seek Duke Wharton."

Stanhope laid his hand gently, but firmly, on the pistol.

" Give me this useless weapon," said he; " the treacherous Duke is already hidden from your vengeance. Last night he was closeted with the triumvirate; and this morning, at daybreak, he left Madrid; but in what direction no one can guess."

Louis yielded his pistol to the demand of Stanhope. At that moment, the crime, and inefficacy of bloodshed, in avenging injuries like his, or any injuries, struck upon his soul. And turning from the supporting arm of General Stanhope, as the venerable form of Mr. Athelstone seemed to appear before him, he buried his face in his hands, and stood immoveable, lost in the multitude and agonies of his thoughts.

The ambassador left him to recover alone. When he re-entered, he found him walking up and down the room, with a composed step. Louis advanced to his friendly host.

" Will you pardon all that you have seen of my weakness, and assist me to join my father instantly ?"

Anticipating this request, Stanhope had despatched, successively, two messages to the Count de Grimaldo, (who, he knew, was not yet gone from council, though the hour was so late,) to obtain an order to the warden of the alcazar at Segovia, for the admission of the Marquis de Montemar to the imprisoned Duke. To the first message, the Count gave a civil refusal; adding, that such permission would be a dangerous indulgence to so signal a criminal as the Duke de Ripperda, and the enterprising spirit of the son might be feared. Stanhope sent his secretary back with a strong remonstrance against the injustice of this refusal; adding, that should it be repeated, he must consider the act as a personal insult to himself: it was hostile to every principle of an Englishman; and, he had hoped, to every principle in civilised man. "In England (said he), law and equity war against crime, not against nature. There, a criminal under sentence of death is suffered to see those near and dear to him. Humanity must bench with justice; or punishment becomes crime, by degenerating into revenge. The Marquis de Montemar, though he bear a Spanish title, has had a British education. He may be willing to avenge himself of his father's enemies; but as neither plot nor treachery are taught in a British school, trust his father's captivity to his honour, and you cannot hold him in stronger bonds."

The Spanish minister did not deem it politic to repulse a second request from the English ambassador in this point of the subject; and, with a polite excuse for his former refusal, he despatched the signed order for the admission of Ripperda's son.

In the course of half an hour Louis was re-seated in his travelling carriage, with four fresh horses furnished from General Stanhope's stables; and, accompanied by Lorenzo, he set forward to Segovia.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE sun had risen, when the equipage that contained Louis de Montemar ascended the mountainous heights of the Guadarama. From a rocky valley, diverging down to the eastern horizon, and shaded with every umbrageous tree and shrub of that luxuriant climate, a distant view of the Escurial was visible. The rays of the ascending sun were bright upon it, and the superb palace of the Spanish kings shone in its fullest splendour.

Lorenzo looked round on Louis. His countenance was still the same as when he entered the carriage; and the page did not venture to call his attention to the magnificent view before him. League after league was traversed. St. Ildefonso's gilded pinnacles next presented themselves on the declivity of a beautiful hill. Its fountains, and its ambrosial vistas, rivalled those of Versailles, in emulation of which the grandson of Louis XIV. had caused this palace to be erected. But here, again, Lorenzo was silent; and glittering domes, and sparkling fountains, lowly cottages, and gliding rivulets, all were alike passed by the abstracted eye of Louis, without note or cognizance.

It was high noon. The chestnut woods of Antero de Herrares opened their enamelled glades before the travellers. They crossed a marble bridge. Its pillared arches and classic balustrades clasped the broadest arm of the river Atayada, which here flowed in a deep and pellucid stream. Onward was a range of colonnades, of the same superb material, diverging on each side from a triple gate, and surmounted by arches, the architraves of which had been wrought by Spanish artists, who had learnt their art in Italy, at the expense of the noble owner of that mansion. A golden eagle, the armorial ensign of the Ripperda family, crested the centre arch. Within, were the park and the deer, and the house rearing its Corinthian columns amidst the redundant groves of a Spanish autumn.

The same feeling which had chained the tongue of

Lorenzo, while passing indifferent objects, however noteworthy, now precipitated him to speak, and he exclaimed—

"Here, my lord, is the Duke's Segovian villa!—all the windows are shut up, and not a soul stirring, where we were once so many, and so gay!"

Louis glanced on what might have been his home; and the flying horses shot by those splendid gates, to find their owner in a prison! He did not answer Lorenzo, not even with a sigh; but looked steadily forward, till the dark towers of the alcazar appeared over the intervening woods. He read their name in their blackness and their chains; but he neither groaned, nor shut his eyes on the dismal abode to which his father was transferred.

After ascending a long and widening road, they passed through the oldest quarter of the town of Segovia, still upon an ascent, till, on crossing the rattling timbers of a drawbridge, the carriage stopped beneath a massy archway. Several sentinels drew around the vehicle, demanding whence it came, and the object of its intrusion. Lorenzo, being most ready in the language of the questioners, abruptly answered,—

"We bear an order from the Count Grimaldo, for admittance to the Duke de Ripperda."

An officer appeared, to receive and examine the passport. Louis alighted, and presented the order. The man bowed respectfully, when he read the name of the Marquis de Montemar, and requested him to follow him to the prison of the Duke.

With unbreathing silence, and a heart into which all that was man within him was summoned, Louis followed his conductor. They reached a heavy door, studded with iron, and traversed with massy bars. The officer drew a huge key from his breast, and opened it.

As it grated horribly in the guards of the lock, and the damp and dreariness of the passages struck on the shuddering senses of Lorenzo, the affectionate youth exclaimed,—

"Oh, my honoured lord! Is it in such a place I find you?"

Louis turned at the exclamation, and looked on the

faithful servant; but no tear was in his eye, no sound on his lip.

The door was opened; and the officer drew back, while the son of the Duke entered the vestibule of his prison. The unoccupied pallet of Martini lay in one corner of this miserable ante-room. Louis saw nothing but the door that led to the interior apartment; and crossing the vestibule with one step (though with an awful sense of his father's stricken state, and of the dignity, whose affliction even a son must not break on too abruptly), he gently pushed forward the half-open door, and found himself in a large and dripping dungeon. He started, and gazed around; for all was horrible, but all was solitude.

"Where is my father?"

"In his bed," cried the officer, who now entered. "He is ill."

Louis hastily, but with a light tread, passed across the pavement to the mattress, which lay behind a woollen curtain, in a low vaulted part of the cell. His conductor, with less delicacy of attention to the supposed slumbers of an invalid, followed him. Lorenzo glided in also; and at the very moment in which the officer had pressed before Louis, to announce to Ripperda the arrival of his son, the page's eye fell on a letter which lay on the table. In the instant that the officer's appalled ejaculation proclaimed that no Duke was in the bed, Lorenzo saw the packet was directed to the Marquis de Montemar, and snatching it up, put it in his breast.

"Then, where is he?" exclaimed Louis, throwing himself between the door and the officer, who was hastily moving toward it. "You pass not here, till you tell me, to what deeper dungeon you have removed him; for no power on earth shall keep me from my father."

The man stood still; and the consternation in his countenance, more than his asseverations of total ignorance on the subject, convinced Louis, that whatever had come of his father, this person was innocent of his fate. He therefore demanded to see the warden; declaring, while he insisted on his demand, that the order he had presented, was from the minister, to admit him to the Duke, wherever

he might be; and on the authority of that order, he would force his way to his presence, against every opposition.

The officer affirmed, that the warden could know nothing of the Duke's strange absence; for that he (the officer) was the warden's deputy; and had himself secured the doors on the prisoner, and his servant, the preceding night; and no one else, not even the warden, possessed a duplicate key to that dungeon.

While he continued to speak with vehemence, and in manifest terror of punishment for what had happened, the determined son of Ripperda repeated his demands to have the warden summoned; affirming he would not leave the spot, till he was convinced that both officers were ignorant of the cause of his father's disappearance.

The deputy, being now suffered to go to the dungeon door, called a sentinel from the end of the stone gallery, and briefly told the man to remain with the Marquis till he should return. But, as he withdrew, he had the precaution to turn the key of the dungeon on those it contained.

The sentinel stood, with fixed arms, where his employer had left him; while Lorenzo glided silently round the dismal apartment, prying into every thing. Having found the letter (which he yet kept carefully concealed till he could safely show it to his master), he thought he might possibly discover some other memorandum from Martini to himself; and, not doubting that the Duke and his brother had made their escape, he left no nook or crevice unexplored.

Louis remained seated against the table, with his arms folded, and gazing intently on the open window. But it was the gaze of concentrated thought, not of observation. Indeed, it could hardly have seemed possible to him, that the Duke could have withdrawn himself through that aperture. It was not only eighteen feet above the bottom of the dungeon, but, from the shadows in the depth of the wall, appeared a mere crenille. These objections would have occurred to Louis, against the supposition of this having been the way of his father's escape, had the idea of an escape once presented itself to his mind. But he

had repelled the first intimation from the deputy of such a suspicion.

"From what," said he, "should my father fly? Justice must speak at last, and acquit him with honour!"

In his own person, Louis felt that he would sooner be condemned in the face of day, by an iniquitous sentence, than incur the stigma of conscious guilt, by flying from the trial it was his right to demand.

"No," cried he, "the Duke de Ripperda would not so desert himself!"

While he believed this, his heart died within him at the thought of his father's endless captivity in some remote prison, where he might never hear the voice of consolation, or see the face of a comforter: and then the spectre of midnight murder suddenly presented itself. His eye hastily scanned the flinty pavement, but there were no traces of blood; all was clear, and all was orderly in the wretched apartment, without any traces of struggle.

In the midst of these reflections, the throng of hurry and alarm was heard in the gallery; the great key once more turned in its guards; and the hinges grating roughly as the door was pushed open, a crowd of soldiers, preceded by the warden and the deputy, poured into the dungeon.

Louis stood to receive them. The warden, holding the order for the Marquis de Montemar's admittance in his hand, in the disorder of his consternation hastily advanced to him, and exclaimed,—

"Marquis, where is the Duke, your father?"

"That is my demand of you," replied Louis, pointing to the order; "the Count Grimaldo expected I should find him here. Here he is not. And you are answerable for his safety, and his appearance."

In glancing round the dungeon, from the floor to the ceiling, the warden's eye was quicker than the deputy's; and, without attending to the reply of Louis, he exclaimed, —"He has escaped through the window!"

"Impossible!" cried the deputy; "he could not reach it."

"Who reached it to take out the bars?" returned his

superior; "he is gone, and by that way. Round, soldiers, to the ditch!"

Louis stood in wordless astonishment at this confirmation of what he, too, had thought impossible; though the impossibility, to him, had rested on the mind of the Duke, not on the means of escape: but when he saw the men withdraw, with fixed bayonets, to hunt his father's life, (for he knew him too well to believe, that after having once chosen the alternative of flight, he would submit to be re-taken,) all his father's danger rushed upon him; and, conscious to no other impulse than that of defending him, he turned impetuously to throw himself before the soldiers.

The warden saw the movement, and guessed the intention. He was a man of gigantic muscle, and seizing the arm of Louis, called aloud to bar the egress.

"What violence is this?" demanded Louis, forcibly extricating himself, and rushing towards the door. But the sentinel without, had thrust the bolt into its guard.

"You must be my prisoner, Marquis," returned the warden, "until those men have searched the neighbourhood."

"On your peril!" exclaimed Louis; "I demand to be released! In the name of your sovereign, and of your laws, I demand it! You have no right to imprison an unoffending man, who came hither under the safe conduct of your minister's signet."

As he spoke, he heard the report of a carbine; and, desperate with apprehension for his father, he snatched his only remaining pistol from his belt; "Open that door, warden," cried he, "or I will make a passage through your heart!"

The wary Spaniard did not stop to answer, but striking the arm that held the pistol, it went off, and the ball lodged in the opposite wall. Louis then felt for his sword. His athletic opponent was on the watch; and seizing him round the body—

"Marquis," cried he, "these outrages can only undo yourself. If the Duke de Ripperda be found, he must be taken alive, at the risk of those who seek him. Kill me,

and you are no less a prisoner; for the door is fastened beyond your strength to burst."

Louis was alone with this powerful man; for Lorenzo, with the same intention as his master, had rushed out with the soldiers. While he stood, apparently quiescent, in the clutch of his adversary, he still held his hand on his sword. He discredited the pledge for Ripperda's safety, and resolutely replied,—

"If my father have fallen, there shall be life for life!"

And with the word, he suddenly wrenched himself from the warden's grasp, and as suddenly drawing out his sword, stood with his back against the door. "I am here, till I know the issue of this search; but I am not a second time to be disarmed. Repeat to the sentinel without, your command respecting my father's safety; and demand of him the cause of the firing of that carbine!"

The warden had no weapons but his bodily strength: and finding that the nerve of his young antagonist, when braced by despair, was equal to his own; and seeing that desperation was in his eyes, and a sword in his hand; he thought it prudent to comply; and he called to the sentinel, to despatch a man round with the demands of the Marquis.

Never, since the hour of his birth, did Louis find himself in so terrible a situation. He was hearkening to the distant voices of them, who, he believed, were his father's murderers, and he found it impossible to get to his rescue! He was, himself, acting the part of a man of violence, to one who was only performing his hard, but cruel duty! As Louis stood, gloomily lost in the horror of the moment, another carbine was fired, accompanied by shouts from the soldiers. He thought he heard a groan follow the report, and that it issued from below the window.

Without a word, or almost a thought, he threw his sword from him, and springing on the opposite wall, found that he had not climbed the perpendicular cliffs of Lindisfarne in vain. The stones were rough; and giving short but sufficient hold to his hand and foot, he gained the deep recess of the window before he scarcely knew he had left the ground. The act seemed but one spring, to

the amazed warden. Louis had no sooner reached the window, than he would have thrown himself from the flinty butments, upon the top of the precipice. Happily the voice of Lorenzo, from the rock beneath, arrested him.

To descend on that side, by clambering, was impossible; the outer part of the wall being worn away into great and abrupt hollows, till that part of the tower, where the window was excavated, hung over the rock in a shelving state.

"The Duke cannot be found!" cried Lorenzo. "For his sake, and for God's sake, do not attempt quitting the dungeon by that window! The soldiers have just shot away this rope ladder, by which he must have escaped."

While he spoke, he lifted it from the ground. The soldiers had spied it at a distance, hanging loose from the wall; and as they scrambled through the matted brambles, one of them took aim, and it fell. Lorenzo had made his approach, before the shot, to see what further evidence of Ripperda's flight might be found there; and while the echoes rang with the men's shouts, at so poor an achievement, he fortunately saved Louis further danger, by showing him the trophy.

"But another carbine was fired?" demanded Louis.

"A soldier slipped his foot, and his piece went off," replied Lorenzo. "Discard me, kill me; but believe me true!" cried the page, aware of his master's surmises, and seeing his hand ready to leave its grasp. "Quit that perilous place, I conjure you. The pursuers are gone round, to say the Duke has escaped beyond their recovery!"

Louis was so far satisfied; and turning towards the dungeon, the entering soldiers doubly assured him; and dropping from the window, inward, he sprung upon the floor.

The men gave a hurried account of their fruitless search.

"Marquis," said the warden, "you must excuse me, that I do not restore a sword which has menaced an officer of the crown; but the door is open, and you may now pass hence. My employers will properly notice the violence of the son, when they have information of the flight of the father."

"Sir," returned Louis, "if I have injured you, in my

struggles for the liberty that was my right, I regret it; and if you know either a father's or a son's heart, you will not reject my apology."

"Soldiers, attend the Marquis de Montemar to the gates," coldly replied the warden.

Louis doubted. He might yet be deceived. He knew not where to seek his father. The enlargement that was now offered him re-awakened his suspicions; and without noticing the order of the warden, he stood still. Lorenzo was more present to himself. He had entered with a second group of soldiers; and putting his hand gently on his master's arm, almost unconsciously drew him out of the dungeon. On the threshold, he whispered, —

"If you are to succour the Duke, we must not linger here!"

The words were a talisman to the benumbed faculties of Louis; he hastened forward, and threw himself into the carriage.

"Back to the British ambassador's," cried Lorenzo to the postilions. The rapid vehicle once more passed over the drawbridge, and wheeled down the declivity through the town. On a rising knoll, Louis caught another glimpse of the dismal towers in which he had endured such variety of mental agony in the course of so few hours! He drew his eyes from them, and the carriage plunged into the long avenue of aloes which led to the wooded heights of Antero de Herrares.

Lorenzo pulled up the windows, and let drop the silken blinds. He then put one hand in his bosom, and laid the other on his master's arm.

"My dear lord," cried he, "here is a letter from your father!"

"Lorenzo?" Louis snatched the letter that was held to him. While he tore open the seal, the faithful youth told him where he had found it. It was not necessary to explain why he had concealed it until this moment. Louis read as follows: —

"If my son have not abandoned me, he will probably visit my prison, and find this. In such a case, he may go

to the house of the noble Spaniard who was his uncle's guest at Lindisfarne. He has a packet in his possession, that will inform Louis de Montemar of the fate of his father.

"WILLIAM,
"Duke de Ripperda."

There were a thousand daggers in the first few words of this brief epistle. *If my son have not abandoned me!* Louis clenched the letter against his soul-struck heart, and fell back in the seat.

"My master! my dear master!" exclaimed the pitying Lorenzo, as he saw the fearful changes in his countenance, and opened a window to give him air. Louis unclosed his eyelids; and those once cheering and radiant eyes, which used to break from under them like the morning star from the tender shades of night, turned on his faithful servant, blood-shot and dimmed with bitterest anguish.

"What does my lord say?" demanded the affectionate youth.

Louis put the letter into his hands. It was not needful to point to the lines which had barbed him so severely; and Lorenzo read them with a bleeding heart, both for father and son. He remarked, that, outraged as the Duke had been by the ingratitude of all the world, the extraordinary length of their voyage might have driven him to some misconception regarding their detention.

"It is hard," continued he, "to be entirely just ourselves, when every body about us treats us with injustice; and the Duke, though a great and a good man, is yet a man, and must share some of our infirmities. You, my lord, will seek an opportunity to obey him immediately; and then, all these too natural suspicions must be destroyed."

Louis looked at the affectionate speaker.

"Excellent Lorenzo!" said he; "my father has found one faithful, in your brother. If you too adhere to me, I shall not be quite alone in this desert universe!—I may yet find my father," murmured he to himself, "and die before him! My life, my life, is all I may now have to prove my soul's integrity!" Much of this, and more of the sad wanderings of a spirit overtasked, and wounded in its

most susceptible nerve, passed in the mind and on the half-uttering lips of Louis.

"But where," asked Lorenzo, "are we to seek this friend of Lindisfarne?"

"It is the Marquis Santa Cruz," replied Louis; "General Stanhope will probably tell me where to find him."

"The Marquis has a villa in the Val del Uzeda, between St. Ildefonso and the Escurial," replied Lorenzo; "and there I know his family usually resides, the Marchioness being sometimes in attendance on the Queen."

"Then," cried Louis, direct the postilions. If the Marquis be there, I may yet see my father before another night shrouds me in this direful Spain!"

CHAPTER XIV.

THE sun had declined from its meridian, some hours, when Louis again passed the marble gates of the Palacio del Atayada, the deserted mansion of his father! and after journeying over many a league of Arcadian landscape, abundant in the olive and the vine, and waving with harvests, which the paternal policy of Ripperda had spread over hill and dale, the heights of Uzeda re-opened to him the distant and transverse valleys of St. Ildefonso and the Escurial.

His carriage turned into a cleft of the hills, overhung with every species of umbrageous trees; while out of those verdant hills innumerable rills poured themselves, over the refreshed earth, from the urns of sculptured nymphs and river-gods reposing in the shade. In the bosom of this green recess stood the villa of Santa Cruz. All around spoke of elegance and taste. The carriage drove under the light portico; and the servants, who thronged around, gave earnest of the hospitable temper of the owner.

Lorenzo questioned them, whether their lord were at the

villa. They replied in the negative, but that his lady was there.

"I must see the Marchioness," returned Louis; and he sprang from the carriage, the door of which a servant had already opened. Lorenzo remained below for further orders, while his master was conducted up stairs into a splendid saloon, the capacious sides of which were hung with the finest pictures of the Italian and Flemish schools. But no object could displace from the vision of Louis, the dungeon which had contained his father.

Louis wrote his name with pencil upon a leaf which he tore from his pocket-book, and sent in to the Marchioness.

It was some time before a reply was returned to him, or, indeed, any person re-appeared. His anxiety became insupportable. He paced the room with impatience, and a sickening heart: for he knew not but that the delay of first one ten minutes, and then of another, before he could follow the track he expected to find in the packet he sought, might, by leaving his father undefended in all the personal dangers of a pursuit, be the very means of allowing him to be retaken.

In the midst of these harassing fears, the door opened, and a young lady entered; who, by her air, could not be mistaken for other than one of the noble members of the family, though her dress was that of a *religieuse*. It was all of spotless white, with a long black rosary hanging from her breast. Her face was mild and pale; but it was the transparent hue of the virgin flower of spring, clad in her veiling leaves. It was Marcella.

Her mother had received the name of the Marquis de Montemar in her chamber. She was an invalid; but remembering the reception his family had given to her son in Lindisfarne, she sent her daughter to bid him welcome.

When Marcella entered, she drew back a moment, on beholding so different a person from the one she had expected to see in the son of the Duke de Ripperda. He had been reported by the ladies of Vienna, as "the glass of fashion, and the mould of form!" Her brother had described him as gay and volant, full of the rich glow of health, and

animated with a joyous life, that made the sense ache to follow it through all its wild excursiveness. The Spaniards, on returning from Vienna, spoke of him as vain or proud, a coxcomb or a cynic, just as their envy or their prejudices prevailed. But Sinzendorff, her revered uncle, had written of him, as one whom all the women loved, while he loved only honour. The Marchioness had heard of the young minister's entanglement, and release, from the woman who had laid similar snares for her son; and her brother, Count Sinzendorff, had dwelt, with encomium, on his unshaken firmness through every change of fortune. As Marcella passed from her mother's chamber, these recollections crowded upon her; and all were calculated to increase the timidity of her approach. She was going to present herself, and alone, to an admired young man, proud in conscious dignity, whose lustre calamity could not dim, and whose spirit was exasperated by oppression!

But, instead of this lofty Marquis de Montemar, — gallant in attire, and resplendent in manly beauty — stern in resentful virtue, and upholding in his own high port all the threatened honours of his race,— she beheld a youthful and a fine form, indeed; but in a neglected dress, covered with dust. The jewels of his hat were broken away, and its disordered plumage darkly shaded his colourless cheek and eyes, whence every ray of joy had fled. Beauty was there; but it was the beauty of sadness — it was the crushed ruin of what might once have been bright and aspiring.

Marcella wondered, for a moment, at the change which grief must have made; and, with a very different sentiment from that with which she entered, she approached the son of Ripperda. She held a packet in her hand. Louis's heart bounded towards it, and he hastily advanced.

"From my father, madam?"

"It was left with my mother, two nights ago, by the Duke de Ripperda's servant," replied she; "and he informed her that the envelope, directed to my father, contained a letter for the Marquis de Montemar. My mother would not detain it from you till she could present it herself — being only now preparing to leave her chamber — and therefore she confided its delivery to me."

As Marcella spoke, she put the packet into his hand. By these words, he found he was in the presence of the Marquis Santa Cruz's daughter; and, expressing his thanks, he begged permission to peruse it before he quitted the house. She answered politely in the affirmative, and immediately withdrew.

Louis had observed nothing of her face or figure, to distinguish her again from the next stranger who might enter the room. The novelty of her dress, however, could not escape even his possessed eye; and, in the moment he learned who she was, he thought of Ferdinand and Alice, and of their future union, which the assumption of this garb seemed to promise. But, as soon as Marcella disappeared, he forgot both, and every accompanying circumstance, and even where he was, in his eagerness to make himself master of the contents of the packet.

On breaking the seal, a letter at the top of a bundle of papers presented itself. He seized it, and began to read it with avidity. It was from Ripperda, and written under all the exasperation of his mind, when he believed himself not merely the object of the world's ingratitude, but abandoned by his own and only son. Yet he forbore to specify his injuries, saying that to name them would be to stigmatise the whole human race. He had hitherto lived for universal man: his days should terminate on a different principle. He would yet confound his enemies, and astonish Europe. But it should not be by embracing revenge, through the treasons of men ready to receive and to avenge him. He would maintain his integrity to the last; and, from the heights of Gibraltar, assert the honour of a name whose last glories might die with him, but never should wane in his person till he set in the grave.

Louis would not think twice on the implied suspicions against himself, which every sentence of the letter contained. They were bitterness to his heart; but he knew his innocence. He now knew the point to which his father was gone, and thither he would follow him.

The papers in the packet contained schedules of the vast properties of the Duke, which were cast over the face of

Spain, in landed estates, immense manufactories, and countless avenues of merchandise.

"I bestow them all on my son," was written by Ripperda on the envelope which contained the catalogue: "they may give power and consequence to the Marquis de Montemar, when he has forgotten that the Duke de Ripperda was his father."

A memorandum of his territories in Spanish America was bound up with the others; and brief directions added, on each head, how his son was to secure his rights in them all.

Louis ran over these lists, and their explications, that he might not leave a single word unnoted; but, when he had finished, he closed up all that related to pecuniary affairs, and, laying them aside in the packet, again turned to the letter. It alone would be his study and his business, till he should reach Gibraltar; and prove to his father that, by his side, in poverty or disgrace, it was his determination to live or die.

He was yet leaning over the letter, perusing it a second time, when he heard the door open behind him. He looked round, and saw the daughter of Santa Cruz re-enter, supporting on her arm an elderly lady of a noble air, who appeared an invalid. He guessed her to be the Marchioness; and, rising instantly, approached her.

"Marquis," said she, "I come, thus in my sick attire, to welcome the son of the Duke de Ripperda to the house of my husband. I know his respect for your father; also his esteem of yourself; and, whatever may have been the misrepresentations of evil tongues, my brother, the Count Sinzendorff, has not left the character of the Marquis de Montemar without an advocate."

The Marchioness observed a brilliant flush shoot over the face of her auditor, as he bowed his head to her last words. She added, in a still more respectful tone, softened even to tenderness by the sentiment of pity, "The machinations of these enemies have been too successful against the Duke. Indeed, I doubt not, that packet has spared me the pain of saying you must seek your noble father in the alcazar of Segovia."

Louis briefly related the events of the last six hours, and presented her the note to read, which his servant had found on the table in the prison, and which had referred him to the Marquis Santa Cruz. The Marchioness had seated herself, and placed her guest beside her. She read the note, and looked with maternal sympathy upon the distressful countenance of the duteous son, to whom it addressed so cutting a reproach. Her commiserating questions, and the knowledge she showed of all the virtues of his father, added to the information that her husband was hastening from Italy to interest himself in his cause, seemed to demand from Louis his fullest confidence. He revealed to her the substance of what his father had written in the packet, and declared his intention to follow him immediately to Gibraltar.

The Marchioness applauded his intended re-union with his father; but resisted his quitting her house, till he had taken the repose she saw he so much needed. Louis would have been unmoved in his resolve to commence his journey that very night, had she not suggested that, severely as the Duke had been used before his flight, should he be retaken, his treatment would be yet more rigorous; and, therefore, his son must be careful not to be himself the guide to so fearful a catastrophe. She assured Louis, that now ministers knew of his arrival, all his movements would be watched; and that, above all things, his pursuing the direct route of his father must be avoided. She urged that a rash step, at this crisis, might be fatal; and, therefore, conjured him to remain that night at least under her roof, where he might consider and reconsider his future plans, and take the rest that was necessary to support him through the trials he might yet have to sustain.

There was so much good sense and precaution in this counsel, that Louis no longer found an argument to oppose it; and adopting her advice, of turning in a direction from Gibraltar, rather than towards it, proposed going to Cadiz, and thence hiring a vessel to take him by sea to the British fortress. This being sanctioned by her approbation, he no longer hesitated to pass the night under her friendly shelter; and, while she retired with her daughter, he followed

a page to an apartment, where every comfort was provided that could refresh the weary traveller.

The Marchioness, desiring to talk of her interesting visiter, withheld Marcella from returning to her apartment; it might rather be called a cell, in which she now usually passed the greatest portion of every day, trying to reconcile her principles to the vows demanded by her father. She had studied divine truths, till her soul was in heaven; but still she was human,—she was yet a daughter. There was a career of kindred duties to perform, "which never creature was so fond to run;" and monastic seclusion, to her, was as death at the threshold. Her heart was warm, as it was innocent: every disposition to blameless joy emanated from its pure fountain; but the sympathies of gentle nature were to be denied to her. She saw that her fate was irrevocable. Kindred, friends — all were to perish to her! And, withdrawing the kindly charities of that heart into itself, as into a grave, she clung to her mother (the last earthly object that was to be wrested from her!) even as it is fabled the departed soul clings to the tomb that covers the body from which it is divided, till time shall be no more. Of her mother alone, she therefore now thought; and, obeying her command to stay, she listened, with a sort of separated interest, to the Marchioness's ardent remembrances of all the kindnesses which the English relatives of Louis de Montemar had shown to her darling Ferdinand, in the island of Lindisfarne.

"Marcella," said she, "we must repay part of that vast debt to this inestimable young man. Your brother has not exaggerated his merits. For never did I see exquisite beauty so unconsciously possessed; nor heroic indifference to the world's idols expressed with such noble simplicity."

When Louis rejoined the kind hostess, his misfortunes and his manners had so happily propitiated, she was seated with her meditative daughter in the evening saloon, which opened to a small lake surrounded by aromatic groves. The Marchioness rose to receive him.

Relieved from immediate alarm for his father's personal safety, by knowing that his projected asylum was the one least likely to occur to his pursuers, Louis's agitated mind

had sunk into a kind of torpid repose. He took the seat offered to him by the Marchioness, and listened to her conversation with soothed attention. She appeared to know, by intuition, the fittest medicine for his spirit; but she only spoke from her own noble nature, and it mingled direct with his. She expatiated on his father's character; on the envy of his rivals; and dated his fall from their ambition alone. She dwelt on the high reverence in which he had been held by the King and Queen; and affirmed that justice must be done him, both by the sovereign and his people, when experience should have taught them how they had cast away their benefactor.

"Meanwhile," continued she, "how glorious he is, in suffering so magnanimously for his virtues!"

"So to suffer, is the cross that makes our virtues Christian!" observed Marcella in a low voice, hardly aware that she had uttered what was passing in her thoughts.

The remark was so like what he would have expected from the lips of his first Christian teacher, that Louis turned towards the speaker. He turned to look on her, recollecting that she was not merely the daughter of the amiable woman who was so maternally solicitous about him; but the disinterested sister, whose self-sacrifice was to empower her brother to complete his happiness. Though she had been the first to welcome Louis to this hospitable refuge, in most inhospitable Spain, he had noticed her so little, he could not have recognised her in any other garb. He now perused her pensive countenance. It was fair and meek, and touched with the tenderest sensibility. Her eyes were hidden with their downward lashes; and the shadow of her veil tempered the dazzling whiteness of her forehead; while the dark and glossy tresses that braided its arching brows, gave her the air of a youthful Madonna. Her soft white hand at that moment pressing the cross to her bosom, completed the picture. Unconscious of observation, she was then breathing an internal prayer for the Duke and his son; and, continuing her meditations on their fate, did not raise her eyes from the floor.

Louis looked on her; but it was as he would have

looked on a lovely image of the consecrated being she resembled; and again he turned to the voice of her mother.

The Marchioness, finding him so composed, entered fully into all she knew of the rise and progress of the conspiracy which had ruined his father. She recounted the various perfidies of the inmates of the *Palais d'Espagne*, which had been confided to her, in the exultation of triumph, by Donna Laura. She narrated consonant particulars in the correspondence between De Patinos and his father, the Marquis de Castellor; and gave instances of even deeper double-dealing in Baptista Orendayn, the nephew of the Count de Paz. Indeed, she hoped that the Marquis, her husband, would, on his return, be enabled to prove, by what she could impart, that Orendayn had been concerned with a suborned band of ruffians, to attack the Duke de Ripperda in the Appenines. The assault was made accordingly; and the Duke would certainly have been destroyed there, but for the fortunate intervention of a stranger.

This assassination was the device of his Spanish rivals. And it was as well known by the Marchioness's informants, that the attempt which was made on Ripperda in the porch of the Jesuits' college, was the work of certain Austrians at the court of Vienna, and not at all arising from the partisans of the Electress. The Bavarians had never gone further in personal hostility, than to way-lay for state papers; and, under the leading of Count Stahlberg, they had taken the despatches from Castanos, which, being examined by the party, were afterwards returned.

In recapitulating this host of jealous adversaries, she asserted that none were so actively hostile to Ripperda as the Austrian junto, at the head of which was Count Routemberg, whose darling policy was to place eternal barriers between any future junction of the empire with Spain. In his house the confederacies were formed, that were to accomplish the destruction of Ripperda and his plans; and, by a secret management, all was supported and impelled by the Emperor himself.

While Louis listened to this information, which agreed so fatally with Wharton's last conference in the garden of

the château, he became more and more bewildered on the motives of his false friend.

At last the Marchioness mentioned that name, which never could be heard by him with indifference: his confidence or his detestation must rest upon it. He was thinking of the accumulated treachery of Wharton, when she pronounced his name. He started, as if it took him by surprise. In her eagerness, she did not observe his emotion, but expatiated on the English Duke's clandestine interviews with Grimaldo, De Paz, and the Queen; showing their results, in the King's inflexibility to Ripperda's demands to be heard; and with a particular emphasis, she affirmed, that she knew the King's subsequent warrant, to silence the injured minister from all appeal, in the sealed dungeons of the Inquisition, was the suggestion of Duke Wharton.

Louis, with a tremendous fire in his before faded eye, grasped the arm of the Marchioness, and in phrensied accents exclaimed, —

"Cease that theme — or it will make me a murderer!"

His manner alarmed the Marchioness, and terrified Marcella. The former, however, restrained herself; and mildly pressing down the hand that clasped hers, detained him on his seat; while Marcella started from her chair, and gazed upon his flashing countenance with dismay. His terrific, guilty words, yet rung in her ears. For a moment his eye caught the expression of hers; and he answered the horror in her face by the exclamation,—

"I loved, and trusted him — and he has betrayed my father!"

He turned away as he spoke, and walked to the other end of the room. The eyes of the Marchioness and of her daughter met, with an anguish of commiseration in each, neither of them could utter. Marcella looked again at his agitated movements, as his back was towards her. His words, "I loved, and trusted him — and he betrayed my father!" had smote upon her filial heart; and tears gushing into her eyes, she glided from his presence to pray and to weep in secret.

When Louis recovered himself, he scarcely remarked that Marcella had withdrawn.

In hopes to soothe him, the Marchioness asked two or three questions respecting Wharton. Twice he attempted to speak, before he could give any voice to what he wished to say: at last he hastily articulated,—

"Spare me on this subject. I would forget him, if God will grant me that gracious oblivion; for that is the only way by which I can remain guiltless of his blood!"

"Rash De Montemar!" cried the Marchioness, pitying, while she reproved; "were my holy daughter here, she would tell you, that if you have hope of Heaven's pardon for your own errors, you must forgive your enemies!"

An agonised smile gleamed on his convulsive lip.

"My own enemies I could forgive, and load with benefits. There are some, were they my enemies alone, I could love in spite of every injury, and pray for them, as for the peace of my own soul. But when they extend their malice to my father; when they betray his trusting faith, and give him to the murderous gripe of them who lurk for his honour and his life, they are his enemies, and I cannot forgive them."

"Yet, do not risk your life, which is now his sole comfort," cried she. "Appeal to Heaven, and it will avenge you."

Again Louis walked from her. Inexorably as he now believed he hated Wharton, and horribly as was the idea of meeting him arm to arm, still that thought was more tolerable to him, than to invoke Almighty power for vengeance.

A sad confusion of right and wrong struggled in his breast; but the better principle prevailed; and even while the pressure of new convictions against Wharton crowded upon him, he felt, that the bitterest pang of all, would be an assurance, that by such guilt on guilt, his false friend had forfeited the mercy of his God. In his fiercest throes of resentment, he could yet say, with the Divine Spirit, "I have no pleasure in the death of a sinner; but rather that he should turn from his wickedness and live!"

The Marchioness marked his unuttered emotion, and, with self-blame at the amplitude of her communications,

apologised for her indiscretion, and proposed his seeking composure in rest. He gladly acquiesced, while he begged her not to distress herself by regretting what she had said; for it was necessary to his father's preservation, and to his own, that he should know all his enemies, and the extent of their malevolence.

It was now within an hour of midnight. On entering his chamber, he sent away Lorenzo; that he, at least, might enjoy the sleep that fled his master's eyes. In a few minutes Louis was alone, in a magnificent apartment, where every tranquillising luxury invited to repose. But the downy couch would then have been a bed of thorns to him. He continued to walk the room from hour to hour, in perturbed meditation on all that he had seen and heard through the preceding day.

His spirit was on the wing to rush through every obstacle to his father's feet; to labour day and night to redeem the reputation sacrificed by his flight; and to avenge himself on the slanderous world, by some glorious assertion of the names of De Montemar and Ripperda.

At last, his exhausted taper went out suddenly; and being without the means of replenishing its light, he threw himself on the bed to muse till morning.

CHAPTER XV.

About an hour before sunrise, the inhabitants of the villa were aroused by the clattering of horses' hoofs upon the pavement around the house, which was speedily followed by a loud knocking at the gates.

The Marchioness, and her daughter, in their dressing-gowns, met in the corridor between their rooms, with each a lamp in her hand. Alarm was in the countenance of both; which was increased to indescribable terror, when

the chamberlain of the mansion appeared on the stairs, and informed them, he had looked from his window, to demand the cause of such untimely disturbance; and the answer he received was from the leader of the party, who said, he came to arrest the Marquis de Montemar, in the name of the King.

Marcella's knees shook under her, and a mist passed over her eyes; but it was only transitory: she heard the steady orders of her mother; and rallied her own presence of mind in the same instant.

"Pedro," said the Marchioness, "doubly barricade the doors; and let no man enter, till I have spoken with the Marquis."

Pedro flew to obey his lady; and she proceeded along the gallery, to the apartment of her guest. Marcella did not follow her in, but sunk into a seat near the door of the chamber. The lock yielded to her mother's hand. She saw her enter; and could distinctly hear her footsteps, as she cautiously approached the bed, and gently called on the name of De Montemar to awaken him. At last, she heard him start from the leaden slumber, which had only recently fallen on his harassed faculties; and with an exclamation of surprise, at seeing the Marchioness leaning over him at that hour, and in such evident agitation, he sprang from the bed.

The tumult at the outside of the house, strenuously demanding admittance; and the replies from within, to withhold it for a time; explained the alarm to Louis, almost before his trembling hostess could speak the words of his arrest. Being fortunately dressed, he stepped forward, with an immediate tranquillity succeeding his first appalled thought, that, by this new detention, his father would yet be left to his cruel suspicions. But he suddenly recollected that Lorenzo might seek him, if he could not; and that, when his father knew how he was detained, he could no longer doubt his filial duty. This passed through his mind in a moment; and taking the agitated hand of the Marchioness, he told her his wish respecting Lorenzo; and, entreating her not to be distressed at what could not essentially injure him, begged her to order her servants to

request the officers to be patient for a few minutes only, when he would instantly put himself into their hands.

"Never!" cried she; "you are my husband's guest; and you shall not be forced from his house during his absence. Ill should I repay the family who fostered my son, were I to surrender their darling into the hands of his enemies. I am aware they may break open my doors; but there is a place in this villa they cannot discover. Come with me, and you shall be safe, till the way is clear for your complete escape."

Surprised at this proposal, Louis did not interrupt her; but when she paused, and put her arm on his, to draw him towards the offered asylum, he earnestly thanked her, yet repeated that it was his fixed intention to obey the arrest of the King.

"What!" cried she, "this is despair, beyond their hopes! They will confine, perhaps torture you! They could not have obtained this warrant from the King, had they not made him believe that you are accessary to the crimes with which they charge your father. They will try to compel you to confession; and, though you are blameless, you will suffer the cruellest ordeal of transgression. They fear your talents; and if the laws refuse to be their emissary, when you are in the solitude of a prison, how many means will present themselves of ridding them of what they fear!"

In great emotion, she followed up these representations, with renewed beseeching that he would accompany her to a temporary concealment.

"It is for my father's enemies to fly," returned he, in a firm though gentle tone; "they are guilty of treachery to the confidence of their sovereign, and flight may do them service. But I am innocent of offence against this country; my father has been its benefactor! I will, therefore, stay, to meet any trial they may devise to impugn him in my person. And, if my defence of his integrity fail with his unjust judges, should I even fall in the attempt, honest men will form a truer judgment; and such hearts as yours, and those I left in England, will still respect Ripperda and his son."

In despair at his resolution, the Marchioness reminded him, that the father whom he so justly revered acted on a different principle. "He was innocent, and menaced; and he fled!"

"And there," returned Louis, "he gave the advantage to his enemies, that sanction the arrest of his son. He should have demanded open trial. All Europe would have supported the demand; and in the face of Europe he would have been acquitted. To this I would yet urge him. His proud rivals dare not suffer his return; and their cowardice will, of itself, pronounce his triumph."

The Marchioness clung to him, as the uproar below increased, and she thought, by the extraordinary noise, that her gates were burst open.

"Alas!" cried she, "you know not the summary justice of this country! The bow-string is yet amongst us: you will perish in prison, unheard, dishonoured! — Oh, De Montemar, in the name of all you love, hasten with me!"

"In the name of all I love and honour, dearest madam!" returned he, straining her respected and clinging form to his grateful heart, "I must remain, and abide the ways of Providence."

"Marcella!" cried the Marchioness, looking round, and seeing her daughter, who had unconsciously started into the room, on hearing the augmented tumult below; "Marcella, come hither, and by your holy eloquence conjure him to fly, and save these men the sin of murder!"

"Marcella stood still, looking on the ground. Her mother continued her entreaties to him, and then again implored her daughter.

"Speak to him, my heaven-devoted child! For that father's sake, conjure him to abandon the ruinous project of abiding by the justice of his enemies."

Marcella's complexion was the hue of death, while she gaspingly answered, —

"I cannot urge the Marquis to depart from sentiments I so much honour."

Louis looked from the weeping Marchioness, who hung on him with maternal tenderness, to the daughter, pale,

and trembling, but firm in the faith that nerved his soul.

"Madam," said he, "I thank you for this support:" then, turning to her mother, "Revered lady," cried he, "remember me in your prayers; and I shall not fear the malice of my enemies."

The words of her daughter had put the Marchioness to silence, and she leaned upon the shoulder of Louis, drowned in tears. At this moment the clamour of many feet was heard on the stairs; and a man, bursting into the room, told his mistress that Don Diego Cuellar, one of the alcaids, had ordered the gates to be forced, and was not only in the house, but then approaching the corridor. The Marchioness sobbed aloud, and exclaimed, in wild grief, "My son, my son!" as if it were Don Ferdinand she held in her arms.

Louis supported her on his bosom, but did not hesitate to say to the servant, "Tell the officer I am at his orders. I will descend to him immediately."

But before the man could obey, Don Diego and his train were in the corridor, and in the room. A threatening denunciation was in his visage, as he advanced with his staff of office towards the prisoner. Louis perceived the storm; and, to spare the sensibility of his hostess, he intercepted the thunder of the alcaid, by repeating the message he had sent by the servant.

"'Tis well, sir," replied the officer: "but the resistance which has been made, must be answered for before the council."

"I will answer for it, and all else that may be brought against me, when I am before the council," replied Louis; "but, meanwhile, I request of your courtesy as a gentleman, to dismiss your guards, till I can soothe this lady."

The manner of his prisoner sufficiently mollified the officer, and he made a sign to his attendants to withdraw. The Marchioness then turned to the alcaid; and, to her fearful interrogatories, he informed her how Louis had been traced to her house.

On his departure from the alcazar, the warden thought it prudent to send a person to observe his movements.

This spy followed him to the Val del Uzeda; and then proceeding to St. Ildefonso, (where the royal family were,) apprised the ministers of the escape of Ripperda, and where they might find his son. A council was convened; and it determined, that Louis should be arrested, and held in strict ward, till information could be gained of the flight and views of his father.

"When that is ascertained," continued the alcaid, "the enlargement of the Marquis de Montemar will be brought into immediate consideration."

The Marchioness, being a little assured, drew Louis aside; and, in a low voice, entreated him to rely on the strenuous friendship of her husband; and to depend upon seeing her, in whatever prison he might be confined. He expressed his gratitude, in emphatic but brief terms; and begged her to extend her kindness, by writing what had happened, and transmitting it, by Lorenzo, to his father.

Marcella stood all this while, leaning against the tapestry, in silent astonishment of thought and feeling.

Lorenzo had been the most active below, in keeping out the officers; and having extricated himself from them who had seized him in consequence, he now rushed into the room, and, in much agitation, threw himself at the feet of his master. Louis grasped the faithful hand that clung to his, and answered the fervent vows to follow him into all captivity, by an impressive whisper: —

"You must serve me here. The Marchioness will tell you how."

Then advancing to the officer, he repeated, "Sir, I am ready."

Don Diego beckoned two guards, who immediately drew near their prisoner. They attempted to lay their hands on the sword and pistols, with which his generous hostess had re-furnished him the preceding night; but he repelled them, and demanded of the alcaid what was meant by this indignity.

"To disarm you, sir," replied the officer: "such are my orders. You menaced the warden of the alcazar, in the discharge of his duty; we are to be protected in ours;

and you must yield your weapons, or have them forced from you."

"The laws require it of me, as your prisoner?"

"They do."

Louis said no more, but put his sword and pistols into the alcaid's hands.

"He has a poniard!" cried one of the attendants, (who was indeed the spy who had watched his steps,) "I saw it in his vest, when he leaped from the window in the dungeon."

Louis had forgotten this weapon, but did not demur in relinquishing it also.

The Marchioness shuddered. "What," cried she, "he is to have no defence? Merciless men!"

"The laws and their honour will defend me, madam!" returned he, putting her hands to his lips; "I fear no man, for I have injured none."

By a sign from the alcaid, the soldiers then closed around him; and the Marchioness, sinking on the bosom of her daughter, did not see his last grateful look, as he was hurried from the room. Marcella met it; and his eyes, in their fullest radiance of beauty and of happiness, were never so deeply felt.

CHAPTER XVI.

A DEEPER dungeon than that which had confined the father, now received the son. The light which discovered its dismal bounds to his solitary eyes, came from a small grated aperture in the vaulted roof. Escape, then, had he meditated such an expedient, was impossible.

But, so far was that idea from presenting itself to his thoughts, he never ceased lamenting that his injured father had been reduced to so equivocal an alternative. He knew not how to reconcile the imprudence of the act, with

Ripperda's consummate wisdom; till, as he passed hours in these lonely musings, the events of history occurred to his memory, and he remembered that there had been times in the lives of even the most illustrious characters, when their good genius, or their good sense, seemed to desert them; when the faculty of judgment was taken away; and they obeyed the impulse of passion, with all the blind zeal of the most inconsiderate of men. Some such alienation of his better reason, Louis thought, must have occurred in the experienced mind of Ripperda, before he could have taken so condemning a step; for of neither his personal courage, nor patriotic integrity, could this devoted son conceive a suspicion. From infancy to manhood, he had but one impression of his father, that —

——— "in his port divine,
The image of his glorious Maker shone
Truth, wisdom, rectitude severe and pure!"

And almost worshipping the human idol in his heart, he loved and honoured him without measure.

On the night of Louis's arrival, he learnt that his prison was the castle of Madrid. But it was not necessary for him to enquire how strict, or how apparently long, was to be his confinement. Hour after hour, day after day, wore away; and no person was suffered to approach him; no letter permitted to reach his hand; and when he attempted to question his gaoler, whether the Marchioness Santa Cruz had ever visited his prison; or if tidings had yet transpired of the Duke de Ripperda, his only answers were gloomy denials of all communication.

Though his portmanteau had been brought to him, the writing materials and money it contained were taken out in his presence, and even his books of devotion shared the same fate. Indeed, the latter seemed a prize of some moment; for when the little Bible, which had been the gift of his Pastor-uncle, opened its titlepage to the eyes of superstition, the officer who superintended the search, ordered it to be carried, under a strong guard, to the grand inquisitor.

Remonstrance, on this or on any other head, was vain; and, under a suspense that increased to torture, three

weeks dragged away their anxious days. At times, he almost suspected that the Marchioness Santa Cruz had forgotten him; then, that Lorenzo had arrived in Gibraltar, and failed of convincing Ripperda of his undeviating duty and affection. Every frightful apprehension of doubted honour; of absolute abandonment to his enemies; of an endless captivity in this dreary dungeon, assailed him in the gloom of his uncompanioned thoughts. Despair and hope, impatience and resignation, were the alternate inmates of his anxious breast. But mental anguish was not enough; every rigour of hard fare, and severe usage, was inexorably brought upon him. His bed was on the flinty pavement; his food, the scanty portion of a criminal. But the conscience of Louis was at rest; and he soon found that "man does not live by bread alone."

Though his gaolers seemed inclined to do so much wrong in their treatment of him, he never repented that he had done rightly in submitting to the law of his new country, by yielding himself to their power. But when he writhed under the tyrannous grasp with which they held him, he could not but remember, with many a yearning comparison, the country which had fostered his infancy. There he had imbibed the mingled tides of freedom and of equity, as from the breast of a mother. Here the proud state that claimed him as her own offspring, met him with the injustice of a malignant stepdame.

"Noble, regretted England!" cried he, "I had rather be a door-keeper in thy courts, than a prince in this land of despotism!"

In these lingering weeks of anxious loneliness, every impetuous passion and daring wish, every motive and action of his short but eventful life, passed in review before him—his impatience to plunge into the world, and the readiness with which he gave way to its delusions. While reflection humbled him to the dust, the consciousness of having, in all his transgressions, erred from mistake or inadvertence, but never from wilfulness, raised his head to the mercy of that Being whom the precepts of Mr. Athelstone had so often told him to "remember in the days of his youth, and in his extremity he should not be forgotten." These thoughts were

heavenly visitants to the young captive, who lay like Joseph in bonds, with Faith, and Hope, and Innocence, his comforters. The cheering lamp which these immortal sisters lit in his heart, illumined the dark eclipse with which the recent treacheries of man had overshadowed it; yet he never thought of Wharton, but with a horror that shook his soul. He durst not look steadily on his image, for no light was there.

A fourth week commenced. It was the anniversary of that day, in the past autumn, when Santa Cruz took his leave of Lindisfarne: Louis then stood gazing on the departing vessel, and vehemently wishing to hang upon its sails, and so be transported to his father and to action! It was also the Sabbath-day; and the uncle who, a year ago, had stood by his side, admonishing the intemperate desire, — he, at this dismal anniversary, was, at this very hour, in the little church of Lindisfarne, beseeching Heaven's "pity on all prisoners and captives," unconscious he was then putting up a prayer for his own darling child!

The tears were not without balm, that filled the eyes of his nephew at the recollection.

In the midst of these meditations, the dungeon door opened, and Santa Cruz appeared on the threshold. Louis started from his seat, and could have cried aloud,—

"Then, my God has remembered me!"

But tidings from his father were also in his thoughts, and he only ejaculated that revered name.

Santa Cruz embraced him, with more agitation than his stately mien might have announced.

"The Duke de Ripperda has not been heard of," returned he; "he must, therefore, be safe. By any other means than that of flight, I would his son were equally secure from his enemies!"

Fearless for himself, Louis entered at once upon his father's case. His first wish was to induce the Marquis to solicit the King to hear the son in defence of the parent; or, if that were denied, to allow Santa Cruz to present a written vindication of Ripperda's Austrian ministry. Louis gave the Marquis a simple narrative of every transaction in Vienna, from the beginning of the business to the stage in

which he left it at his recall. And, in the course of the explanation, he could not avoid noticing the destructive mystery into which the double conduct of Duke Wharton had involved every proceeding, even to those in which he had no explicable concern.

"You are already avenged of him!" replied the Marquis. "General Stanhope has made full report to England of all your enemy's secret practices in favour of the exiled sovereign. The information was given by your father, who gained it from the lips of Wharton himself. Prior to that, the English Duke's adherence to James Stuart had been known to, but could not be proved by, the British ministry. But this accusation brought it into a tangible shape; and the consequence is, the confiscation of your enemy's estates, and a reward offered for his apprehension."

Louis was confounded at this recital. The words which Wharton had spoken to him in the park of Bamborough murmured in his ears — "*I put my life into your hands!*"

"And my father has set that life at a price! The country in which we first met is now no more to him than to me. He is an outlaw — I a prisoner!"

Louis was silent under these thoughts — a stricture was on his heart; but he recovered himself, while Santa Cruz proceeded to inform him that he had been only a few days returned to Spain. But the Marchioness had lost no time in writing to him all she knew relative to the fall of Ripperda, and the arrest of his son; and, urged by her, as well as by his own zeal, he had hastened to Madrid. He there investigated the affair. Among other nefarious particulars, respecting the overthrow of the ex-minister, he had learned what was to have been its bloody conclusion. The King had been so pressed by the British ambassador on the outrageous seizure of his guest, and some of the northern envoys having openly pleaded their conviction of the Duke de Ripperda's general integrity, the Spanish ministers feared to stem such an opposition of opinion, should they venture their predecessor in a public trial; and, aware of their inability to convict him of treachery, peculation, and unlawful

ambition (the grounds of his impeachment), they had recourse to the *lettres de cachet* of the Inquisition.

"Did I believe that your father's reconciliation to the Romish church were hypocrisy," continued the Marquis, "I should be the first to approve his sentence; but I know the spring of these accusations — that the penalty of imputed heresy would have been made the forfeit of his too exemplary virtues!"

Santa Cruz did not stop at this observation; but candidly acknowledged, that, if ever the flight of an innocent man from the bonds of his country were an act of compulsive prudence, it was in the case of Ripperda. He added,—

"It is not here, as in England, where the laws govern the prince. Arbitrary power holds ours in check; and when once a man is seized, if he cannot attain the grace of his judge, he has little dependence on his justice."

The Marquis said, that he had made personal applications to the ministers, and to the Queen, to beg their interference with Philip for Louis's trial or enlargement. The ministers were inflexible, and Isabella not less firm in her refusal. All that could be extracted from their clemency (or, rather, from that of the Queen alone), was a hard-wrung permission to visit Louis in his cell.

"Yet," said the Marquis, "my hopes do not stop there. One step in humanity warrants the expectation of a second. I am in favour with her Majesty. I came to be, what you propose — the medium of your father's vindication; and that will comprehend your own."

Impressed with the deepest gratitude, Louis confided to his disinterested friend the whole contents of the packet left in the care of the Marchioness. According to Louis's parting request, she had intrusted her husband with the secret of Ripperda's asylum; and now he acknowledged that one object of his present visit was to obtain Louis's permission to confide it also to the Queen. He urged that it would flatter the peculiarities of her character, and might conciliate her good offices for his liberty. Being at Gibraltar, Ripperda was out of the reach of personal danger, even should the secret transpire beyond herself; and,

meanwhile, the measure might do every thing for his son, and his son's final wishes, in the assertion of his father's fame.

"Should her influence be seriously aroused in your behalf," said the Marquis, "you will find it resistless with the King; therefore, peremptory with his ministers."

Sensible as he was that his father's asylum was chosen with honour, and that its divulgement could be productive of no possible harm, Louis had every disposition to yield to this advice; but his eagerness to adopt any honourable means of facilitating his release ran before the progressive hopes of his zealous friend, when he found that his father was yet ignorant of his being in Spain.

He learned from the Marquis, that, as soon as he was taken from the Val del Uzeda, a reserve guard had forcibly seized Lorenzo, and borne him away also to prison.

Soon after imparting the latter information, Santa Cruz rose to retire; and, promising to use his endeavours for the enlargement of the servant, as well as the master, he embraced the grateful son of Ripperda, and bade him adieu.

CHAPTER XVII.

Some time elapsed before Louis saw the Marquis again; but when he re-appeared, it was to appoint an interview between the son of Ripperda and a lady of the court; and this ostensible confidante was no other than her Majesty's self.

Santa Cruz's representation of Louis's romantic honour with regard to Countess Altheim, had excited Isabella's not less romantic taste for adventure; and she resolved to try her personal effect upon a heart like his, unaided by her rank. While she was considering this project, a person arrived from Vienna, who spoke every where of the con-

fusion which had taken place at that court, from an open declaration, on the part of the Archduchess Maria-Theresa, in favour of Francis, Prince of Lorraine. This news, by verifying one argument, in the alleged innocence of Louis de Montemar, gave a respectable colour, in her own mind, to the really vain motive, which prompted a clandestine reception of the Duke de Ripperda's son. In mentioning her design to his zealous friend, she hinted that such privacy was necessary, since the King had followed the flight of Ripperda with a sentence of perpetual banishment. While unknown, she said, she could discourse more freely to the young Marquis on the circumstances of his father's conduct; and, by remaining incognita, should she choose the affair to end at that conference, her implied interference would escape having raised in him any too sanguine expectations.

Santa Cruz bowed to a command, that promised so fair, notwithstanding its professed doubts as to the issue; and, as it was to be kept a profound secret, he pledged himself, and performed his word, not to disclose her real quality to the object of her condescension.

While Louis exchanged his prison garments for a court dress, the Marquis told him he must not ground his father's defence to the lady he should see, on any argument of the Queen's precipitancy in politics. Her Majesty's consciousness was sufficient. Louis thanked him for his caution; and no objection being made to the royal signet, which Santa Cruz carried, they passed through the prison; and without opposition entered the carriage at its gates.

As they drove silently through the streets, the Marquis regarded the countenance of his companion. It was no longer pallid and dejected. His eyes were bent downwards in thought, but a bright colour was on his cheek, and the refulgence of an inward happy animation illumed every feature. Santa Cruz refrained from remarking on this change, so favourable to his cause, though he did not the less wonder how it could have taken place, during the short interval since his first visit.

The fact was simple. From that hour hope had been

Louis's abundant aliment. Yet not an implicit hope in frail humanity. He had lately learned to put no absolute trust in man, nor any dependence on princes. He had been made to know, that blinded judgments are often with the one, and misguiding interests with the other; but he knew *in whom he trusted!* and the expression of hope in his countenance, partook of the sublime source whence it sprung.

When they arrived at St. Ildefonso, vespers were concluded, and the King had retired with his confessor. This circumstance was what Isabella had anticipated, and which had determined her to name that hour for the appointed interview. A few minutes after Santa Cruz had conducted Louis into her pavilion, she ascended the steps. On hearing her foot on the pavement, the Marquis hastened to meet her; and as she stood in the portico, and Louis remained in the room, he had an opportunity of taking cognizance of the lady who was to report his suit to her royal mistress.

She seemed about forty; of a low stature, and slight figure; with a countenance, whose acute lineaments, dark complexion, and quick, penetrating eye, announced alacrity of intellect, with an equal proportion of irritability and vindictiveness of mind. She conversed a second with the Marquis, and preceded him into the pavilion. He presented Louis to her as the Marquis de Montemar; and named her to him by the title of Duchess Tarrazona.

Louis bowed respectfully, while she so far forgot her assumed character, as to take no notice of his obeisance, though her riveted observation lost not a line of his face or deportment. He raised his eyes from the share they usually took in his bow; but encountering the sharp and investigating gaze of hers, he looked down again, and retreated a step back, with a second bow.

"Marquis," said she, to Santa Cruz, "you may attend in the portico."

As she spoke, she turned into a secluded veranda, and waved her hand to Louis to follow her. He obeyed.

For more than an hour Santa Cruz walked to and fro under the long double colonnade of the pavilion, before

the Queen re-appeared on the threshold. Louis remained in the saloon. She stood apart several minutes, talking earnestly with the Marquis, and then withdrew, unattended, across the garden.

Not a word passed between him and his charge, until they were out of the confines of St. Ildefonso, and once more on the road to Madrid. Louis's countenance all this time was meditative and troubled. Santa Cruz at last said,—

"The Duchess informs me it shall not be her fault if your suit be not favourably conveyed to the Queen."

"She is very kind," replied Louis, "but very extraordinary; and, did you not assure me of her influence, I would rather avoid her interference. She appears too peremptory to be a favourite with arbitrary power; and though some of her discourse showed a penetrating judgment, and great vivacity in the interests of Spain, yet the rest was trifling; indeed, absurdly foreign from our subject."

Santa Cruz warned his young friend to take things as he found them, and to be as respectful to the Duchess as to the royal presence itself. He then enquired the particulars of what had passed.

Louis informed him, that, so far from her Grace seeking information relative to the Duke de Ripperda's political conduct at Vienna, she continually interrupted the narration of these proceedings, with the strangest questions respecting the nature of his intimacy with the Empress. And when she had received assurances and proofs, that it was a purely confidential friendship, contracted in early life; and, though continued, was ever in check to the interests of Spain, she repeated the same interrogatories, again and again, with all the art and abruptness of consummate subtlety. At last she demanded a minute description of the Empress's person, saying with a smile,—

"Marquis, your next attendance at St. Ildefonso may give you an opportunity of judging between your Queen and this boasted Elizabeth of Germany!"

"Should you be admitted to such an audience," observed Santa Cruz, with a smile, "you must not disap-

point the expectations of the Duchess, in giving the palm to her mistress."

"She will be fairest to me," returned Louis, "who turns the most gracious eye on the truth of my father."

"Hold that principle," rejoined his friend, "and I will not curb your sincerity."

From this day the aspect of many countenances changed at St. Ildefonso. The Queen was engaged in frequent conferences with the King; and the ministers, who severally used to make one in all the royal consultations, were totally excluded from these. Philip kept a strict silence on their subject, though his saddened physiognomy often declared how they perplexed him. The Queen alone wore an unaltered mien; yet the lynx eye of De Paz could often discern suspicion in her prompt accordance at the council; and some unknown triumph in the smile, with which she bowed in devoted deference to the judgment of her husband. What was the object of all this, and what would be its end, were equally subjects of mystery and of apprehension to the newly-seated ministers; but not one of them suspected, for a moment, that Ripperda, whom they had exiled, or his son, whom they had immured, held any connexion with the changing scene.

In the course of a week, after the interview in the pavilion, Santa Cruz re-entered the state prison of Madrid, with the sign-manual of the King, for the release of the Marquis de Montemar, and his servant Lorenzo d'Urbino. The young man was confined in a cell remote from his master, in equal ignorance with him that the same roof covered them. Their re-union was joyous on the part of Louis, but full of overflowing transport on the side of Lorenzo; for his gaolers had tortured him with reports of his master's death, and assured him that his own imprisonment would shortly be ended by the same violent means.

The governor of the prison was enjoined to conceal the release of the Marquis de Montemar from the ministers of the King, until Philip himself should send permission to officially announce it.

Louis was to be admitted the following morning to a private audience of the Queen. He was to go as a sup-

pliant; and to pass from a dungeon to his first presentation at a court, where his father had taught him to believe, he would one day be received as only second to royalty itself! But he thought not of these circumstances. He had gained one great object in obtaining the royal ear, and he looked with confidence to the event of the interview.

Santa Cruz was not less sanguine; and, with almost parental pride in the son of Ripperda, he conducted him to the palace, and led him to the chamber of audience. Her Majesty was alone, and seated in a chair of state. A magnificent dress shone through the large veil she had thrown over her face and person.

On Louis approaching her, and on his being named, bending his knee to the ground, she rose, and threw up her veil.

"Marquis de Montemar!" said she, with a smile, and extending her hand; "the Duchess Tarrazona has prevailed; and, thus, I promise my patronage to her client!"

Louis had entered in some agitation; and knelt with more, at the feet of the sovereign, who, he believed, held the honour and fate of his father in her hand. He now recognised the Duchess, in the Queen; and every anxious doubt flying before the glad surprise, the sentiment of his heart shone out in his complexion and eyes. She translated this flush of hope, into a tribute to her charms; and graciously repeated her smile, when he put her hand to his lips.

"Whom will you serve, De Montemar?" said she, "Elizabeth, and Countess Altheim? or Isabella, and the Duchess Tarrazona? Choose freely, for I love not bondage."

Conscious complacency beamed in her looks, as she spoke.

"My duty, and my heart," replied he, "are alike at your Majesty's feet."

His heart was in his words, and his countenance. The devotion of Ripperda had been reserved and stately; but in the animated answer of his son, there was a youthful fervour, a chivalric gallantry; which, being her soul's passion, subdued her at once to his interest. All her pre-

determined caution vanished before it. She looked towards Santa Cruz.

"Give De Montemar your cross of the Amaranth," said she; "I will replace it to-morrow. When he returns from Gibraltar, he may wear it openly; now, it must be nearer the seat of truth."

Santa Cruz drew from his neck the purple riband, at which the brilliant cross was suspended, and buckled it under the vest of his young friend. Again Louis kissed the hand of the condescending Isabella; who continued to regard his graceful person with increasing favour, while she communicated the result of her mediation between him and the King.

So many baffled negotiations for the restoration of Gibraltar, had worn out the patience of Philip; and, as the fortress was evidently strengthening itself on the Spanish side, he had ordered similar lines of intimidation to be constructed at San Roque. But this did not awe the English, whose sovereign seemed on the eve of a quarrel with the new ministers of Spain. Isabella had seized the occasion, to represent to her husband the danger of allowing the British cabinet the incalculable benefit of Ripperda's discoveries and counsels. In pursuance of these arguments, she had gradually gained her object with the King; and she informed Louis she had obtained the royal command for him to go direct to Gibraltar, to lay before Ripperda all that was alleged against him; to offer him a fair and open trial, or a general amnesty; and, whichever he would prefer, should follow his election.

The trial was what Louis demanded.

"Grant my father that," said he, "and we ask no more."

"Bring him from Gibraltar," returned the Queen, "and nothing shall be withheld, that can gratify the honourable ambition of his son."

She then told him, that, as it was necessary to keep these preliminaries from the knowledge of the ministry, he must neither visit the British ambassador, nor the Val del Uzeda; nor even allow his name nor his errand to be known, until he should have obtained the object of his mission.

"When you return, it will be with a companion," added she, "to whom, meanwhile, I pledge my restored confidence."

She smiled, and disappeared. Louis looked gratefully after her. The Marquis would not trouble the hopes of this affectionate son, by warning him, that all this revered goodness arose from the dreams of vanity; and that both father and son must preserve its illusions, if they would continue in the favour she so largely promised.

Louis gave his arm to his friend; and with heads too full of busy thoughts, to give them immediate utterance, they repaired in silence to Santa Cruz's residence in Madrid.

A few hours completed every preparation for Louis's journey to Gibraltar; and the next morning, by daybreak, accompanied by the faithful Lorenzo, he set forth on his momentous pilgrimage.

CHAPTER XVIII.

HOPE, having drawn him from sad meditations, as he rapidly pursued his way towards the south of Spain, he could not but obey the voice of nature, which called on him from valley and from mountain, to behold her vast and wonderous creations.

The royal province of Castile, traversed by rivers, and populous with cities, conducted him to the extensive plains of La Mancha. Here, the palladian palaces, north of the Guadiana, and avenued with glowing vistas, were exchanged for heavy and sombre hamlets, spread under the shade of thick groves, and dark with the clusters of the black grape. But, in architecture alone, these villages were gloomy and uninviting. It was the season of the vintage, and the whole scene teemed with life and gaiety. Louis passed through it, enjoying, with the sympathy of benevolence, the happiness he saw. In front lay a mountainous desert. Here he exchanged his vehicle for two stout mules, used to

the precipitous road; and, with Lorenzo, entered the new region.

They were now in the Sierra Morena, which separates La Mancha from the Hesperian vales of Andalusia. The passes of the mountain were long, winding, and melancholy; but the moment he crossed its high misty ridge, Louis felt a difference in the atmosphere; amazing and grateful in its contrast, as the luxuriant landscape before him, when opposed to the frowning sterility behind.

"That is Andalusia!" exclaimed Lorenzo, pointing down to the fairest *piedmont* of Spain. Louis knew there was not a rill, nor a hillock, in that ample province, which did not once owe tribute to his family; he also knew, how they had been lost; and, with mingled feelings, he turned to the careless voice of Lorenzo, remarking on the beauties of the view.

On one side, towards the east, extended the pastoral hills of Jaen, backed by the snowy summits of the distant Nevada of Granada;—the last retreat of the Moors, before their final expulsion from Spain! Louis thought on the latter circumstance, as those storied mountains stood bright in the glowing sky. He recollected, that amongst these persecuted people was Don Ferdinand de Valor, one of his own progenitors; and that his attachment to the Moorish cause had occasioned the first sequestration of the Ripperda territories to the Spanish kings. Louis did not utter his reflections; but, deeply ruminating, gave the reins to his mule, and slowly descended the heights.

With this humble equipage, and by the side of a single attendant, he entered the principality of his fathers. Over those very hills and valleys, where the heroes of his name had conducted armies, to assist or to repel the sovereigns of Spain, he was journeying, to seek the representative of all their honours; an exiled fugitive, in a foreign land! —But William de Ripperda was not less worthy of their blood! And the last of their race did not blush at the banishment of a parent, whose crimes were his virtues.

"My noble, glorious father!" exclaimed he, inwardly, as he looked upwards: that look conveyed his vow to Heaven, —to think only of that father; to exult only in his virtue;

to mourn only his affliction; and to regard his weal or woe, as the only future objects of his own.

When he crossed the Guadalquivir, Lorenzo checked his mule.

"From this spot, to the banks of the Xenil," said he, "a track of many leagues, is the Marquisate of Montemar. The castle stands on a high promontory, far to the west, on the latter river. I never shall forget the joy of the country, when the Duke de Ripperda paid it a visit, on his return from Vienna."

Louis looked on the silver flood, on each side of the noble bridge they were crossing. He, then, was lord of that branch of the magnificent Guadalquivir! The lands he saw, bore his name; the people who tilled them, owed him homage; and he was passing through all, a stranger, and unknown!

He descended from the bridge, into a sinuous track, between long plantations of olives; and, under their refreshing foliage, the low vines, and the waving corn, were alternately spreading their clusters, and yellow tops, to the sun. Here, again, were the reaper, and the joyous treaders of the wine-press. He listened to their jocund voices; their guitars, castanets, and bounding steps; and he could not forbear thinking, with some emotion of displeasure, how little did the memory of him live in their hearts, whose paternal policies had secured to them these fruits of their labour. As long as they were happy, it seemed the same to them, whether their benefactor were on a throne or in a prison!

But it was human nature, consistent with itself; which forgets the Providence that blesses, in the enjoyment of his gifts. The friend of man must, therefore, imitate his Creator; and, pouring his good on those who need it, the just and the unjust, look for gratitude in the world to come.

The travellers again occupied a wheeled carriage, and pursued their journey with rapidity. In some parts, they traversed extensive forests, sublime in sylvan grandeur; then, they wound through the shady defiles of intersecting hills; or passed through towns, and villages, the decorated and airy architecture of which bore evidence of Moresco

origin; all around, was a fair garden. But there was a bound; a wall of mountains rose before them, shooting up into the azure heavens, in sharp and menacing peaks.

Here they resumed their mules. The first part of the ascent was gradual; and, as Louis mounted the rugged acclivities, (sometimes on foot, to scale the highest points, while his beast rested;) he saw, winding along the less abrupt tracks, the shepherds of the plains, driving their flocks to the recesses of the upland pastures. The practice is the same in Scotland; and the similitude pleased one, who had passed some of his happiest hours amongst the Highland hills.

But the image of him, who was then his dear and trusted companion, rose with the remembrance. He saw him bounding down the breezy height, his plaid streaming in the air, and his feathered bonnet in his hand, as he whistled gaily, and waved him from afar.

Louis closed his eyes, to shut out the association with the scene; but it would not do. The glad smile of perfect confidence still shone on the visionary lip; the eyes of the persecuting phantom continued to sparkle with greeting intelligence; and even his voice seemed to sound in his ear! —Louis shuddered to the soul, and, spurring his mule, dashed forward, amongst beetling rocks, and caverned ruins. They had once been a magnificent work of man. An aqueduct built by the Romans, and its remains, clasped the mouth of the pass, which leads to the interior of the mountains. Hence it was called the *Puerta de Ronda;* as these were the peaks of that name, which stretch their stony ramparts between the plains of Andalusia and the borders of the sea. The Sierra de Ronda surpasses, in desolate grandeur, even the sublime wastes of the Morena mountains. No vegetation crowned these vast colossal rocks; bare to the sun and tempest, they looked like the huge altar of nature, to which avenging Jove fastened the consuming but still immortal Prometheus. All around, was either acclivity or precipice; and, from between two high pyramidal crags, Louis caught his first view of the Mediterranean.

A small-fishing town was scattered about a little bay, at

the foot of the mountain. Lorenzo proposed hiring a vessel there, to take them immediately round to Gibraltar. Louis readily acquiesced in a plan, which would exempt him from the delays that might accrue, should they enter the fortress by the Spanish lines. He was to remain in the mountain, to watch the mules, while Lorenzo would descend, by a path he had discovered in the precipice, to the sea-shore. Before they parted, a spot was fixed on amongst the rocks, as a place of rendezvous.

When Lorenzo was gone, Louis bound the animals to the remains of an old wooden cross, which had been erected to mark a place of murder; and, putting down their corn before them, on a spot where grass would never grow, he ascended a high promontory, to see whether he could discern any part of the embattled heights of Gibraltar. But the lofty crest he sought, was not within the mountainous horizon. Broken pinnacles of granite, shattered by the deluge; and fathomless abysms, that made the eye giddy, even to glance at, hemmed him around. As he contemplated the hideous solitude, voices suddenly sounded near him. It was not his intention to listen, but before he could move, he heard the name of his father, pronounced in a rough, guttural tone. He paused breathlessly. The speakers were invisible; and the last two who spoke, continued affirming to the other, that, "the Duke de Ripperda was still as able, as he was willing, to reward all who would do him service."

"Prove it to me," replied his comrade, "and you shall find me ready."

"This purse of ducats!" replied the other: "he will load your felucca with bags of the same, if you carry the merchandise he bargains for!"

A low shelving cliff, and some broken ground, divided Louis from the speakers. He saw the dark points of their Montero caps, under the crag; and, vaulting from his more elevated situation, stood before them. They were two strong-bodied men, with fierce, independent countenances; and, starting on their feet, they, also, stood resolutely; and eyed the no less commanding, though youthful figure, which boldly advanced towards them.

Louis saw, by their wild garb, they were smugglers; and of the Gustanos tribe, the gipsies of Spain. Lorenzo had pointed some of these people out to him, in the Sierra Morena; and had explained their daring lives, and outlawed condition. Some pursued their desperate traffic on the high seas; and others, in wandering bands, vended their forbidden merchandise over the face of the country. But they all called themselves *Serranos;* being the generic name for the inhabitants of these fastnesses of nature; and, as such, Louis addressed them.

"Brave Serranos!" cried he, as he approached them; "you speak of the Duke de Ripperda, as if you had seen him lately. I am seeking him; and any facility you may give me, shall not pass unrewarded."

The men looked on each other; but the elder of the two, striking the head of a huge hatchet into his belt, to show he could maintain his humour, not to be trifled with; answered Louis, by demanding, in his turn, how he knew, that they had any concern with the Duke de Ripperda.

"By accident. I stood by my mule, on the other side of the cliff, and heard you discourse of the Duke, as if you had recently parted from him. Was it at Gibraltar?"

"No."

"Where, then?"

"If you are an emissary of his enemies," replied the smuggler, "you had best return to your mule. I am not the man, to betray a friend."

The blunt honour of the outlaw, bore its own evidence to Louis; and, without a second thought, he answered,—

"I am his son."

"It may be so;" replied the man, "but you are also a courtier; and flesh and blood of that cast are rarely to be trusted. If you dare face the truth, follow me. You will find a man behind that rock, who may tell you, what I will not."

"Who might I see there?"

"One that knows whether the Duke de Ripperda has a son."

"His name?" demanded Louis, who observed a strange, treacherous leer, in the wild countenance of the other man.

"Martini d'Urbino," returned his comrade.

Louis did not hesitate: "I follow you."

The smuggler led the way, down a circuitous ravine, to the mouth of a cavern. Several mules were feeding near its entrance. Louis heard the sound of boisterous jollity; and, as he advanced, he discerned, in the depth of the cave, many persons seated on the ground, under the light of a huge iron lamp, that hung from the roof.

Had he wished to recede, retreat would have been impossible. But all thoughts of personal hazard were lost in the one eager desire of learning some certain tidings of his father. The smugglers' communications to each other, being uttered, when they were ignorant of being overheard; and, therefore, when they could have no intention to deceive; had awakened doubts in him of Ripperda having reached Gibraltar. Perhaps, he had been overtaken by his enemies; and was now, secretly, managing with these adventurous men, to effect his escape from some second alcazar, in the bosom of the mountains! The minister's silence to Santa Cruz, or even to the Queen, on such a recapture, was no argument against its probability; and, impressed with these apprehensions, Louis hurried onward, impatient to see Martini, and to learn how he might yet reach his father.

At the mouth of the cavern, he stopped. His guides drew close to him. They saw no sign of intimidation in his face; and the former spokesman stepping forward, announced to his comrades, the arrival of a stranger, who called himself the son of the Duke de Ripperda. Every man rose at a moment, and with a murmur, and clangor of heavy arms against the rocky floor, that might have appalled more veteran nerves. Louis comprehended his danger. His eye had ranged, at a glance, through the crowd, and he saw no Martini. He recoiled a step, and, placing his hand on his sword, said in a firm voice —

"Gentlemen! I am here, on the faith of that man. He brought me to meet Martini d'Urbino, my father's servant; and I demand to see him."

The smuggler put his hand upon the arm of Louis.

"Signor, you have a stout heart. From that, alone, I believe you to be what you say. Enter the cavern, and you will find the man."

The smuggler turned, and said something, in an unknown language, to his comrades. Louis regarded him with a dauntless, but stern brow; for, while he spoke, the men drew gradually around, though at some little distance, muttering to each other, and fixing their eyes on their prisoner. Such Louis believed himself to be. The only point that was open for his advance, was into a cave. All seemed vacancy there, excepting the pendent lamp, which showed the fragments of the yet unfinished revel.

"Can my father be reduced to league with men like these?"

It was frenzy to suppose it; and, if it were not so, Louis himself was lost. He had gone too far to retreat: and, with a step which announced the resolution with which he would defend his life, he went forward into the den.

The captain of the band followed him. He passed him; and was immediately obscured in the deeper gloom of the interior rock. Louis saw no human being, in the wide range, though many might be hidden in the shadowy depths of its farther excavations. He fixed himself with his back against the side of the cavern; and, with his hand on his sword, steadfastly regarded the spot where the smuggler had disappeared.

His comrades remained without, and evidently watched any egress, unsanctioned by their chief.

Louis heard the advance of hasty steps, from the interior vaults. He planted himself more firmly in his position, and half drew his weapon. The smuggler emerged from a recess, with another person; and, in the instant of his re-appearance, pointed to Louis, and said to his companion —

"Do you know that cavalier?"

The two were in the deepest shadow of the rock: hence Louis could not distinguish, otherwise than by the voice, which of the persons was his conductor. But himself being on the spot, where the light fell direct on his face,

the immediate response to the demand of the smuggler was an amazed cry —

"It is the Marquis de Montemar!"

"'Tis well!" rejoined the outlaw, "else he must have slept without his ancestors."

The voice of him who had recognised Louis, was indeed Martini's; and that faithful servant was, the next moment, at the feet of his master's son.

The smuggler joined his comrades on the rock; and Louis immediately enquired the fate of his father. To his astonishment, Martini informed him that, more than two months ago, that very man had conveyed the Duke to the coast of Barbary.

"Had he been refused admission into Gibraltar?"

"No; he had never sought it."

"What was his object in going to Barbary?"

To this, Martini gave a confused and unsatisfactory reply. All that Louis could gather from his agitated, and sometimes contradictory accounts, was, that after his escape with his master from the alcazar, and during their progress towards the sea, the Duke had never emerged from an intense reverie, except to give orders; and then, he only delivered his commands, and straight was profoundly silent again. It was not until they reached the borders of the Mediterranean, that the object of his meditation seemed explained. While Martini was foddering down his weary mules, Ripperda entered the shed, accompanied by Cavalho, the smuggler. In few words, he declared his intention to embark that night for Tangier; and asked Martini, whether he chose to share his fortunes in that land, or to return whence he came. Martini swore to live and die with him; and the next sun rose upon Ripperda in the kingdom of the Moors.

This intelligence confounded Louis; it was so contrary to his father's written intention, and so totally inexplicable, on any principle of his former conduct. While Martini gave his hurried narration, he did it with evident fear of saying too much; and yet he appeared hovering on the point of saying more. Louis told him there was something in his manner that excited his suspicions. He feared

he withheld some communication, which, as the son of the Duke de Ripperda, he ought to know. Martini's confusion increased with the earnest remonstrance of his young master; and, at last, he confessed that the Duke was engaged in some projects, the consequences of which he dreaded, but he was bound by oath not to betray.

"His Excellency," continued he, "has laid the same bonds on Cavalho; who, with other men of his trade, are sworn to serve him. My present errand to Spain was to bring away certain treasures he left at the Castle de Montemar. They are now on the backs of the mules you saw feeding without; and, by to-morrow night, they will be in Barbary."

Louis was lost in conjecture.

"Are you sure, Martini, my father received no insulting repulse from Gibraltar?"

"I am sure he never made any application there."

"It is very extraordinary! But you dare not satisfy me. I will know it all from himself; and, whatever may be his reasons, his destiny shall be mine."

Martini now acknowledged to Louis, that Ripperda's indignation was so high against his son, there could not be a hope of his admitting him to his presence.

"Every day," continued the faithful creature, "my lord names you in his general maledictions on the ungrateful world; he names you in terms that I have often deprecated from you, on my knees; and, as often, he has commanded me from his sight, till I knew how to distinguish between loyalty and parricide."

"But I do not deserve his curse, Martini," replied Louis, "and I will appear before him. He shall not want a comforter, and an honourable confidant, while he has a son. You must engage this Cavalho to give me a passage in his vessel."

Martini went out of the cavern, to prevail on the smuggler to this purpose; and Louis was left to his bewildering thoughts. That he saw the usually festive spirits of the Italian so completely subdued, redoubled the uneasiness, with which he considered the vow that had been exacted from him, and the smugglers. Louis's open and honour-

able mind, shrunk from such ill-assorted mystery; till, finding some condemnation of his father, in this repugnance, he reproached himself for having conceived the nameless dread he felt creeping over him. He recalled his injured parent's undeviating career of public virtue; he dwelt on the magnanimous features of his character; and could find no argument in either, to sanction his present irrepressible forebodings.

"Yet why," cried he, "does he take refuge with infidels? why associate his honourable name with these desperate men?"

After Louis had settled with Cavalho the terms of his voyage to the opposite coast, he and Martini repaired to the rock he had appointed to Lorenzo for their mutual rendezvous. Lorenzo was sitting by the mules, anxiously awaiting the appearance of his master, when he descried him on the heights, with his companion. It was now deep twilight; but the light was sufficient, when the latter drew near, for Lorenzo to recognise his brother; and the lively pleasure of their meeting was only checked by recollection of the calamitous situation of their respective lords.

Lorenzo informed his master, he could not procure a boat to go round to Gibraltar, the strait being too much infested with Barbary pirates, for small vessels to put to sea. Martini sighed heavily at this information. Louis attributed it to apprehension for the treasure he had to convey, and made a remark to that purpose.

"No," replied the Italian; "Cavalho carries a safe-conduct: nevertheless, I am Catholic enough to wish every corsair at the bottom of the sea!"

A few minutes communicated to Lorenzo, that his master's voyage was now to be to Barbary; where the Duke de Ripperda was already arrived. The faithful servant regarded all places alike, to which he was to follow his lord; and, having received his orders, he went apart with Martini, to discuss with freedom the subjects most interesting to them both.

The night was balmy and serene; and Louis kept his station in the open air. After their conference, the brothers

drew near, and slept by his side; but he watched and mused, and silently prayed to Him who was above the stars. The moon arose. As he contemplated that lovely planet, considering it, as walking in beauty and loneliness, like the youthful saint, who had urged him to persist in the virtue that was his principle, he could, almost, have bowed to the bright similitude. But, when he recollected, that by the vague light of this very moon, the secret depredator crept from his covert; and each deed, that shuns the ken of man, steals upon his slumbers; he shuddered; and, turning from its beams, beheld the long shadow of a figure approaching him. It was Cavalho, from the beach beneath. He came to say that his men were on board, the packages stowed, and all was ready to sail.

In the course of half an hour, Louis found himself on board an outlaw's vessel, with the crescent of Mohammed flying from the mast! This was the "safe-conduct" Martini spoke of, and was sufficient to protect them from all the corsairs of Barbary. Their light galliots scudded by in every direction, and hailed the smuggler as he passed. Cavalho stood on the deck, with a turban on his head, replying through a trumpet, in the barbarous slang of rapine.

The dark blue sea, innocent of the guilty keels which shot across its bosom, heaved its reflecting waves under the brilliant orbs of a midnight African sky. All was tranquil; all in harmony with the first fiat of its Creator; excepting the breast of rapacious man; excepting the heart of an anxious son, ruminating on conjectures, hopes, and fears. He leaned on the railing of the deck, with his eyes fixed on the dusky distant shore; but in a more wretched state of mind, than he could have believed it possible to be his, when approaching the goal of his many prayers, the presence of his father. There was something within him, that would not be satisfied with his present companions; with his father, having made such men his confidential agents; and, in the midst of his troubled thoughts, he often murmured to himself —

"Oh, why did he fly!"

The night continued bright, and the wind fair; and

having smoothly passed Europa Point, the little vessel turned into the strait, between the far-famed Pillars of Hercules, — Calpe and Abyla. Louis gazed on both; on the fortified heights of the one, on the wild cliffs of the other. He thought on Gerizim and Ebal — the blessing, and the curse: "Choose ye between them!"

CHAPTER XIX.

THE next day being a religious feast of the Moors, it was midnight before the Christian crew thought it safe to draw towards the shore. They then ran their bark into an obscure creek, about a league from the town of Tangier. A dull flame, which gleamed on the summit of the rock, as if feeding on its surface, was the mariner's guide through the intricate navigation. The cliffs were high and close; therefore all was black darkness, excepting where this phosphoric beacon opened its wandering fires.

A dead silence was maintained during the working of the little ship into its place of refuge; and, not until its bulging sides grated against the point of landing, did Louis receive any intimation of being near the place of disembarking. Martini pressed his arm, and whispered —

"We may now go on shore; but continue silent till we reach the Hambra."

Cavalho and the Italian jumped from the head of the vessel, upon the land. Louis followed his conductors, leaving Lorenzo in the ship. For nearly an hour the cautious tread of their footsteps was all that disturbed the profound stillness. They passed many low, flat-roofed dwellings, where the inhabitants were shut in, even from the light of the stars, performing the last rites of their solemn feast. Such gloom was in memory of the shadows, which had enveloped their prophet in his flight from persecution: to invade it by noise or intrusion, would have

been deemed sacrilege, and the blood of the transgressor must have expiated the offence.

After their almost unbreathing passage along this populous road, they struck into an avenue of date trees, and stopped before a building of spacious dimensions. Martini turned a key in a low-arched door, and, gently opening it, they all passed through a short paved arcade into a court, open to the sky, and dimly lighted, under its pillared side-aisles, with four painted lamps. A fountain in the centre was discovered, by the transient sparkling of its waters, as they dashed into a marble basin below.

Here silence was broken, and Martini told Louis, that, although his father was under that roof, he durst not introduce him immediately to his presence. In the Duke's exasperated state of mind, an abrupt entrance might destroy at once every object of the interview; therefore, the judicious follower of the unhappy Ripperda's fortunes conjured his son to wait till the Duke were at least apprised of his arrival.

Louis had no resource but to remain where he was. He had too much dependence on the honesty and discretion of Martini to doubt his prudence in this precaution; and the faithful creature left him.

If the gloom around this anxious son were great, that in his mind was of a deeper shade. He was alone; for the smuggler had followed Martini. An hour elapsed in this irksome solitude. He listened for the sound of a voice, or an approaching step; but the silence continued unbroken. His suspense became intolerable; composure was no longer in his power even to assume. He paced the mosaic floor with every agitating conjecture, envying even the feelings of anticipated murder, with which he had awaited the mysterious visitant, in the lonely château of Phaffenberg. At last, the Italian and Cavalho appeared at the extremity of the court. The smuggler turned away, through a dark colonnade; and Martini advanced to Louis, who had darted towards him.

"Follow me, signor; my lord consents to see you."

It was a cold welcome; but Louis thought not of the words, since the permission was granted. He hastened,

through numerous arcades, to a large tented door. Martini drew it back, and Louis beheld the honoured object of his long and filial pilgrimage. The Duke was standing, with his back to him, reading a scroll of paper. Nothing that was not purely the son, was then in Louis's labouring heart; and advancing, to throw himself at his father's feet, he heard Martini say,—

"My lord! the Marquis de Montemar."

Ripperda turned his head.

"Let him wait my leisure;" and, looking on the paper again, he sternly resumed his reading.

Louis stood. The face of deadly paleness, the eye's livid flash, and the deep, emaciated lines, furrowed with every trace of the burning volcano within, filled him with a dismay, even more terrible than the fierce estrangement this reception announced. But it was only for a moment that his astounded faculties were transfixed by the direful apprehension. It was his father still; his noble, injured, suffering father! Rushing forward, Louis flung himself on his knees before him, and covered his face in his robe; for the hand he would have grasped was withheld.

Ripperda's breast was locked.

"What is it you require of me?" said he: "the minion of two queens must have some reason for bending thus low to the man one has dishonoured, and the other betrayed!"

Louis looked up in that implacable countenance. He attempted to speak, but no sound obeyed. He struggled for his father's hand, and wrung it to his heart. Ripperda stood, cold and collected.

"What would you yet seek of me? I have no longer fame, nor riches, nor power, to bestow. These were your idols! Deny it not! They were my own! I found their food ashes. But the draught that turned my blood to poison, was the desertion of my son."

"Hear me, my father!" at last burst from the lips of De Montemar, as he clung around that august but torpid frame. No warmth glowed there, but the gloomy flame of vengeance; no responsive throe whispered there, that sym-

pathy and forgiveness were within. The very stillness, with which he suffered, without returning or reproving, this agonised embrace, smote his son the more severely to the soul. Yet he thought he saw more of resentment than of the new calamity he had lately apprehended, in the stern calmness of his father; and, hoping to prevail by reason, where reason yet reigned — in a less agitated voice, he repeated —

"Hear me, and then condemn me! or believe me, and acquit me — before the tribunal of Heaven, and your own justice!"

Ripperda, with the same unmoved air, replied, —

"Speak what you have to say; I will attend."

He pointed to a divan for Louis to sit. He obeyed; and his father sat opposite to him, folded in his mantle. His eyes were bent to the floor, except when he occasionally turned them, in deep suspicion, upon the earnest narrator. Not one oral remark escaped him, till the communication was brought to an end. He then looked up, and slowly pronounced, —

"'Tis well; and the tale is marvellously told. But I have no connection with its truth or falsehood."

"Yes, my father!" returned Louis: "it contains your justification; the acquittal of your son; and the atonement of your repentant sovereigns!"

"My justification is here!" exclaimed the Duke, proudly striking his breast, and starting from his seat. "And, for atonement! Heaven and earth cannot atone for my injuries. Tell your queen, that William de Ripperda was not born to quail to any man, nor to hold his honours by flattery to a woman. I served the country of my ancestors, for its own sake; neither in homage to her, nor to the King. I devoted myself to the prosperity and peace of the world. But they rejected peace, and they shall find a sword! All have spurned me! I am thrust out from Europe. Yet when I have found a land of refuge, they would ensnare me to return! And I will return! Return, with desolation and death! For Christendom, ungrateful Christendom, has sinned beyond my wish to pardon."

"How am I to comprehend you, my father?"

"You cannot comprehend me. I would not be comprehended by a Spaniard! You were once my son. And you have satisfied me you meant to be loyal to me: but you cannot serve two masters."

"What master would oppose my serving my father? If you mean the King of Spain, your own inexpugnable honour would not raise an arm against him; and he will not, cannot, prevent me dedicating my life to you!"

"My honour, Louis! *Christian* knights have honour! The King of Spain has honour; his ministers and those of Austria have a thousand honours! But where were they all when my *inexpugnable honour* was calumniated and betrayed? Where, when the man they durst not bring to an open trial was committed to the dungeons of the Inquisition, to be silently and securely murdered?"

Louis acknowledged the justice of his father's indignation against the government of Spain; yet he enforced the Queen's persuasions for the return of her still favourite minister; and, dwelling on the glorious result of the public trial she had absolutely promised him, enlarged on his consequent satisfaction, in pronouncing a general forgiveness on the misguided people, who were still the objects of his paternal love.

Ripperda walked the room during this discourse; and, when it ended, gave no other reply to its arguments than pronouncing a brief and solemn curse upon the whole land. Louis shuddered as he gazed on the working brow of that still noble countenance; and, with a self-control that surprised even himself, commenced a new train of persuasions to induce his father to resume his first intention of passing over to Gibraltar. He laid before him the advantages of seeking an asylum in England; where he might live with honour in the bosom of his family, and under the protection of a government constituted to revere his virtues.

"But here," said he, "what can your free spirit expect in a land of slaves?"

Ripperda drew near him. That mouth, on which the graces once played, was distorted by a smile of such triumphant malice, that his son recoiled.

"In the name of God, my father! what is it you intend?"

"I will tell you, Louis," returned he, "when I hear you repeat your oath, to adhere to your father, against earth and heaven. Grapple with me, my son, in this overthrow of our oppressors, and the name of Ripperda shall redeem itself!"

His eyes shot terrific fires, as he spoke; and Louis, direfully convinced of his fears, answered with assumed calmness —

"All that the laws of earth and heaven and my own devoted heart dictate, as duty to my father, I am ready to perform. To follow you whithersoever you go; to abide with you even in this worse than wilderness: — if it be your decisive will!"

Ripperda walked several times up and down the apartment. Several times he glanced suspiciously towards his son, and stopped opposite to him, as if he were going to speak; then turned away, and resumed his perturbed pace. A consuming impatience inflamed every feature; and, once or twice he took out his watch, and, looking at it, muttered to himself. At last, abruptly drawing near his son, he snatched the cross of the Amaranth from his breast, and scornfully exclaimed —

"If you would belong to me, forswear all of which this is the emblem."

Louis was dumb. The Duke resumed with wild solemnity —

"One night in the Alcazar, — when my gaolers had left me no light but my injuries, — I bethought me, who raised those walls! — Louis! — In the black darkness of my prison I saw a host, — they who fell in the passes of Granada! — I saw the spring of my Moorish blood; — and from that hour the soul of Aben Humeya passed into my breast. Yon is my ensign!"

He pointed to a crescent standard, which stood in a far corner of the room. Louis still gazed on him, without speaking; but the apprehension in his mind was in his looks.

"Do not mistake me," rejoined the Duke; "my in-

juries have not made me mad; but they have driven me to a desperation—that will probe you to the heart. Are you now willing to go where I shall go; to lodge where I shall lodge? Shall my God be your God? And my enemies your enemies? Or, am I cast out, like Ismael, to find my revenge on them who mock me—alone?"

Louis had now subdued the effect of his fears, and rallied himself, to argue again with his father as man with man. He could not penetrate the whole of the threats he had heard; yet, his rapid arguments embraced every possible project of revenge. The Duke listened to him with stoical apathy. But, when the energetic pleader dwelt on the heinousness of coalescing with the enemies of the Christian faith, in any scheme against its professors, Ripperda interrupted him, with a withering laugh—

"What, if I make their faith my own?"

"Impossible!" cried Louis; "you whose life has been a transcript of your faith; noble and true! It is not in you, my father, to desert a religion, the founder of which was perfectly holy, just, and merciful; to embrace the creed of an impostor!—one, whose life was polluted with every vice; and whose blasphemous doctrines sanctioned oppression, and privileged murder! Oh, my father, it is not in you to become the very thing that excites your vengeance."

As Louis continued a still more earnest appeal to his father's understanding and conscience, Ripperda suddenly stopped before him.

"You may spare your arguments, De Montemar; I know all you would say; but it is my choice to be a Mussulman."

His son's tongue clove to the roof of his mouth; but he forced the appalling question: "Your choice to abjure the religion you believe? To cast from you, your God, and your redemption?"

"It is my choice to be revenged!" cried the Duke, gloomily striking his sword; "we will talk of redemption hereafter."

"Oh, my father, it may then be too late!"

"My soul on the issue!" returned he, with a second

horrible smile: "you are brave and daring; and will buckle your life to your father's in the desperate leap?"

He grasped his son's arm as he spoke, and looked in his face with a fierce resolution, which menaced some terrible judgment, on the reply he seemed to anticipate. A low, monotonous cadence of many voices, chanting a few dismal notes in regular rise and fall, broke the awful pause. Ripperda dropped the arm he held, and calmly said,—

"They come. In another hour, I shall be sealed an enemy of Christendom!"

Louis comprehended all that was intended.

"By the Saviour you outrage in the dreadful intent," cried he, "I demand of you not to incur the deep perdition! By the honour and renown you so richly possess, I conjure you not to consign all at once to such universal infamy! By the memory of my mother, now in the heaven from which you would seal your everlasting banishment, I implore you to remember that you are a Christian!— that you are the Duke de Ripperda!— that you are my father!"

With the last words Louis sunk on his knees, and forcibly added, "My life and your salvation hang on this dreadful hour!"

All the passions of his nature were now in arms in the breast of Ripperda. The boiling flood rushed to his brain, and pressed upon the nerve that shook the seat of reason. He looked askance upon his son, with a horrible expression that spoke of suspicion, of scorn, nay, even of hate.

"De Montemar," cried he, "what would ye, yet, with one who reads you as you are? What dare you expect from a father, who sees the desertion you meditate? I will not be trifled with, for I cannot be deceived. Be with me, or against me— a Mussulman, or an enemy! For, in this hour, I forswear all connection with the Christian world— all honour to the name of ——"

But, ere he could pronounce the fatal abjuration, an awful cry from his son arrested the concluding words. It was the cry of a pleading angel at the bar of eternal judgment! With its piercing, beseeching appeal, he stretched forth his arms to Heaven, supplicating its mercy, to defend

his father from himself. At this juncture the door opened, and Martini announced the arrival of the sacred deputation. The Duke snatched his hand from the grasp of his son: Louis seized his robe.

"Never will I leave you," cried he, "till you consent to quit these enemies of your honour and of your soul!"

"Release me, on the peril of your life!" returned his father, with a desperation equal to his own; but with a something added to it, that made Martini draw a few steps nearer to the defenceless Marquis. Ripperda's fingers wandered over the hilt of a poniard that was in his girdle.

"Could my blood expiate the offence of Spain, and not pollute my father's hand, cried Louis, "I would say, take the life you gave. Oh! at any sacrifice, but that of soul and spirit, leave this accursed land! If your freedom be pledged to these barbarians, give them my youth and vigour in exchange. Let *them* drink my blood! — let them cover me with insults and oppression! Only do you fly — fly, my father! and save me from veiling my eyes in the dreadful day of judgment!"

Ripperda did not answer, for his possessed mind heard not what was said. He continued gazing on the vehement speaker with a terrible fixture of eye; but, in the moment the sounds ceased, he burst into a tremendous laugh, and, with a force almost preternatural, attempted to break from his son's clinging arms. But filial piety was stronger than the madness of revenge. Louis grasped his knees, exclaiming, in the agony of his spirit,—

"Oh, God, be my advocate!"

At that moment a clenched hand fell on his forehead, with the weight of death. Louis felt no more, for the blow was in his soul. His nerveless fingers relaxed their hold: he fell prostrate, and Ripperda rushed from the apartment.

CHAPTER XX.

When Louis awoke to recollection, he found himself lying on a mat, on a stone floor, and in a dark apartment. A strange mingling of heavy sounds murmured in his ear, as, with a confused sense of suffering and of misery, he strove to recall past events. Such shades are of speedy conjuration. Where he was, he could not guess; but he soon remembered where he last knew consciousness: he too well recollected the last scene which had met his eyes. Its various images were no sooner recalled, than they became vague and indistinct, in the sudden whirlwind of his despair; and, almost believing himself in some Moorish dungeon, he turned his languid frame, in the resignation of utter hopelessness. His hand touched a human face. He raised himself on his arm, and found some one extended on the bare ground, near him, and, by the hard breathing, in a profound sleep.

"Some unhappy wretch, like myself!" murmured he, and fell back upon his bed. Whether he slumbered or mused, he knew not; but he continued to lie in a quiet, dreamy consciousness of irremediable misery.

A sound creaked in the darkness. He turned towards it, and saw a door opened at the extremity of the apartment, by a shadowy figure, which put its hand in for something that hung against the wall, and then withdrew. A faint light glimmered from under the now open portal. For some minutes, he could discern nothing distinctly; but the light suddenly became vivid, and he had a clear, though transitory, view of the adjoining chamber. It seemed vaulted; and a number of men and women were seated on the floor, round a heap of burning logs. Some smoked cigars, others spoke in whispers; some chanted low and dirge-like tunes, while the rest silently applied to their flagons, or fed the fire with broken boughs. A high wind raged without, which, making its way through the ill-contrived fastenings of this rugged abode, blew the ashes and live embers over the wild group. Some had dropped

asleep, and lay in various attitudes, with their heads on their knees, or leaning against the nearest substance for a pillow. The women, whose figures were huge as their male companions, were apparently more robust; for they did not seem to need the same restorer of nature. When all the men were crouched on their rocky bed, these beldames drew closely round the fire; and, bending over it, as if brooding incantation, conversed with each other in low, grumbling tones. At last, they, too, successively dozed over the dying embers, till the whole was involved in total silence. The fire went perfectly out, and Louis's over-strained nerves sunk into a kind of nightmare repose.

About dawn, he was aroused by a stir in the next chamber. The noise had the same effect upon his companion, who awoke with a deep sigh. The person rose, and, leaving the vault, shut the door. All now was darkness; but the lumbering bustle without mingled with the voices of men and women, and gradually augmented to uproar, till, sinking by the same gradations, every sound ceased, and the whole became profoundly still.

It was indifferent to Louis what passed — tumult or silence; whether he were still in the world, or committed to a living grave. He was not himself, for the shock he had received had fevered his brain; and he lay as if the horrible past, and the inexplicable present, were only parts of the same irksome dream. His eyes were closed in this carelessness of observation, when a ray gleamed through their lids. He opened them instinctively, and saw the white light of day streaming through the open door, and Lorenzo bending over him. His torpid faculties aroused themselves at sight of the well-known countenance; and the faithful servant as gladly made a response, which answered the demand of where they were, though he could hardly speak for joy, at seeing his master restored from the stupor which had immediately followed the swoon in which Martini had been obliged to commit him again to the felucca.

Lorenzo related, that, without a word of explanation, his brother had ordered him to accompany the Marquis immediately back to the opposite coast; and that, though Cavallo's vessel could not so instantly return, a comrade's boat

was soon obtained, which landed them safely at the place of their former embarkation. The smugglers had assisted Lorenzo to carry his insensible charge up to the mountain, to take a short repose in the cavern, where the men found their wives waiting to receive them. But these women seemed to have nothing of the sex, but the name. They saw the pale, and scarcely breathing form of the Marquis de Montemar, carried by their husbands into the interior den, without a glance of pity. He was a grandee; one of those whose family had held rule in Spain, and, some day, he might be as ready as any of his order to drag to execution the very men who now gave him shelter! This passed in the minds of the women; and they exulted in the idea that not one female hand of the disdained gipsy tribe would condescend to smooth the pillow, or bestow a look on the object of, perhaps, at that moment, the anxious wishes of his courtly mother!

As Lorenzo had marked these women's haughty rejection of their husbands' orders to administer to their guest, he feared their more active malice; and was not a little rejoiced when the whole train parted in the morning, on their various trafficks, and he was left alone, to convey his master from the cavern in the best way he could. Finding him restored to sensibility and speech, he did not venture to ask him the cause of his so terrible trance; for Martini had warned him neither to make such enquiries himself, nor to satisfy the curiosity of whatever persons in Spain, by recounting any part of the incidents in the Sierra de Ronda, nor hinting at his own transitory visit to the opposite coast.

Louis listened, with a very few observations, to all that Lorenzo said. As the fresh and balmy air of the morning breathed into the cavern, his frame became braced; and, though still bewildered in his thoughts, he rose; and, walking out into the dell before the cave, despatched his companion to procure mules for re-crossing the mountains. The animals were soon on the rock, and, with an aimless mind, he commenced his return to Madrid. A film was over every faculty. Lorenzo watched anxiously the rayless fixture of his eye, which turned to no object, nor his

ear to any sound, during the rapid progress of their journey. But all his haste was vain to check the fire that was preying on his master's veins, or to arrive at Madrid, where alone he could expect relief or consolation.

In the Val de Peñas, Louis became too ill to proceed; and, happily, the alarming symptoms seized him in sight of a monastery. Lorenzo left him in the carriage, and went forward alone, to solicit the hospitality of the brotherhood. They were as eager to bestow, as he to ask, the benevolence required; and Louis soon found assistance under their charitable roof.

For three long weeks he lingered between suffering and the grave. His fever was on the nerves, attended with delirium, and every other prognostic of a speedy termination of his days. Lorenzo shared the constant vigilance of the good fathers, in watching by the invalid; and, at the commencement of the fourth week, the delirium left him. His present recovery to recollection was not, like that in the cave, dim and distressing. He spoke with so much strength of voice, and clearness of perception, that his affectionate attendant was transported with hope; but the priest considered it as a last gleam from the departing soul, which often sheds its brightest light on the earth, just as it leaves it for ever. Under this impression, the good father begged Lorenzo to withdraw for a few minutes, while he should discourse, as became his faith, with the restored Marquis.

When he found himself obeyed, and that he was alone with his patient, he cautiously apprised him of his approaching dissolution; and then as piously exhorted him to dedicate the sane hour which had been granted to him, in making his peace with God.

"I have one act to perform," returned Louis, "before I am called into the presence of my only Father. Give me writing materials."

The monk laid paper before him, but held the pen in his own hand.

"Dictate, and I will write; and, I trust, the confession may bring peace to your departing soul!"

"No," replied Louis, "my own hand alone must re-

cord what is on my soul. And no eye — Lorenzo,"— he looked for that faithful servant, and finding him absent, requested the monk to call him in. "He must be a witness, with you, Father, that the probably altered characters are mine."

Lorenzo was summoned, and the monk briefly told him the cause. He was transfixed, till the gentle voice of his master addressed him.

"Lorenzo," said he, "your fidelity to me has been more like that of a brother than of a servant. I trust you with the charge of my last testament; for I know you will execute it, as if my eye were then looking upon you."

Lorenzo did not speak, but put to his lips the trembling hand that took the pen from the friar.

Louis passed an hour in writing. Both witnesses sat at a distance; Lorenzo, with his face bent down on his knees, and the priest marvelling within himself, at the firmness with which the dying Marquis pursued his task. His eyes receded not once from the paper, nor did his fingers relax, while, with determined truth, he related all that had passed in the Hambra, between him and his father; yet, in the dreadful confession, he pleaded, his almost belief, that calamity had disordered the senses of his unhappy parent. On these grounds he implored the Marquis Santa Cruz, (to whom the paper was addressed,) not only to conceal this tale of shame from every hostile eye; but, by the friendship he once felt for both father and son, and by his vows of Christian charity, to leave no means unexerted to recall Ripperda from his apostasy.

"If I deceive myself," continued this pious son, "in believing the existence of that mental derangement, which would once have been my most fearful deprecation, but, since this direful crime, it is now my fervent hope, many would tell me I must despair of his salvation. My trust is in a higher judgment. In Him, who blessed me with such zeal as yours, to be his minister to my erring parent; in Him, who promises pardon to the penitent; and to whom all that may seem impossible to man, is as already done.

"In this faith I shall lay down my head in the grave,

with perfect confidence, that a way is open, by which the unhappy abjurer of his Saviour's name, may yet be received to mercy. In the world to come, I may hope to embrace my father, reconciled to his God, and washed from every worldly stain! Meanwhile, in this, my last act, I recommend him to your secret exhortations; to the prayers of my saint-like uncle of Lindisfarne."

Here Louis paused, and a tear fell upon the paper. It was the first that had moistened the burning surface of his eye, since the calamity which had stretched him on that bed of death. It mingled with the ink, in writing the dear and honoured name. He resumed: —

"This paper must pass from your hands, my revered friend, to those of Mr. Athelstone. Let his eyes alone share the confidence of this sad narrative. Let him know, that his nephew, the child of his nurture, dies happy — happy in the hope that is, and that which is to come!"

As he added an awful farewell to his beloved aunt and cousins, a crowd of tender recollections thronged upon his soul. He hastily addressed the packet to the Marquis Santa Cruz. Besides this comprehensive letter, he wrote a few brief lines, which comprised his will; and the monk and Lorenzo having signed it, a seal was affixed to its cover. The abbot was summoned to despatch the one to Madrid; and Lorenzo received the other, to convey to Lindisfarne, when his beloved master should be no more.

This duty done, Louis sunk exhausted on his pillow. But the cord on his heart was taken off. The benign image of his earliest friend, like the vision of a ministering angel, had unloosed it; and a holy dew seemed poured upon the desert of his soul. As he laid himself back on the bed, whence he expected never to rise again, he thought of the only hand which he wished could have given him the last bread of life; the only hand he could have wished might have closed his eyes, when temporal life was fled. He wept at the distance which separated him from that father of his moral being; he wept that he must breathe his last sigh on a stranger's bosom. But his spirit was resigned; and as his tears ceased to flow, he gently fell asleep.

CHAPTER XXI.

During the confinement of Louis in the monastery of Val de Peñas, and while the Marquis Santa Cruz and the Queen of Spain were alike wondering at no intelligence having arrived from him, since his departure from Madrid; news, of various kinds, created as various perplexities in the cabinet of the King.

The annual wealth of Spain, in its Mexican galleons, had been taken by a fleet of Barbary corsairs. The coasts of the Mediterranean were filled with pirates, in vessels of every size; and manœuvred with a courage and a skill that baffled every art to avoid them. But this was not all. While such an extraordinary accession to the Barbary marine rose on the sea, like an exhalation, a Moor, under the name of Aben Humeya, as suddenly made his appearance in Morocco, carrying all before him, in the field and in the state. He possessed the confidence of Abdallah, without a rival; and after having discomfited that monarch's rebellious kinsman, Muley Hamet, was advancing, at the head of his victorious army, to redeem to the Emperor the possession of Ceuta; the Gibraltar of the Spaniards on the African shore.

Hostilities were at this time hanging in the balance between Great Britain and Spain, on account of Gibraltar; and, to awe the replies of the Britannic minister to its demanded restitution, an army of twenty-five thousand men, (which was on its march to Italy, to effect a similar object on the duchies of Parma and Placentia,) was ordered to fall back, and make demonstrations towards the British fortress. Part of this army was in Valencia; and, on a second courier arriving from Ceuta, with intelligence that Aben Humeya had concluded a treaty, defensive and offensive, between the Moorish Emperor and the other Barbary powers, King Philip saw the necessity of detaching one division, at least, to the protection of his African dominions. He appointed Santa Cruz to the command; but,

in consequence of some strange, inconsistent, and perverse arguments from his ministers, when the Marquis appeared for his last directions, his Majesty informed him that a thousand men were sufficient to raise the siege. If more were necessary, they should be sent; but too formidable a body, at first, would only increase difficulties, by raising the consequence of a barbarian chief in the eyes of Christian Europe. Santa Cruz saw that the jealousy of the ministers against himself, was the origin of this damp on the first vigorous proposal of the King; but, determined to do his own duty at least, he acquiesced, and withdrew from the royal presence. He made a rapid journey to Val del Uzeda, where he found his son just arrived from Italy; and, giving him orders to hold himself in readiness to accompany any second detachment to Ceuta, he took a parental farewell of his family, and returned to Madrid. In the same evening that he alighted at his own hotel, he received the packet from Louis de Montemar, and had a long and distressing conversation with the friar who brought it.

The contents of the letter filled him with astonishment and trouble. He had no need of further investigation, to conclude who was the Aben Humeya who was putting so new and menacing a face on every thing in Barbary; and, considering that circumstances demanded the disclosure to the Queen, he hastened to the palace. A private audience was immediately granted; and the letter of the dying son of the lost Ripperda was confided to Her Majesty.

Pity was not the weakness of Isabella's heart; and she read the confession, contained in the hardly legible characters, with unsoftened indignation. Ripperda's treasures had then spread the Spanish seas with depredators; his domination had concentrated the states of Barbary into one interest; his resentment had turned their whole force against the power of Spain! She had but one policy; to wrest this mighty Son of Vengeance from his passion and his influence. And, having determined, as most prudent, to conceal the discovery from the King, and his ministers, she gave her present counsellor *carte blanche*, to reconcile Ripperda on any terms; and, should his more worthy son be

found alive, she commanded, that he should be made the agent with his father.

"But, should he be no more?"—enquired the Marquis, with a sigh which could hardly have been deeper for his own son.

"Then," replied she, "you must choose another ambassador. I will reward whoever goes, according to his success with this formidable renegado."

With this commission, though without a hope of seeing the son of Ripperda yet an inhabitant of this world, Santa Cruz took the convent in his way to the plains of Valencia. When he alighted at the gate, the abbot met him; and answered, to his fearful question, "That the Marquis de Montemar not merely breathed, but seemed in less danger of immediate dissolution than when the messenger had left the convent."

From the night in which this despatch had been sent off, the virulence of his fever disappeared. He now felt, and bewailed himself, as a man; and the fiend, which despair had locked within his bosom, fled with the genial flood. He remained in a state of calm, that astonished himself; while it amazed all around, to see one who was a heretic, so evidently comforted by an influence from on high.

Santa Cruz sent to inform him of his arrival, and was immediately admitted to his cell. Lorenzo withdrew, as the Marquis entered. Louis was dressed in his usual clothes, but, from weakness, still lay on the couch. The window of his cell was open, to admit the mountain air, which blew fresh and cheeringly over his face. That face was not to be described: it spoke of heaven; and his whole form harmonised with the celestial witness.

Santa Cruz stopped, and gazed on him; while Louis, raising himself on his arm, stretched his hand towards him, with a smile, that made the veteran's head bow before the youthful saint. He advanced, and embraced him. Louis bent his face upon the Marquis's hand.

"You will live, my son!" cried Santa Cruz, in a burst of manly sensibility; "you will recover your father, to his God, and to his country!"

"I could wish to live, for that purpose!" replied Louis;

" but be it as Heaven wills. My prayers may be effected without my own agency."

When recovered from his emotion, the Marquis communicated his present commission; and, in recapitulating the tidings from Morocco, the mantling colour on the hectic cheek of Louis showed that he, too, recognised his father in the new Aben Humeya. In narrating the rapid successes of the apostate Duke, Santa Cruz dwelt on one circumstance, which contained some antidote to the poison of the rest.

Muley Hamet (a disaffected kinsman of the Emperor) had appeared, with a large army of malecontents, on the plain of Marmora. This place is about half a day's journey from the capital of Morocco. Aben Humeya assembled the household troops; and, on the same day the tidings arrived, marched to the field of sedition. His forces were inferior in number to the enemy; but their leader gave them an example of confidence. Muley Hamet practised the usual Moorish stratagems, which the discipline of his adversary so completely baffled, that, enraged with disappointment, the rebel chief dared a general engagement, in the very worst position he could have chosen. Aben Humeya had drawn him into the declivities of the mountains, where the cavalry, his principal strength, could not act; and sending a detachment to block up the regress by occupying the pass of Cedi Cassem, the Moorish prince suffered a total defeat. Every soul might have been cut off, but the new Mussulman had not yet forgotten the warfare of Christian nations. He called to his men to remember, that the misguided followers of Muley Hamet were their brethren; and that, after the signal chastisement they had received, it was the victor's duty to suffer the escape of the remnant. Aben Humeya pursued the same conciliatory conduct in taking Tetuan, and Arzilla, from the power of the rebel; and, an offer of general pardon being spread amongst the refractory Moors, the troops of Muley Hamet deserted to his adversary.

" This consummate policy, is the Duke de Ripperda," said the Marquis; " and the Duke in his sanest mind."

" I would draw another inference from such policy,"

rejoined his son, "that, whether his mind be in full health, or disordered, this mercy is a sure pledge, the Christian principle remains in his heart."

"There is no disordered intellect in these plans and executions," returned Santa Cruz; "but a stretch of capacity, and an extravagant exertion of its power, which compels common minds to pause and wonder. Genius, however, may sometimes be mistaken for madness; for, it frequently acts entirely under the influence of imagination, and does things so utterly irrational, that, if they be not the effect of an absolute want of reason, they are certainly the proceedings of a dereliction from reason, and produce the consequences of madness."

Louis knew to whom this latter remark might have too well applied; and, with stifled emotion, he answered—

"That conduct, then, is most likely to be according to good judgment, which is actuated by sober experience alone."

"That conduct," replied the Marquis, "which avoids the enthusiasm of fancy, and of the passions, as he would the shoals and quicksands of the sea! But there is something more required than sober experience. A well-regulated mind must sit in judgment upon that experience; and, my dear De Montemar," continued he, impressively, "wisdom and virtue will be the issue."

Louis returned to the last act of his father, upon the plains of Marmora. It obliterated the frenzied moments of their parting; and, opening his heart to a dawn of hope, he took the letter of the Queen, which her own hand had addressed to the banished Ripperda, and putting it in his bosom, told his veteran friend, he trusted to deliver it himself, on the African shores.

Santa Cruz was to set off the following morning towards his army; and having calculated the slower progress of troops to the coast, and the usual delays in getting on board the transports, he (though doubting his young friend would live to see it) fixed a day for Louis joining him at the place of embarkation.

But Louis's reanimation was not transitory. Youth, and inward vigour, with the bracing, life-inspiring air, that is

breathed from the lips of a friend, restored him to such a strength, that, at the time appointed, he appeared on the quarter-deck of the *Trinidada;* the vessel that was to bear Santa Cruz to the Mohammedan shore.

Unconscious of the wound they probed, the officers of the General's staff discoursed largely on the crusade to which they were going. Some affirmed the new Moorish leader to be an Arab; others, a once renowned brother of the Emperor, who, on that prince's accession to the throne, had suddenly disappeared. Abdallah had been jealous of his fame; and rumour spoke of the bowstring; hints, also, were given of perpetual imprisonment, in the seven towers of Mequinez; and now that a stranger warrior, whom no person knew, had appeared so opportunely in the cause of Abdallah—it was more than suspected, that the captive prince had purchased liberty and honour, by assuming a new name, and fighting the battles of his brother.

Louis could not bear these guesses; nor the invectives, (to the justice of which his own integrity assented,) in which these young men indulged, against the numerous renegadoes at the court of Abdallah. Sidi Ali, a Sicilian apostate and a celebrated engineer, was most especially the object of their anathemas; as, from his skill, they expected some protraction of the glory of repelling Aben Humeya from the walls of Ceuta. When these discussions began, Louis usually retired to a distant corner on the quarter-deck; and while his upright mind armed itself with conscious virtue, his body derived its wonted vigour from the genial breezes of the sea.

On the night of the sixth day, after they had set sail from the port of Carthagena, the little fleet entered the bay of Ceuta; and on a wave smooth as glass, the troops stepped into boats, which rowed them to the perpendicular walls of the town. There all was deep shadow. Louis saw nothing through the universal blackness. Nor did he note the dreary splashing of the boats, in the fathomless water; nor did he feel the chilling vapour, which arose from its cold surface, withheld from evaporation by the height and closeness of the outworks. He was in the first

pinnace; and had no thought, no observation, but for the object of his landing.

A long flight of steps in the rock, between two walls, was the only ingress on this side into the fortress. The boats crowded to the spot, where their crews severally leaped on the stony ladder. A light heart was in all their breasts, and, plumed with anticipated victory, they seemed to fly. Louis alone, whose whole soul was once as much on the wing for military achievements, moved with a slow, but a firm step; for against whom, was the sword of his first field to be drawn!

On entering the fortress, he fully understood how necessary was all this silence in gaining the shore. Count de Blas, the governor, represented that the Moors were in prodigious force before the town. That several skirmishes had taken place, between their advanced posts and some corps of observation from the garrison. The Spaniards had been beaten in with loss; and a universal panic prevailed in the garrison. No soldier would show his head above the ramparts; and the consequence was already seen, in the audacity with which Aben Humeya was opening his trenches. Until Santa Cruz arrived, De Blas declared, he was in nightly dread of an attempt being made to storm the town; and, in such a case, he could not have put any dependence on his dismayed troops.

Prior to Aben Humeya having taken up his present position, he had reduced the whole of the rebellious bashas to the obedience of their Emperor. Their leader, Muley Hamet, extended his flight from the hilly country, to the deserts of Taffilet; while Abdallah, in honour of this proof of victory, sent a deputation of his royal brothers to invest Aben Humeya with the dignity of Basha of Tetuan; and to present him with a banner, on which was embroidered—

"*Proceed! to exceed is no longer possible!*"

De Blas panted to mortify the insolence of the new Basha; and he suggested the advantage of making a sally with the fresh troops. To this argument Santa Cruz replied, that he had orders from his sovereign to act with peculiar circumspection. He was to communicate with

the Moorish general; and, to do this, with the necessary knowledge, he must have time to estimate their relative strength.

These investigations began the next day, and in the prosecution of them, Santa Cruz was always attended by Louis.

In the course of these proceedings, the group of observation mounted on a redoubt far to the front in the Spanish lines. The Marquis contemplated, with his glass, the scientific precision with which the enemy's works were advancing. The Count de Blas stood near him, and expatiated, with much heat, on the probable effects of the new discipline introduced into the Moorish army by its present chief.

"But these European tactics," cried he, "are engrafted on a true barbarian soil. A flag of truce, which I despatched to the Infidel, to gain time, was fired on in its return, and, in attempting to make good its retreat, a party of the enemy rushed from behind yon epaulement to the left, and took the whole troop, to a man. One, who afterwards made his escape, informed me, the proud Aben Humeya chose to take offence at some want of official reverence in the Spanish officer's manner of quitting the camp. The moment it was told him, he ordered our countrymen to be pursued and seized; and, at the same time, he denounced a similar fate, to all who should henceforward presume to bear any Spanish flag within the reach of his lines."

While the Governor was speaking, a squadron of Moors turned that very sidework, and presented themselves on the plain, glittering in all the splendid array of the Basha's peculiar suite. In the midst of the group, which immediately parted to short distances, Louis beheld an august figure. De Blas proclaimed it to be Aben Humeya. In that clear atmosphere, no glass was necessary to note an object just without the reach of musket-shot; and to observe the Basha, Louis's soul was in his eyes. Was it his father? or, indeed, a native Moor, who thus wore a name, always too dear to the race of Ripperda.

At sight of their leader, the acclamations of the Moors

in the trenches were loud and incessant. He was mounted on a black horse, richly caparisoned; and the dress of the new Mussulman was in every way suited to his lately-assumed rank and people. It was loose, and of blue and gold tissue over a yellow caftan embroidered with gold. His vest and belt-arms glittered with jewels; while a splendid scimitar hung at his side. The sacred crescent, with the heron-plume, crested his turban. And the bridle in his hand sparkled with brilliant studs; while the magnificent housings of his horse almost touched the ground. Aben Humeya rode forward, and again the air was rent with shouts. A flourish of wind-instruments succeeded; and his suite began to play their evolutions before him, in all the various exercises of the lance and dart.

Louis thought he could not mistake the demeanour of his father. But all this supremacy over the rest of mankind, in personal dignity and grace, seemed to his virtuous son, only a garment of mockery to the fallen spirit within. It was horrible in his eyes, and he turned silently from the vociferous observations of De Blas.

That same evening Santa Cruz ordered a flag of truce to be in readiness for the Moorish camp at daybreak. At the mention of so dangerous an expedition, every officer shrunk back. None spoke. But Santa Cruz neither addressed any, nor looked on any: the forlorn hope on this enterprise was already chosen.

When Louis came in the morning for his last orders, he found the Governor with his General, remonstrating on the madness of exposing so distinguished a young man as the Marquis de Montemar in so perilous a hazard. Santa Cruz repeated to his young friend what De Blas had said, and that not a man in the garrison would volunteer to form the escort.

Louis bowed gratefully to the solicitude of the Count; but answered the Marquis, by requesting to have the white flag delivered to him, as he should go alone. To hamper him with cowards, Santa Cruz thought, would only invite danger, and he put the flag into his hand.

Louis left the gates with no other companion than his courage and his faith. The works were crowded in every

part, to watch the desperate adventure. At a given spot he halted, to unfurl the white banner. Again he shot forward, waving its staff, to be seen by the Moorish outposts, as he advanced within their fire. A hundred turbans emerged from the nearest trenches: — and a yell of such horrid import burst from every mouth, that his horse started on its haunches. Nothing, however, checked its rider. He struck his spurs into its sides; and, in spite of a strange noise from its nostrils, fully descriptive of surprise and terror, he resumed his onward speed. The savage cries from below were now echoed by a thousand voices from the works above; and a volley of musketry was discharged. Louis, for a moment, was lost in the smoke; but it cleared away, and his friends on the walls of Ceuta once again saw their resolute flag-bearer, galloping towards the camp. Another volley succeeded, and the plain was again obscured: again it cleared; but no Louis was to be seen. Vengeance alone now occupied the breasts of the men upon the Spanish lines. Their courage revived with their indignation; and, rushing without command, from a sally-port, they charged fiercely towards the point of their revenge. At sight of this sortie, a similar detachment issued from the gates of the camp. The horse of Louis had been transfixed by two balls, and lay struggling on the ground. He extricated himself from the dying animal, and was rising from its side, just as the sally-port of Ceuta opened, to rescue or avenge him. Being on foot, the broken ground of the plain concealed him from his friends until he rejoined them; when, his faithful Lorenzo immediately giving him his horse, he was soon remounted.

His re-appearance having been discovered by Santa Cruz, who stood on the redoubt, the sortie was recalled; and Louis, with the troop, re-entered the garrison.

The implacable fury of this second breach of the received laws of war, inflamed the Spaniards beyond all terms of mercy: and there was no name, opprobrious to a man and a soldier, which they did not lavish on the fierce Aben Humeya.

Louis withdrew to the quarters of Santa Cruz. His re-

solution was taken; and he only awaited the Marquis's sanction, to put it in execution that very night: to go by stealth into the Moorish camp, and depend on Providence for conducting him to the presence of his father.

Santa Cruz would not hear him to an end. He regarded this last act, of firing upon a single man, as so glaring a proof of apostasy from honour, as well as from religion, that he no longer retained a hope of the perpetrator's return to truth and loyalty.

"No, De Montemar," said he, "we must now let that alone for ever. You would only lose yourself, without recovering him."

"I should lose myself, indeed," replied Louis, "were I to abandon the only purpose for which I came to this country; the only purpose for which I believe my life is lengthened. He will not imbrue his hands in the blood of his own son; and, who in that camp, will dare to touch the man, of whom he will say, 'Let his life be protected?'"

"This is delusion, De Montemar. He has abandoned his God. He has trampled on his honour. And, with these facts, there is no reasonable hope."

"My hope may be beyond reason; but it is not against it," replied Louis. "Grant me the means to fulfil my resolution, and I dare promise myself that you shall see me again."

"Never," returned Santa Cruz; "the blood of rashness shall never be on my head. Leave me now, and we will discourse of more rational projects to-morrow."

Louis obeyed. But to-morrow might never occur to him. That night, alone, and unassisted, he determined to penetrate the Moorish lines.

CHAPTER XXII.

From his observations, while carrying the ill-received flag of truce, he thought it possible to throw himself into one of the trenches nearest the enemy's position; and, in the disguise of a Moor, return with the workmen into the camp.

By means of his devoted Lorenzo, (who would have suffered the rack, rather than betray the confidence of his master,) he procured the accoutrements of a Moresco soldier, from a Jewish merchant in Ceuta. The aspect of the night favoured his project; and he left the Spanish fortress, in company with the latest outpost. The growing shadows gave him opportunity to glide away unobserved; and having had his disguise previously hidden amongst the ruins of an old fort, midway between the Moorish and Spanish works, he covered himself with the Moresco trousers, haique, and turban. He then took a pickaxe in his hand, and cautiously proceeded along the flank of the Moorish trenches; the line of which he discerned by a pale and zigzag gleam along the surface of the ground. It was too faint to be noticeable at any distance, and arose from the low lanterns within; by which glow-worm light, when the sky was obscured, the yet inexpert engineers performed their work.

When arrived near the verge of the excavations nearest the camp, he listened breathlessly to the clash of cymbals, which announced an exchange of workmen. Now was his moment. He slid down the bank, into the vacant fosse; and stood, close in its angle, shrouded by complete darkness. The lamps did not extend beyond the place of immediate labour. He had hardly taken his station when an iron gate opened into the trench, the cymbals ceased, and an advance of numerous feet from the camp sounded towards him. It was answered by a similar approach from the lines. He drew himself closer into the angle, as the latter passed him in enfilade; but observing that each man, as he marched by a particular officer, cried aloud, "Lahilla Lah!" and was then counted by the officer, Louis saw the danger of being last in the file; and stepping in, between the rapid step of one soldier, turning the angle, and the halting approach of another, he repeated the expected response, and moved forward unmolested. He entered the camp without impediment; and the Moors parting to their different quarters, he turned quickly in a direction, which, he thought, from the description of the

escaped Spaniard, would lead him to the pavilion of its commander.

Excepting the words he had repeated as the parol of the night, and of the meaning of which he was entirely ignorant, he knew not a syllable of the Moresco tongue. The camp was only partially lighted; but near the Basha's quarters the lamps became thicker, until the platform around his tent was one blaze of illumination.

Several Moorish officers were walking to and fro, as if waiting for orders; and the ample circle in which the pavilion stood, was hemmed round by the body-guards of the Basha. These men were negroes, of huge proportions, and equipped in the most formidable array of barbaric arms. They sat on the ground, in the Moorish style, with each his hand on his drawn scimitar.

Louis drew into the comparative obscurity of one of the tented streets diverging from the platform; and, with a scrutinising eye, revolved how he should pass this excluding circle. While he looked from man to man, the curtained entrance of the pavilion was drawn back by two slaves, and a blaze of flambeaux issued from it, in the midst of which was a military figure, in a splendid Moorish dress: but it was not his father.

By one act, all the negroes bent forward, and struck their foreheads to the ground. Even the officers made the same abasement to this personage; who, graciously bowing his head, passed on, followed by a procession of flambeaux. But still the light was glaring as noonday around the tent. It was only by stratagem Louis could enter it, and his life must be set on the hazard.

After watching a little time, to afford opportunity for some favourable accident to open a way, without the desperate expedient he revolved, he retreated through a cross passage of dark tents, that led into the great illuminated avenue before the pavilion; and, having wrapped his mother's picture, which he always wore at his breast, in the silk handkerchief he took from his neck, he put them into his bosom; and, then boldly plunging into the darkened street, into the full light of the platform, moved directly to the curtained entrance.

In an instant, a host of scimitars was at his breast. He stood unmoved, as they stopped him, and exclaiming — "Aben Humeya!" took the handkerchief from his breast, and held it forth, with a commanding air, towards the tent. He had not even repelled the weapons with his hand, so firm did he stand, in perfect carelessness of his own fate, while thus pressing forward in the line of his duty. His air awed the negroes. Louis profited by their suspended faculties, and was passing on, when a person in the dress of an officer intercepted him. This man made a barbarous attempt to speak the Moresco language, but in a mutilated jargon, consisting of every tongue on the Mediterranean shores; and saluting Louis by the opprobrious appellation of slave, demanded, with other viler epithets, how he presumed to violate that sacred threshold.

Louis saw the miserable soul of some base renegado of the Balearic Isles, in this insolent attack; and answering him at once in Spanish, warned him, in laconic but haughty language, to beware how he insulted a man, who came, in the face of three hundred scimitars, to lay the spoil of a brave Spaniard at the feet of Aben Humeya.

"Conduct me to his presence," continued he; "or know, that he who speaks Spanish like his native tongue, is not less able to prove a Moorish sword his native weapon!"

The renegado eyed the speaker with a trembling suspicion. His head might pay the forfeit, should he introduce an improper person into the pavilion; and should his perverseness exclude one on whom the Basha conferred confidence, he would incur equal jeopardy. He now wished he had left the responsibility of this ingress to the negroes; but he had interposed, and must proceed.

"Your name?" said he.

"That the Basha will know, when he sees me."

The officer feared to hesitate, and led him to the first range of the pavilion. Like the outer court, it was lined with guards. The renegado, in a tone of some respect, told Louis, he must stop in this vestibule until his credentials in the handkerchief were delivered to Aben Hu-

meya. The alcaide of the guard, who carried it in, returned with consternation in his countenance; and, beckoning Louis to follow, preceded him through several chambers, before they arrived at the sacred inclosure. Within that veil none durst penetrate, without an especial summons from the Basha.

The officer drew aside the curtain, and pointing in silence to the door, Louis entered alone. The Basha stood by a Moorish couch, directly under a lamp in the centre of the place. A table was near him, on which lay a naked scimitar, and an open casket containing the Koran. He had the picture in his hand.

Louis's face was overshadowed by the dark folds of his turban; and, as he did not assume the usual position of all who (of less than equal rank) approached the august presence, the Basha fell back a step, and exclaimed —

"Who art thou, that darest so to approach Aben Humeya?"

Louis, with clasped hands, bowed his head upon his breast, but could not immediately answer. It was his father's voice, and he had not ventured his life in vain!

"Whence came this Christian spoil?" demanded Ripperda: "was it taken from the living, or the dead?"

The voice was firm; but the tension with which he grasped the picture, was sufficient assurance that an exerted nerve was necessary to enable him to put the question, with the steadiness of one indifferent to the owner's fate.

"I took it from the living!" replied Louis, "to pass me into the presence of one who gave me life."

An inarticulate sound burst from the lips of his father: he moved a few hasty steps towards him; but as suddenly starting back —

"Presumptuous boy!" cried he, "what do you promise yourself by this temerity? Are you not aware that the act which made me a Mussulman, separated me from all former relations? and that, in Louis de Montemar, I can see no other than a Spanish spy?"

"No act of man," replied Louis, "can cut asunder the bands of nature; can separate the unity of son and father,

in the great objects of time and eternity. And in that faith I appear again before you, on a second mission from your religion and your country."

"This told me a braver story!" returned Ripperda, sternly putting the picture into the hand of his son; "but speak your errand, that I may dismiss the messenger."

Louis bore the taunt without reply; and with brief, but energetic argument, he repeated to his gloomily listening father, the new proposals from the Queen. They assured the banished Duke, that the decree of his exile not only was recalled, and the King ready to publicly declare the charges of his enemies false; but his Majesty had promised, not merely a general amnesty, for his present proceedings in Africa; and would, on his return to Spain, invest him with a new and extraordinary trust at court, to the confusion of his rivals, and the assertion of his character in the minds of all men. The church, too, should open its arms to receive him; for Isabella would obtain an absolution from the Pope for the brief apostasy. So that dark deed, obliterated by penitence, might remain as totally unknown to the world at large, as, his son trusted, it would then be blotted from the book of God.

"Louis," replied the Duke, "have you known me so long, by the best proofs of man—his actions! and are you yet to be told, that my religion consists wholly of the prosperity of the country I serve? and that my country is that which best knows the value of my services?"

"Then," returned his son, not wishing to comprehend the whole of his speech; "that country is now Spain. Read the letter of Isabella, and you will find the prayer of the nation in every line. She is as a mother petitioning a beloved son to spare his brothers. Oh, my father, listen to the native magnanimity of your soul, rather than to this new and unnatural pride, and resume at once the patriot and the Christian. None, excepting the King and Queen, and the Marquis Santa Cruz, know that Aben Humeya and Ripperda are the same; and, having been spared that open stigma, your religion and your country may yet be that of Spain."

Ripperda grasped the still unread letter of the Queen;

"De Montemar!" said he, "and is it you that can think I would live under shelter of any shrouded act? No; I have dared to be a Mussulman! to resume the name of my Moorish ancestors; to tread in the unreceding steps of Julian and De Valor. What I am, I am; and my banners, here, and in Spain, shall proclaim to all the world, that Ripperda's injuries are in the breast of Aben Humeya."

Again Louis urged him to read the last appeal of his former sovereigns, and then trample on his country and them, if vengeance could yet have place, with such ample restitution.

"Restitution!" repeated the Duke, and broke the seal. He read the letter, and threw it from him; but not with the same equanimity as he began the contents. In the offered pardon, and the promised honours, all his imputed transgressions were recapitulated, to enhance the merit of the amnesty; all the accusations of a vain woman's jealousy were poured forth in extenuation of her share in his fall; and the whole was wound up in a passion of reproaches and entreaties, in which the chains which had formerly bound him to her feet, were so apparent, that his incensed spirit rose with every line; and he cast the letter from him.

Louis trembled at this issue, so unexpected from what he had hoped would have made some softening impression on his father's implacable revenge; but, with a firm voice, he asked, what was his reply to that petition, from a Queen and a woman?

Ripperda turned on him a penetrating and contemptuous look.

"Have you read that petition?"

"No, my Father; but I know it is to ratify all that I have assured you."

"I know not what it would ratify!" cried the Duke, stung by a sudden recollection; and snatching up the letter, he tore it in pieces. "It shall never be a witness that any one dared tamper with my honour; that he who once commanded nations — but no more. I will answer this

letter to-morrow, on that field. They who survive may bear the writing to their Queen."

"My Father!" exclaimed Louis.

"I have said it, young man," interrupted Ripperda in a voice of thunder; "go, and tell them so — and it shall be finished."

"No;" returned Louis, "for in that field you would have to meet your own people, and your own son! You would drench your hands in the blood you have so often sworn to cherish; you would give the last blow to the name and race of Ripperda: — and what will be your reward? The fetters of a barbarian!"

The string had been touched, which vibrated to madness in the brain of Ripperda. His apprehension became confused, and, with terrific solemnity, he approached his son.

"Hitherto," said he, "I have heard you with patience! I read your Queen's letter with patience! I received her General's flag of truce with patience. But her letter is an insidious blazonry of all my false accusers; — and he, who brought the flag of truce, whispered at my gates that Aben Humeya was a Spanish traitor. This is their truth, their amnesty; this, my sheltered honour! And you appear the minister of such an embassy! De Montemar," cried he, grasping his arm; "are you aware to what you move me? But I will not reason farther. Tell your Sovereign, it is my will to be his enemy! That is my final answer."

Ripperda walked haughtily away; but Louis followed him, with all the filial eloquence of a man determined to prevail. His father turned fiercely on him.

"Silence!" cried he: "my whole nature rejects the treacherous influence. I am not to be again betrayed by the arms which once deserted me. You would sell me; but I am not to be bought. These limbs shall never wither in a dungeon, closed by my own son! This head shall never welter on a scaffold, your hands have reared!"

His eyes were fixed on the sword, on the table. The expression was portentous; and he moved towards it, muttering to himself the names of De Paz and Wharton. Louis saw the urging demon; and, clasping his hands,

while he tore his gaze from that ever revered face, he threw himself between his father and the weapon.

"Parricide!" cried Ripperda, "I am not at your mercy!" and, with the word, he made a stroke at the breast of his son. Louis seized the frantic arm.

"Duke de Ripperda," said he, "I may fall by your slaves; but your own hand shall not kill your son. If you indeed believe that he who has twice hazarded his life, to recall you to your honour and your God, can be leagued with falsehood to betray you, — summon your guards to despatch me!"

Ripperda glared on him, as he firmly grasped the hand that held the dagger. Louis's eyes were not less riveted on those of his father.

"De Montemar," cried he, relaxing his hold on the weapon; "on the perdition of us both, leave my presence; and see that we never meet again. Your father is not what he was."

He struck his hand upon his burning forehead; and, trembling from head to foot, sunk into a seat.

Louis observed him in silence; but his soul was prostrate before the only Being who could restore that noble mind; his heart was at the feet of his father; and, falling on his knees beside him, he put that now unarmed hand to his lips.

Ripperda had still enough of human tenderness to understand this appeal; but his distempered imagination would not apprehend its truth; and, starting from his position, he exclaimed, —

"Impossible! The world and your ingratitude have undone me. You are no more a son, to a rebel and a renegado; I no more a father, to him whose treasons reduced me to this extremity! — Away, and by that path," added he, pointing to a passage in the back of the pavilion. "If we ever meet again, you must finish your commission; or I blot from the earth the dishonoured name of Ripperda!"

Louis was still on his knee, when his father hastily advanced to the curtain, and called aloud. A mute appeared: and the Basha, with an instant recovery of composed dignity, commanded him to see that Moor, (pointing to Louis,)

to the outside of the camp, towards the hill, and leave him there.

Ripperda quitted the apartment, as he spoke; and, with desolation in his heart, Louis rose, and followed his conductor.

CHAPTER XXIII.

The Moorish slave passed, without obstacle, to the rear of the camp; and, making his mute salam to his equally silent charge, quitted him in a recess between the hills. Louis found his way back to the Spanish lines by keeping close to the sea-coast; and, throwing off his disguise, proceeded close under the wall of Ceuta, till he arrived at the drawbridge. He crossed it at daybreak.

Struck to the soul, this wretched heir of all his father's nobleness, and galling sensibility to infamy, employed some hours in self-collection, before he obeyed the painful necessity of informing Santa Cruz that he had been in the Moorish camp, and that the result of the interview with its Basha had destroyed his every hope of inducing the unhappy renegado to forego his scheme of vengeance!

Santa Cruz too much respected the filial devotion of Louis, in what he had done, to reprimand the rashness of the experiment.

"But, there let it cease," said he. "You now owe a duty elsewhere, and must preserve the loyalty of that name in yourself, which he so determinately abandons."

"I shall attempt it," replied Louis, as he moved to leave the apartment. "Allow me to serve in your army as a volunteer, and I will do my best not to disgrace your confidence."

"De Montemar, I can never doubt *you*."

Louis sighed at the emphasis his veteran friend had laid upon the word *you*; and, with feelings which only a son in his situation can know, he replied,—

"When my father has fallen from his proud height of virtue, who dare think he stands?"

Santa Cruz understood the response; and, with a voice of parental tenderness, made answer,—

"He fell, because his virtue was proud. It is not so with you. Therefore, let not the lowliness of a wounded spirit, mourning the transgressions of others, lessen your faith in the power which God has given you to be what you believed your father was. Stand erect in your own virtue, for it is the panoply of heaven; and do not allow infidelity, even in the shape of a parent, to suppose it can bow a head so armed."

Louis kissed the hand that grasped his, in the zeal of this exhortation; and, without further observation, withdrew.

Next day, the theme was renewed between the veteran and his young friend; and, while the former repeated his satisfaction that the alleged violation of the first flag of truce had been provoked by the outrageous conduct of the Spanish officer, and was not a wanton breach of military law on the side of Ripperda, he explained to Louis why the supposition of so base an act had appeared fuller of despair, in his eyes, than even the bold derelictions of apostasy and treason. To a daring crime of the latter complexion a man may be impelled by sudden passion; and, though he deserve punishment, and receive it, yet after-circumstances may wholly obliterate the memory of his guilt. Should remorse follow his transgression, he will as bravely acknowledge the justice of his sentence, as he had before desperately incurred the penalty of the great moral law. But a mean, over-reaching, treacherous action, proves cowardice of soul: he who performs it, never has courage to look it in the face. If it be pressed upon him, he crouches under his load of infamy; or impudently affects ignorance of its existence, while he feels in his heart that he has not spirit to retrace the path of reputation by confession and amendment. Hence, as desertion of honour is the vice of cowards, it is hopeless in its nature; and society can offer no terms to him who has abandoned himself.

Louis never thought of military glory, when he volun-

teered his services to the Spanish arms. His aim was to guard his father's head in the day of battle; and, to prove to Spain, and to the world (should it ever hear of him more), that he behaved with fidelity to the country to which that father had constrained him to swear allegiance. Life's aspect was changed to him. He had hardly entered the morn of his days, and already clouds were gathered over the opening prospect; at least, all his dearest objects were snatched from his sight — the lofty consciousness of public duties, the race of glory, and the fame of future ages! Even at the starting-post, he had reached the goal, and his hardly risen sun went instant down in darkness.

"How many before me, and how many that come after me, have destinies directly the reverse of mine! Nay, their day of brightness is even lengthened, like that of Joshua in the field of Gibeon, till all in their heart be achieved."

The draught was a bitter one, which Louis found in his cup of trial; but he was resolved to drink it to the dregs. "And there," cried he, "I shall find it has some sweetness."

The observations he could not help making, while passing through the Moorish camp, had shown him the strength of the enemy; and, from the discipline and number of the troops, he did not doubt that the slender garrison of Ceuta would be lost, should his father attack it by storm. The fortifications were in so bad a state, that Santa Cruz set all hands to work to bring them into order; and, meanwhile, sent to the lines before San Roque, for a reinforcement of engineers, and as many troops as they could spare.

During these preparations, the Basha was seen visiting his works every day. He was followed by a formidable guard, who, in contempt of the Spaniards, amused themselves in scampering about, throwing the gerid, and firing at each other in sport, between their own parallels. It was evident that Ripperda wished to provoke Santa Cruz to a battle, or to induce him to believe that such was his motive; for he ventured insulting detachments, even under the fire of the Spanish forts. But his point was to seize the fortified port of Larach. By retaining possession of that

place, the Spaniards might command the whole of the Atlantic coast of Morocco. Larach on the Atlantic, and Ceuta on the Mediterranean, were now all that remained to Philip in Africa; and the new Aben Humeya was aware that while the Moors were making these hostile demonstrations before the one, the other would consider itself secure, and of consequence easily fall into his hands. New levies were marching from Mequinez, to complete the army with which he meant to crush the Spanish power, both in Algiers and Morocco; and this reinforcement, by his orders, was now halted in the valleys of Benzeroel. On such information, he quitted his camp; and, leaving directions with Sidi Ali how to proceed in his absence, repaired to the head of his second army.

He was well acquainted with Don Juan d'Orendayn, the commandant of Larach, a vain and ignorant brother of the no less insolent and vain Count de Paz, his most inveterate enemy at the Spanish court. But it was not to avenge himself on any individual, that Ripperda would have moved a single step: it was against the whole Spanish nation he had sworn vengeance; and, high or low, declared enemies, or professing friends, — all were alike to him. They were Spaniards, and he drew an unsparing sword.

All the revenge that he took personally on the kinsman of De Paz, was to make his vanity the cause of his destruction; and, sending a renegado Jew into the town, the pretended deserter informed D'Orendayn, that Aben Humeya was encamped, with a few troops, on the banks of the adjacent river, on his way to the siege of Ceuta. The Jew added, that the fears of these raw recruits were so great of Don Juan discovering who were in his neighbourhood, they had drawn the line of their camp to a fictitious length, to deceive him with regard to their numbers; and that Aben Humeya, not being able to place any dependence on these timid men, was under apprehensions like their own, till he could excite their courage by mingling them with the veterans before Ceuta. The Jew found himself believed, and was vehemently seconded by the young officers in the garrison, when he advised a sudden sally from Larach, and

promised to Don Juan the glory of making Aben Humeya his prisoner.

Cowardice and ambition contended in the breast of D'Orendayn. He despatched a corps of observation, to ascertain the truth of the deserter; and, on its return at night, bearing witness that the pavilion of the Basha stood in a line of tents which could not contain more than four or five hundred men, hesitation was at an end; and the apprehensive governor, hoping to steal an easy victory, gave orders for the sortie.

Ripperda had disposed the strength of his army amongst the numerous dells and recesses at the foot of the mountains. On one side of his visible front, was a thick wood; on the other, a small branch of the river Lecus. His cavalry was posted behind the wood; and his own little camp, which consisted of six hundred of his best disciplined men, lay on their arms within the lines. These were nothing more than a range of hurdles; but so disposed, as to be a sufficient screen for the men to form behind them.

D'Orendayn, believing the whole of the Basha's present force was contained in that small boundary, came boldly forward, with two thirds of his own garrison, and, with a furious discharge of musketry, fell upon the Moorish camp. The night was bright, and seemed to favour the exploit. After making a show of resistance, the attacked gave ground, and soon after fled towards the mountain. The Spanish commander, now certain of success, blew a summons for the rest of the garrison to join him in the chase; for the Jew told him victory over so inconsiderable a body would yield him little honour, unless he could secure the person of its formidable leader. When the pursuers appeared to gain upon the fugitives, who surrounded the banner of Aben Humeya, and D'Orendayn thought he had the achievement and its rewards in his hand, he had already advanced into the ambuscade. The Basha, facing suddenly round, cried aloud,—

"Lahillah Lah, Mahometh ressoul Allah!"

A thousand voices echoed the sound; showers of arrows poured from the incumbent heights; and, from every

opening in the hills, Moorish infantry rushed upon the astonished victors, while the cavalry from the wood charged them in the rear.

No Spaniard returned to tell the story. Larach received a Moorish garrison; and the crescent of Mohammed was flying on its walls, when a little row-boat, manned by a few Christian merchants, who had escaped during the confusion in the town, made the best of its way to reach the Spanish coast.

The acclamations which followed the return of Aben Humeya to his camp before Ceuta, were heard in the Spanish fortress; and, the same night, there was a rumour amongst the Jews in the town, of what had befallen Larach.

Santa Cruz and the Count de Blas were confounded, when they found the report was true. They had received so insufficient an accession from the opposite coast, it appeared a mere mockery. No artillery was sent, for which Santa Cruz had particularly despatched his messenger. Other requests were also neglected; and he was obliged, at last, to perceive a spirit of contradiction to himself in all the orders which the war ministers gave out for the prosecution of the African campaign. Besides this, the Count de Patinos appeared suddenly, with a peremptory command from the Queen for Santa Cruz to join her at Seville.

An exchange of brides, between the royal heirs of Spain and Portugal, was the ostensible reason for this journey of the court towards the Spanish frontiers. The real motive was the King's desire to view, with his own eyes, the lines he was planning at San Roque, the object of which was to shut out the fortress of Gibraltar from communication with his people, and to facilitate his operations on that place in any future siege. Previous to his visiting this scene of anticipated glory, he became indisposed, and the court halted at Seville. His illness wore so dangerous an aspect, that Isabella became alarmed, and thought it prudent to know personally from Santa Cruz what was likely to be the persistance of Ripperda, before she should disarm herself by despatching those troops to Africa which the death of Philip

might render necessary to the maintenance of her son's claims elsewhere.

The small detachment which had been granted, arrived under the command of Don Joseph de Pinel. Don Ferdinand d'Osorio was on his staff; and the young soldier eagerly joined his father, hoping to obliterate the memory of his youthful follies, by a conduct worthy of the virtues of his ancestors.

During Ferdinand's stay at Val del Uzeda, his mother had "talked down the night," in praise of the filial perseverance of the Marquis de Montemar; in describing his ingenuous and elevated deportment; in imagining all the various treasures of his yet more elevated mind. The young Spaniard now listened with no other feeling, than that of emulation to merit similar encomiums; and Marcella answered his enquiries, respecting her opinion of Louis, by a melancholy smile.

"Were I translated to a better being," said she, "and, in that altered state, might choose my ministry, I would say, let me be guardian angel to that virtuous young man!"

"Indeed!" replied Ferdinand, drawing his own inferences from the innocent reply of his sister. She spoke it from the dictates of a pure and pious heart; and did not blush, when she answered his smiling remark: — "That she had chosen a work of supererogation; for a virtuous character needed no ministration: it was sufficient of itself."

"No, Ferdinand," returned she, and she spoke with a force to which she was not aware; "virtue is not apathy. It feels under the rack; it bleeds under the axe. But where the weaknesses of corrupted nature would shrink and fly, the strength of virtue is steadfast, or rather tries to be so, to combat to the end." She cast down her eyes with the last word, and unconsciously closed it with a deep sigh. Her mother looked, with an answering though uncommunicated feeling, on her gentle daughter; and with equal fervour took up the subject. "Virtue is not an heathen idol," cried she; "a block, or a stone. It is the Christian

spirit, in a human body; and has drops on its suffering brow, which the hand of pity may wipe away."

Ferdinand was reproved, and did not venture again to sport with a sentiment, which suited so well with the vestal state, he hoped to induce his sister to make the price of his happiness with Alice. But there his arguments failed.

One day, when he was strolling with Marcella through the orange groves of Val del Uzeda, and she was listening to the reiterated praises of the fair sisters of Lindisfarne, with smiles of affection towards the theme and its eulogist, Ferdinand, all at once, proposed his awful demand on her tenderness for him. Marcella, for some time, stood as one thunderstruck. She gasped for breath; for an icy stricture was on her heart. With difficulty she spoke, and recapitulated to him the simple principles of the religious belief she had imbibed from her protestant governess; and she shed tears, as she asserted the impossibility of her taking monastic vows in a church, against the peculiar tenets of which, her soul revolted.

"I could resign my life for you, my brother," added she, "but for nothing this world can produce, dare I sacrifice my conscience."

To Providence, then, Ferdinand left his future destiny: and, only striving to deserve its bounty, when he was called upon to join the Ceuta expedition, he resolved to make Louis de Montemar the confidant and counsellor of his thoughts. According to these sentiments, he embraced him on the African shore, with a grateful acknowledgment of his former generous interference; and soon convinced, Louis, that he held to his heart the still faithful lover of his dear Alice.

Before Santa Cruz quitted Ceuta, he left positive orders, that no sally should be attempted, until he was come back with the men and ammunition, necessary to make the first attack a decisive one. An hour passed in private conference between him and the anxious son of Ripperda. The Marquis alone knew that Aben Humeya was other than a Moor; therefore, the Marquis alone knew why the once gay De Montemar was seldom seen to smile; and why,

while he did his military duty, with a precision that neither admitted error nor relaxation, the glow of martial enthusiasm was extinguished in his countenance. But the hectic of fevered diligence still kept its crimson on his cheek, and, at times, gave a lustre to his eyes of intolerable brightness.

Santa Cruz had hardly set sail, when a spirit, very different from that he had inculcated, manifested itself amongst the heads of the garrison. The Moors seemed carelessly disposed in their camp, revelling and exulting in the easy fall of Larach. This change, and some observations on the unguarded state of their lines, induced Don Joseph de Penil to propose attacking them by surprise. The Counts de Blas and de Patinos warmly assented to the enterprise; and the former, turning to Louis, said, he should lead the volunteers in the sortie. He thanked the governor for the proposed distinction, but respectfully reminded him of the Marquis's parting commands. Every lip was now opened upon the absurdity of Santa Cruz, in attempting to curb events by such ill-judged caution; and, as De Penil persisted in pressing the advantage of the present moment, he triumphantly called on Louis, to give the Marquis's reasons for such jealous prevention.

Louis calmly explained the incapability of Ceuta to defend itself, should the sally be repulsed by the enemy. In support of this opinion, he enumerated all the wants and defects of the garrison; and ended, by repeating the positive charge of the Marquis Santa Cruz, that no egress should be made from the Spanish lines, until his return with sufficient means to render defeat almost impossible.

"De Montemar!" exclaimed De Blas, "these considerations are for grey hairs. If you are ambitious to be a soldier, begin at the right end; act before you think: and where can an enterprising spirit have so fair a field, as against these insolent barbarians?"

"Courage," rejoined De Penil, glancing superciliously on Louis, "is an essential quality in a soldier!"

"So essential," replied Louis, "that he cannot maintain obedience without it."

"Some orders are safely obeyed!" said De Patinos, with affected carelessness. "A parade at Vienna, and a sortie from Ceuta, are different things!"

"When disobedience is a proof of courage, or of good discipline," returned Louis, "I may have the honour to meet your approbation, Count de Patinos. Meanwhile I trust that the Count de Blas, on whose responsibility the fate of this garrison hangs, place me where he will, shall ever find me at my post."

De Patinos started angrily from his seat. Louis rose also.

"Gentlemen," cried De Blas, "what is it you mean?"

"To show I can revenge insult," cried the haughty Count, touching his sword, "if it be within the calculation of that philosopher to bid me draw it."

Louis boiled with rising passion; his lightning glances could hardly be restrained from giving the defiance his better principles refused; but checking the first impulse of his youthful indignation, he sternly answered,—

"Count de Patinos, I do not wear the King's sword, to draw it at the prompting of every wordy spirit. If I have insulted you, unprovoked, I submit myself to the judgment of all present, and am ready to stand your fire. But on the reverse, I mean not to assert that courage by a private duel, which the public service will so soon put to a better trial."

De Penil prevented an insolent retort from De Patinos; and De Blas interfering with a real interest in the reconciliation of the two young men, the haughty Spaniard grumbled out an enforced apology, and left the room.

Don Joseph was conscious that he, too, had been guilty of an impropriety towards the Marquis de Montemar; but he was too proud to acknowledge error, to one so much his junior; and saw him retire to his quarters, with an admiration of his superior self command, which he would have been glad to emulate, but had not generosity enough to praise.

Piqued into obstinacy, he urged De Blas to put the garrison into immediate preparation for an attack upon the

enemy's trenches; and, with the rising sun, the ground before the fortress was filled with Spanish troops.

Nothing could have been more grateful to the views of Ripperda. He knew the weakness of his opponent, in numbers and artillery; and, from a forward eminence in his lines, with the aid of his glass, he counted the Spanish columns as they defiled through their gates; and believing them devoted to his sword, he turned to the Moors, whose thickening ranks blackened the ground around them, and addressed them in a style to arouse their fiercest passions. He described their former empire in Spain; he recapitulated the various acts of injustice which had banished them that kingdom; he exposed the tyrannous animosity of the Spaniards to the past and present generations of the Moors; and set forth the shame of permitting so oppressive a race to maintain a foot of land in Barbary.

The Moors answered his inflaming eloquence, as he expected; and with furious gesticulations, and curses which rent the air, they demanded to be led against their hereditary enemies. He mounted his horse; and giving his orders of battle into the hands of his two leading coadjutors, Sidi Ali and the Hadge Adelmelek, marched out, at the head of his troops, into the open field.

The Spaniards were led on, in two wretchedly appointed battalions, by De Blas and Don Joseph de Penil. Count de Patinos, in the arrogance of his assumed contempt of Louis, volunteered his services at the head of a small detachment of troops, which the governor considered the *élite* of his cavalry. De Montemar and Don Ferdinand commanded the men who were to carry the trenches.

This part of the plan was speedily accomplished. The workmen fled without resistance; and even the Moors in the parallels, when they had discharged their fire, threw down their arms before the overwhelming enemy, and begged quarter. But no time was granted to yield, or to receive mercy. Every avenue from the Basha's camp poured forth its troops; and at this moment, they came rushing on like a storm. They charged over their vanquished comrades; and overleaping every obstacle, fell upon the Spanish advance with a shock that broke its line.

The havoc was as great as the surprise; and the way was soon open to the attack of the second division. It made a halt, and stood firm. Louis collected the fugitives from the first line, and formed them behind their comrades, while the battle in front became close and complex. The Infidels, contrary to their wonted custom, fought hand to hand; and rallied two or three times, when any extraordinary press of Spanish force compelled them to recede.

Aben Humeya showed an eminent example of faith in his new creed. He appeared to take no care of his person, but rode about under the heaviest volleys, exhorting, and charging with his men; till at length, after prodigious efforts, the Spaniards were obliged to give ground. They retreated; but it was with a backward step; while the Moors, crowding on them, horse and foot, broke the line in every direction. In some places, the victors so mingled with the vanquished, that it rather resembled an affray of single combatants, than a contest of regular troops. The depth of De Montemar's little phalanx was insufficient to sustain the weight of the Basha's charge; it was penetrated and turned; and in the moment of its defeat, the horse of Don Ferdinand was shot, and fell. A Moor pointed his pistol to despatch the rider; when Louis dashed before the infidel, and the ball grazed his cheek. A random shot killed the Moor, while another gave the just rescued Ferdinand a less mortal wound.

The Basha, after being twice unhorsed himself, cut off the squadron under De Patinos; and the confusion among the Spaniards, being redoubled by Count de Blas falling at the same time, the panic-struck infantry retreated pell-mell into their outworks; hardly closing the gates on the triumphant Infidels at their heels. As Don Joseph de Penil galloped back to the sally-port, he passed Louis de Montemar; who, black as a Moor with smoke and toil, was standing by a field piece, which he had brought to that spot to cover the flight of the Spaniards, and was then firing on the pursuers, with a quickness and effect that cleared the way to a considerable distance.

The enemy halted before this formidable barrier; for Louis's commands, and example, soon made it a battery;

and as the grape showered from it on all sides, the fugitive Spaniards re-entered the fortress in safety.

Aben Humeya drew off his victorious troops; but it was the recoil of the tiger, to make his second spring decisive.

CHAPTER XXIV.

All was dismay within the Spanish lines. The Count de Blas died in the arms of the men who were bearing him into the castle; and Don Joseph de Penil was so severely wounded, that he dropped off his horse, as soon as it had cleared the drawbridge into the fortress. Half the garrison were slain or missing; and no officers of rank returned alive from the field, but what were borne in on their cloaks,—sad, mangled victims of the preceding rashness.

When De Penil's wounds were dressed, and he heard the state of his men, he was driven to despair. All who approached him came trembling; and, from confusion of mind, contradicted each other in every account of the garrison, excepting the one, that its destruction was inevitable! He called for the Marquis de Montemar.

When Louis obeyed the summons, he corroborated the observations of De Penil's own senses. He told him, that a contagious fear unmanned every heart; and that the eyes of the soldiers continually turned to the sea, with a more evident wish for escape, than resistance. While Don Joseph listened to the consequences of his own headstrong folly, and saw the bloody evidence of the courage, he had pretended to doubt, on the cheek of the brave narrator, he obeyed the noble shame, which coloured his own; and having uttered a frank apology for his former conduct, as frankly asked the young soldier's opinion on the present crisis.

Louis did not hesitate to say, that he believed the Moors could not see their advantage, without attempting to storm the place.

"And they will take it, to a certainty!" replied De Penil. "In the present disposition of the men, there can be no resistance."

"Without resistance, they are lost!" returned Louis. "There are no ships for flight; and the Moors grant no terms in a surrender."

"Then every man must fight for his life!" cried De Penil. "I will yet do my duty, from this bed; and you, De Montemar, must act from my authority."

Louis did not now demur. Without losing time, in sending for those paralysed officers, who wandered from place to place at their wit's end, De Penil consulted his young coadjutor on every resource; and while he marvelled at so comprehensive a judgment, in so inexperienced a soldier, he adopted so many of his suggestions, that dispositions were soon made for the defence of Ceuta, of better promise than those which had placed it in such extremity.

Louis wrote down the necessary arrangement; and, when it was finished, the wounded General was laid on a litter, and carried to the ramparts.

De Penil was too conscious of the evil his impatience had wrought, not to do his utmost to prevent yet more disastrous consequences; and, while he exhorted the men to stand to their guns, and never to leave their ground but with their lives, he himself took an oath before them never to surrender. He told them to obey the Marquis de Montemar, as his representative.

"But for his promptitude in mounting the battery, which covered our retreat, and his steadiness in maintaining it," added the General, "we should not now have Ceuta to defend."

The soldiers knew this, as well as their commander, and with a sincere hurrah of obedience followed their officers to their respective duties.

Exhausted, and almost fainting, De Penil ordered the litter to his quarters; but he held himself up with assumed

strength, till the walls of his apartment permitted overtasked nature to sink under the pain of his wounds.

Louis's spirit rose with the summons for exertion. His calm collectedness in dispensing command; his instant apprehension of what was most proper to be done, from objects of the greatest importance, to the minutest enquiry from the meanest workman in the lines, revived courage in the faintest heart, and inspired the brave with an animation equal to his own.

After he had seen every thing prepared for the anticipated assault, he returned to De Penil, to inform him of the favourable aspect his commands had produced; and then leaving him to rest, proceeded to the quarters of Don Ferdinand.

His wound was deep, but not mortal. Yet the alarm for his life had been so great, before the extraction of the ball, that one of the surgeons, during the operation, had despatched a messenger across the strait, to inform Santa Cruz of the perilous state of his son.

When Louis heard what had been done, he reprimanded the man, for persuming to send off any account, before the official reports of the affair had been issued from the commander himself. The other surgeons assured his young representative, that his friend was not to be despaired of; and, with the feelings of a brother, for the son of the revered Santa Cruz, Louis entered his apartment.

"De Montemar," cried Ferdinand, stretching out his hand to him, "dearer lips than mine must thank you that I live."

Louis smiled, as he used to do in his unclouded days of happiness:—"God is good, in yet giving life a value to me, by making me his instrument to preserve lives more worthy than my own. While I may be such," added he, with a deeper expression, and pressing Ferdinand's hand between his, "the son of Ripperda is not completely lost!"

Ferdinand did not understand all the reference of this almost unconscious apostrophe; but supposing it arose from some free remarks of the Count de Patinos, which might have reached Louis's ear, he replied with earnestness,—

"*Il rit bien, qui rit le dernier!* I saw the scoffer fly

before the negro guards of Aben Humeya! and I have since been told, that he and his whole squadron threw down their arms before the barbarian."

"Whatever may be the Count de Patinos's ungenerous enmity against me, who never voluntarily gave him offence," replied Louis, "I must exonerate him of cowardice. I believe him brave; and all I wish is, that he may be treated according to his merits as a soldier, by the hands into which he has fallen."

At nine o'clock, Louis went the round of his posts, and found all in good order. The men were in spirits; though it was easy to discern, even by the naked eye, that a threatening commotion continued along the enemy's lines.

By his glass, earlier in the evening, Louis had observed the approach of artillery, and some other signs, which convinced him of the necessity of Don Joseph's precaution. For his own part, he never retired under cover the whole night, but kept his station on the best point of observation, —a tower at the extremity of the outworks.

About the watch of the night which is called by the Moors Latumar, being their fifth hour of prayer, the sky was involved in total darkness; but the attentive ear of Louis heard a distant murmuring. It was demonstrative of the approach he expected; and having persons near him for the purpose, he despatched them to the lines, to order every man's hand to be on his arms.

In less than a quarter of an hour after he had left the tower, and taken his own appointed station, the flash of cannon burst over the plain. Peal after peal succeeded. The roaring of the guns, and the smoke of the explosions, rocked the fortress to its foundation; while the blaze, and the smoke, of the firing, alternately possessed the sulphureous atmosphere. The ordnance on the walls of Ceuta were not silent; while the mutual bombardment, in the intermitting darkness, was rendered more terrific, by the savage cries of the besiegers, mingling their horrid war-whoop with the hissing of the musketry, and the tremendous thunders of the cannonade.

Where was his father, in the midst of this dreadful contest?—more than once shot, in direful question, across the

mind of Louis; but he dismissed the paralysing thought. He was there to defend the cause of his country, and the faith of his fathers; and he must not allow the yearnings of his heart to unman his fidelity.

He flew from the bastion, on which he stood, at the moment he heard a shout of triumph from the scene below. In defiance of shells and raking fires, these desperate barbarians had rushed on, and pointed their guns, till they saw a breach was made. Calling on Mahommed, they mounted by escalade. Louis threw forward a rampart of gabions; but they were scarcely placed, and the cannon planted, before a tumbrel blew up, and rendered the ingress more accessible. The stone battlements shook under his feet like an earthquake, while the fragments from the torn rampart, the smoke, and the scorching powder, covered him with viewless horror. There was not the pause of a moment between the explosion, the dispersion of the smoke, and the most dreadful conflict of the hour.

Aben Humeya had joined the escalade; and the very band which planted the crescent on the towers of Larach, was the first to scale the walls of Ceuta.

The contest at the breach was as sanguinary as it was decisive. The Moors were twice repulsed with terrible slaughter; and the more terrible, the second time, as it was quickly known, by the intrepid desperation of the assailants, that they were led on by the Basha himself. Louis's unreceding arm had tumbled the leader of the first division from his footing on the wall; and at his fall, his followers had given ground. The second assault came on, and with redoubled numbers. Louis was fighting with the invincible devotedness of a man who knew that spot was the key of the fortress, when his father's voice assailed his ear. A flash of musketry showed the jewelled chelengk in his turban: he was mounting the further ridge of the platform, slippery with blood, and calling on his men to support him. In another moment, two Biscayan grenadiers held the Basha between their weapons and the pinnacle of the battlement. A choice of death seemed the only alternative;—their swords, or a headlong plunge over the precipice. The Moors, who pressed forward, were cut to pieces by the

Spaniards on the breach. Louis saw nothing but destruction to his father. Ripperda's weapon shivered in his hand, against those of his enemies. Louis threw himself between the Biscayans, and their prey—

"The Basha is the governor's prisoner!" The words were scarcely uttered, for the strokes levelled at Ripperda's breast were sheathed in that of his son. The Spaniards recoiled, on finding they had wounded their leader; and, in the instant, Sidi Ali mounting the height with a fresh band, the reinforcement surrounded Aben Humeya, and believed the day won. But as Ali's hand planted the Ottoman standard, amidst volleys of musketry, and the grappling of foe to foe, the clouds of smoke rolled away from the eastern point of the rampart, and the golden head of the sun peered from the horizon. Its first ray shot direct upon the radiant crest of Aben Humeya. A Spanish rifleman took aim. The ball struck; and, in spite of a momentary exertion in its victim to spring forward, he staggered, and fell into the arms of his followers.

A woeful yell announced to the legions below, that some direful disaster had happened. The cry was echoed from rank to rank, with shrieks and howlings; and the single blast of a trumpet immediately succeeded. The breach was abandoned, as if by enchantment. The firing sunk at once into a dead calm; and the flight of the Moors, through the yet hovering smoke, sounded in the darkness, like the wings of many birds brushing the sands before the sweep of a coming storm.

CHAPTER XXV.

THE Queen's cabinet at Seville was employed on many projects, besides that of sealing the union between Portugal and Spain. Grimaldo was just dead; and the affairs of state falling to the management of the Marquis de Cas-

tellor and the Count de Paz, her Majesty affected a warm interest in the former, though she detested him in her heart; not only as the successful rival of her regretted Ripperda, but because his talents were equal to his ambition; and what was more provoking to a despotic woman, he made her feel, that, in spite of her, he could hold his ground by the same arts as those which had bestowed it on him.

The Count de Paz was a man of a different complexion. Covetousness, and an abject dependence on individual favour, tethered his vain-glorious spirit to a boundary he panted to overleap, but everlastingly found it a limit he could not pass. This man, Isabella used as her instrument; and, by his connivance, admitted a third person to their private councils, who commanded him with the invincible power of a superior demon.

In obedience to the Queen, and to this her secret counsellor, De Paz was to influence De Castellor, to extort an act of aggression from the French arms against the German Emperor.

Since the public betrothment of Maria-Theresa to the Prince of Lorraine, Isabella had become reconciled to Louis the Fifteenth; and she now wanted to attack the grasping power of the rival empire, by a concerted act of open hostility. France was to invade Austria, on the side of Germany; while Spain, in consequence of the death of the Duke of Parma, should resist the pretensions of the Emperor to that duchy; and, in support of the rights of Prince Carlos (the late Duke's kinsman, and Isabella's son), over-run that part of Italy with Spanish troops.

Her secret counsellor had already moved the cardinal minister of the French King, to thwart the establishment of the pragmatic sanction; and, through the Queen of Spain and De Paz, he had drawn from the treasury of Philip, a large subsidy, to support the pretensions of Bavaria.

On the open rupture between Isabella and the Empress, the former was not long at a loss how to revenge herself on the wide ambition of her rival. Her midnight familiar whispered the means. He told her that Gibraltar was not

more the fortress of England than of Austria! Whoever possessed that rock, commanded the Mediterranean; and those on its banks might thank the gods they were not sent to be galley-slaves! The interests of Austria and the House of Brunswick were now the same. He therefore exhorted her to categorically demand Gibraltar of the King of England; and to make her husband, and his council, see the wisdom of considering him the King of England, who would restore that gem to the Spanish crown!

One of the last acts of George the First was to reject this demand, with a positive refusal; and the following evening, saw a tall dark man, of a noble mien, pass into the private cabinet of the King of Spain. They were alone together for some time; and then the Queen, and the two ministers of state, being introduced, a paper was signed in their presence, by Philip and the stranger; and the royal seals of Spain, and of Great Britain, were solemnly affixed to the deed.

Santa Cruz met this personage as he withdrew through the vestibule of the King's apartment. The Marquis knew him, and stood with his hat in his hand till he passed.

"Do not repeat what you have seen," whispered Isabella, who found the Marquis gazing after him; "but now you read my riddle. A few months may see you governor of Gibraltar!"

"The trenches of San Roque must be first opened in England!" replied he, answering her gay smile with unusual gravity.

"No," was her reply; "there we have charged a mine, and the best engineer in Christendom has his hand on the match."

Santa Cruz understood enough of her meaning not to make a second observation in so public a passage: bowing to her beckoning finger, he followed her into her apartment.

He held in his hand the first official despatches from Ceuta. The last had not arrived. But the fugitive merchants from Larach were then in the palace.

The Queen was enraged at these determined acts of

hostility, in the man to whom she had condescended to humble herself as a suppliant; and vehemently arraigning the insolence that durst disdain her returning favour, she preceded Santa Cruz to the chamber of her royal husband.

On the King's being told the fate of Larach, and learning, by the discomfiture of Don Joseph de Penil, how nearly Ceuta had shared the same disaster, he issued orders, that the troops just called off from the lines of San Roque should be immediately employed to vindicate the Christian name in the plains of Barbary.

These forces had been intended by Isabella and her secret counsellor, to make a descent on the British shore; and there, as Santa Cruz had guessed, assert the rights of him, who had purchased the support of Philip, by a written pledge for the restitution of Gibraltar. But at this moment, resentment obliterated every promise; and in the rage of revenge against the man who had disdained her (more as a woman than a queen), she at once announced to her husband, that it was his own rebellious subject, the Duke de Ripperda, who, under the assumed name of Aben Humeya, but as a real apostate and a traitor, now waged war in Africa against his King and his God.

Philip's amazement was creditable to his heart; and, when unquestionably convinced, his indignation against the Duke's irreligion superseded the expected resentment for his rebellion. He summoned his council; and, in full assembly of the ministers and grandees, degraded the Duke de Ripperda from all his honours, hereditary and by creation; confiscated his estates; and ordered the arms of his family to be obliterated from the Spanish college of arms.

With the feelings of an ancient Spanish nobleman, Santa Cruz saw the rapidity of this act of disgrace. Not in consideration of the degraded Duke; for in becoming an infidel, he had sunk himself below the power of man to cast him lower; but compassion for his blameless and exemplary son filled the heart of Santa Cruz with honourable sympathy.

The Queen turned on him at the moment, and observing

the expression of his countenance, said with a taunting surprise, —

"Marquis, you pity this renegade!"

"Madam," replied he, "I respect the Marquis de Montemar."

Isabella drew towards the King.

"Your Majesty will grant an exception in behalf of that young man? He covered the retreat of De Penil into Ceuta, and merits some exemption from the universal stigma on his father."

"We may consider that hereafter," replied the King; "meanwhile let the edict be published."

The messenger, whom the surgeon at Ceuta had despatched during the panic which immediately succeeded the return of the unfortunate sortie, went direct to the Marquis Santa Cruz's house in Seville. The Marquis was from home, but the man delivered his credentials to the servants; and, with the eagerness of a first bringer of news, gave an exaggerated account of the defeat of Don Joseph, the death of De Blas, and the wounded state of Don Ferdinand d'Osorio. He closed his report of the latter, by saying, the young gentleman had been rescued from immediate death by the intrepid interference of the Marquis de Montemar; but as the Moorish sabres were generally venomed, little hope could be cherished of his ultimate recovery.

On Santa Cruz's return from the palace, he found his wife and daughter in speechless agony, listening to this narrative of despair. He sent the man from the room; and by reading to them the despatch, which the official messenger had brought from the disastrous field, he succeeded in convincing them, that the Moors did not poison their weapons, and that the life of his son was in no present danger. The Marchioness, however, insisted on accompanying her husband to Ceuta; and Marcella, in a passion of tears, implored her father to permit her to be her mother's attendant.

Dreading that despairing love had precipitated the vehement nature of her brother upon the swords of his enemies, Marcella now reproached herself for having so

decisively, and therefore she thought cruelly, rejected his suit. In the paroxysm of her grief, and her remorse, she threw herself at the Marquis's feet; and, to his astonishment, informed him of Ferdinand's love for the cousin of the Marquis de Montemar; declaring, at the same time, her own resolution to no longer oppose her father's wishes to devote her to a cloister, if her vows might be simply confined to celibacy, and a secluded state, and Ferdinand be allowed to marry the English lady.

The Marquis was confounded, and looked at his wife.

"It is too true," was her reply to his enquiring eyes; "Ferdinand loves Alice Coningsby; and my invaluable child would make herself the price of her brother's happiness."

"Marcella!" replied Santa Cruz, turning with solemnity to his daughter; "this is not what I expected from you. You dishonour your father, and your brother, by your petition. You may accompany your mother to his sick couch; and for the rest, should he recover, I hope he will find a fitter oblation to his blind passions, than a sister's and a parent's conscience."

Marcella rose humbled from her knees, and in speechless sorrow left the apartment. The Marquis looked after her, and sighed; and the Marchioness, taking his hand, pressed it to her lips, wet with her drowning tears, and exclaimed,—

"Better that we had never met, than that the purest offspring of our Heaven-sanctified union should be consigned to a living tomb! Oh, Santa Cruz, why is she to be our victim?"

CHAPTER XXVI.

SANTA CRUZ did not wait for the tedious embarkation of the troops now under orders for Africa; but set forward

immediately, accompanied by his wife and daughter, who both assumed the privileged habits of *Sisters of Mercy*, in this their pilgrimage to a land of war and suffering.

When he arrived at Ceuta, he was ignorant of the attempt which had been made to storm the place. The courier with that intelligence had been taken by an Algerine row-boat, and carried into Oran.

By this capture, Ripperda became acquainted with all that had passed in the rescued fortress; for the messenger was sent in irons to him: and the dastardly communicativeness of the man was too clear an interpreter of the brief account in the despatches.

The Basha's wounds being aslant, and in the muscles of his breast, were slight, and easy of cure; but that in his mind was not to be healed, when, on awaking from his swoon, he found himself shut up in a palanquin, and in full retreat from the fortress he had believed in his hands. He was no sooner within his own intrenchments, than both officers and men felt the weight of his disappointment. He summoned their several commanders into his pavilion, and accused them of cowardice for having made so unnecessary, and therefore shameful, a flight.

Adelmelek pleaded two reasons for this conduct. Their Basha's supposed mortal wound; and its befalling him in the moment of sunrise, seemed so signal a judgment on the Moors for their breach of the prophet's ordinance, in pursuing the warfare into the Sabbath morn, that, with one consent, they made the only expiation in their power, by abandoning the scene of their impiety.

Enraged at the subtilty of this apology, in which Ripperda saw that the jealousy of the Hadge was at the bottom of his retreat, he turned on him with derision, and bade him take that excuse to the Emperor, and see whether he most respected the enlargement of his empire, or the superstition of a coward.

"Aben Humeya," replied the Hadge, regarding him with equal scorn, "if I am to be your messenger, one truth at least you shall learn of me before I set out on my journey: it is impossible for a bad Christian to become a good Mussulman! Devout men are no changelings. He

has little of the spirit of religion, who finds an insurmountable stumbling-block in any dispute about the letter; and, in my opinion, the man who more than once alters his faith, may show himself a consummate hypocrite, but he persuades no one to doubt the nothingness of his religion."

"Proud bigot! your head shall answer for this insult!" exclaimed Ripperda, starting from the cushion on which he lay.

"The event of this siege," replied the Hadge, "will determine the fate of yours!" and, with a threatening countenance, he left the apartment.

Nothing awed by what he called this insolence in a man whose talents he despised, Ripperda was the more incited to show his contempt of superstition; and, the moment Adelmelek withdrew, the reproaches, which began to him, were turned on the other officers, with augmented severity of reproof. He punished the soldiers in a more exemplary way; and published a proclamation, declaring that he would put to death any officer, let his rank be what it would, who should henceforth presume at any time to disobey his orders, or to desert his post on any pretence whatever. He finished by pronouncing himself, as the leader of the Mohammedan armies in Barbary, the best interpreter of the prophet's laws; and that while he bore the standard of Mecca, the Sabbaths of Jews, Mussulmen, or Christians, should be alike free to the progress of his arms.

The rigor of these threats, and this last assertion, so contrary to the customs of their faith, filled the Moors with terror and amazement; but the full effects of the manifesto were to be seen hereafter.

While these punishments and intimidations were going on, the courier taken at Oran was brought to the camp before Ceuta. The Basha was now convalescent; and while the reading of the despatches inspired his coadjutor, Sidi Ali, with renewed confidence in the reduction of the fortress, it doubly exasperated the passions of Ripperda, when he gathered from the report the dangerous state of his son.

The courier was commanded into his presence; and, on examining him, it was found that three parts of the garri-

son had fallen in the sortie and the defence of the town; that the Count de Blas was dead of his wounds; the commander, De Penil, incapable of service; and that the young Marquis De Montemar, whose gallant exertions filled so great a part in the despatches, was in such extremity when the messenger came off, that it was impossible he could now be alive.

Ripperda was no stranger to the voice which had rushed between him and his assailants on the breach; but it had passed by him as the wind. Vengeance was then all that possessed his soul; but now that voice was hushed for ever! In his first field his son had perished; and perished against whom?

Ripperda sprang on his feet, as the horrible images pressed upon his brain. Regardless of who were present, he snatched up his sword.

"I am alone," cried he: "the last — the last! But I will yet uproot thee, murderous Spain! that dost thus riot in my vitals!"

The prisoner and the attendants all fled from before the terrible enunciation of his eyes. Sidi Ali alone had courage to remain, and seize the aimless weapon.

"Aben Humeya," said he, "what unmans you thus, before the eyes of slaves?"

"Were I less a man," cried Ripperda, turning his burning eyeballs upon him, "I could bear it; but now the curse has found me!"

CHAPTER XXVII.

When Santa Cruz landed at Ceuta, he proceeded direct to the quarters of Don Joseph de Penil, and was told there of the attempt to storm the fortress, and its miraculous defence by the inexperienced but intrepid son of Ripperda. Don Joseph's wounds were in a mending state; and from him the Marquis learned that his son was also on the recovery.

"But," continued De Penil, "few are our hopes for the excellent De Montemar!"

"The worst wound is in his heart!" remarked Santa Cruz. For it could no longer be disguised from De Penil, and the whole garrison, that Aben Humeya, the direful cause of all this bloodshed, was, though now an apostate and a rebel, once the great Duke de Ripperda,—the universally honoured father of this noble young man.

The Duke's public attainder and disgraced name at Seville had made the circumstance known to all there; and the new army spread it at once through the lines of Ceuta.

But there was a kind hand, which, for a time, warded off the blow that might have been fatal to his blameless son. Don Ferdinand and Louis de Montemar lay in their wounds under the same roof, and by the same gentle ministry they were attended.

The Marchioness and her daughter found little difference in their hearts between the sufferers; for, if the one claimed the tenderness due to a brother and a son, the other had purchased the life of that dear relative by the exposure of his own; and the bonds of gratitude were not less sacred than those of kindred.

Marcella sought to cheer her brother, by assuring him that her repugnance to a monastic life should no longer stand between him and his happiness, if that compliance could obtain their father's consent to Ferdinand's union with the cousin of his friend; but her conscience compelled her to repeat the Marquis's remark on the sacrifice she offered to make in behalf of her brother.

"However," continued she, "our aunt, the abbess of the Ursulines, is too charitable to force my conscience to more than the vow and the seclusion; and I trust that Heaven will not see any crime in a Protestant nun worshipping, in spirit and in truth, by the side of sisters from whom the cloud of error has not yet been raised!"

Ferdinand gazed upon his sister while she spoke. Was the fabled Iphigenia of Tauris half so fair, or the virgin daughter of Jephthah so full of youthful loveliness, as she who now talked, with such sweet smiles, of immolating

herself for him? She was indeed a victim, clad in the lily and the rose; and the fragrance of the flowers, and the morning dew of their leaves, breathed and sparkled from her lips as she pursued her disinterested theme. Bodily suffering, and hours of solitary reflection, had opened to Ferdinand a clear view of his former injustice, in seeking happiness at the expense of his sister's liberty. Now, abhorring his former selfishness, he was ashamed to acknowledge its late power over him, even by disavowing its continuance; and, with a deep blush and deeper sigh, he pressed her hand without a word.

But, in Marcella's separated heart, the vow of abjuration from the world was already registered. She repeated it again and again to herself; for, since she came to Ceuta, there were impressions daily made on that heart which confused its images; and, with a nameless sense of danger, she clung to the one idea, that she had now but one duty,—to wait, with her lamp trimmed, while she ministered to all who needed her deeds of charity; and in this spirit, as a *Sister of Mercy*, whose garb she wore, she daily attended her mother to the couch of the preserver of her brother.

The Marchioness's eager disposition was always too hasty in imparting the evil as well as the good. To avert the probable consequences of such precipitation now, Marcella had cautioned her mother, and every body who entered the room of the Marquis de Montemar, not to breathe a hint of the sentence which Philip had passed upon the name of his father. From an instinct in her own bosom, she knew that injuries are easier to be borne than disgrace; and she guarded every approach to Louis's ear with the watchfulness of an attendant spirit.

As her own hand frequently administered the prescribed cordials to the silently suffering patient, his eyes thanked her, though his lips seldom moved. His wounds were numerous and excruciating; and, from the opium his surgeons mixed with every potion, he was almost always in a seeming stupor. But neither his mental perceptions, nor the annotations of his heart, shared the lulling faculty. His shrouded vision discerned the solicitude that hovered over him. He heard the tender voice that gave directions for his

comfort; he felt the soft hand that smoothed his pillow; and his own spirit mingled in the prayer which the holy accents of Marcella murmured over his apparently unobserving form, when she gave place to the persons whose medical balsams were less healing than the balm of her presence alone.

"It is the presence of virtue," said he to himself; "and that is the ministering angel of heaven."

Lorenzo had shared his master's dangers and his wounds, as he had shared his sorrows and his prison. He had followed him from rampart to rampart, stood by him on the breach, and sunk under the same sweep of balls which had levelled his master to the earth. As soon as the faithful servant was able to leave his chamber, he prevailed on his attendants to take him to that of the Marquis de Montemar; for Lorenzo had been told the news which still held the garrison in astonishment,—that the exiled Ripperda was the man who, under a Moorish name, now made Spain tremble; and that the impotent revenge of the Spanish court was to deprive him of a title he had already abandoned.

It was during the absence of the Marchioness and Marcella, at matin prayers, that Lorenzo was borne to Louis's apartment. Ignorant that any thing which the whole garrison knew, could have been withheld from him who had most concern in it, Lorenzo, after his first felicitations on finding his master declared out of danger, began to accuse the Spanish government; enlarging on its injustice, in not sparing the honours of Ripperda to the meritorious son, though it had been found necessary to withdraw them from the rebellion of the father. Louis started.

"Explain yourself, Lorenzo."

Lorenzo was seized with a trembling, which almost amounted to fainting, when he found that he had intimated to his master what his master's friends had deemed it prudent to conceal. Louis regarded him with grateful pity, while he armed himself to hear whatever was then to be told.

"Do not hesitate to speak all you know," continued he;

" my heart has armour, Lorenzo, that the world guesses not."

Lorenzo burst into tears; but he instantly revealed all. Louis pressed his hand; and bidding him return to his room, and take care of himself, the faithful creature, with a full heart, permitted the servants to carry him from the apartment. When the door was closed on every body, Louis laid himself back upon his couch. That was his hour of agony; all that was yet within him of the world, mingled with the pang of filial anguish, and agitated his spirit even unto death.

Ferdinand came into the room leaning on his sister; and taking his seat by the side of his friend's bed, gently touched him; —

" Do you sleep, De Montemar?" said he. " Here is a fresh northern breeze, a breeze from Lindisfarne! Open your eyes, and receive the genial visitant!"

Louis did not open his eyes, but he sighed heavily, and half muttered in a smothered voice,—" When shall I meet a genial visitant again? Oh, Ferdinand," added he, turning his face upon the hand of his friend, " better had it been for me, had I never been born!"

Marcella was retiring at the first exclamation; but at the second, she paused, and drew near.

" De Montemar," said Ferdinand, " what can prompt you, who are so universally honoured, to such a sentiment?"

" My father's universal infamy," replied Louis. " And where shall I hide my head?"

" In the bosom of him who pierces the heart to purify it!" replied Marcella, who sunk on her knees beside him. " He only, who wilfully offends that gracious Being, may cry, *Better for me, had I never been born!* If God have already judged your erring father, and given that once illustrious name to universal infamy, regard it as a mercy, a punishment here, that he may receive redemption hereafter."

Louis looked up from his thorny pillow. He took her hand, and pressed it to his lips.

" You, you, holy Marcella!" cried he, " are the genial visitant, I saw not, — are the messenger from heaven that speaks peace to my soul! Pray for me, I beseech you!

but, above all, pray for my misguided father. May he be redeemed!—and for disgrace — trampling, overwhelming disgrace—let it come!"

The speech was begun to her, but ended in an address to Heaven, without further consciousness of who were present.

Ferdinand and his sister saw that some person had betrayed to him the secret they had so carefully concealed; and both apprehended the effects of so sudden a blow upon a mind whose keen sense of honour seemed one with his being. Marcella felt the pang in her own heart.

When the Marquis Santa Cruz learnt what had passed, he went to the couch of his young friend; and dismissing every person, discoursed with him alone, for more than an hour. The Marchioness met him in the room of her son, and, with maternal anxiety, enquired the result of his visit.

"I found him," replied Santa Cruz, "in a silence, which he had never broken since my son and daughter left him; but when I spoke to him, he answered me firmly. And then I discovered, that it was not so much the publication of his father's dishonour which had so affected this virtuous son, as the conviction, that such public degradation, by further incensing his father, would seal his estrangement from his religion and his country."

"He is now an outcast!" cried Louis; "and driven to despair, my father will believe himself banished from the face of heaven and the Christian world for ever!"

"Oh, my father!" cried Marcella, catching the hand of Santa Cruz, with all her devout and pure soul in her animated countenance; "is there not one who teaches us, *where* all comfort *is written?* And in those sacred pages we are told, that he who was cast into the desert for mocking the promise of his God, yet found an angel in the wilderness to save him from perishing."

"Louis de Montemar is no stranger to the volume which is your study, my child," gently answered her father; "and I soon learnt, that though human nature shrunk under the stroke, there was a spirit within him, that sustained and cheered him with a better hope."

"My father," said Marcella, laying her trembling hand

on the arm of the Marquis, " can his faith be wrong, who is so supported?"

Santa Cruz shook off that appealing touch. A deep thoughtfulness passed over his brow. It was troubled, but it was not severe; and he left the room without answering her.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

It was some time after this conference, before the army from the Peninsula were all arrived and disembarked at Ceuta. Santa Cruz had made himself master of every information respecting the condition of the enemy; and found that a large reinforcement of troops was daily expected from the interior provinces. He wished to bring the besiegers to a general battle, before this accession of cavalry should recruit them to so great an advantage, for his own columns were very slenderly supported by horse.

The whole strength of the Ceuta army did not amount to more than twenty-five thousand men; but they were fresh and in spirits; while the forces under the Basha were in disorder and dismay, at the contempt their leader showed to the laws of their prophet. Ten thousand Arabs had lately arrived to strengthen the division under Sidi Ali, which the Basha had disposed on the side of a mountain, to cover his camp; and some other Bedouin chief was bringing up hordes from the interior, to assist their brethren in driving the Spaniards into the sea!

Santa Cruz did not disturb the progress of Louis de Montemar's recovery with any communication of these designs; but proceeded, without any apparent extraordinary motion in the garrison, to draw out his troops, and prepare for a general attack. His position was fully taken one morning before it was light; and falling, in the darkness, upon the advanced posts of the Moors, the infidels in the trenches were cut off to a man, before a gun was fired.

Martini was the first who brought his master intelligence of this assault; for the Moors had conceived so sullen a horror of their leader, that many of them would rather have suffered a total surprise of their camp, than save themselves by yielding to the impious Aben Humeya another opportunity of establishing his power with the Emperor. The rest of his troops stood in uncertainty and alarm. But a few minutes showed the irresistible ascendency of boldness and decision over pusillanimity and wavering. When Ripperda knew the peril of his camp, and issued from his tent in full military array, the awfulness of his heroic countenance, and the splendour of his arms, eclipsed all remembrance of his tyranny in some; and others, dreading the resentment of so formidable a man, threw themselves forward to receive his commands.

He ordered the gates of the camp to be thrown open, and the trumpets to sound. He was obeyed: and he and his battalions soon occupied the space between the entrenchments and the rapid advance of the Spaniards, who were now nearly within the range of his first line of batteries.

The cannon began their summons of death. The rays of the morning, and the flashing of guns, traversed each other in the passing shadows, and rolling smoke. During deep night, Santa Cruz had detached a body of infantry, with a few field pieces, to file off to the left; and by forming a pass, at the bottom of the hill, between Ali's camp and the Basha's, cut off the former from coming to the support of his colleague.

Before Aben Humeya marched out into the field, he despatched two messengers: the one to Sidi Ali, ordering him to advance, and attack the Spaniards in flank; and the other to Adelmelek (who was bringing up the columns from the interior), to hasten onward, and confirm the anticipated victory.

His orders being issued, the Basha bore down upon the charging enemy. The shock was terrific; and the weight of cavalry being on the side of the Moors, it was decisive. The Spaniards gave ground. While Aben Humeya pursued his advantage, a report reached him that Ali was in-

tercepted in the hills. With the quickness of lightning, he detached a resolute body of troops, to cut off, in their turn, the division of Spaniards, which had been sent on this dangerous enterprise.

The eyes of Santa Cruz were not less alert, in viewing the manœuvres of his enemy; and at the very moment he was looking around, to see to whom he could intrust the important commission of opposing this force, to his astonishment he beheld Louis de Montemar at his side. He had heard the roll of cannon, and required no other summons. He was mounted, and in arms, as if in perfect vigour, from his hardly closed wounds. Without asking a question, the Marquis ordered him to take the command of a certain body of cavalry, and lead them towards the hill, to the attack of the detachment despatched from the Moorish camp.

Louis performed his commission so completely, that the Moors were obliged to fall back, and shelter themselves behind their nearest batteries. At this crisis, part of the troops which had been posted to watch the motions of Sidi Ali, seeing the way clear, forgot their duty in their eagerness, and joined the chase. Profiting by the oversight, Ali rushed from his lines; and taking the pursuing Christians in the rear, the shouts of the Moors re-animated their fugitive brethren in front, who turned upon the enemy: and all at once Louis found himself between two fires.

But it was not the object of Sidi Ali to waste his time in the extirpation of a part, when the whole was near, to yield a mightier revenge to the conqueror. He advanced with rapidity and good order, to the support of the Basha; whose left flank was already turned by the furious onset of the Spaniards. Seeing the approaching squadrons of Ali, Aben Humeya rallied his men; and precipitating himself, with a chosen cohort, upon the more effective engine of the enemy (which was one of the Moorish batteries turned upon themselves), he retook it, and discharged it on its late usurpers. The troops of Ali came on with shouts like thunder; and the Christians, who expected nothing less than this new attack, supported the charge only for a while. Aben Humeya brought up a kind of flying battery of his own construction; and his adversaries, being thrown

into confusion by its incessant fire, turned to fly. The Basha left the fugitives to Ali, and moved to the centre, which was now hardly pressed by Santa Cruz himself.

Until now, the Spanish leader had not exposed his own person; but when he found that part of his army was following the retrograde motion of the left wing, he saw the necessity of coming forward, and fighting man to man.

Here was the shock and nerve of the day. Aben Humeya and Santa Cruz were alike seen in every part of the field, as if their bodies, as well as their minds, had the property of omnipresence. Blood streamed on every side; the terrific screams of the wounded horses mingled with the groans of the dying, the yells and shouts of the victors, the braying of the trumpets, the rolling of the drums; while the roaring of the guns shook the earth, and seemed to tear the heavens. The echoes were tremendous from the caves, and summits of the overhanging mountains; and to the crazed imagination of fear, the Genius of Spain and of Barbary appeared to hang in the clouds of battle, and to clash their dreadful arms, in horror of the decisive fight.

But in the moment of loudest uproar, while the helmeted turban of the Basha shone resplendent in anticipated victory, and his watchmen looked from his towers in the camp, for the approach of Adelmelek, a howl of dismay issued from the left; and the thronging squadrons of half Ali's division were seen spiked upon the points of the Spanish line.

Louis had no sooner observed that the Sidi had passed him, and driven this wing of the Spaniards from their ground, than recalling his own troops, and hastily dismounting behind the rolling smoke, he came in van of his flying comrades; and making a hasty *chevaux de frise* of his lances, he permitted the fugitives to pass through, and form in the rear, while the enemy's horse found their fate on his iron rampart. Field pieces were rapidly brought forward to confirm this stand; and the leader of the Arabs falling by the first explosion, the Moors turned, and fled towards their lines.

The centre and the right flank deserved the confidence

of their leader; but the star of Ripperda was now on its last horizon. The Moors fought with desperation, for empire,—for paradise! He performed prodigies of valour! The fabled exploits of romance were no longer marvellous to them who beheld Abel Humeya; but the Spanish numbers and discipline overpowered it all.

Louis saw that, on that field, his father's power in Africa, and perhaps himself, would on that day perish. Through the flashes of musketry, and of cannon shot, he saw that father moving in every direction, with the consummate generalship of a practised soldier, with a heroic resolution that merited a better cause. Louis was desperate and devoted as himself. Though actuated by different principles, and exposing their lives on adverse sides, they seemed actuated by the same spirit—to conquer or to die.

The Moorish entrenchments were forced in every point; the ditch filled with the slain; the camp set on fire, that no delay might be made for plunder; and the infidels who survived, flying in every direction, without a leader, and without a refuge.

The slaughter was as tremendous as the discomfiture was signal and conclusive.

At the entrance of the mountainous track between Abyla and the hills of Tetuan, the pursuing army was encountered by an ambuscade from Adelmelek's division. The envious Moor had disobeyed Aben Humeya's orders to join him in the field. He waited apart for the defeat of the Basha; but to insure his own favour with the Emperor, he planted a powerful detachment, to cover the retreat of any who might escape the horrors of the day.

While the Spaniards were briskly engaged with this ambuscade, the fugitives retreated safely into the mountains. The object gained, the army of Adelmelek drew behind some batteries he had prepared. At this sight, the orders of Santa Cruz, to abandon the dangerous pursuit, were at last obeyed; and the infuriate conquerors, drunk with blood and vengeance, returned, in broken ranks, to the rescued town of Ceuta.

Louis, who had accompanied the general chase, had

only one object,—to know the fate of his father; and he galloped over the death-strewn earth, with his eyes wandering all around, while his sword waved without aim over his unhelmeted head. The plumed crescent of Aben Humeya was no more to be seen. Even his standards had long disappeared from the field, and with the returning squadrons, the horse of De Montemar also quitted the pursuit.

He was stopped in his slow, homeward pace, by a throng before the pavilion of Santa Cruz; the officers were alighting, where all of distinction in the army were assembled to congratulate the general on his victory. Louis entered mechanically, with the rest. He was pale as a spectre; and the blood on his garments bore witness that he had not left his chamber that morning on a vain errand. His presence of mind had saved the day at its first commencement, and his undaunted arm had twice turned a Moorish cimeter from the Spanish general. On Louis's entrance, therefore, his brave compeers parted before him; and the oldest veterans present did not think themselves degraded in bowing their heads before the youthful hero.

When the eyes of Santa Cruz met his advancing figure, the bleeding image of Ripperda rose upon his recollection. He had seen him borne, lifeless, from the burning camp.

"He was his father!" cried the Marquis to himself, as he looked on the brave and devoted son; and stepping forward, he pressed him silently in his arms. Louis felt the pulse of the pitying heart that beat against his; but he was not, then, susceptible of comfort from any human commiseration. With an unaltered aspect, he raised himself from the Marquis's breast, and passed, unmoved, through the less delicate crowd, who pressed on him with compliments on the exertions of the day. He heard nothing but the buzz of many voices; and, bowing without observation, as the speakers approached or retreated from him, left the pavilion, and as unnotingly proceeded to the city.

The nature of Ferdinand's wounds not allowing him to share in the service of the day, hourly messengers from the field had duly communicated the progress of the con-

test. Victory was at last declared! The Marchioness and her daughter threw themselves, in speechless thanksgiving, upon the ground, before the Almighty Preserver of Santa Cruz. They had known all the agonies of being within hearing of a field of battle. The distant uproar of death; the thundering of the guns; the red and billowy clouds, which, at every explosion, a strong east wind drove in darkening volumes over the fortress; were portentous accompaniments to the terrifying successions of the wounded, which every hour brought within its walls. The horrid suspense of that day often came over Marcella in future years, with a recollection, so present, of mental torture, that, catching the hand dearest to her in the world, and trembling with dismay at what might have been the issue, she has wept over it tears of ceaseless gratitude. But in the dreadful hour of conflict, those tender expressions of anxiety were driven back upon their source; and while thinking on no other object than the life of her father and his friend, her hands, with her mother's, assisted in binding up fractured limbs, and stanching blood welling from many a brave heart.

The trumpet of recal from the victorious chase sounded near the walls. The Marchioness rose from her knees; and though unable, from strong emotion, to move herself, she despatched her son, and Marcella, to meet their father. Ferdinand supported his sister's agitated steps, while he sustained his own by the aid of his crutch. They were hastening along the main gallery of the castle, when Louis de Montemar entered from the field.

Aware of what must be his feelings on the defeat and fall of his father, Ferdinand instantly quitted his sister's side, and retreated from the melancholy greeting. Marcella was not less informed, by her own heart, of what must then be tearing their friend's; but she did not fly, neither did she move towards him. She stood still, with her eyes riveted on him, in speechless occupation of soul. He had not seen Ferdinand; he did not see her, though he passed her close. Marcella saw something dreadful in the fixture of his mien. Could such piety as his be stricken with despair? She sunk on her knees at the terrible

image; and a sound, between a groan, and a cry of supplication to Heaven, burst from her lips, as, with clasped hands, she looked upon his disappearing steps.

That was a sound which had its chord in Louis's breast. He turned round. Marcella did not cover her face; for a brighter principle than terrestrial love actuated her soul for the noble sufferer before her. She knelt, and looked on him. Louis approached her. He stood for a moment gazing on her. In the next, the whole agony of his mind agitated his before marbled features. As she started on her feet, he took her hand, and firmly grasping it, said, "Oh, pray for me!" then dropping it, he again turned away, and passed out of sight along the gallery.

CHAPTER XXIX.

THE siege of Ceuta was now not merely raised, but the accumulating army which had so long held it in blockade, and then beleaguered it with such enterprising determination, was disappeared, as if it had never been. Victors and vanquished were mingled in one common grave. The steed with its rider; and he who slew, by the side of him that was slain. The Spaniards performed these frightful obsequies; and he who held the mattock, or the spade, had often to contend with birds of prey and ravenous dogs, howling amongst the mangled remains.

A flag of truce arrived from Adelmelek. It offered preliminaries of peace, in the name of the Emperor; while the vindictive Hadge accused the defeated Aben Humeya of all the reciprocal outrages committed during the present campaign.

Santa Cruz enquired the fate of the late Basha.

"He fled from the field of battle," replied the Moor, "and has not yet been heard of."

"Your information is false," returned the Marquis; "I

myself saw him, streaming with wounds, and insensible, borne out of his consuming camp by a party of your own countrymen."

"I speak on the word of my commander," replied the Moor.

"You must bring me better evidence of his truth," rejoined the Marquis, "before I trust him. Return this day week to Ceuta; and, as he dissembles, or fairly represents, the last act of his fallen rival, I shall shape the terms my Sovereign may empower me to make to your Emperor."

Santa Cruz was not long in receiving ample credentials from the court of Seville, for all he might wish to do, in re-establishing the Spanish interest in Barbary. At Seville, as in Ceuta, it was believed that the Duke de Ripperda had expiated his crimes with his life; and in answer to the evidence which Santa Cruz transmitted, of the inextinguishable loyalty of the Marquis de Montemar, the King issued a new edict, granting him the restitution of all his late father's hereditary honours and possessions. But there was a clause in this munificent investiture. The future Duke de Ripperda must avow himself of the Roman Catholic communion.

The re-opened wounds of Louis were just cicatrised; and he was leaning over the table on which he was writing to his friends in England, when the Marquis entered with the official letter from the King. He read it aloud, through the catalogue of the Ripperda territories and titles; but before he opened on the clause, he paused.

"De Montemar," said he, with solemnity, "hard have been the trials sent to prove the gold of your heart; and you will not esteem the last title with which your King would invest you, the least honourable,—a true Christian!"

He then read the condition:—"That all these restitutions should be ratified by the royal seal, on the day that the Cardinal-resident at Madrid should witness the baptism of Louis, Duke of Ripperda, into the bosom of the Church of Rome."

"I am sensible to the gracious intent of my Sovereign," replied Louis; "but that name I once idolized, I would

now hear no more. It shall never be borne by me! And for the rest,—I am a Protestant, and I will die so."

Santa Cruz urged him by religious arguments, and persuasions drawn from the reasonableness of maintaining the rights of his ancestors. He spoke of the justice he owed to himself in restoring the illustrious name of his family to its pristine lustre; and, at any rate, it was his duty, when so offered, to transmit it, and the inheritance that was its appendage, unimpaired to his posterity.

"I shall have no posterity," replied Louis. "My father died an infidel, and his name and his race are no more."

"What do you mean, De Montemar?" demanded the Marquis, regarding with alarm the countenance of his young friend.

"Nothing rash; nothing that this venerable man would not approve," said he, laying his hand on the letter he was writing to Mr. Athelstone. "But, Marquis," cried he, "is there not matter enough to break a son's heart?"

Santa Cruz replied by turning the subject to Louis's own great endowments of mind and figure; and tried to awaken his ambition, by dwelling on the impression his high-principled conduct at Vienna had made upon his sovereigns. "It could only be equalled," he said, "by their admiration of your late intrepid defence of Ceuta. On these grounds," the Marquis added, "you have only to choose; and the first stations in the state, or in the army, must in process of time be at your command."

Louis shook his head.

"I was not born for a statesman," replied he. "I acknowledge no morality but one; and I have known enough of the ethics of cabinets, to loathe their chicanery. I have seen that, in the adjustment of their respective interests, the principles of common honesty may not only be dispensed with, but that no subterfuge is too mean for adoption, when it is deemed expedient to disguise truth or over-reach a rival party. Where every man is supposed a deceiver by profession, no man can really trust in each other; and I will never be one of a set of men, where all are suspected of dishonour. As to the army! I have had

enough of that also." He shuddered as he spoke, and covered his face with his hand.

Santa Cruz did not require that shudder to be explained; but he affected to consider this wide rejection as derogatory to Louis's loyalty, and to the general manliness of his character.

"Not in my mind," continued the veteran; "but in the opinion of the world. You must recover what your father's dereliction has lost; and the public suffrage is only to be retained by a succession of distinguished services. You are especially called upon to make manifest, in all ways, what you are — a true subject of Spain, and one whose piety is worthy the adoption of our Church."

"I *am* called upon," replied Louis, "to appear what I am! I served the King of Spain at the expense of many a sacrifice. I need not turn your eyes to the last. My faith is not in my power to exchange at will; but were it so, ill would he serve his prince, who could so desert himself: the example before us ought to set that at rest for ever. If, by remaining a Protestant, I must be no more a Spaniard, the forfeiture must proceed against me. I have still the country of my mother. It will judge me with candour; and there, I trust, I shall do my duty, in whatever state of life it may please Heaven to number out my days."

As Louis uttered this, his countenance was calm though sorrowful; and Santa Cruz, struck with such awful resignation in one so young and powerfully endowed, grasped his hand with as much reverence as affection, and soon after left the room.

CHAPTER XXX.

MEANWHILE all was consternation and mutiny amongst the shattered remnant of the Moorish army. Ali had collected the fugitives from the bloody day of Ceuta, and attempted

to re-organise them into some line of defence. But fearful of being led a second time against their conquerors, they resisted every law of discipline, and spread the same refractory spirit to the camp of Adelmelek. The Hadge had, undesignedly, prepared his legions for this excess of disobedience. He had impressed them with a belief, that the conversion of the Duke de Ripperda to the Ottoman faith was only a master-stroke of Christian policy, to acquire the Emperor Abdallah's confidence; and then, as was now apparent, betray the whole of the Moorish host to the sword of Spain. The credulity of the people at large was ready to believe the same misrepresentation. Aware that their masters seldom consulted any counsellor but caprice, they did not doubt it now; and secure in their poverty, but bold in the use of their tongues, they clamoured against the court, for putting such implicit trust in a renegado. Adelmelek doubled their rage, by assuring the people that Aben Humeya had withdrawn himself from punishment, by shutting himself up, with the embezzled treasures of Abdallah, within the bulwarks of Tetuan.

At this juncture, Muley Hamet, having been secretly apprised of the disaster which had befallen his former vanquisher, re-appeared upon the plains of Marmora; and at the head of an armed multitude of Moors and Arabs, marched towards Mequinez.

Sidi Solyman, his near kinsman and secret partisan, was then in the capital. He was ready, on any promising occasion, to blow the flame of sedition; and, with great industry and despatch prepared the way for Muley Hamet, by publishing the reverses of the campaign. He accused the great officers of state of mal-administration; their chief agent, the renegade Duke, as an infamous trafficker of his faith; and urged, that Abdallah, having introduced the Christian impostor into the councils of the empire, had rendered himself obnoxious to the prophet's vengeance; the people at present lay under the same curse; and their first act must be to appease the Heavenly Power, by the deposition of the Emperor, and the delivery of Aben Humeya to the expiation of the laws!

The ever discontented and tumultuous rabble of Me-

quinez listened to these suggestions in the very spirit that was desired. They set fire to the imperial palace, and marched out of the town, headed by the incendiary Solyman, to meet his kinsman on the plain.

Abdallah, at that time, with a few chosen troops, was winding his way through the Habad mountains, to support the joint authority of Ali and Adelmelek with his presence; and also to ameliorate the fury of the latter against the Spanish Basha. His Majesty still believed him to be as true as he was brave.

Adelmelek weighed the consequence to himself, of the Emperor's arrival, should he hear from Ali, that the battle of Ceuta was lost by the disobedience of the army of the interior to the summons of Aben Humeya. The Hadge soon settled the alternative; and on the very day he was told of Abdallah's approach, he caused Ali to be assassinated. An honest Moor, who knew the designs of the Hadge, left the camp that very night, and meeting the imperial escort in the mountains, informed the Emperor, not merely of the murder of the Sidi, but that Adelmelek intended his sovereign the same fate; after which he would march upon Tetuan, (where the Basha was shut up, utterly helpless from his numerous wounds,) and storming the place, deliver the whole, with the empire, into the hands of Muley Hamet. Other information more than corroborated this statement; and Abdallah soon saw that temporary flight was his only resource. He called his few faithful followers, and taking a circuit through the mountains, made a safe retreat into the desert regions of his empire.

Muley Hamet was declared Emperor, by Sidi Solyman and Adelmelek; and the troops of the latter, rejoicing in any change, readily obeyed his orders for a mere show of discipline, while he despatched his second ambassador to Ceuta, to make peace, at any rate, with the Spanish King.

By the information of this envoy, Santa Cruz learnt, that when Ripperda fell in the battle of the camp, it was under the stroke of many wounds, and the last had been supposed mortal. But his immediate followers, snatching

him from the crowd of slain, had laid him on a camel, and disappeared with him from the field. It was some days before Adelmelek knew what was become of the fugitive party; and then, a messenger from Ismail Cheriff, chief of his Arabian guards, brought information (just before the murder of Ali) that the Arabs had borne the wounded Aben Humeya to the safe hold of his own fortress of Tetuan. Ali lost no time in sending the courier back to the faithful Ismail, with a full account of Adelmelek's intention to give the Basha up to the resentment of the turbulent soldiery, or to influence the Emperor to order his immediate death.

The consequence was, Aben Humeya closed the gates of Tetuan against all the insidious advances of Adelmelek.

"Ali is dead; and Muley Hamet Emperor of Morocco," —the ambassador continued: "Adelmelek is alone powerful with the new sovereign; and the first judicial act of the divan has been to declare Aben Humeya a traitor to the empire and our prophet. Should the desperate state of his wounds fail of proving his executioner, before the next moon, Tetuan will be stormed by Adelmelek, the inhabitants put to the sword, and the treacherous Basha die the death of a slave."

To these denunciations, Louis de Montemar, who was present at the audience, paid no attention; all that he heard, and what he seized as the renewal of life, was, that his father yet survived; that he was accused of irreverence towards the founder of the Ottoman faith; and that he had taken refuge in a place, not more than a day's journey from the Spanish fortress.

When the Mussulman closed his communications, and withdrew, to leave their import to consultation, Louis imparted what were now his designs. Indeed, it was hardly necessary to declare them; for the existence of the Duke de Ripperda was no sooner affirmed, and his occupation of Tetuan mentioned, than Santa Cruz read, in the instant blaze of his friend's countenance, the regeneration of hope, and the enterprise to which the welcome visitant would give birth.

"But the hazard is so infinite!" rejoined the Marquis;

" where are we to find a person, who would have the boldness to guide you through the brigand tracks of these infuriated Moors? And even should we be successful in that object, and you arrive at Tetuan, consider the result. You may be admitted to your father; but should he perish in his apostasy, where would be your protection? and what would be your fate?"

" That, I leave to Providence!" replied Louis; " my course is clear:—to seek my father; and make a last effort to share with him that happiness in the world to come, he has for ever destroyed in this."

" But his wounds are mortal," returned Santa Cruz; " he may be dead before you have reached this scene of peril! You will then have exposed your life, and more than your life, in vain. Think of the horrors that would befall you, should the incensed Moors discover in you the son of the man his enemies have taught them to believe was their betrayer?"

" Nothing is terrible to me," replied Louis, " but the idea of my father dying in his apostasy. Heaven appears to have opened his grave, to give him for a short time to my prayers; and shall any thing prevent me entering it, even if it should prove my own? I feel I have my errand! It is to touch the dead with the recalling breath of his Redeemer; it is to see him rise again to life everlasting!"

Louis's soul was kindled into a holy flame. It was the ardent devotion of a son, mingling with the fervour of a really pious spirit. The enterprising hope, that was its offspring, might, by colder natures, be termed romantic vanity, or fanatic enthusiasm; but the warm heart of the Marquis saw religion in his zeal, and filial duty in the hazarded self-immolation.

After discussing many plans, it was at last decided, that the safest scheme was to pass from Ceuta by water; and that Louis should put on the garb of a brother of Montesa, an *Order of Mercy,* then by licence scattered throughout the marine towns of Barbary, for the redemption of Christian slaves.

As he passed into the chapel, to receive the vesture, and holy benediction, from the superior of the Ceuta brethren,

he found Santa Cruz and his family kneeling before the altar, to unite their orisons with that of the priest.

The supplications of the veteran were fervent, though silent; and, as he prayed, he often turned his eyes on his daughter, who knelt by him, with her face concealed in her veil.

The abbot put his hands on the head of Louis. The Marchioness wept; for she had no faith in this expedition, and thought within herself—"So he sanctifies the youthful martyr! From that den of infidelity he never will return!"

Ferdinand whispered something of the same import to his mother; and she sobbed audibly.

Louis turned to her voice, and put her hand to his lips. The Marquis and Ferdinand embraced him. Marcella had raised herself from her knees, and held by the rails of the altar. Louis did not see her face, for the veil yet hung before it; but the other hand, that was laid upon her breast, trembled; and he thought he saw, he was not less in her thoughts, than in those of her parents. He wished, yet hesitated to approach her. Santa Cruz observed the direction of his eyes, and his doubting movement, but he did not speak. Louis's heart failed him; and blessing her in its inward recesses, he turned away, and followed the abbot out of the chapel.

Having received his credentials from the superior at Ceuta, to the fraternity of the same order at Tetuan, Louis took his station in the open boat, that was to convey him through the dangers of the counter-current, at that worst season of the year, to the point where now centered all his hopes and fears.

CHAPTER XXXI.

The river of Tetuan meets the sea little more than a league from the town. All was quiet on its banks; and the boat which conveyed Louis to the Christian convent on

the city walls, threw out its grappling irons under the deep excavation of a rock, at the base of an old tower.

Through a kind of lantern staircase in the hollow of the wall, Louis was conducted to an iron grating. The man who had been his pilot in this midnight voyage, pulled a bell which hung within the grating, then crossing himself, muttered the Moorish *benedicite*, "Sta fer Lah!" and sprang back into his boat.

Louis had been warned by his brethren at Ceuta, not to ask his navigators any question; and when he witnessed this monstrous association of Mussulmen, with Christian devotion, he did not doubt that he had been rowed to Tetuan, by characters of as little principle as those which had brought him from Spain to the Ottoman shore.

Before any person answered to the pull of the bell, which had ceased ringing, he heard the boat splashing away with its crew, from under the caverned passage; and shortly after, the dead silence assured him he was left quite alone.

The mariner had given him a dark lantern, which showed him the gloom of his situation. A short flight of steps; a fathomless abyss of waters. Before him, a strong grated door, through which no human nerve could force an entrance; and immediately beyond it, a rough dark wall, which did not appear more than a foot distant from its impassable portcullis.

Louis had just raised his arm to the bell, to make it sound a second time, when a figure appeared at the grate, with the suddenness of an apparition. Without a word being uttered on either side, the massy bars were drawn, and Louis found himself following this silent conductor, through a long, narrow stone passage, to another iron door. The mute friar made its bolts yield before him; and the chamber, to which its porch is a vestibule, presented, to the eye of De Montemar, the assembled body of the holy brotherhood of Tetuan.

This little synod did not exceed ten; the person who conducted him completing that number. The prior rose, on the entrance of a stranger brother of their order, which the ringing of that secret bell had announced; it being a

mode of ingress to their cell, by which none but the respective fraternities of Montesa were ever allowed to enter.

A peculiar badge on the cowl of Louis announced that he came from the *order* at Ceuta; and the credentials he delivered to the prior confirmed its evidence. He was introduced to the brethren at Tetuan, as one who had a message of conscience to the dying Basha; and they were exhorted, by every argument from the Christian faith to further the visit of the sacred ambassador.

"I must see him this night."

"That is impossible," replied the prior; "but within an hour, I expect a visit from Martini d'Urbino, the alcaid of his Christian slaves."

Louis enquired, how the alcaid reported the state of the Basha; and asked the purport of his visit to the cell.

The prior hesitated to give a candid answer. But he recollected the style of his superior's letter; and Louis repeated his questions, though mildly, with so unappealable an air of authority, the good priest could no longer refuse a true and respectful reply.

"The Basha cannot live many days; and his Christian servant visits this cell by stealth, to witness the masses which we say for his master's soul."

"At his master's requisition?" demanded Louis.

"At his servant's," replied the prior; "the Duke, himself, is yet lost to redemption."

Louis sighed heavily. He wrapped himself in his mantle, as he took his station by the low embers of the hearth; and spoke no more, till a hasty step in a distant passage announced the approach of Martini. The friars had respected the abstracted taciturnity of their stranger brother; and did not even intrude on him by an observation, when they saw him start from his seat at the well-known tread of his father's faithful follower.

Louis's cowl hung over his face when Martini entered. Indeed, it had never been raised.

The alcaid's appearance was strange to the eyes of him, who had last seen him in the light European garb of his country. He was now covered with the gorgeous draperies of an Asiatic officer; and the load of his magnificence

seemed to weigh as heavily on his frame, as the fetters of his office oppressed the careless gaiety of his naturally free spirit. He did not remark an accession to the number of the brotherhood, but immediately declared the Duke's augmented bodily danger. The anguish of his wounds had that day been more intolerable than he could bear; low groans burst from his lips, during their most insufferable extremity; and when the hours of cessation from pain recurred, he lay in sullen despair; only breaking the fearful stillness, by occasionally murmuring the words, "Lost! lost!"

"'Tis the evidence of his spirit against him!" exclaimed the prior. "But here is a brother," pointing to Louis, "whose holy zeal would try to lead him into some view of comfort."

"That is not to be done in this world," returned Martini; "he has lost too much, for any mortal aid to give him consolation."

"Then," cried the priest, "his doom must be eternal death!"

"Teach him to think that! Tell him, the doom of an unpardoned transgressor is utter extinction;" replied Martini, "and you complete his perdition. He would find a treacherous peace, in anticipating the oblivion of the grave. But now — let us to prayers, my holy fathers; that is the only way, by which we can bring him comfort."

The prior began the mass. Louis was on his knees, as well as the brothers. His prayers were not in their words, nor uttered in any sounds; but the inward groanings of his earnest spirit, like those of him who smote his breast in the Temple, and exclaimed, "Lord, be merciful unto me a sinner!" were heard, and answered from above.

At the end of the service, Martini laid his oblation on the altar, and was turning away to withdraw, when Louis put his hand on his arm. He durst not speak to him before the brethren; for the abbot at Ceuta had warned him, not to discover himself in the priory at Tetuan, until his success with the Basha should supersede any cause of fear at such an enterprise.

"Signor alcaid," said the prior, "if it be possible, you

must introduce that brother to your dying master. He comes from Ceuta, and his mission is of importance."

"Nothing from Ceuta can be of importance to my master now," replied Martini: "its very name would re-awaken him from the melancholy stupor in which I left him, to all the horrors of his most terrific agonies." Martini paused an instant; then, in a suppressed tone, he addressed the stranger friar.

"Father," said he, "the Marquis de Montemar, my master's only son, fell on the walls of Ceuta, in his sight, and in his defence. When any circumstance recalls the scene, then it is, that I see the palsied quivering of his lip; that I hear the often repeated *Lost! lost!* till the low, half-uttered sound almost drives me mad. I, too, loved him. But all is now gone for ever."

Louis grasped Martini's arm, and made a sign to the brethren to withdraw. There was that, in the credentials he brought, which told them to respect all his wishes; and without a word, they obeyed the motion of his hand.

Assured from what he now heard, that his father had restored him to his heart, the hope Louis derived from this happy change nerved him with perfect self-possession; and drawing Martini towards the lamp that hung over the altar, he raised his cowl from his face.

"Martini," said he, "you will not deny me the sight of my father."

It was flesh and blood that clasped his arm: but it seemed the voice and countenance of the slain De Montemar! The latter was wan and pale, and, in the scared apprehension of the beholder, ghastly, as if just risen from his bloody grave. Martini did not speak; but, with his eyes fixed on what he believed a terrible forewarning of his master's death, he shook almost to fainting.

Louis comprehended his fear, and instantly relieved it by saying, "I was wounded, when my father saw me fall. But Heaven has spared me to this hour; and you must do a last service to the Duke de Ripperda and his son."

Though Martini was now convinced it was no spectre that stood before him, he sunk upon the steps of the altar, and remained for some time in so much emotion, he could

not reply. At last he spoke; and in his rapid and agitated recapitulation of the events which had succeeded his master's repulse at the storming of Ceuta, he mentioned, that Ripperda's indignation at the Moors for abandoning the ramparts, seemed the more exasperated, when report told him, that the breach had been defended by the Marquis de Montemar.

"We both did our duty," said he to me, with a horrible smile; "though Louis would have served Spain better, if he had suffered his brother soldiers to kill its enemy."—"But he would not have been your son!" replied I. The Duke looked sternly at me. "Martini, how often have I told you, I have no son? No part in any human being — but what administers to my vengeance!"

"Then came the intercepted courier from Oran. His despatches related the attempt on Ceuta; and that the Marquis de Montemar was dying of his wounds. He was brought before the Basha; and, on being questioned, acknowledged you were dead. At that unexpected disclosure, nature asserted itself in your father's breast. He found, you were yet his son, in the moment you were lost to him for ever. His grief knew no bounds: it was terrible, and in despair. Alas! signor, it was frenzy, wearing the garb of warlike retaliation. His orders were full of blood, and extirpating revenge. All flew at his command; but though all were brave, none fought as he did. His onward courage, and invincible resolution, on that desperate day of his defeat, surpassed human daring, and almost human credibility. He fell, bleeding at every pore. I was near him at the instant; and raising him from the ground, (then as insensible, as if past the pains of death,) the Arab, Ismail Cheriff, assisted me, and we bore him to a place of security.

"We knew that all was over in the field; and, dreading the malice of his Moorish rivals, as soon as we perceived life in him, we conveyed him safely into Tetuan; and closing the gates, prepared to defend him against the immediate fury of his vanquished soldiers; who, we were soon informed, were in mutiny, and urging their no less

hostile commanders to lead them against their former Basha."

But an antidote to the deadly aconite, which so much of this narrative contained, was also gathered by the anxious son of Ripperda. He learnt, that the blood which flowed so copiously from his father's wounds, had cleared the long troubled fountain of his heart.

When the Duke recovered from his first mortal weakness, he found that he had also recovered a memory he would gladly have lost for ever. The madness of his revenge had passed away in the floodgates which opened from his streaming sides. No mist now hung over his better faculties. He saw his injuries as they were; but he also beheld his extravagant retaliation in its true enormity. He had become a rebel, an apostate, an enemy to all mankind! He had sacrificed his honour, his affections, his soul, to a phantom that vanished in his embrace, and left him to a terrible conviction of perdition! His son was no more! The race of Ripperda was then extinct; and all the fame, and all the glory, for which he had contended, were blotted out for ever! His evil deeds alone would be remembered, as an example to avoid, and to shudder at! Remorse fastened on the heart of the dying man; but it was a remorse, direful and dark. Repentance did not shed a tear there; for the mortal vice of his youth, and of his manhood, still kept guard over the better spirit within. He was too proud to give vent to the anguish of his soul; too proud to acknowledge to man, or to God, the secret of his misery — that he was a sinner, and in despair.

Louis passed with Martini over the embattled terraces, which, in the present fortified state of the city, occupied the place of citron groves, on the flat roofs of the houses of Tetuan. The Ginaraliph, otherwise the Basha's palace, was in the centre of the town, surrounded by sumptuous gardens; and stood in the moonlight, reflecting from its gilded domes the milder splendours of her orb. The court, and the chambers, spoke of pomp and luxury. Guards lined the galleries; while the baths and remote pavilions of the Basha breathed every fragrance of Arabia,

and sparkled every where with gold and silver stuffs, drapering the walls, and carpeting the floors. Did paradise consist in banqueting the senses, here it was. But paradise dwells within the heart. In that of the expiring possessor of all these delusions, there was only a desert to be found. In such a state, gloomily awaiting his last sigh, and the direful judgment that was to be passed upon his soul, Louis beheld his father, lying as one already dead, under the mockery of all this gilded pomp.

Ripperda did not see the grey form that glided into his apartment; for he did not raise his head from its fixed position on his pillow. Martini advanced to the couch.

"My lord, I bring you good tidings!"

Ripperda took no notice of what was said. Martini drew closer, and repeated the words. His master opened his eyes, with a look of reproach.

"I do not deceive you, my lord," cried the faithful servant; "my tidings are the most precious your dearest wishes could desire."

"Then they would rid me of this world, and all that troubles me!" cried Ripperda. "Tell me nothing, for I have no wishes here."

"Your son, my lord!" returned Martini; "would you not hear of him?"

"No!" cried the Duke, in a voice of peculiar strength. "His reputation is my infamy! Let me die without that last drop."

Louis could refrain no longer. He sunk on his knees. His cowl was now thrown backward from his head; and though at the extreme distance of the apartment, his father recognised him at the first glance. His eyes for a while became riveted to the strange vision; but he did not for a moment believe it otherwise than a reality.

"Who is that?" cried he to Martini, and pointing to the figure.

"The Marquis de Montemar," replied the Italian.

Louis was now on his feet, and approaching his father. Ripperda drew himself up on his bed.

"And what," cried he, in a severe tone, "if you be yet a wretch in this miserable world, what tempts you again

into the presence of the man who has survived all relations but his own conscience?"

"My own conscience, and my heart!" cried Louis; "from this hour, determined to live and die by my father."

Ripperda bent his head upon his clapsed hands. Louis drew near, then nearer, and kneeling by the bed, touched those hands, which seemed clenched in each other with more than mortal agony. The bed shook under the strong emotion of the Duke. At last his hands closed over his son's; and Louis, in broken accents, exclaimed: "Oh! my father: in all that I have offended you, by word or deed, pardon; and bless me by your restored confidence!"

"Louis!" cried the Duke, after a pause, and relinquishing the hands he held: "pardon is not a word to pass my lips. I know it not. I shall never hear it. Let all men perish, as I shall perish."

"You will not pronounce such a sentence on your son?" returned Louis, seeing the distemper of his mind; and praying inwardly, while he sought to soothe, and to turn him to better fcelings. "You gave me birth; and you will not leave me to die, without having received your forgiveness for all my unintentional offences."

"Louis de Montemar!" cried the Duke; "virtuous son of an angel I shall never behold! There is no death in your breast; no need of forgiveness from earth or heaven! But your father! Shudder while you touch him, for hell is already in his bosom."

Ripperda's face was again buried in his hands. That once godlike figure shook as under the last throes of dissolution; and before his anguished son could form his pious hopes into any words of consolation, a slave appeared for a moment at the curtain of the door. The act of prostration, holding out a sealed packet to Martini, and vanishing again, seemed comprised in less than a second.

Martini knew the writing to be that of a friend of his own, in the suite of Adelmelek; and aware of some pressing danger, from the abrupt entrance of the slave, he broke the seal. He read, that the late Emperor being deposed, Adelmelek was advancing to Tetuan, to threaten it with

destruction; or to allow it to purchase mercy, by an instant surrender of its Basha. This sacrifice being made, the offending Aben Humeya would be put to an ignominious death; and so the laws of Mahommed should be appeased, and an exemplary warning set up to all foreign invaders of the rights and honours of true Mussulmen.

Without preface, Martini communicated this information to those present. He no longer feared the execution of such threats; but felicitated his master on the arrival of the Marquis de Montemar, who would, himself, defend his father's life from these ungrateful Moors.

"And was it my death you feared?" asked the Duke, gloomily looking up from his position, and bracing his nerves at this seeming summons to renewed action. "Were it to be found, I would seek it; but there is no death for me. Torn from this murderous world by violence, or sapped by the consuming hand of corporeal pain, neither can give me rest."

"Yes, my father," gently rejoined Louis; "there is rest in the grave, when——"

"Silence!" interrupted the Duke; all his former haughtiness confirming his voice and manner: "is it you that would cajole reason with sophistry?—that would give up your unsullied truth at last, to insult your father, by preaching an annihilation you know to be a falsehood? I know a different lesson. A man cannot rid himself of bodily pangs, by moving from place to place. How, then, shall the torments of the spirit be extinguished by so small a change, as being in or out of this loathed prison of flesh? When my soul, my own and proper self—when it is freed, by death, from the fetters of the passions which have undone me, then I shall think even more intensely than I do now. I shall remember more than I do now. I shall see the naked springs, the undisguised consequences of all my actions. They will burn in my eyes for ever. For such, I feel, is the eternal book of accusation, prepared for the immortal spirit that has transgressed beyond the hope of pardon, or the power of peace! Louis," added he, grasping his son's arm, and looking him sternly in the face; "has not your Pastor-uncle taught you the same?"

"Yes; and more," replied his son. "He has taught me, that it is impossible for the finite faculties of man to comprehend the infinite attributes of God; how he reconciles justice with mercy, in the mystery of the redemption, and renews the corrupted nature of man by the regeneration of repentance! Recall the promises of the Scriptures, my father; and there you will find, that He who washed David from blood-guiltiness, and blotted out the idolatry of Solomon; that He who pardoned Cephas for denying Him in the hour of trial, and satisfied the perverse infidelity of Thomas; that He who forgave Saul his persecutions, and made him the ablest apostle of his church; nay, that He who has been the propitiation of man, from the fall of Adam to the present hour;—wills not the death of a sinner, but calls him to repentance and to life!"

"But what," returned the Duke, "if I know nothing of these things? You start! But it is true. The Scriptures you talk of is the only book I never opened." There was a terrible expression in the eyes of Ripperda as he delivered this, and listened to the heavy groan that burst from the heart of his son.

"In this hour," continued he, "when all human learning deserts me; rejected by the world, and loathing man and all his ways;—in this bitter hour, I believe, therein I might have found the word of life! But I derided its pretensions, and the penalty must be paid!"

Louis had recovered himself from the first shock of this awful confession. He beheld the desperate resignation of his father's countenance, when uttering the last sentence; but he did not permit it to shake his manhood a second time, as he now took up the sacred subject, in the language of Scripture itself. He had been well taught by the precepts and example of his Pastor-uncle; and with a memory which astonished even himself, and a power of argument that seemed the eloquence of inspiration, the young preacher sat by his father's side, till a light, like the morning sun, rose upon the chaos of his mind. Feeling warmth with the beam, his heart, which until now had been like a stone in his bosom, melted under the genial influence; and the eyes,

which had not endured the softness of a tear for many months, overflowed on the hand of his son.

The soul of Louis was then as in heaven. He was speechless with gratitude; and when his father looked upon him, he beheld his face indeed as an angel; for all that he had taught and promised, was then effulgent in his upward eyes.

Louis passed the night in his father's chamber. And before another sun rose and set, and rose again, he had so entirely satisfied him of the truth and efficacy of the religion of Christ, that the noble penitent begged to seal his repentance and his faith, by receiving the holy sacrament from the hands of the prior of Montesa.

During these few sacred days, the Duke became so tranquillised by the hopes of religion, that he found freedom of mind sufficient to converse with his son on his future temporal concerns. He took pen and ink, to write something to that effect; which he forbade Louis to open, till the writer were no more.

"It particularly relates to England," said he; "for that country must hereafter be yours. It is the only one I ever knew, where virtue is a man's best friend. You came innocent out of it; and it is to your own credit, and the influence of God alone, that you return unpolluted by the stains which have made my name one universal blot. Oh! Louis," cried he, wringing his hands; "you have taken from your father the sting of death; you have brought him the true unction of Heaven; and given him that peace, which the world and all its empires cannot give: and what do I bequeath thee in return? The memory of my infamy! But it will not reach you in England; or if it do, that people are too just, to condemn the blameless son, for the delinquency of his parent."

Louis's heart sprang to that country, to which his father exhorted him to return. Since he left it, his pilgrimage had been one of anguish: an expedition of contest and sorrow; of defeat without error; and victory which could yield no triumph.

"But you will live, my father!" said he, observing that for the last few hours the Duke's pains had ceased; and

that his countenance bespoke, if not the serenity of innocence, the resignation of religion. "Your bodily sufferings are ameliorated; and we shall see England together."

Ripperda looked on him with a sudden brightness in his eye.

"That penance is spared me!" cried he: "while on earth, I should feel, that memory and reproach are the worms which never die! I have, indeed, no pain; neither in my spirit, nor in my body; and in the moment the latter ceased, your father felt the bond was taken off that fastened his frail being to this world!"

Louis now understood, what another few hours would so soon demonstrate.

"Here is the remnant of a sword," rejoined the Duke, putting the shattered remains of one into his son's hand. "It broke in the conflict on the breach of Ceuta, but it did not fail me. Its fractured blade slew the Biscayan who wounded you in my defence. Preserve it, Louis; for it was my friend, when I believe I had hardly another friend left. It saved my life from assassins in the mountains of Genoa. Who wielded it, I know not; but remark its motto, *J'ose!* Should you ever meet its owner, remember that William de Ripperda's last injunction was *Gratitude!*"

Louis kissed the shattered blade, and put it into his bosom. At the same instant he heard a stir in the vestibule:—it was the prior of Montesa.

The Roman Catholic religion was the first Ripperda had exercised; and though he knew it by its ceremonials only, it was most grateful to him to die in its profession. He now worshipped the only God and Saviour, in spirit and in truth; and Louis felt, that in such circumstances, every water was alike holy that baptized him to salvation.

"Father!" said he, when the priest entered, "you come to behold in me the end of all human vanity. What have I not been? What am I now? An example, and a beacon! What Ripperda was, is now forgotten; what he is, will be remembered by men, and reproached upon his posterity, when God has erased the record for ever!"

With his hands clasped in those of the prior, he made a short but contrite confession of his transgressions and his

faith. From those hallowed lips he received the sacred absolution; and as the consummation of his eternal peace, raised on his bed upon his knees, and supported on the breast of his son, for the first and the last time, he received the pledge of his salvation, in tasting, with a believer's heart, the last supper of our Lord.

"It is the bread of life!" cried he, firmly pressing the hand of Louis; and starting forward with his eyes riveted, as if on some invisible object:—"Thou hast given it me; and thy mother——" he fell back on the bosom of his son. At that moment, the smile which was once so beautiful, but now rendered ghastly by the hues of death, flitted over his blanched lips. It seemed the glittering wing of a seraph, escaping the marble tomb. All was still. The voice of the priest raised a requiem to the departed spirit; but Louis had neither voice nor tear. He was sunk on his knees, to adore the merciful God, into whose presence his beloved father was then passed away.

CHAPTER XXXII.

Louis opened the sealed packet, and obeyed his father's dying injunctions to the minutest circumstance.

According to the noble penitent's written command, and by the friendly management of the faithful Arab, his death was concealed from the Moors, until all was accomplished which he wished to be done. When every thing was completed, his body was taken away by night to the chapel of Montesa; and buried in its consecrated garden, without pomp, or a register on his grave.

Louis remained for an hour alone, by the humbled relics of all that was once admired and honoured in man. His heart would have been with that cold corse, had he not known that its spirit must be sought in other regions. But on the awful spot, he called on the shade of his mother; he invoked the soul of him who had sinned and been for-

given! He laid his own ambition, and all that was yet within him of this world, on that first altar of nature, at the foot of the cross. He rose with a holy confidence, and was comforted.

He bade adieu to the brethren, who now knew him to be the son of the deceased, and blessed him for his filial heroism. The prior conducted him, with repeated benediction, to the boat that was to convey him to the late Basha's armed galleon in the bay. Martini was already there, with the Count de Patinos. Ripperda had held that young Spaniard a close prisoner, in a remote tower of the Ginaraliph; but, with his dying breath, he pronounced his release; and the Count, with other Christian captives, to whom the same voice gave liberty, were now safely embarked, along with the treasures of Ripperda, in the vessel that was to carry his son to the opposite shore.

Nature seemed to have put on her mourning garments; for all was universal darkness: not a star in the heavens, nor a glow-worm on the beach, shed one ray of light, to guide the little bark, as it silently floated down the river.

Louis left a letter with the prior, for the Marquis Santa Cruz. It was to be conveyed to Ceuta, by the first messenger from the brotherhood; and would inform him of the melancholy and decisive event which had taken place in Tetuan. Louis wrote fully on the subject, adding, that his father had ordered him to take De Patinos, and the Christian captives, to Gibraltar, and from thence give them liberty. The Duke had also enjoined certain sums to be left with the brethren of Ceuta and of Tetuan, for the ransom of other captives in the interior; while the treasure on board the galleon was to be consigned to the governor of Gibraltar, under the personal agency of Martini d'Urbino, for a general fund towards freeing the numerous Christian slaves on the coast of Barbary.

Louis communicated, that it was his father's commands he should return to England. He also acknowledged, that he wished to obey; but he added, he would not take so decisive a step, until he could consult the Marquis, how far such obedience might militate against his pledged duty to Spain. It was therefore his design to revisit Ceuta, as soon

as he had fulfilled his commission at the British fortress; and from the experienced counsel and unswerving integrity of Santa Cruz, shape his future fate.

But Louis was never to see Ceuta again; never to set his foot again upon the Spanish shore; nor to hear the voice of Santa Cruz, till his destiny was decided beyond the power of friendship to dissuade or annul.

A whirlwind from the north-west caught the galleon, and its newly enfranchised crew, at the mouth of the Bay of Tetuan, and drove it out to sea, where it was beaten about, at the mercy of the winds and waves, for many days. After having been twice nearly wrecked, — first on the coast of Algiers, and then on the spiky shores of Murcia, — a Levanter, suddenly springing up, drove them as fiercely back towards the Straits; and, falling calm nearly opposite the Bay of Gibraltar, on the tenth morning after he sailed, Louis landed at the British fortress.

As he stepped out on the old mole, the partialities of his infancy were re-awakened by what he saw; and, though more than nominally a Spaniard, he felt the exultation of an Englishman, when viewing that rock, and those bastions, where the most heroic and persevering achievements had been performed by the countrymen of his mother. It was England's own imperial domain; and Louis sighed, when he inwardly exclaimed, "Oh! why did I wish for any other country?"

Lorenzo awaited him in the town, with a packet from Santa Cruz. It was in answer to that which the Tetuan monks had forwarded to Ceuta, and was written just as the Spanish army was embarking on its return to Spain. By order of the King, Santa Cruz had made peace with the new government of the Moors; and was recalled, with his whole family, to rejoin the court at Seville, and attend it to Madrid. But this was not all the Marquis had to communicate: he enclosed an angry letter from the Queen, on the subject of Louis having preferred the errors of heresy to the truths of the church, and the prejudices of an absurd education to the favour of his too indulgent sovereigns. Her indignation was so highly incensed against so signal an instance of folly and ingratitude, that she told Santa Cruz

the delinquent must no longer consider himself protected by Spanish laws, should he ever presume to re-enter that country.

"'Tis well," said Louis to himself; and he turned the page.

Santa Cruz then addressed him as a father, consoling and cheering him with every argument that could be drawn from a heroic and pious mind.

"You have convinced me," added he, "that the Holy One is no respecter of persons,— that all, of every country, and every sect, who work the works of righteousness, are accepted by him. If I can bring you brighter tidings from my at present inexorable mistress, you shall see me again in Lindisfarne. Meanwhile, be assured of the parental exertions of your unalienable friend,

"SANTA CRUZ."

"A heart-wringing farewell was added by the Marchioness. It was blotted with her tears; for she, who knew the vindictive personal arrogance of the Queen, had no hope of her being appeased; and there were expressions of a wild and mysterious regret in this affecting postscript, that puzzled Louis to understand, while, once or twice, he unconsciously sighed when he read the name of Marcella coupled with words of maternal lamentation. She was ill: the air and quiet of the Ursuline convent were prescribed for her, and her mother was in despair.

In a letter from Ferdinand, he enlarged on his sister's meek resignation to plans which, he now believed, would consign her to the grave. He execrated his own selfish wishes, which had urged her pitying nature to sanction so dire an immolation, by proposing it as the purchase of his happiness. He acknowledged that he now saw his father would not be bribed. Persuasion was the only engine that could be used with hope; "and," he added, "were you to plead for my happiness with a woman that is of your blood, I should hardly fear a refusal. My father holds you in such esteem, I think he could deny you nothing."

"It was only yesterday he was nearly drawn into a quarrel on your account; and, that it did not come to a

more serious argument is, I believe, more owing to his principle against duelling, than to any deference to his antagonist.

"The affair took place in the Queen's cabinet, where, it seems, a little junto sits every morning, previous to the council in the King's presence. About half a dozen old grandees—your father's mortal enemies, and, consequently, no friends to his son—followed up their observations on the late business in Africa with certain insinuations against all of his race. The Queen was already provoked at your declining the King's conditional re-investiture; and, instigated by the sly hints of these men, she, in her turn, let drop a few animadversions on your conduct. This was unleashing the hounds: the cry was up; and, in five seconds, the poor Marquis de Montemar was torn limb from limb! The sentence against his noble father was to be renewed on him: he was to be publicly branded as a heretic, deprived of his fortunes and his name, and the memory of his ancestors erased from the archives of the Escurial!

"'If your Majesty give but the word to our gracious sovereign,' exclaimed the old Duke d'Almeida to Isabella, 'in another hour the last of that rebellious race will be reduced to the condition of its long demerits, and be numbered with the dregs of the people!'

"'We have a petition here to the King to that purpose,' hastily rejoined the Count de Paz. 'If your Majesty would sanction it with your royal signature.'

"Isabella took the pen. Duke Wharton, who was present, but who had remained all this time in silence, turned haughtily towards De Paz. 'And who are *we?*' cried he. Then, with his usual effrontery, laying his hand on the paper before the Queen, he exclaimed, 'This is all short of the mark! These venerable lords, in the compassion of their natures, have refrained from noting to your Majesty the true offence of this daring Anglo-Spaniard. They know that the favour with which half the princesses of Europe have treated that audacious young man has made him lift his eyes, where we stand blinded. He rejects the King's conditions, not because the vain boy prefers heresy and rebellion; but he is ambitious to pay his

duty to his country, rather as a personal devotion to the royal Isabella, than as a peremptory obligation to his sovereign. This wild arrogance must arm all hearts against him. I, therefore, petition your Majesty not to mock your own dignity, by a beggarly stripping him of lands and parchments; but give him Phaeton's fate at once! Strike him where he is vulnerable—banish him your presence for ever!'

"The Queen's colour heightened during this speech. She rose proudly from her chair. 'My Lords,' said she, 'what the Duke of Wharton has intimated shall have its weight. Meanwhile, I will re-consider the sentence you would propose to the King, and give you my directions accordingly.'

"On my father arriving at the palace (which was immediately after the breaking up of the consultation), the Queen's secretary told him this conversation. The Marquis was justly irritated at this false representation, so maliguantly made by Duke Wharton; and, accidentally meeting him in his return through the gallery, my father accosted him without ceremony, and with a severe reproof at his daring to ascribe such motives to your conduct. Wharton listened to him with a provoking kind of respect; and when my father, with some heat, had finished his reproaches, the Duke coolly replied,—

"'I am sorry your lordship and I should differ on any subject; but you are too good a Catholic to wish any man to speak against his conscience.'

"'I am too much a man of honour, Duke Wharton, to sanction any man in speaking otherwise than what is fact. I know the Marquis de Montemar, and you have no authority for what you said this morning to the Queen.'

"'Did the Marquis Santa Cruz wear a cowl, instead of a helmet,' answered the Duke, 'I might possibly make him master of my cabala; but, as it is, we may part friends, since I am determined not to confess myself his enemy.'

"My father turned indignantly from the gay bow of the Duke; and so they separated.

"These are bad symptoms for you, dearest Louis," continued the letter of Ferdinand; "but if any thing can be

done to protect your paternal rights in this country, my father will do it. And, as to my mother, I believe she thinks of you more than she does of me; but that is because you deserve it better. Write to me from Gibraltar, and say that you will gladly welcome to England your friend,

"FERDINAND D'OSORIO."

Louis received these packets from Lorenzo, at the house of a Spanish merchant residing in the town of Gibraltar. The Spaniard was known to Santa Cruz, and recommended by him as a person well adapted to assist in the accomplishment of Louis's views in visiting the rock. He found the house in a retired part of the town, and preferred such a residence before the military bustle of the British quarters.

Having read the letters of his Spanish friends, he put them into his bosom, which had long been accustomed so to hide the sorrows of his heart; and, having seen the Count de Patinos respectfully attended to by Lorenzo, and the other captives comfortably disposed under the care of Martini, he quitted the merchant's house, to seek his first conference with the British governor.

He had no occasion for other introduction to General * * * *, than the announcement of his name. The gazettes of Ceuta had been daily in the hands of the British garrison; and the tremendous bombardment of the Spanish fortress having been seen from the heights of Calpe, its gallant defence was read with avidity by the generous spectators. The Marquis de Montemar filled every line in the two last reports; and General * * * * rose to receive him, with that respect which, from veteran glory, is the brightest meed that can be bestowed on youthful fame.

While Louis sat with the English commander, in spite of his late inattention to objects of trifling import, the furniture and style of the apartment struck him as what he had not seen since he left England; and he was conscious to an emotion, as if he had drawn at once near to his home, and even felt the atmosphere of the room different from that in the Spanish quarter of the rock.

It was not necessary, in his conversation with the

governor, to pain himself by any elaborate explanation of his father's rupture with the Spanish court, and his fatal engagement with that of Morocco. The Pillars of Hercules were too near each other, for any thing that was transacted under the shadow of the one to be unknown to the inhabitants at the foot of the other. The Governor of Gibraltar admired the greatness of the Duke de Ripperda, when his virtues guided the Spanish helm; and his own virtues did not prevent him pitying the fallen statesman, when his ill-directed resentment made him dictator to a horde of Barbary.

Louis pleaded to himself the partial frenzy of his father's mind, as some extenuation of his conduct. He learned from Martini that the Duke's passions had always been strong; but, until he received the wound on his head in the porch of the Jesuits at Vienna, they were always under his control. From that perilous hour, his temper became more irritable; and, in every way, he showed himself more vulnerable to the attack of circumstances. These circumstances at last turned the momentous balance; and, disappointed, insulted, and betrayed, madness contended with and overwhelmed his reason. With just enough of the one to show him the enormity of his retaliation, and of the other to precipitate him into its commission, he became the desperate victim of revenge, — a renegade, and a slave.

Nought of this passed the lips of Louis, to the English general; but he understood it all from the report of certain Jews from the coast of Barbary; and, in conversing with the son of the unhappy Duke, he delicately implied that he knew his illustrious father had been led to his last fatal step by the false lights of a distempered mind.

"In his latter hours," replied Louis, "that, indeed, fatal disorder was taken away. He was restored to the upright principle of his former character; and his penitence, for the effect of his dereliction, was as deep as his injuries were indelible. But, in that hour of terrible recollections, he forgave all, as he hoped to be forgiven. And I saw him die in the faith of the church."

Louis spoke this with a steady voice; and a certain dignity, elevating the sadness of his countenance which con-

vinced his auditor that the son of Ripperda felt the honour of his name returned to him, in the restoration of his father to the religion and pardon of his God.

General * * * * entered with zeal into the plans which the deceased Duke had laid down for the redemption of several hundred Christian slaves in the interior of the Barbary states. And as the scheme must occupy much time, and numerous agents, to bring it to effect, Ripperda had fixed upon Martini to be the negotiating person on the Spanish side of the lines of San Roque. Certain deposits of treasure, for ransoms, were to be left, not only in his hands, but in those of the Governor of the English fortress, who, from the political relations between it and the Barbary coast, could be the most efficient agent in the great design.

General * * * *, having heard of the probable sequestration of all the Ripperda property in Spain, ventured to hint to the despoiled heir, that there might be an excess of generosity, in at once relinquishing so vast a sum as that which the munificence of the Duke had allotted to the cause of charity.

" Had he foreseen the injustice of the Spanish government to his son," continued the veteran, " I doubt not, he would have bequeathed his benevolence in a more prudent measure! It therefore becomes you, Marquis, to make the restrictions common equity suggests."

" No," replied Louis ; " my father's wealth was his own. I have no right, had I the wish, to lay an appropriating hand on a single ingot. I am rich in the task of obeying his commands. And for myself, the world does not want ways for a man of few personal wants, to gain an honourable subsistence."

A few days put every thing in train for the prosecution of Ripperda's charitable bequest. The treasure was lodged in the government-house ; and a list of all the yet unredeemed Christian slaves in Barbary put into the General's hands. The enfranchised captives which Louis had brought with him, were ready at the British lines, on the land-side of the fortress, to pass into Spain. On taking leave of their benefactor, he who had so religiously and with largesses of money besides, obeyed every tittle of the deceased Duke's

will, in their behalf, they fell on their knees before him, and implored for blessings on his life.

"The past has been a vale of sorrows!" sighed he to himself, as he cheerfully bade them adieu, and gave them blessing for blessing.*

Martini was to lead these happy captives to their native land; that done, he was to take up his own residence at the castle of De Montemar, until the execution of the expected decree against its lord should drive him out into some humbler abode; where he would still exercise the benevolent agency which alone could have persuaded him to separate himself from the immediate presence of the beloved son of his ever-honoured master.

He wept at parting with Louis. Not so, when he bade adieu to Lorenzo. "You are happy!" said he; "you go with all that remains to me of my best benefactor!"

"I am but your servant, my lord!" said he to Louis; "but there are times when the heart knows no distinctions but those of attachment. Your noble father is gone; and the world may cut me piecemeal, before I feel his son otherwise than *bone of my bone*, and yet my honoured lord."

Louis pressed the faithful creature to his heart; and, could he have wept, his tears would have mingled with those of Martini, which bathed his cheek.

The Count de Patinos was to accompany the returning column. He too was to take leave of his generous protector. It was beneath his rank to bow the knee; it was adverse to his nature to call a benediction on his head: but he embraced Louis with the ceremonial of his country, while the extension of his arms was as cold and repelling as if the mutual touch transformed benefits to injuries.

As the Count turned away, "Thus," said Louis to himself, "does Spain and all its interests depart from me!"

Some other thoughts, in which Spain had a share, traversed his mind, as he slowly took his way, through the devious pathways in the rock, towards the dwelling of his

* This benevolent agency, attributed to the then Governor of Gibraltar, has, in our times, been actively and munificently fulfilled by our brave countryman, Sir Sidney Smith.

Spanish host. As he entered it, he felt it was possible to regret never respiring the atmosphere of Spain again.

The governor had informed him that a British frigate was ready to sail for Portsmouth. A passage was offered, and accepted. The day arrived, and after dining with his new friends in the garrison, and bidding them farewell, on the evening previous to the night he was to embark, he ascended the summit of the mountain — to look around, and to breathe his last adieu to lands he should never see again.

He was alone; and so distant from the garrison, not a sound came to his ear, as he pensively mounted steep after steep, till he reached the old signal-house; at this time a lone deserted tower, on the highest point of the rock. All was calm within him, in this moment of final separation from all that had once possessed his whole heart, and been the utmost bounds of his far-stretching ambition.

The extended and magnificent scenery, which derived a kind of visionary beauty from the pure and luminous atmosphere in which it was displayed, seemed to refine the faculties by which it was contemplated, and to dilate his soul with a tranquil and devotional delight.

"Is it," thought he, "that, as man draws near the region of celestial spirits, he begins to partake their ethereal nature?"

Still, some earthly remembrances clung to the spot that horizon bounded. He looked from side to side. The vast Atlantic, rolling into the Straits, and ploughed by many a proud frigate, did not hold his attention long. He turned towards the east: there the Mediterranean took its milder course, flowing far away, between the hostile shores of Spain and Africa, till it was lost in distant Italy, and farther Greece. The Moorish coast was boldly distinguished by prominent headlands and towering cliffs. They seemed to stretch to an infinite extent. And, on the opposite shore, and to the same unlimited horizon, rose the mountainous regions of Spain, the snow-clad Grenadines, and the empurpled heights of Antequera. The plains were diversified with towns and castles; and immediately beneath him lay the lines of San Roque. He gazed on that

Spain, he was to leave for ever; that Spain, which held the Marquis Santa Cruz; and her whose voice he was to hear no more. But the sounds were still echoing in his heart: in his troubled dreams or waking musings, he often heard the same. "I cannot dissuade the Marquis de Montemar from that for which I honour him!" he often heard her say: "Look up, and cherish life; for Heaven knows how to bless, when all the world has failed!"

"The world has failed me!" sighed he to himself; "and all that might yet bless me. Oh, Marcella! — and thou, too!" — He did not sigh again. He looked abroad, and his melancholy eyes ranged over the abundant vales of Andalusia. That very province of Spain, on which he was now looking down for the last time, was his own inheritance! But that was little. He turned to the red line of light which now tracked the darkening coast of Africa. There stood the rugged cliffs of Abyla, frowning in mist, over the towers he had so lately defended with his blood. Beyond lay a dearer spot,— the green sod that covered his father's grave. There, the dews of night fell; and the wailing of the blast in the lonely turrets around, were all which, hereafter, would supply the place of a son's tears and groans!

"Oh, my father!" cried he, "thou sleepest alone! Far from thy wife and child! Far from the country of thy birth, or thy adoption — betrayed, forgotten, stigmatised!"

While this bitter remembrance envenomed the before resigned state of his mind, his upward eye was struck with the appearance of an eagle, as if emerging from the ether; so high was its elevation, as it floated over him on vigorous and steady wing. It moved towards the coast of Barbary. It seemed to hover over the heights of Tetuan: it descended for a while; remained stationary in mid air; and then soaring aloft, like a dart of light, was lost in the heavens.

Louis saw no more. That bird was the crest of his family. Imagination and grief were busy in his heart. He burst into tears, and slowly descended the mountain.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

A SUCCESSION of various weather at last brought the frigate, which contained Louis de Montemar, in sight of the British coast. He had left it, rich in possession, richer in hope! He was returning to it, after an absence of little more than two years, deprived of all. In the morning of his youth, he brought in his bosom the experience of age; but not with a subdued spirit, nor a wearied courage.

"I am bruised," said he to himself, "but not broken. I have yet bonds of duty to the world, and I will not shrink from my task."

But he felt this inward assurance spring, and grow, exactly in proportion as he drew nearer to the coast where he had imbibed the first aliments of all that was greatly emulous in his mind; where his heart had first known the glows of dear domestic tenderness; where, in short, he first knew a home.

"Since I left it," cried he, "I have never found another!" and, as he stood on the deck of the vessel, he thought the glittering summits of the cliffs he descried at a distance, shone on him like the welcoming smiles of a mother.

He landed. Portsmouth did not detain him long; nor any town, nor any track he passed over; while the rapid vehicle in which he threw himself, conveyed him with all the eagerness of his wishes towards Northumberland.

It was the season of the year when the family of Lindisfarne were usually removed to Morewick Hall. Though the summer was far advanced in the southern climate he had left, in the colder latitudes of England he found snow on the mountains and ice in the valleys. The leafless woods shook their glittering branches in the keen blast; and the heavy clouds, teeming with a hail-storm, burst, and darkened the road.

Louis would not think of the orange groves, and gales laden with balm and fragrance, he had so lately left behind;

but he did not check the remembrance, because he regretted the change.

There were memories attached to it, which he wished not to cling too closely to his heart, when he should first press to his returning bosom the venerable form of him, who had blessed him when he last crossed the top of that hill!

As soon as the well-known pinnacles of Morewick Hall appeared over the woods at the bottom of the valley, he called to the postilion to proceed slower. He was alone. For he could not approach that house with any witness of his emotion. But the man had no sooner obeyed his directions, and was winding down the hill with a leisurely pace, than Louis felt the agitation of his mind increased by the slowness that permitted recollection. He changed his commands, and the driver set off on the spur, towards the gates of Morewick.

Many an apprehension was in his bosom — many a wringing reflection. How had he left that place? How did he return? And what would be the pangs of meeting, after the wreck of so many hopes!

He was taking counsel of his manhood, to sustain with firmness the questions which must summon the shadows, whose *torturing substance* he had endured without a receding nerve, when his carriage entered the gates of Morewick Park. Lost in self-recollection, it was only by the jerk of the horses, in stopping before the mansion, that Louis knew he was arrived. The carriage-door was opened. In that land of hospitality, the house-door also stood at large. He sprang from his vehicle into the hall. Servants were entering it from different avenues; but he passed through them all, and knew nothing of what he saw, nor did, till he found himself at the feet of his revered uncle.

He was clasped in the arms of his aunt, and Alice bathed his hand with her happy tears.

It was many minutes before a word was spoken. But every heart knew each other's language; and the folded hands of Mr. Athelstone, as he stood over his nephew,

told, to all who looked on him, that his grateful soul was then at the feet of his God.

The embrace with which Louis strained his aunt to his bosom, recalled her passing senses to recollection; and, throwing her arms round his neck, she wept almost to suffocation. While the Pastor assisted his nephew to bear her to the settee, Louis put the venerable hand to his lips. The last time he so pressed it, he was possessed of a father, whom he loved and honoured! That father was now no more; and the pride with which he then dwelt on his name, was extinguished for ever! He would not allow the swelling sluices of his heart to give way, or even to intimate what was labouring there, by pressing that hand on his bosom!

"Dearest Louis!" cried Alice, who was the first to speak; for her mother sat on the sofa, with her arms still on the neck of her nephew, and gazing with anguish on his face:—"Dearest Louis!" cried her daughter, in a voice as plaintive as her mother's looks; "oh, how you are changed!"

"Not in heart, Alice!" said he, turning his eyes tenderly upon her.

"Ah! that voice is still his own!" cried Mrs. Coningsby, throwing herself upon his bosom, and weeping afresh.

"Yes, Catherine," said the Pastor, regarding the agitated group with all the tenderness of his sainted spirit. "A veil has fallen over the lustre of that beauty, you used to prize so much! but it is a veil only; the light of heaven is still behind it!"

It was not until this day of emotion was quite over, and that both Mrs. Coningsby and Alice had given their hands to the kneeling obeisance of Lorenzo, with rather the welcome of kindred than of superiors; and the calming solitude of night had schooled every heart to the necessity of, at least, assuming tranquillity, that the little circle at Morewick could fully feel the happiness of re-union.

Before Louis quitted his chamber next morning, the usual domestic group were assembled in the breakfast room. Mr. Athelstone, with pious gratitude, remarked to

Mrs. Coningsby on the trying circumstances of his nephew's yet early life, and exulted in the integrity with which he had passed so fiery an ordeal.

"Yes," returned she, "but he has not escaped the marks!" and she shuddered while she wiped the starting tear from her eye.

"The soldiers of our heavenly captain," rejoined the Pastor, with a meek sigh, "must struggle and conquer till the end; and then comes their rest, and their reward!"

"His discipline has been severe, indeed!" replied Mrs. Coningsby, with almost audible sobs; "but, altered as he is, never did I behold affliction so dignified. His eyes, in their brightest happiness, never looked so lovely as last night, in the wordless anguish of his soul."

"And yet, Catherine, you lament his bloom!"

"No, Mr. Athelstone, it is the cause of its loss that fills me with regret."

"But I do," cried Alice; "I lament the loss of all that was my former Louis! his light, ethereal step, — his look of radiance — and his voice, — oh, its soul-entrancing gladness! all gone, gone!"

"Give him time, my child," returned the Pastor; "the hand of recent sorrow is yet heavy on him. He must yield his tribute to Nature. Suffer him now, and Nature will reward us with an ample restoration of all his delighting powers."

Louis's entrance checked the reply of Alice. And now he was welcomed to the dear domestic breakfast table, with smiles, instead of the tears which, on the foregoing night, had lingered in every eye until the hour of retirement.

During the meal, Mr. Athelstone made the conversation cheerful, by turning it on general subjects, and particularly enlarging on Sir Anthony's improved manner of life. He had thrown aside his old reprehensible habits; and, preferring the society of his family, passed his days in the equable current of domestic comfort and social respectability. Cornelia was now with him at Bath, whither he had been sent by his physicians.

While the Pastor pursued this discourse, and Louis listened to him with evident pleasure, Alice contemplated her cousin's

face and figure; and at last wondered within herself, how she could have thought himself so greatly altered. If any change had taken place in his figure, it unquestionably was to its advantage. A certain martial dignity was added to its former pliant grace. It was now a form, *where every god had seemed to have set his seal*, to shape the perfect man; before, it was that of a beautiful youth, — the dawn of this chequered but resplendent day!

If this were the case, it must then be his black garments which had at first struck her with some melancholy idea of a change in his person as well as face! She scanned that face with equal scrutiny. To her poetic fancy, his still matchless smile played under the soft moonlight of his now pensive eyes, like the shadowed yet scintillating wave of her native stream.

At the moment this romantic image crossed her mind, she descried a spot of a deeper hue than the rest, and of the form and tint of a faded leaf, upon his cheek.

"Dear Louis!" said she, pressing affectionately to his side, and putting her finger on the place; "what mark is that? It was not there when you left us?"

All her cousin's wonted bloom suffused that pale cheek, and obliterated the mark, as she uttered the question. It was the remains of the wound he had received there, in defending the life of Don Ferdinand.

"Do not enquire of all things, sweet Alice!" returned he, as he pressed her hand to his lips.

But he said it with an accent and a look so fraught with tenderness, and a something implied besides, that Ferdinand immediately occurred to her mind, though she knew not why, and, casting down her eyes with a blush, she again thought within herself —

"How could I think that Louis was altered?"

Before the expiration of a week, he had communicated to the different members of the little circle, all that respectively most interested each. But it was only when alone with his revered uncle, that he laid open the undisguised history of all that had befallen him, in his father's calamities and his own; the undisguised confession of his trials, his disappointments, and the present unnatural torpor of his soul.

The Pastor, with the gentleness of affection, and a knowledge that knew when to probe, to render the cure more radical, entered on all these discussions with wisdom and truth. He showed Louis how mistaken had been his early conceptions of human nature; how idolatrous had been his estimation of beings, formed of the same dust and ashes as himself.

"I told you this from the first, my child!" said he; "and though your lips accorded, your spirit would not believe. But it is the error of most of us. We garnish finite man with the perfections of the infinite God. We fall down and worship the image we have made. We pray to it; we rest on it. But we soon find our trust is in a piece of clay. It has ears, and hears not; eyes, and sees not; and hands that cannot help! Yes, Louis, all earthly idols are little more than blocks of wood; they might have been staves to hold us on our way; but when elevated to shrines, we find them things of nought. Now, my son, if we view all that are born of women, as erring creatures like ourselves, and accordingly love and assist, pardon and sustain them; we shall support, and be supported, through this travelling pilgrimage, till we at last lay down our heads in the grave, at peace with all mankind. But, on the reverse, when we look for perfection, and meet error, we are shocked; we resent and abhor; we do not forgive, we will not excuse; and they become our enemies from despair, whom the tender charities of a Christian spirit might have preserved as friends, and in time persuaded to the hope of unerring purity!"

Louis acknowledged the truth of these observations. He had erred under them all, excepting that of not knowing how to pardon; and there, his heart bore witness to itself, that he could forgive the hand that stabbed him.

"Yes, sir," replied he, "I know, that, in striving after excellence, to bear, and to forbear, is the duty of man on earth. Perfect virtue will be his happiness in heaven."

"You sigh, my dear Louis," replied Mr. Athelstone, "while you acknowledge this! But so right a judgment, at so early an age, is cheaply purchased by the *sweet uses of adversity!* You know I told you, in my first letter, on

the beginning of your misfortunes; that, may be, you were only entered into a cloud, which would shed forth a gentle shower to refresh your virtues — and the event has proved it."

"But not with gentle showers!" replied Louis, with a smile of anguish.

"No, my child," answered the Pastor; "but had you not required it, they would not have been so heavy."

"I believe it, sir!" replied Louis, rising from his chair: "I was proud, I was ambitious. The world reigned in my heart, when you thought it possessed by a better principle. I was ignorant of my own state, till I was made to see — But we will speak no further on it!" cried he, interrupting himself. "It is over, — quite over;— buried deep, deep — beneath the walls of Tetuan!"

Louis had touched a string that made every chord in his heart vibrate; and he quitted the venerable presence, to recover composure in the recollections of solitude.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

THE letters from Morewick, which announced to Sir Anthony Athelstone, then at Bath, the return of his nephew, found the Baronet just recovering from a fit of the gout. He was seated in his great arm-chair, and Cornelia reading by his footstool, when the tidings were brought in. Under these circumstances, for either to set out on an immediate journey northward, was impossible; but the raptures of both were not less eloquent; and were expressed with boisterous joy, by the one; and the mild transport of perfect happiness, from the lips of the other.

Sir Anthony wrote to Morewick, that his physicians would allow him to set forward in a very short time; when six horses should bring him with all speed to the

banks of the Coquet. But this permission was not granted so soon as he expected; and, when it was accorded, the circumstances attending rapid travelling were so hostile to his convalescent state, that, within a stage of his own place of Athelstone manor, he was seized with a relapse. Cornelia got him to the house, but no farther; the gout had now made prisoners of both feet; and he was laid upon his couch, for, perhaps, a month to come, when she wrote to her cousin to tell him of this prevention to their progress.

The anticipated answer to this information was not disappointed. Louis set out for Athelstone. His reception there, was like that of the lost sheep being found; or the prodigal son, returned from his hopeless wanderings. The fatted calf was killed, and all the costly apparel brought forth, by the tenantry, to honour the re-appearance of their master's future heir. Sir Anthony fell on his neck; and the happy Cornelia, standing bright in her beauty, like the Palladian goddess her form and character resembled, looked on him with a sister's love beaming through her tears.

Time flew in this dear domestic circle. Louis and Cornelia successively read and conversed, and amused the good-humoured invalid, in every possible way. And, what was less agreeable to the cousins, the neighbouring gentry were curious to renew their acquaintance with the young, and always animating, De Montemar; but who was now returned amongst them, a politician, and a soldier. Some enjoyed his society, with the zest of highly intelligent minds; others gathered from his observations, information and pleasure; while the rest (and some of the older sort) listened, and questioned, and marvelled, with an absurd wonder, at such extraordinary knowledge, in a man not yet four and twenty.

During his first visit to Athelstone, which was lengthened to more than a month, he received letters from Spain, from Martini and Ferdinand. The former told him, that he was still an unmolested occupier of the castle on the Guadalquivir. There was but one sentiment along its banks: lamentation for Ripperda; whom they still designated under the title of the *Great Duke;* while they ac-

cused the present ministry of Spain, of having forced him into rebellion. His dying in the arms of the church, was a sufficient propitiation, in their eyes, for his short defection. But that was not enough for their love; and masses were daily said, throughout Andalusia, for the repose of his soul.

Martini's duty of charity proceeded in a manner equally grateful to the son of Ripperda. General * * * *, in Gibraltar, and Ismail Cheriff in Barbary, continued zealous coadjutors in the good work; and many slaves were ransomed, who had since arrived in Spain, full of thanksgiving to the hands which gave them freedom.

Ferdinand's letter was of a less agreeable complexion. An air of restraint pervaded its communications; which induced Louis to believe, that his friend did not wish to let him see the whole hostility of the Spanish court against his father's fame, and his own claims on the country. Ferdinand wrote of armaments by sea and land. This could no longer excite its former interest in the mind of his correspondent. He added, there were great schisms in the *Sanctum Sanctorum* of the Queen; but there was one head, acknowledged infallible by all parties, and that was Duke Wharton. He rode the government, as Jupiter did his cloud; and, in the same invisible manner, shot his thunderbolts; every body knowing whence the shaft came, but nobody daring to mention the name that lanched it. However, he was lately gone to Paris, to meet the Electress of Bavaria.

"I would I might never read of him, nor hear of him again!" exclaimed Louis, as he turned to the pages which, spoke of the Marquis Santa Cruz's journey into Italy for the benefit of Marcella's health.

"She has never recovered her close attendance on the two wounded cavaliers at Ceuta," continued Ferdinand. "The life of so worthless a being as I am, may have been dearly purchased; but I will not say the same of my friend! However, Marcella will not own to this cause of her illness. She rather believes it to be a punishment laid on her, for her long resistance to the wishes of my father, for her entire seclusion from the world. This idea was

fastened on her; and though she has tried the air of the Ursulines in vain, all her petitions now are, to be fixed with our aunt, the abbess.

Louis closed the letter, at this passage. The form of Marcella was then before him. She, whose bloom of health, he was too sensible, had, in part, been sacrificed for him! He recalled her, as she used to sit, evening after evening, by his apparently unobserving side, in that sad chamber of suffering at Ceuta. In those hours, the bright moon of that clear atmosphere, shining through the solitary window, fell direct on her face. It was pale from watching; but her eyes were often fixed on the orb; and the expression of her countenance, ever reminded him of Milton's lines:—

"So dear to Heaven is saintly chastity,
That, when a soul is found sincerely pure,
A thousand liveried angels lacquey her;
Tell her of things, that no gross ear can hear;
Till oft converse with heavenly habitants
Begins to cast a beam on th' outward shape,
The unpolluted temple of the mind,
And turns it by degrees to the soul's essence,
Till all be made immortal!"

When he used to repeat these lines to himself in her presence, and gazing upon that form, which already appeared half angel; he did not sigh, when they closed with the remembrance of the vow, urged on her by her father. Why then did separation make a change? Why did her image haunt him? Why did his heart feel as if it had received another death-stroke, when he read, it was now her own repeated wish, to retire into the convent of the Ursulines?

His bosom's deepest grief whispered the solution to this mystery. While his father lived in exile, Louis could be conscious to no feeling that did not point at him. That absorbing interest gone, the repressed sympathies of his heart streamed towards this attraction; and he found, that he loved, and had most inexplicably dared to hope! But this letter extinguished the vain chimera. He was made sensible, that the object of his tenderest thoughts had never been more to him than a *Sister of Mercy;* that her uncon-

scious eyes, had never looked a dearer language; that she was now passing from him, by her own wish, for ever.

"Then, be it so!" said he, striking his breast; "I deserve this new misery, for my most extravagant presumption."

A few weeks after the receipt of these letters, Sir Anthony Athelstone was so completely recovered, as to meditate the transfer of himself and family to Bamborough. Mr. Athelstone's little household had been some time removed to Lindisfarne; and the prospect of the whole party being re-united under the venerable roof, was impatiently anticipated by them all. But the Baronet being one in the domestic circle of the Pastorage, was to be yet further postponed. The King had died the beginning of the month; and Sir Anthony was suddenly summoned to town, by order of his successor, George the Second, to receive His Majesty's commands respecting the civil management of his northern counties. Other great landholders, north of the Humber, had received the same writ; and without demur, the Baronet set forward, with his nearest neighbour, to obey the summons of their new King.

Louis and Cornelia had their uncle's injunctions to proceed immediately to Bamborough; and either invite the family of the Pastorage to be their guests till his return, or, if they preferred it, cross over and take up their temporary abode at Lindisfarne.

It was a fine morning, in the month of June, when they set off from Athelstone manor. Lorenzo, who would never lose sight of his master, rode by the side of the carriage. The usual outriders kept their stations before and behind.

The cousins being together alone for so many hours, various subjects passed in review before them; and none of deeper interest, than the mutual attachment of Ferdinand and Alice.

"I wish," continued Cornelia, "that my sister could have pitied, without loving him."

"But is it not natural to love what we pity?"

"Not always," replied she: "we must admire, to love."

"And may we not admire what we pity?" enquired Louis, the secret of whose heart was prompting these questions.

"In some cases," returned Cornelia; "but surely not in Alice's, when she first knew Don Ferdinand. And how she could fix her pure affections on one his father acknowledged to have been very blameworthy, has ever been an inexplicable wonder to me."

"His melancholy was contrition for his offences, Cornelia," replied her cousin; "and Alice, admiring the principle, on your own argument, loved him."

"It may be so!" replied her sister, with a smile; "but were I to choose, it should be an unsullied tablet!"

Louis shook his head. "Then, my sweet cousin, you must go to heaven for it!"

Cornelia shook her head in return.

"You are an amiable sceptic, my Cornelia; and Heaven grant, time may not be the teacher to you, it has been to me!"

"Louis," answered she, with a tender seriousness, "will you not be offended, if I make a candid reply to that invocation?"

"Nothing that you would say can offend me."

"Then," replied she, "had you not deserted your youthful standard of female perfection—" She paused, and feared to go on. Louis completed the sentence.

"You would say, I should not have been disappointed in the Countess Altheim!"—A heightened colour was on his cheek, as he spoke.

"Forgive me!" cried his cousin; "I was indelicate, nay cruel, in making the reference."

"Not cruel," returned he; "for she is now no more to me, than the recollection of a hideous dream. My imagination, not my heart, was the victim of her delusions."

"Ah, Louis!" cried Cornelia, again forgetting herself in the earnestness of her remarks; "it was something like your infatuation for Duke Wharton. My uncle always called him a splendid mischief; and, happily, the writ of outlawry has banished him this country for ever.

But you have long been convinced of his worthlessness; and I thank Heaven for your second escape, from similar delusions!"

Louis did not answer, but gratefully put his cousin's hand to his lips. She resumed.

"Indeed, when you wrote of her to my uncle, and, under your best impressions, too, dwelt so much on her beauty, and her preference for you, we could no way make ourselves esteem her, or believe her capable of making you finally happy. Dare I venture to go on, Louis?"

"Yes; you are a gentle physician!" replied he, with a forced smile; "and man's vanity needs a probe!"

"Now, the Lady Marcella!" continued Cornelia — Louis prevented himself from starting—"you wrote little of her, and you have said less; but it was always of her virtues; and in such few words, we saw her fairer, than the proud beauty of Vienna." Again Cornelia paused, and looked on her cousin, whose face was now bent on his hand. She rather hesitatingly proceeded. "We wished, and thought, that, had it not been for the vow anticipated by Ferdinand, you might have found her nearer to your first ideas of female excellence, and repaid her goodness to you, with your love."

Louis did not speak, but still kept his head in its reclining position. She saw the struggle of a suppressed sigh, which would have been a sufficient response; and, grieved at the pain she had unconsciously excited, she tenderly pressed his hand.

"Louis," said she, in a tremulous voice, "could I have conjectured this — But I begin to think I have been very inhuman!" and the tears sprang to her eyes, as she spoke.

"Not so," replied he; "you have all of human softness, without its weakness. And, that I may emulate you, my Cornelia, there are some subjects I would rather avoid."

Cornelia did not answer this, nor ask another question; his emotion declared itself. And, turning to the other side of the carriage, she affected to gaze out of the window; but it was to allow her tears to flow, unnoticed, down her

cheeks. Though she had never known the passion, she pitied its struggles; she loved the sufferer, dear as a brother; and, at that moment, would have surrendered her own blameless life, if, by that means, she could have purchased the happiness of Louis with the angelic Marcella.

CHAPTER XXXV.

During these conferences, the day gradually declined into red billowy clouds, till the whole heavens were overcast, and the pregnant vapour hung on every hill. A chill, unnatural to the season of the year, pervaded the air; while, at times, a steam of sulphureous vapour descended from the sky, and rendered the atmosphere hot to suffocation. With the gathering clouds, the evening soon deepened into night; and, in the midst of a succession of wide moors, this fearful canopy developed itself to the travellers, in all the horrors of a tempest. It was profoundly dark, though the hour could not be much beyond the time of twilight; but the violence of all the seasons seemed accumulated in this tremendous storm. Thunder and lightning, sleet and rain, and furious hurricanes of wind, menaced the travellers in every blast. The postilions lost their way: sometimes plunging into plashes of water, at other times struggling in a morass; but at every step encountering some new obstacle, and some new danger.

Several hours passed in dreadful wandering over dreary fells, where the yawning coal-pits, scattered over their bosom, were not the least objects of fear to the bewildered drivers.

Louis became alarmed for the health, as well as the immediate personal safety, of his cousin. It appeared to him she could hardly escape some dangerous cold; for, owing to the frequent jeopardy of the carriage, in the difficult and trackless road, he let the windows down, for fear of the

glass injuring her, in case of an overturn. He drew up the blinds in their stead; but, from their construction, little of the outward weather could be excluded, and the whole weight of the storm drove in upon her, till she was wet through. He had covered her with his coat; but all could not shield her from the deluge, and piercing blast, of that furious night. She shivered, and shrunk close into the corner of the carriage, in spite of her resolution not to distress him by showing herself affected by what was hopeless of remedy, till the morning light should show them where they were.

In the midst of this compulsory resignation, the carriage made a violent rebound, and stuck fast in the mud behind; while the horses plunged and reared with such strength, as to threaten its instant overturn in the morass.

Lorenzo dismounted; and, throwing open the door, Louis leaped out, and taking Cornelia in his arms, who was almost fainting from exhaustion, he carried her out of the reach of the wheels and refractory horses. One of the servants approached him at the moment, and told him the accident had been occasioned by the breast of one of the leaders striking against the angle of a stone hovel. "It was a miserable, uninhabited shed; but would give shelter to Miss Coningsby till they could see what might be done to release the carriage."

Revived at hearing of any refuge from the elements, Cornelia exerted herself to obey the suggestions of the servant; and Louis, equally glad of so providential a shelter, supported her tottering steps through the muddy ground. The hovel appeared of considerable extent, from the length of wall they had to grope along before they reached the entrance; for door it had none. Louis bent under the low rafter; and, leading Cornelia in, found his way obstructed by heaps of dried turf. On one of these heaps she proposed seating herself, till her cousin had enquired after the injury of the horse, and given his judgment on what was best to be done for the extrication of their vehicle.

Louis knew her too well to fear that solitude and darkness alone could create any alarm in her mind; and having seen her harassed spirits a little revived by the comparative

security of the place, he had just consented to quit her for a short time, when Lorenzo re-entered, with a glimmering lamp which he had rescued from the carriage. All the others had been extinguished, in succession, by the storm; and this was following their fate, when the prompt Italian seized it from its hook, and brought it in to light a few turfs to warm Cornelia.

She took it; and, dismissing her cousin and Lorenzo to their exertions without, with her own unpractised hands she gathered some of the moor fuel into a distant corner from the rest, and soon spread a cheering glow through the dreary habitation. Lorenzo ran in with a flask of oil from one of the postilions' pockets, and replenished her lamp: he told her the wounded horse had been loosened from the harness, and Louis was then examining the injury. After this information, he left her.

While the group without were attempting to raise the carriage from the bog, Cornelia sat anxiously attending to their alternate voices of hope, and the disappointing plunges of the vehicle into the treacherous soil. In the midst of this solicitude, she thought she heard sounds of another import; and, listening, found they were repeated low and heavily, as from some person in a dying extremity. She turned her head in the direction whence they came; and, as she held her breath, to hear more distinctly, the moans became louder, and drew her eye to a narrow doorway, in the side of the intermediate mud wall, at some distance from where she sat. Without once considering that there might be danger to herself in exposing herself alone to the human being or beings she might find there, she thought only of succouring distress; and, taking up her lamp, made her way over the scattered turf, to the miserable, half-shut door.

It let her into a part of the hovel even more dismal than the one she had left; for here was the confusion and stench of old worm-eaten sheepskins, broken tar-tubs, and iron implements of the shepherd's life, lying about in rust and disorder. In the middle of the apartment, something dark was spread on the floor: from that wretched bed the moans proceeded. Probably the poor tenant of this lonely sheep-

cot lay perishing there, under the toil of his occupation, without the support of necessary nourishment, or the comfort of a companion, to soothe him in the last moments of over-tasked nature!

She stepped gently towards the object of her pity. As she drew near, she saw the bed was a heap of these mouldering fleeces, half covered with a cloak, on which lay the suffering person.

Cornelia bent over it; and, holding the lamp so as to distinguish what was beneath, beheld, not the squalid shape of poverty and comfortless old age, but a man in the garb of a gentleman! His dress was disordered, and clotted with the slime of the morass; but his figure, the contour of which she thought she had never seen equalled, needed no embellishment to show its consummate elegance, though now motionless in the torpor of approaching death.

Cornelia's astonishment was not so great as to supersede the active exercise of the benevolence which had brought her to his side. She bent down; and, placing the lamp on the ground, with her trembling hands attempted to turn the face of the dying person from the stifling wool in which it was now sunk. When she had accomplished what she wished, her pitying admiration was not less attracted to that face, than it had been to the figure of the unhappy sufferer. It was as pale and motionless as marble; and as perfect in every line of manly lineament, as the finest statue that ever lay under the chisel of the sculptor. A majesty, almost more than human, was stamped on the brow, on which her eyes were riveted.

But too true a groan of suffering mortality broke the fixture of those godlike lips. It was that of acute pain; and she took up the lamp, to see if she could find its immediate cause. She then saw that the linen on his breast was stained and stiff with blood. She put her hand upon that part of his linen where the blood-stain was the widest, and in the act felt a gaping wound. He shrunk under the touch, and convulsively opened his eyes. They were shut as suddenly; and, in a low voice, he hardly articulated,—

"Where am I?"

"In a wretched place," replied Cornelia; "but with

those who only wait the morning light to bear you to one of comfort."

On the first sounds of her voice, the sufferer appeared to struggle to bear the light with his eyes; but it was beyond their power. He tried to speak —

"If I live —" said he. But a sudden agony rushing through his frame arrested the rest; and, turning his face again upon the dark pillow, Cornelia thought that moment was his last.

She clasped her hands, in the wordless sympathy of human nature. Had she then been brought through the horrors of the still raging tempest, at that dismal hour of night, to this lonely hovel, to close the eyes of a forlorn stranger, — to perform the last offices to the beloved son or husband of some tender mother, or doating wife, who must "long look for him who never could return!"

"Louis, Louis!" cried she, in accents of pity and dismay. Louis heard the cry, and the tone struck him with an alarm that instantly brought him into the hovel. Lorenzo followed his master, and both rushed through the chamber, in which she was not to be found, into the one whence the light gleamed. She pointed, without being able to speak, to the heap on the floor. Seeing her agitated state, Louis flew to support her. Lorenzo stepped towards the wretched bed; and the rays of the lamp resting upon the marks of blood, he started back, and exclaimed —

"Santa Maria! A murdered man!"

Cornelia gasped at this enunciation of his actual death; and Louis, while he held her faster to his heart, instinctively moved towards the terrific object. Her feet readily obeyed the humane impulse of his; and, sinking on her knee by the side of the motionless stranger, she ventured to put her hand on his, expecting to feel the chill of death.

"He is warm!" cried she, looking up in the face of her cousin. He had caught a glimpse of the figure as it lay, and she saw him pale and trembling. Lorenzo stooped to raise the dying man; but Louis suddenly pushed his servant aside, and for a moment hung over the bed. He bent to the head that was smothered up in the wool; and, touching it, with a suspense of soul he had only felt once

before, he turned that lifeless face upwards. His nerveless hands let go their hold; and it would have fallen back into its loathsome pillow, had not the watchful care of Cornelia caught it on her arm.

"My God! my God!" exclaimed he, as, recoiling from the bed, he hid his face in his hands, "to what am I reserved?"

Cornelia did not move from her position; but her eyes were now fixed on her cousin. The emotions of his mind shook his frame to convulsion, though he gave no second utterance to his thoughts.

"Who was it, then, whose deathful face now lay on her arm?" She had seen by her cousin's countenance, on the first view of the sufferer, that he knew him; and she now contemplated the silent agonies of a more than common grief! Her hand instinctively moved to the heart of the stranger.

"Lorenzo," said she, in a low voice, as if alike afraid to wake the dead, or to disturb the living, "feel! surely there is a pulse!"

Lorenzo obeyed, but not so gently as her tender touch: the sufferer started in Cornelia's arms, and murmured a few inarticulate sounds. Louis heard them, as a voice from the dead; and, springing forward, was again at his side.

"He lives, Cornelia!" cried he. "We must search his wounds: he may yet be saved!"

"Who is he?" asked Cornelia, in a tone that echoed the deep interest of his own.

"He is my friend," answered Louis. But he checked himself from saying more; for his heart smote him with the true response, "My bitterest enemy!"

Heavy groans succeeded the few half-uttered sounds from the lips of Wharton. It was he that Louis recognised in this lone abode of murder! It was the blood, his boiling vengeance had once wished to shed, which now stained the ground around! Louis shuddered. God alone knew his gratitude at that moment, for having saved him from the perdition of that revenge. Again he stooped to the sufferer; and finding that, as he and Lorenzo attempted to raise him, the symptom of pain was most acute when they appeared to

press on his left shoulder, Louis concluded that on that spot was the principal injury. Though Wharton appeared sensible to bodily anguish, his other faculties were too confused to have any perception of what was now passing around him.

On examining farther, which his anxious attendants did with the tenderest care, they found his shoulder dislocated, and a frightful wound in his breast, made by some jagged instrument. The blood was stanched over it by the cold of the night. Louis had no sooner removed the stiffened linen, and a broad blue riband, part of which had been stabbed into the wound, than the blood began to flow afresh. Cornelia trembled, as the pure crimson trickled over the hand of her cousin. He shuddered also, but it was from a different reflection. She gave him a handkerchief from her neck, to well up what, she feared, might be the last effort of life. The heart's surgery was then in the hands of Louis; and by the time he had bound up the wound, and composed the shoulder, so as to produce the least possible pain until he could reach proper assistance, a servant came in from without, to say the carriage was brought into a tolerable state for proceeding.

The violence of the storm had subsided, and one of the outriders had found his way back, with tidings of a secure track. Another had brought a herdsman, whom he had engaged to guide the carriage over the waste, into the direct northern road.

On enquiry of this man, Louis found they were now in the midst of Wansbeck Moor; a terrible wilderness of bituminous slime, exhausted coal-pits, and pasture land, so marshy as to be poison, rather than aliment, to the poor cattle, grazing on its treacherous surface. But, as it possessed a few causeways of firmer texture, which the wretched herdsmen had raised for their own convenience, less practised travellers, sometimes, used them as cross-roads; and often, as might be expected, were led astray, or into no very insignificant nightly perils. Such had been the temptation, and the issue, to the postilions of De Montemar's travelling equipage.

When all was prepared in the coach, the wounded Duke

was carried into it, between Louis and Lorenzo. None knew who he was but the bleeding heart of him who had once been his friend. At the unavoidable changes of position, his sufferings became so grievous, that every sound went to the soul of Cornelia; she now felt both for the invalid and her cousin, whose interest in this unknown's recovery she saw, not in words, but in the pale cheek and searching eye with which he composed every thing that could yield the sufferer ease.

In her conversations with Louis, concerning Germany and Spain, she had heard him speak of estimable persons belonging to both countries; but who, of them all, was now before her, she could form no conjecture; for though he spoke of several with considerable regard, yet he had not given her to understand that he had conceived a friendship for any one of them, so exclusive as that which was now manifested in his silent, but ceaseless attentions to the noble stranger. That he was noble in other respects besides the stamp of nature, was apparent to her, from the riband of some order, which had hung on his breast under his linen. A badge was suspended to it, which she had observed Louis conceal the moment he had extricated the riband, he putting them, without remark, into his own bosom.

The travellers were now in the carriage; and the rain having ceased, the wind that remained did the service of dispersing the clouds; so that the moon sometimes appeared, and Louis began to hope they might reach Morewick about sunrise. The dell in the moor, from which they started, was not more than three hours' journey to Warkworth; a little town, about two miles from the hall; and he gave orders that, in passing through it, a surgeon should be called up, to follow the carriage to Morewick.

As they journeyed forward, with the stranger's head in the lap of Cornelia, and Louis supporting the fractured shoulder on his knees, her cousin told her, in a suppressed tone, that it was necessary, for a time, the invalid should remain in ignorance that he was at Morewick Hall, and who were his present attendants. "Therefore," continued Louis, "your Christian charity must take charge of his

comforts; and, as you love my peace, neither ask his name, nor let him hear that of Louis de Montemar!"

"Not ask his name!" repeated Cornelia, looking down upon the deathly face on her lap; "what has he done to be ashamed of it?"

Louis turned almost of the same ashy hue: "Do men never seek concealment, but from infamy?"

"I would not think so ill of any man you could love," replied she; "and certainly not of this;" her eye again falling on the finely-composed features before her; "for here the finger of Heaven seems to have written true nobleness."

"Cornelia," returned Louis, "when we obey the commands of Him, who told of the Samaritan binding up the wounds of the stranger, and bade us do likewise; he did not say, Enquire of his virtues first; but, See his misery, and relieve it!"

There was an air of reproof in this remark; a something of asperity, that Cornelia could not understand; and, instead of its raising doubts in her mind, relative to the character of the stranger, she cast down her eyes in silence, to conjecture what she had done to merit such unusual harshness from the unerring candour of her cousin. The features her meditating gaze dwelt on, were, to her, an unimpeachable witness of good within. But what would she have felt, could she have been told, at that moment, that the object of Louis's distracted thoughts, and of her own then unqualified pity and admiration, was the delusive, the treacherous, the outlawed Duke Wharton!

CHAPTER XXXVI.

On the travellers' arrival at Morewick, the orders of its present temporary master were strictly obeyed. Duke Wharton was laid in an airy, but remote chamber; and a surgeon, with every proper assistant, in attendance day

and night. The Duke's shoulder was set, and his wound probed.

A fever came on; and, for some time, he remained in a strange dreamy sort of inanity, which threatened his wound with mortification. But no watching, nor hopelessness, could weary the cares of Cornelia.

Louis also hovered near; and the medicines passed through his hand to that of Cornelia, when the burning lip of Wharton turned from all other persuasions. As the fever gained ground, his delirium became absolute. Yet it was never violent, but uttered in low and half articulated murmurs; he often muttered the names of De Montemar and Ripperda.

When she first heard the latter, her eye instinctively turned upon her cousin; and such an expression of horror was then in his countenance, that, struck with a nameless terror, she started from her chair. Louis rose, and quitted the room; and he did not return any more that day.

The next morning brought intelligence that amazed him. A letter from Santa Cruz, dated Harwich; and the Marchioness, and Marcella, were with him! Louis felt a sudden rush of joy overpower his heart. The only breast on which he would have laid his wearied head, and there have found a rest, and balm for all his sorrows, was no longer divided from him by lands and seas! Marcella was in England!

"Yes!" cried he, "she alone could renew the charm of life to me! But the *vow of separation* is in her heart; and there, too, I am to find the world a desert!" He sighed, and the transient light of happiness passed from his bosom.

On reading the Marquis's letter with more composed attention, he found, that this voyage to England was on a diplomatic errand; and till that was accomplished, by an interview with the Spanish ambassador in London, Santa Cruz could not proceed with his family to Lindisfarne, the object of their visit. Marcella's illness, after defying all changes of air, had been so increased by fatigue, the Marchioness would not stir from Harwich, till rest should renew her strength; and, in consequence, the Mar-

quis was a prisoner with them, until Louis should arrive, to assist Ferdinand, in the care and journey of his mother and sister, to the hospitable roof of Lindisfarne.

On Louis turning to the date of this letter, he found it had been written several days, and must have been unduly delayed in its progress. No time, therefore, was to be lost in welcoming his best friends, the friends of his father's memory! to the land which, he trusted, was now to be his undisturbed home. He despatched a messenger to his uncle at Lindisfarne, to prepare him for the arrival of the illustrious Spaniards; but before he communicated to Cornelia the necessity for his temporary absence, he sent for the Duke's surgeon.

That gentleman answered his agitated enquiries, with more truth than sympathy.

"Sir," said he, "if a material change do not take place in the course of eight and forty hours, in that time, he must breathe his last."

"Then I dare not hope to see him alive, should I be absent three days."

"I fear not," replied the surgeon.

Louis left the room.

He passed along the silent galleries, for it was now a very late hour, to the chamber of his friend.

"Wharton!" cried he, as he stood alone, by the side of the Duke's couch, and gazed, as he thought, for the last time, on his face, "is it thus we are to part?" He took the inanimate hand; and, wringing it between his, held it for a long time in the agony of his mind.

"O blighted affection! Tenderness, mourning that man is frail! Here stand, and feel that thine is the canker-worm that eats into the heart!"

The unconscious violence, with which Louis clasped the hand of him he once loved and trusted, roused the dormant faculties of Wharton, to some perception. His eye opened; but it turned vacantly, and without recognition, on the anguished face of his friend; and, heavily sighing, he fell back on the pillow.

"Here, vanity of man, and pride of intellect, behold thyself!" cried the inward soul of Louis, smiting his breast.

" Here is all that woman ever admired, or man envied! all that betrayed him to dishonour! all that bound me to deplore him, and to love him to the end! Wharton, — farewell!"

Louis could not utter a dearer appellative, than the low breathing of that ever-beloved name; and with a death-chill at his heart, he pressed the unconscious hand to his lips, and rushed from the room.

Cornelia met him in the antechamber. She observed his extraordinary agitation; and without a preface, which he had not sufficient self-command even to attempt, he informed her of his summons to the south-east coast, and of the probable event before his return.

" Cornelia," said he, " to what a scene may I leave you! But should the last extremity come, — should he then be sensible, and he chance to name me, — tell him under whose roof he dies, — and he will then know, he may die in peace!"

" Louis," returned she, " you do indeed leave me to an awful task! I cannot regard one you appear to love so much, with a common compassion. Trust me, and tell me who he is?"

" I dare not. — For *his* life, short as it may be, I dare not," repeated her cousin. " Too soon may it be revealed, and then you will respect my reasons. And, for his knowledge of where he is; only in the case of his naming me, with the anguish, that is now wringing my heart for him, — only, in that case, say, his *last friend* was Louis de Montemar!"

" Your emotions are terrible!" cried Cornelia, clinging to her cousin's arm. " What do you leave me to suppose, by such inscrutable mystery? Oh, Louis, except when speaking of your father, I never saw you shaken thus!"

" For my sake, Cornelia!" replied he, " enquire no further. Should he be no more, preserve the sacred remains, till I return; they at least shall sleep in peace. There is no enmity in the grave."

At the dawn of the morning, which succeeded Louis's departure for Harwich, the Duke awoke to a perfect perception of his state, his wounds, and his danger. He

remembered every event, which had brought him into that perilous condition; his secret missions from the Kings of Spain and of France, to examine into the aptness of the public mind in Scotland, and in the border counties of England, to receive a foreign army, headed by the exiled prince.—To do this, unsuspected, and to avoid the forfeiture of his head, should he be found in England after his attainder, he had disguised himself, at Hamburgh, as a German merchant; and there engaged two resolute men, of the country, to be his servants. They served the seeming trader, with sufficient fidelity during his Scottish progress. He came southward; and now he had to recall, what terminated his first day's journey. He recollected being thrown from his restive horse, in the storm and darkness of Wansbeck Fells; also, that the accident had dislocated his shoulder; and that his two servants, by his own orders, had taken him into a hovel by the roadside. In attempting to set the dislocated limb, which he had also directed them to do, their awkwardness had occasioned him so much pain, that he fainted under the unsuccessful operation. He remembered, that when he recovered from his swoon, which he did with an extraordinary sickness at the heart, he had put his hand to his side, where the peculiar sensation was, and drawn it back covered with blood. No answer was then returned to his immediate call upon his servants. This silence, uninterrupted by any thing but the raging storm without, had confirmed his suspicions, that the villains had given him his death-wound; and were fled with their booty. He, however, thrust the linen of his shirt into the wound; and had lain half dead with pain and exhaustion, till all was lost in insensibility. From that hour, he knew nothing, till he now opened his eyes, and looked around. He saw himself on a comfortable bed, instead of the wretched litter on which he had believed himself left to perish! he must, then, be in the hands of some benevolent person!—but how brought, or where resident, he could not guess.

At this moment of conjecture, Cornelia heard him move, and gently put aside the curtain. Her eyes met the surprised fixture of his. But it was no longer with the glare

of fever, with the wild flashes of delirium; the light of recovered reason was there, and the enquiring gaze of gratitude. If she had thought his face perfect in manly beauty, while it was insensible, or only moved by a distempered spirit, what were her impressions, when his intelligent mind was restored to all its powers, and it shone out in those eyes, and in that countenance?

Even her self-controlled spirit trembled before the resistless influence; and, with a failing voice, she answered his respectful demand of where he was.

"Under the roof of a gentleman; my kinsman."

Wharton considered for a moment.—"His name, lady?"

"Your present critical state," replied she, "does not permit me to answer that question."

An immediate supposition, that he was a prisoner, shot through the mind of the Duke.

"I am, then, in the house of an enemy!" cried he, starting on his arm; "and your benevolence, madam, would spare me the truth!"

"No," answered Cornelia, astonished at the supposition; or, rather, gazing on him with renewed anxiety, for fear his delirium was returning; "he is your friend—your anxious friend. And, while he enjoined me not to mention his name in your hearing; he likewise refused me, and all in this house, the knowledge of yours."

"That is sufficient!" replied Wharton.

"Madam, whoever your friend may be, this caution does, indeed, manifest him to be mine. I am without guess, on the subject; nor will I seek to penetrate, what he wishes to conceal. But you may answer me, how I came under this generous care!"

Cornelia briefly related (though without betraying whence she came, or whither she was going,) the events of the moor.

"Then I am still in Northumberland?" replied Wharton. He paused, and added, "There are some names in this country I would enquire after; but—" and he paused again. "It is better I should not. My last hours shall not injure any man."

There were sensations within him that made him murmur to himself the concluding sentence. And Cornelia, seeing, by the sudden lividness which overspread his so lately reanimated countenance, that some unhappy change was recurring, rose from her chair, and summoned his medical assistants.

They were closed up, for nearly an hour, with their patient. At the door of the ante-room Cornelia met them; and, with a dawning hope in her heart, to which his recovery to reason had given birth, she hastily enquired their opinion of the invalid.

"That he may last till to-morrow morning; but not beyond it," replied the superior surgeon.

She heard no more; though his colleagues spoke also, giving their various reasons for this judgment. She stood benumbed; but showed no other sign of the blow on her heart, while, bowing their heads, the party left her. She then walked steadily to her own chamber; and there, throwing herself on her knees before Heaven, petitioned for its mercy, to heal so prized a friend of her beloved cousin.

"Thy hand alone!" cried she, "and on that alone I now confide!"

She was soon after summoned to the side of the dying stranger. He had requested the use of pen and ink, and that the lady he had seen would allow him to see her once more. Cornelia took what he required, and hastened to his apartment.

He was propped in the bed by the attentive hands of Lorenzo; who remained, by the invalid's directions, after the entrance of Cornelia. The paleness of watching and anxiety was in her face; the flush of pain, mental and bodily, on Wharton's. She drew near him.

"Noble lady," said he, "your physicians are honest men. They have told me, my hours are numbered; that I have but a short time, in which to express my thanks to your humanity; and to make up my accounts with the world. Will you indulge me with the means?"

He stretched his hands towards the writing materials.

Cornelia's sight seemed leaving her, but she gave him the pen; and moved to withdraw. He had begun to write;

but at her motion, he looked up, and entreated her, as well as Lorenzo, to remain; to bear witness that the papers he was writing were penned by his own hand.

She retook her place, and soon found her presence necessary; for he was often faint under his task. He took restoratives from her hand; but in spite of all her persuasions to the contrary, always re-commenced it.

As he closed one packet, to begin another, she laid her hand upon his arm. "For the sake of heaven, desist!" cried she; "this perseverance is suicide."

"No," replied he; "there is but one man in the world, who could act by me as your kinsman has done! And this deed is my last duty to him and to myself."

Cornelia said no more; but submitted with an awful awaiting of the conclusion.

By the Duke's orders Lorenzo sealed the first packet, and returned it into his hand. No one saw how he directed it. The second packet was then sealed and superscribed, and both were put into one cover. That was also sealed, and when directed by the Duke's hand, he put into that of Cornelia. She glanced upon the superscription.

"To my benefactress. But not to be opened till the writer is no more."

She read it, and, without power of checking them, burst into tears. The burning hand, which then gratefully pressed hers, as he relinquished the packet, would be cold and motionless, when she should break that seal! Human nature, pity, admiration, all struck at once upon her heart, and she trembled, almost to sinking.

The Duke observed her emotion, and made a sign to Lorenzo to withdraw. Both his hands now clasped hers, as with his dying eyes he gazed on her.

"Lady," said he, "when you open that packet, you will know that he whom you now honour with your pity was a being to be condemned; but he trusts to be pardoned also! I am a man, and I erred; but I am a Christian, and have contrition. When you know me, remember me with one of those tears, and my conscious soul will disdain the world's persisted obloquy!"

Cornelia wept the more at these words; but she strove

to speak; and to gently extricate her hand from a grasp, which already seemed the convulsive pressures of death.

"You will tell De Montemar," cried he, in great emotion; and in that moment of mortal fainting forgetting his caution: — You will tell him ——" he paused and struggled for a few seconds — then gasping — relinquished the hand he held, and fell back upon his pillow.

Cornelia saw and heard no more.

When she recovered, she found herself in another room, and supported by her uncle of Lindisfarne.

"Your fears are premature, my dear child;" cried the venerable man, as soon as she opened her eyes; "Lorenzo has just been in, to tell me your invalid guest is now recovering from the swoon in which you left him; and that the surgeons are in his chamber."

"Heaven has brought you here, my revered uncle!" cried she; "you will see him?"

"For that purpose," replied Mr. Athelstone, "I came."

Indeed, as soon as he had received Louis's few lines, imparting his indispensable absence, and obligation to leave Cornelia to take charge of the invalid stranger; the good Pastor judged, that whoever this nameless person might be, and for whatever reasons his reception at Morewick was to be generally concealed, yet it was the duty of its master not to allow his niece to be with servants alone, in the distressing scene, which the agitated letter of his nephew confessed might be anticipated during his absence. Notwithstanding all Louis's caution, in his communications respecting the wounded person, Mr. Athelstone drew his own conclusions, that there was more unexplained than the fantastic mystery of a foreigner wishing to travel incognito. He was convinced that danger, to one party at least, hung over the discovery; and in his guesses he was not very remote from the truth. The more his suspicions gained ground from the style of his nephew's last letter, the more he saw the propriety of acting in defiance of Louis's positive request, "that he would allow none of the Lindisfarne family to interrupt the charitable duties of Cornelia." The earnestness of this injunction (for it was put so as not to admit of a discussion) confirmed Mr. Athelstone in his

idea, that peril was attached to the entertainer of this mysterious personage; and resolving to protect his nephew and his niece, in the possible dilemma, into which humanity on one side, and romantic generosity on the other, might involve their safeties, he ordered a post chaise to await him on the opposite shore. Without imparting any of these reflections or motives to Mrs. Coningsby, he left his directions with her and Alice, to prepare every comfort for the expected reception of the Marchioness and her daughter. Busy in the hospitable bustle of such arrangements, the happy mother and her favourite child saw Mr. Athelstone depart to rejoin Cornelia, without a suspicion of the nature of his errand. He alighted in the hall at Morewick, at the very moment Lorenzo had found Miss Coningsby lying, insensible, in the room of the stranger. She was brought into the next chamber, and delivered into the arms of her uncle; while Lorenzo recalled the medical assistants to his master's friend; and he communicated the result, as soon as the Duke breathed, to the benevolent enquiries of the Pastor.

When Cornelia had sufficiently recovered from her swoon, to speak with composure, she related with brief eloquence, all that had passed between herself, her cousin, and the dying stranger.

Mr. Athelstone listened attentively, to all she had to say, and to conjecture, about the object of their discourse. She always distinguished him, by the approving and pitying appellation of *the noble sufferer;* and the penetration of her uncle soon discovered, that his niece was no longer an impartial speaker.

"Cornelia," replied he, "I perceive you have no suspicion, who this *noble sufferer* may be?"

"None, my uncle."

"But I have. I recognise him in every word you have uttered, except his repentance; and that may be yet the salutation of Iscariot!"

"My uncle! what do you mean?"

"I mean to speak of one," returned the Pastor, "*whose heart was lifted up, because of his beauty; and he corrupted his wisdom, by reason of his brightness; and, where*

we should have found light, there was darkness, and the mouth of the grave!"

Cornelia sunk into a seat. "Sir," cried she, "you terrify me with an unutterable apprehension! If he be, what you suppose, you are a Christian minister! Go to him, in this his last hour; and save him, if it be possible, from the death whence there is no recall!"

Her hands were clasped over her face, as she pronounced the last words. Lorenzo at the same moment appeared at the door; and, beckoning Mr. Athelstone, the pious man left the room.

CHAPTER XXXVII.

On the evening of the second day after his departure from Morewick, Louis found himself clasped to the veteran bosom of Santa Cruz; ardently embraced by Ferdinand; and caressed with maternal fondness by the enraptured Marchioness.

"We are come to live amongst you, for a long time;" cried she, "to seek those blessings at Lindisfarne, for my beloved Marcella, which her brother found so abundantly."

Louis assured her, of the happiness such an intention would bring to his family; and he soon read in the looks of Ferdinand, that it was as a privileged lover, he was now returning to the feet of Alice. The present grief which Louis had in the depths of his heart, he hid there, and smiled his congratulations to the animated eyes of his friend.

"Our Marcella," said the Marquis, "is suffering under sorrow as well as sickness. When I went to Rome, she was too ill to accompany me. I left her with my wife, under the care of my sister, the abbess of the Ursulines; and, on my return, I found I had lost my sister by a sudden death; and that my daughter, from the shock, was reduced to the brink of the grave."

"But she is now out of danger!" cried the Marchioness; comprehending the unuttered expression, in the eyes of their young friend.

She had read his heart, in a few hasty lines which he had written to Ferdinand, in answer to the letter in which he had enlarged on Marcella's changed wishes with regard to a monastic life. When Louis came to that subject, without being aware of the clearness with which his words unfolded his own feelings, he wrote as follows —

"I began to think, that my probationary conflicts, instead of confirming my spirit, have in some cases at least, a contrary effect. I felt so much in reading your sister's *wish* to bury herself from all she has hitherto blessed with her virtues, that — I wish I could for ever be kept in ignorance of the time when she is really professed. At least, Ferdinand, do you refrain from telling it to me; and I shall not dread to open your letters."

Ferdinand showed this paragraph to his mother. The lamp in his own soul, had discovered sleeping love in every unconscious line. The Marchioness had observed the powerful impression, which De Montemar made on her daughter, when she first witnessed his filial devotion in the Val del Uzeda. From that hour, her distaste, as well as her religious opinions, became more adverse to a monastic vow. But when her awakened sensibility comprehended the feelings of her brother, though unconscious of the new principle within her, which pleaded his cause, even against her own heart, she became willing to sacrifice herself for his happiness. In Barbary, as in Spain, she found nothing but what increased her admiration, even to reverence, of the devoted son of the misled Duke de Ripperda. And, being so devoted a son, it never crossed the pure heaven of her mind, that any idea of her, but as a *sister of Mercy*, could ever occur to his heart. She believed, that she also thought of him as a "thing enskied and sainted;" and that his remembrance, would be as obnoxious to her peace, after they had separated for ever in this world, as that of the most lovely characters she had read of; who were now in the grave, but whose society would be one of her felicities in the life to come.

But she deceived herself. She saw Louis de Montemar no more, but his image was ever before her; his words, his looks, his actions; and, finding the secret of her soul, in its anguish and despair, she every hour urged her parents to shut her up from that world, which contained an object that could make her feel no longer mistress of herself. This fatal secret, she revealed to no one. It preyed upon her heart, and her life. But not until the Marchioness was secluded with her, in the convent of the Ursulines, did she penetrate its depth and power: though this tender mother had wept in silence over what she had too soon discerned, this unhappy, unuttered passion; and a sad, immature grave seemed ever opening before the feet of her devoted child.

But, when her eyes fell on the paragraph concerning Marcella, in the letter from Louis to Ferdinand, she became convinced that the tenderness was mutual; and that mutual was the hopelessness and misery.

Without appearing to design any peculiar communication to her daughter, she read the letter to her; and dwelt with particular emphasis on that comprehensive sentence. Marcella listened as if transfixed by a shaft. She durst not receive its import; she feared there would be crime, in even wishing it real; although her abbess aunt had put a decisive negative on her monastic intentions, by telling her, there would be positive guilt in becoming a Catholic nun, with her religious reservations.

"Not a nun!" murmured she to herself, "but I have never considered myself to have any connection with the world; and I feel as if I sinned in the very wish! Death will soon give me a cell, against which there is no exclusion." She leaned her throbbing head upon her hand.

"My child," said her mother, tenderly drawing near her; "what do you think of De Montemar's animated gratitude, in these touching sentiments?"

"That it is gratitude!" replied Marcella, rising with a forced smile, "and I am obliged to him for anticipating a pity, which, my aunt teaches me, I cannot with conscience put myself into the condition of meriting."

"And do you see no more than gratitude and com-

passion, here?" asked the Marchioness, re-reading the passage, and holding her daughter's arm while she did so. "Were I to speak what I think, this matchless young man loves you!"

These words, from the lips of her mother, were more than Marcella could bear; she gasped, and fell into her arms.

When the Marquis returned from his successful mission to Rome, he found his sister dead, and his wife in possession of his daughter's unlimited confidence; but that timid and self-accusing daughter, was brought to the verge of the grave, by sorrow for the deceased, and shame at the weakness of her own heart.

His first communication to the Marchioness, was, to prepare her family for crossing with him to England.

"I have given my sanction to Ferdinand's attachment to the niece of Mr. Athelstone," said he: "travelling, and change of scene, may be beneficial to Marcella; and our friends of Lindisfarne will give us the welcome of kindred."

Marcella obeyed the commands of her father, in these preparations. But with an unchanging cheek, she answered her mother's imprudent day-dreams respecting the Marquis's affection for De Montemar.

"No, no, my mother!" cried she, "speak no more of the Marquis de Montemar, with any relation to me. That sin of my imagination is now over. Were it not so, these shores should never have seen your daughter."

If the Marchioness cherished any more sanguine wishes, she did not express them; and Marcella was not again persecuted on the subject.

Louis arrived at Harwich. Marcella was then in her chamber. But learning from her mother, (who had glided out of the room with the information,) that the preserver of her father and her brother was then in the house; she did not resist the next request, that she would bid him welcome. She felt confident in her own resolves; and, with a serene aspect, put her arm on her mother's, to comply.

She was in black. It was the first time Louis had seen her out of the dress of a nun; and, on her entrance, he started at the unexpected change. It awakened emotions

in his heart, which he thought he had just hushed for ever He rose in disorder.

Her face and hands were pale; but a gentle colour, like the soft reflection from the rose, passed over her cheek, as he approached her. She tried to meet him with tranquillity; and to look at him with the open eye of friendly cognizance. But the moment his hand touched hers, her eyelids fell; and a chill ran through her whole frame, to blanch her cheeks; and shake her with such a trembling, that the Marchioness made a sign to her husband. He sprang towards her, and gently bore her to the sofa.

The Marquis sat for some time, rubbing his daughter's cold hands in his; and the Marchioness touched her forehead and lips with essence. Louis did not venture to follow her to the sofa, but remained standing where the group had left him. As she lay, like a lily on a velvet pall, so fair and fragile, in her mourning garments, he gazed on her with his soul in his eyes, and felt the possibility of a yet bitterer pang, than the death of his false friend. But the moment he thought so, he checked the selfish sentiment; and said, in anguish of spirit to himself,—"Oh no! with thee, Marcella, dwell innocence and virtue. Thy translation is to heaven; and can I mourn with bitterness, her who goes to blessedness? But when the deluding, the betrayer, the impenitent, are called away!—Oh, Wharton! thou, who wert once my friend—*would to God I could die for thee!*"

Ferdinand observed his countenance, and touched his arm. "Why do you gaze with such despair on my sister?" whispered he: "her illness is merely weakness, from fatigue. Lindisfarne will restore us all."

"Heaven grant it!" was the response of Louis, as he recalled himself from the momentary wanderings of his thoughts.

Marcella soon after re-opened her eyes; and, having recovered her perfect recollection, she also strove to rally her self-possession; and, though with still downcast lids, she stretched out her hand to her father's friend, as he again advanced. He took it, but he durst not impress it with his lips; and, in a calm but low voice, she expressed her

pleasure at seeing him returned in safety to the country of his nearest relatives. Louis neither heard nor saw distinctly. The confusion was in his heart. And what he spoke, or what he did, he knew not. He was only conscious to the sound of her voice, to the touch of her hand, the dearest to him of all the world's possessions.

Her father and mother joined in the conversation, and many mutual enquiries now took place. Marcella, for nearly an hour, bore her part, with a composure that surprised and pleased the Marchioness. When she appeared exhausted, her mother rose; and Marcella, doing the same, took the parental arm, and with a bend of her head to her father, quitted the room.

Santa Cruz turned towards Louis, as his daughter disappeared; and observed, with a solemn concentration of thought, that his eyes followed with anxiety, the slow progress of Marcella from the room; that he gazed on the door, a long time after it was closed on her; and then withdrew his attention with a heavy and deep-drawn sigh.

"De Montemar," said the Marquis, "come with me into my chamber. I have much to say to you."

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

THE conference lasted many hours. The subject was Spain, the injuries of his father and himself; and the yet hovering vision of Marcella fled before the direful apparitions. Louis saw the hue of his destiny, and, with its paleness spreading to his heart, he sat and listened.

Santa Cruz assured him, that he had left no power unexerted, day or night, to bring the prejudiced mind of the King to a fair judgment on the Duke de Ripperda: his political integrity, great exasperations, and religious penitence. "The Queen was more placable in your behalf;"

continued the Marquis; "for, alas, the sex! the subject in debate was a handsome young man, and one who admired her! At least, Duke Wharton made her believe so."

"Duke Wharton!" echoed Louis.

"Yes," replied the Marquis, "that man was ever a Proteus; and never more so, than in the present instance. When I and the Spanish ministry thought him the most active enemy you had, he was making himself master of all their malignancy against you, whether in arms or in ambuscade: and, by a generalship as effective as it was surprising, turned the whole battery against its inventors."

"Marquis!" cried Louis, starting from his chair, "what is it you say?"

"The truth, though a strange one," replied Santa Cruz; "and this *ruse de guerre* was so artfully managed, that not a man in the Spanish cabinet is aware of the hand that gave the overthrow. Being one in all their secret counsels, he influenced the separate members to certain exaggerated conduct; and, playing the one off against the other, in their allegations against your father, managed that contradictions should occur in every hearing before the King. Meanwhile, by accusing you to the Queen, in terms to awaken her vanity to a belief of your personal loyalty to her, he gained your point there. With your personal enemies, and his political friends, he affected to wonder at the Marquis de Montemar's restitution to the royal favour: while with me, he rejoiced in private;—laughing at the absurdity of such earthworms as De Castellar and De Paz making any tilt against the clouded power they saw hovering over them."

"And that cloud is a bright one!" continued the Marquis, kindling with his subject. "It has absorbed the follies of his youth. And, gazing with wonder at his capacity, I beheld with admiration, the man I once despised. In short, his genius, with a sort of supernatural cognizance, darts into the views of men, and turns their devices to the side of justice and honour!"

Louis's deep groans burst upon the ear of Santa Cruz. His face, for some time, had been covered with his hands.

An amazed enquiry, and an agonised reply, soon explained the cause. Wharton, at that moment, was at the point of death, in the house of Mr. Athelstone, at Morewick! was dying, under an impression that Louis was estranged from him; nay, had united with his father in denouncing him as a traitor! He might now be dead; and he, who loved him to the last, never be able to pour out his gratitude, for such noble assertion of that father's fame!

This information astonished and distressed Santa Cruz; and the greater the extremity of the Duke, the more he thought himself called upon, to relate every thing explicitly to his agonised friend. In the course of this protracted conversation, he gave a brief account of all he knew of Wharton's conduct, throughout the whole transactions relative to the Duke de Ripperda.

Wharton had frankly acknowledged, that, from the period he was convinced that no impressions in behalf of the Stuart or Bavarian interests could be made on Spain, he determined to overthrow the political power of him, who avowed himself the root of this obstinacy. Ripperda had proclaimed his devotion to the House of Brunswick, more than once, at the great councils of Vienna. He had affirmed his implacability to both pretenders, at the table of the Cardinal Giovenozzi; and he did it with circumstances of such personal insult to Wharton, that the friend of the Stuarts at once laid a comprehensive plan to make him feel his power.

Routemberg's conspiracy against the Spanish minister did not originate with Wharton; but it was modified by him: he mounted the guns, and planted the circular batteries; and he did it, to bring Ripperda to a point, where none could preserve him, but the man who held the springs of every movement in his own hands. This man was Wharton's self. Twice, at critical moments, in Vienna and at Madrid, he offered his terms:—to unmask every machination against Ripperda; and to maintain him in his seat against all the world! if he would at last oppose the House of Brunswick, in the empire and in England. Both overtures were rejected with disdain; and events took their course. Ripperda's was a fall, not a descent; and the ruin

was terrible. The new ministers of Spain, who had bought their elevation by embracing Wharton's views, triumphed in every way over their disgraced predecessor. But the English politician was of another spirit. His enemy once down, he told his coadjutors, he was not of the herd to strike his heel against the fallen lion.

It did not, at this juncture, accord with the interests of his two royal friends, James Stuart and Maria of Bavaria, to make a full disclosure in favour of the overthrown Duke; but he made secret visits to the King's confessor, and to the Queen's, not to incense, as was supposed, but to propitiate, each sovereign against the cabinet ministers' rancorous persecution of their fallen rival. He denied to their majesties all the circumstances which had been alleged by these men, to prove that Ripperda had negotiated with him. He positively asserted, there had never been any amicable private meeting between them. "He explained the adventure in the Carinthian post-house; also another rencounter, in the mountains of Genoa," continued the Marquis, "where he had accidentally rescued your father from a band of assassins, set on him by a Spaniard; and, said Wharton, "for De Montemar's sake, I will not name the villain." "It were not possible to describe the varied anguish of Louis de Montemar, during this discourse, and the new discoveries it made at every sentence. He did not utter it, for he was on the rack. But when he found that it was Wharton's arm which had saved his father amongst the Maritime Alps; that it was to him, though unknown, Ripperda had bequeathed the *gratitude* of his son;—then Louis felt the iron enter his soul.

In short, Santa Cruz informed him, that Wharton proved to the King and Queen, that his enmity was against Ripperda's politics, not against himself; though he protested, there was not a man on earth, who detested another with more determined hatred than the ex-minister had detested him.

Things were in this state, when the Duke was summoned by the Chevalier St. George, to a conference at Rome; the field was then open to Grimaldo, and his colleagues;

and their violent proceedings ended in the flight of their victim.

In this pause of the narrative, Louis wrung his hands, and bitterly exclaimed,—

"What an extreme and false judge have I been of this unexampled friend! And just is my punishment — that I should lose him for ever, in the moment I know his invaluable worth!"

"Be not unjust to yourself, my dear De Montemar!" answered the Marquis. "Philip Wharton did not open to me only half his soul. When we pledged our faith to each other (which coalition was not to be revealed to you till its object was successful), he confessed to me that he deserved your warmest resentment; for the sin of his life, since he knew you, was an incessant attempt at rendering you, in *all things*, like himself! 'De Montemar was bright and ambitious,' said he; 'too likely to outshine his master, unless I gave his towering soul a little of my own ballast. I tried him, where man is most vulnerable. Marquis, I was so very a wretch, that the clearer I saw my power over him, with a more devilish zeal I sought to thrust him into the fire. In the garden of the Château de Phaffenberg was the scene of my last attempt! His resolution not only to meet ruin himself, but to consign his idolised father to the same, rather than rescue either, by a dereliction from virtue, was a sword that cut asunder marrow and spirit! Since that hour I have regarded that boy as a Mentor, worth all the bearded sages, from Socrates to the Cambray bishop.'

"So spoke the animated Duke," continued Santa Cruz; "and he has honoured his model. For, from that time (although it was long before I shared his secret), he has been your unsuspected and efficient friend. The re-enrolment of your father's name in the national archives, and these parchments, containing your own restituted rights, without condition or subtraction (but the dukedom of Ripperda, which none but a Catholic can bear), are undeniable witnesses of this fact."

"Marquis," replied Louis, walking the room in insupportable agony of spirit, "you heap coals of fire upon my head! My father denounced him as a traitor to the House

of Hanover. A price is set on his head; and, hidden like a thief, he lies, murdered by assassins, under the very roof he would have crowned with happiness! Oh, my venerable friend! I cannot bear what is pressing on my brain!"

The Marquis saw that Louis was in no condition to listen with attention, much less with complacency, to any thing else he had to impart; and, aware that his greatest proof of kindness would be to hasten a return to Morewick, which might yield a chance for the friends to meet again in this world, withdrew, to give corresponding directions to his family.

CHAPTER XXXIX.

THE next dawn saw the Marquis Santa Cruz step into the post-chariot that was to convey him to London. He had advised Louis not to distress the apprehensive mind of the Marchioness, by imparting to her, or to any of the travelling group, the afflicting scene at Morewick. Besides, under the dangerous circumstances which enveloped Wharton's asylum there, the fewer who were privy to the secret, the better for all parties.

Immediately after breakfast, Louis led the Marchioness to her carriage. Ferdinand had already placed his sister within it; and Don Garcia de Lima, the family physician, with the female attendants of the ladies, took his station in De Montemar's travelling chaise.

A cold Northumbrian morning, which, though at deep midsummer, is sometimes saturated with fog, chilled the delicate frame of Marcella; and, wrapping herself within her pelisse, she drew close into the corner of the coach.

The first start of the horses from the inn-gate relit hope in the breast of Louis. And, as they flew along the northern road, the pinions of his soul seemed to extend themselves; while, with the animated glow of renewed confidence in Wharton, and the sanguine expectation of soon avowing

it at his side, dilated his heart, he appeared to the eyes of his companions a new being. Marcella contemplated that radiant, unobserving countenance: she saw it was happiness that shone there — happiness in returning whence he came. For his eyes were directed forward, with an eagerness which plainly declared that, at that moment, he thought not of any one in the carriage.

"'Tis well — 'tis well," muttered she to herself. Then, shrinking to the soul at the latent pang which had dictated the involuntary words, and feeling the fresh air particularly bleak at that instant, she even shuddered.

"You are cold, Lady Marcella," said Louis, hearing the gentle shiver, and drawing up the window that was next her: "I fear our Northumbrian breezes are rough in their welcome."

Marcella did not speak, but bowed her head.

This little incident recalled Louis's attention to those around him; and he succeeded in beguiling the thoughts of the Marchioness, at least from her most anxious meditations; for the mournful comfort which the Marquis's communications, had infused into his mind, had empowered him to complete his journey with comparative cheerfulness.

Over and over again, he felt that a perfect reliance on the virtue of a beloved object, and conviction of his acceptance with the Source of all Purity, is what takes the mortal sting from death; and though sorrow and anxiety were full in his heart, the shafts of despair and horror were extracted, and he thought himself equal to seeing his friend pass that bourne, where he trusted one day to follow him into the land of peace.

All this genial impetus of spirit succeeded very well, until the third morning of the journey. Marcella had been overtasked by the exertions of the two preceding days; and, as her brother was leading her from the inn, she fainted in his arms. She was carried back into the house. The physician's chaise had some time set forth; but her mother applied the usual restoratives: and when she was sufficiently recovered to comprehend what was said, the Marchioness tenderly assured her she should not be hurried by proceeding that day.

Louis turned towards the window. An hour, a moment, might be sufficient to divide him for ever, in this life, from the friend of his heart! Marcella was ill, but she was not dying; and the determination to delay a whole day and a night, struck him with an agony which forced him to turn away to conceal. But Marcella had caught the look, and its whole expression entered her heart.

"His wishes, his anxieties, are in another place," said she to herself; "perhaps with the incomparable Cornelia! And what have I to do to oppose them? Let *him* be happy!"

Her resolution was taken; and she steadily replied, in a low but unfaltering voice, to her mother's persuasions, "Indeed, it was only weakness. It is over, and I must go on."

Louis gazed on her with an agitating gratitude he durst not express. She observed him, and looked another way, though with an air of unaffected serenity. Marcella was always serene, after any struggle in her soul, when the conquest was gained.

In half an hour, they were reseated in the carriage; and, by the orders of Ferdinand, who had received a whispered command from his sister, the drivers kept their horses to their fullest speed.

Little conversation passed in this day's journey. The spell of the two former ones had been broken by the check in the morning.

Marcella spoke little; for she durst not spare any waste of strength, from the exertion necessary to bear the casualties of the journey; but she constantly replied cheerfully to the anxious enquiries of her mother. The eyes of Louis turned often on her, with an expression of solicitude that penetrated her heart; but the effect it produced favoured the first deceit she had ever practised in her life. It drove the blood from that heart to her cheek; and she looked well, when her soul was almost fainting within her.

It was ten o'clock, on the third night after their leaving Harwich, when the harassed party entered on Morpeth Moor, within a stage of Alnwick. The darkness, during this latter dozen miles, concealed from his companions the

increasing discomposure of Louis. Every step drew him now so near Morewick, he was ready to break from the carriage, and escape at once to the side of his dying friend. These twelve miles seemed a hundred to his impatience; and when the drivers drew up before the door of the inn at Alnwick, he sprung out, as if it had been into his uncle's house.

Marcella would fain have made a proposal to go on, even during the night; but nature was at last subdued, and she did not choose to speak, when she knew that the hardly articulate sounds of her voice would too truly proclaim she had already done too much.

The Marchioness having alighted, Louis drew near, to assist Ferdinand in bearing out his sister; but Marcella gently waved him away with her hand. Ferdinand threw his arms round her waist, and supported her failing steps into the house.

She was seated, pale and silent, in a chair by the fire-side (for the night was cold and wet), when Louis re-entered from giving orders respecting their apartments. Don Garcia's hand was upon her pulse.

"Donna Marcella had best retire immediately," said the physician.

"But I shall be ready to recommence our journey to-morrow, at daybreak," answered she, with a mournful smile, and turning her head towards Louis. He bowed, with a full heart; and she left the room, leaning on her mother and the physician.

"Ferdinand," said Louis, "it is not necessary to disturb your sister so early as she intimates. I have business at Morewick: it is only a few miles off; I shall take a horse immediately, and return —" His lip became convulsed, and he could not proceed.

"Why, what is the matter at Morewick?" hastily enquired the young Spaniard. "Your family are at Lindisfarne."

"All, excepting Cornelia. But spare me further questions. When we meet again ——" Again he interrupted himself, and then resumed, in a more collected voice,— "Rest is necessary, both for your mother and your sister.

Do not allow them to be disturbed till noon. I shall be with you long, very long, before that."

"This is very strange, De Montemar," said Ferdinand, with rather a tone of offended pride.

"For no other cause than the one which impels me," returned Louis, "would I leave their side. But when you know it, they and you will pardon and pity me."

"I ask no farther," said Ferdinand.

CHAPTER XL.

The horse was fleet which carried Louis, that dreary night, without star, or guide of any kind, over the lonely heaths which lie between Alnwick, and the little bye-road that winds through Warkworth to Morewick Hall. But he knew every dell and dingle in that near neighbourhood; and, without once going out of the direct track, soon found himself under the tall elms of the old park.

The porter, whom he had aroused at the lodge-gate, followed, to take his horse. But he rung the bell at the great door twice, before there was any appearance of its being answered. At last he heard voices, as if in consultation, within the door. He rung a third time. They receded; and in a few minutes, a window was cautiously opened above his head. He could not see objects in the darkness; but he looked up, and impatiently demanded admittance.

"It is my master!" exclaimed Lorenzo; and, quitting the window, hurried down stairs. The door was instantly opened by him; while, a little within the hall, appeared the venerable figure of Mr. Athelstone.

At sight of him, Louis felt the object of his haste must be no more. The shaft of death seemed struck into his own soul, as he desperately stepped forward. Mr. Athelstone clasped him in his arms.

"Then all is over!" burst from his sealed lips.

The Pastor drew him into a room, and Lorenzo followed with a candle. Louis stood so calm, so unshaken, under the belief that his friend was dead, that the affectionate Italian gazed at him with surprise. But Mr. Athelstone read, under that fixed endurance, a sensibility to the shock he had anticipated, which made the good man only too eager to unfold his better tidings.

"Does my presence, my dear nephew," said he, grasping his marble hand, "only speak of death? Your friend's fever has left him; and his wound begins to close."

Louis had armed himself to bear the stroke of consummate grief: but this turn of joy, being beyond his hopes, was also beyond his manhood; and with his first step towards the parlour door, he staggered and fell. But an insensibility, which is the effect of happiness, is as a mist before the sun. A few minutes recalled him to perception; and the blissful tears which flowed from his eyes, bathed the hand of the venerable messenger of such good tidings.

"They are full of peace to me!" cried Louis.

"They ought to be so," replied Mr. Athelstone. And then his nephew listened with a chastised anxiety, while the pious man explained his own presence at Morewick; and that his first meeting with Cornelia had confirmed his suspicions, that Duke Wharton was this secret and cherished guest.

"I went to him," continued the Pastor, "to arouse his spirit from the deleterious slumber of this world, ere he should sink into that sleep which might prove eternal. At the first sight of me, he knew me; and by that knowledge, was confirmed in his own belief, that he was under a roof which belonged to you. I confess to you, Louis, though I had suspected whom I might find, I receded a step, when I saw that it was the treacherous Wharton! I knew that, by granting him this protection, you had laid yourself open to the punishment, he might escape! And this man had cozened you of your friendship; had rifled you of your father's honours, and life——"

"My uncle!" exclaimed Louis, interrupting him.

Mr. Athelstone put forth his hand, with a sign that he

wished to be heard to the end; and then he benignly resumed:—

"But I went forward; and repeated those blessed words of the Giver of all pardon:—

"'Peace be to this house, and grace to all who dwell within it!'

"When I drew near, the Duke stretched out his hand to me. 'Mr. Athelstone,' said he, 'you do not visit the pillow of an impenitent. But where is my friend?' And he looked, as if he thought you were behind me."

"And he looked in vain!" exclaimed Louis.

"But your spirit, entered with your uncle!" replied the Pastor, laying his hand gently on the bent head of his nephew. "And a better spirit, my child: that which, as a minister of Christ, I derived from his holy word! The succeeding two hours, I passed by the bedside of the Duke of Wharton; and when I left him, that resplendent countenance of his, was lit with a new light; the effulgence of heaven shone on it; and, pressing my hand to his lips, he called me his father! his better father!—'For you have poured on me,' said he, 'not the unction which gives temporal, but that which dispenses eternal life!'"

Two similar hours were now passed between Louis and his uncle. During that time, all was communicated, which the former had learnt from Santa Cruz, relative to Duke Wharton; and Mr. Athelstone unfolded to his nephew, what the sealed papers in Cornelia's possession contained; and which, as a full avowal to his Christian confessor, the Duke had permitted the Pastor to read.

The night that followed Wharton's first conference with Mr. Athelstone, had been succeeded by a comfortable sleep. And then it was, that, on the ensuing morning, before he would venture to partake the holiest rite of the Christian church, he entreated the Pastor to break those seals, and read the contents. The packet that was addressed to De Montemar did not contain the latter circumstances which Santa Cruz had mentioned: for those particulars, it referred Louis to that mutual friend. But the narrative, generally, and briefly, explained the Duke's antecedent conduct with regard to Ripperda and his son; and ended

with affirming the spotless fidelity of Ripperda, both to the sovereigns of Austria and of Spain, until he became another being on the field of Barbary. Wharton's concluding farewell to Louis was short, but to the soul; yet, still, the usual spirit of the writer had prevailed, to clothe his last words in the cheerful garb of verse; and he wrote:—

> "Be kind to my remains; and, oh, defend
> Against your judgment, your departed friend!
> Let not the invidious foe my fame pursue!
> The world I served, and only injured you!"

The second paper, was to the secretary of state in London; declaring, on the word of a dying man, that he only suspected under whose protection he was. That, he believed, none, of all who attended him in his asylum, but the one romantic friend who brought him there, knew they were harbouring an outlawed man. He therefore wrote this, on the truth of an accountable being, ready to be called into the presence of his Creator; to exonerate all, and every one, who had granted him protection in these his last hours, from any implication of disloyalty against the existing government of England: though, with his last breath, he would say, "*Long live King James!*"

"Cornelia," continued the Pastor, "has been an unwearied watch in his apartment. She is now reposing with her maid, in a room adjoining to his, while he sleeps; and this is his third night of undisturbed rest."

To invade those hours of genial slumber, was the last thing to which Louis could have been brought to consent. But neither he, nor his uncle, felt any thing dormitive in their faculties, while conversing on a subject so dear to both their hearts; to the one, a restored friend; to the other, a redeemed fellow-creature.

During these precious vigils, Mr. Athelstone learnt from his nephew, the true object of the Marquis Santa Cruz's visit to England. It was not merely a private mission to the Spanish ambassador in London; but to give his personal sanction to the attachment of his son to Alice; and to use his influence with the Pastor and Mrs. Coningsby to accord their consent to the marriage.

"Which we shall readily grant," replied Mr. Athelstone; for the hearts which the Almighty hath joined together, in innocence and virtue, let no man put asunder! And that He has done so, by an awful covenant between the Marquis's family and ours, is distinctly marked by the mutually shedding of their blood for each other, in the terrible fields of Barbary."

Mr. Athelstone dwelt, with the tenderness of a parent, on the fading health of Lady Marcella; and, while he eulogised her benevolent cares of the wounded at Ceuta, he could not refrain from expressing a regret, that so much active virtue should be intended for the living tomb of a convent.

"And yet," added the venerable man, "there are excellent divines of our own church, who tell us that a vestal life is an angel's life. Being unmingled with the world, it is ready to converse with God; and, by not feeling the warmth of indulged nature, it flames out with holy fires, till it burns like the seraphim; the most ecstasied order of beatified spirits!"

"Is that your sentiment, sir?" enquired Louis, looking down, and quelling the palpitation of his heart.

"No, Louis; my opinion of an angel's life, both on earth and in heaven, is, that it must be one of ministry. And that cannot be fulfilled by retiring to a solitude beyond the stars, or immuring one's self below them, in monasteries and loneliness."

"Then, to covet one, likely to be so immured," replied Louis, with a mournful smile, "is not a very mortal sin!"

This remark put his uncle to painful silence. He understood its import, though he had never before suspected the possibility of its existence. The moment he heard it, he wondered that he should not have foreseen the birth of such a sentiment, in such a character as Louis, for such a mind as Lady Marcella's. And, in the moment of apprehending this affection, being also aware that it was awakened only for disappointment, he paused, and fixed his benign eyes on his nephew. The venerable man had, in early youth, once known to love, and to resign its object; and now, remembering something of the pangs he had so

long forgotten, he exclaimed, "Alas! alas! I was not prepared for this!"

Louis took his hand with the enthusiasm of a manly heart, re-illumining his momentarily saddened countenance.

"But I am, my uncle!" said he; "and when she, who alone I ever truly loved, has indeed uttered the fatal vow, I will do my best to reconcile your plan of ministry with that of Bishop Taylor's celibacy; and so tread in the steps of my revered Pastor, to the end of my days!"

He put his uncle's hand to his lips, to conceal the sigh that would have ended the sentence.

Mr. Athelstone thought it best to pass immediately from a subject on which hope could have no footing; and he proposed, that, as Heaven had seen it good to spare the life of Duke Wharton, their next object must be to preserve him from the knowledge of the government, until he should be sufficiently recovered to pass beyond seas. To effect this concealment with the least mystery, he recommended intrusting the Marchioness and her family with what had happened. Don Garcia, the physician, would be bound to keep the secret, on account of the Duke's power in the Spanish court; and then he might be removed to Lindisfarne, as part of the travelling suite. In that remote place he would be attended by Don Garcia, and might await his convalescence without much alarm for his personal safety.

Louis highly approved of these suggestions, and settled, that, as soon as he had seen Wharton in the morning, he would return to Alnwick, and make the necessary arrangement with the Marchioness.

Towards dawn the Pastor dropt asleep in his great chair, and Louis was left to his meditations. He too well remembered the distressed, and almost reproachful, looks with which the mother of Marcella had regarded him, when he so quiescently permitted her daughter to hurry forward, to the danger of her health; and also the uncomplaining patience with which Marcella had borne the fatigues of the first two days; and the unselfed, and almost sympathetic perseverance with which she had persisted through the third. There was something in these remembrances, which, while it overpowered him with regretful shame at

his seeming ingratitude, yet awakened a countless train of recollections, that flowed like balm into his soul. With his lips he foreswore all hope of Marcella; but there was a subtle something in the bottom of his heart, that would not allow him to feel that he must absolutely seek the resignation he professed.

He ruminated on the consolations he had received at her hands, when he lay in sickness and in sorrow; on the gentle virtues, which, (like silent rills, only betraying their hidden course by a brighter green above,) showed their foundation in the beautiful composure of her character. Her tender cares had been as unremitting as efficient, and made her influence be felt throughout his own soul, even as the atmosphere that surrounded him, soft, balmy, and inspiring!

Louis knew not that he loved her, till he believed he took his last leave of her on the steps of the altar in the chapel of Ceuta. He knew not how he loved her, till the burden of his friend's delinquency was taken from his heart; and its first spring to pour the rapture of that conviction into her pure bosom. He would not, however, acknowledge to himself that he thought she loved him. But he felt it in every nerve of his body, in the dearest recesses of his soul in every heaven-directed aspiration of his grateful spirit.

"And in heaven alone," cried he, "will it be mutually imparted and enjoyed!"

CHAPTER XLI.

THE morning's sun witnessed the agitated though happy meeting between Louis and Cornelia, while their venerable uncle was gone to prepare the awakened invalid for the entrance of his friend. Much circumlocution was not suffered to precede a re-union, after which the Duke panted, as if it were the earnest of all his future good. Louis was not less eager to forgive and be forgiven, and to throw himself on the breast of the man he had always loved, (whe-

ther in admiration or in forbearance,) with, at last, the sanction of the best guardians of his youth and virtue.

When he was told he might approach the chamber, the permission, and the clasp of Wharton's arms around his body, seemed the action of one instant. Mr. Athelstone closed the door on the friends, and left them alone. The gallant heart of the Duke, and the soul of Louis, melted at once into one stream of mingling tenderness; and sweet were those manly tears. They were as the "Pool of Bethesda," whence each arose strengthened, and restored to a friendship, deathless as their souls.

All was recapitulated; all was explained. And Wharton now stood before his friend, without a shadow, without a mystery. But in the deep and intricate enfoldment of the snares, which had lurked in the gay assemblies of the Hôtel d'Etrées, Louis often shuddered to the depths of his wounded spirit.

"I found you there," continued Wharton; "I doubted, and I tried you! But, like the light, you passed through the impurest objects without defilement! Yet, when you are a father, De Montemar, never advise your sons to make a similar experiment."

"Never! never!" returned Louis, with every agonised recollection in his own voice.

The Duke resumed; and as he, in like manner, unwound the devious clue of policy, and showed him all its labyrinths, and gins, and hidden places,—where

> "The toad beds with the viper; and darkness
> Weds with murder, to do the work of hell!"

the spirit of Louis mourned within him, that such paths had been those of his friend! that in those trackless wildernesses, his beloved father had perished.

"But it was to kill the Minotaur, I entered his den!" replied Wharton.

"Yes," answered Louis; "but you did not escape the taint of his breath!—Let me thank Heaven, I was so soon beaten from the same ground!"

"No!" replied the Duke; "the politics of Europe, are only to be redeemed from Machiavelian villanies, by

honest men turning their talents to the trust, of which those talents are the warrant."

"But then the mode of warfare!" rejoined Louis: "all the evil passions are aroused; and who would enlist with such leaders?"

"Reverse the order; make them your followers!" replied Wharton. "Man must be ruled by our knowledge of his nature. To the noble, give noble stimulus; to the base, the scourge. You must take the world as you find it; use it according to its own worthlessness, and not by the measure of yourself. To talk of virtue to some statesmen, would be casting pearls to swine; and, we should certainly share the mud in which the hogs would trample them. To act virtuously, is our command; courage and obedience will work the way. Your uncle reads us a parable to this effect?"

"He does, Wharton!" replied Louis, pressing his friend's hand; "but he also reads — *Let not thy good be evil spoken of!* and has it not been too much the case with thine?"

"Granted!" returned the Duke. "What has been, shall not be again. And, if God grant me life," continued he, "you shall hear of me, to the satisfaction of your heart, and to the confusion of my enemies!"

The spirit of Wharton seemed in such vigour, during this lengthened interview, that it embraced every subject that could interest Louis or himself; and readily fell in with Mr. Athelstone's project of his accompanying the family of Santa Cruz to Lindisfarne.

"And will those holy walls open to receive me?" asked the Duke: "De Montemar, I have not seen the rocks of Lindisfarne, since I forced you into its waves. It is not my interest to woo your Cornelia on that spot."

"Take her, then, to the mountains of Genoa."

Wharton understood the reference; and again the friends were clasped in each other's arms.

CHAPTER XLII.

FERDINAND had just sent to his sister, a few hasty lines he had received from Louis; and which were to precede his return from Morewick; when the writer himself, entered, like *Maia's son,* breathing hope and happiness. The Marchioness was preparing breakfast.

"Whatever your secret may be, it is a pleasant one," cried she; "your countenance is a brilliant herald."

Marcella was yet in her chamber, which adjoined the breakfast room. She became faint, and closed her hand upon the unread letter.

"Oh," sighed she to herself, "would to God, that I had never left Spain, or never seen this island! How little did I know myself! Weak, culpable that I am!"

What were Louis's answers to her mother, or her brother (who both spoke at once), she did not hear. The pulses of her head beat almost audibly, and seemed to exclude all other sounds from reaching her ears. She was separated from the room by a slight door only, which, standing ajar, discovered his figure to her, as it animatedly moved to and fro, while, in a lowered voice, he imparted his secret to her mother and brother.

Ferdinand soon came in, to lead her to the breakfast table. "De Montemar is come back," cried he, "and has so much to tell you!"

"He has told you and my mother," said she, "and that is enough; I shall soon have no interest in this world!" but the last was only murmured to herself. However, she rose; and, leaning on her brother, walked steadily and serenely into the next room.

"My child," said the Marchioness, "we are to pass this day at Morewick; where you will meet Mr. Athelstone, and the sweet Cornelia."

"Cornelia!" murmured Marcella to herself; and, forcing a smile, which gleamed like a moonbeam on a flowery grave, she gently bowed her head, and took her seat.

The Marchioness turned from her to Louis; and observing the deep and penetrating tenderness with which he regarded her, she drew near her son, and, while a tear started in her eye, whispered him: "Surely your father may withhold the dove of promise, till there be no resting-place."

Ferdinand saw his mother was affected; and, making an excuse to attend her, to consult with Don Garcia, respecting their proceeding, he took her from the room.

Marcella was now left alone with Louis. She sat like a cold statue. His joyous heart was overclouded at once; and with a slow step he approached her. Her eyes were cast down, and fixed on her clasped hands, in which she still held the letter. At that moment, all his love and all his agonies lest his impatience had overtasked her tender frame, were apparent in his countenance. She looked up, and received its full import direct upon her heart. The confusion in hers, the gasp with which she recalled her eyes, and covered them with her hand, proclaimed her whole secret to Louis. It wrested from him all his own; but not a word found utterance on either side. He was at her feet, on his knees, and with the hem of her garment pressed to his lips.

But how different was the sentiment, which then rendered him speechless, from the tumultuous emotion, which had arrested him in the same position, before Countess Altheim! There, his spirit was divided against itself. His reason doubted the admiration of his senses; and a racking indecision, checked his wishes and his lips. Here, his whole soul consented to the perfect love, with which the virtues of Marcella had possessed his heart. The passion that she inspired, was, like herself, a sacred flame, and lit for immortality; and Louis avowed its imperishable nature to himself, even while he struggled for words to foreswear it, at the feet of the future nun, for ever.

Marcella's faculties, so lately possessed with the idea of his devotion to Cornelia, were all amazement. Surprised out of herself, by the look she had momentarily seen; and immediately feeling him at her feet; she became so overwhelmed by her own consciousness, and his irrepressible

emotions, that she shook, almost to the parting of soul and body.

"Pardon me, Lady Marcella!" cried he; "pardon my first and my last disclosure of a sentiment, which, as it has no hope, I trust, has no sacrilege! But to love all that is pure and noble in idea, and not to love its living image, was impossible to me. You confirmed me in the virtue I might have deserted! You consoled me, when the world had abandoned me! You have, even now, exerted yourself beyond your strength, in compassion to a desperate haste, for which I durst not assign a cause. This last goodness, leaves me no longer master of myself. It has precipitated me to the avowal of a sentiment, which, in my breast, shall never know a second object. The hour that consigns you to a cloister, seals my heart for ever."

This was spoken with agitated rapidity; but no answer was returned. Marcella felt she had betrayed herself; and her horror at this conviction overwhelmed all other considerations. She attempted to rise; he did not venture to withhold her.

"Oh, Lady Marcella!" cried he, "has the irrepressible utterance of my gratitude offended you past all pardon?"

She had arrived at the door of the inner room, when he repeated the demand, with an anguish of expression she could not mistake. Turning round, she falteringly replied, —

"I have offended, past all hope of my own pardon!"

Louis was springing forward. She saw the movement, though with still downcast eyes; and putting out her hand, with an air of vestal reserve, decisively but gently pronounced, —"No more!" and disappeared into the room.

The state of his mind was inexplicable to himself. He was awe-struck, by her manner. A sentence of perpetual silence, seemed to be in those words! — and yet, the flood of happiness which had burst over his whole heart, at the conviction her first moments of confusion inspired, would not be driven back.

He was standing in this agitated state, when the Marchioness re-entered, followed by Ferdinand and Don Garcia.

On perceiving that Marcella was not in the room, the Marchioness expressed some alarm at her disappearance; and, accompanied by the physician, hastened to seek her in the adjoining apartment.

Ferdinand glanced in the kindling face of his friend, and conjectured better than his mother. He drew near him.

"De Montemar," said he, in a lowered voice, "shall I guess your meditations?"

"No, Ferdinand; I would not extend my offence: and yet, you have read me ill, if I have been able to hide it from you!"

"And who have you offended, my brother?" asked Ferdinand, drawing close to him, and in a tone so peculiar, that Louis rapidly repeated, "My brother! Say not that word again, or you will undo me!"

"De Montemar," returned Ferdinand, "hope, as I have done, against possibilities!"

Louis's eyes demanded what he meant?

Ferdinand grasped his hand,—"I dare not say more."

At that instant the Marchioness re-entered; and, informing Louis that Marcella was ready to set out; in a strange, but happy disorder of mind, he left the room, to order the horses.

The two young men preceded the carriages to Morewick; and during the drive, the Marchioness communicated to her daughter, all that Louis had confided to her, respecting the cause of his late eagerness to return thither. As Marcella listened to the history of his friendship for Duke Wharton; its trials; its sufferings; and now its triumph, in the reformation of his friend from all his errors, and final restoration as from the grave; her tears bore too true a witness to the interest with which she hearkened to every circumstance that related to him. She hardly allowed herself to breathe, during that part of the narrative, where her mother particularly enlarged on Cornelia's cares of the Duke; and repeated the observation of Louis, that such cares seemed his friend's best sanative; for, he believed, if any two beings were fitted by Pro-

vidence for union, it was the nobly eccentric mind of Wharton to the celestial harmony of Cornelia's.

"And the union is not very improbable either," continued the Marchioness: "his former Duchess, (a wife only in name,) having been long dead; and all his former prejudices against a renewal of nuptial bonds, being annihilated by the merits of our De Montemar's sweet cousin."

Marcella was too much overwhelmed by the last scene between herself and Louis, to remark on these communications; and to confess what had passed to her mother, was more than her agitated spirits could then achieve. She pleaded the truth, — a severe headach; and sat silently back in the carriage, till the gates of Morewick opened to receive them.

Louis and Ferdinand, having preceded the travellers half an hour, they stood with Mr. Athelstone under the porch of the hall, to bid them welcome.

Marcella's eye instantly fell on the silver-headed Pastor of Lindisfarne. He seemed to stand, like the benignant saint of Patmos, venerable in years, and reverend in the spirit of holiness. He saluted the cheek of the animated Marchioness; but when he put out his hand to support the advancing steps of Marcella, her knees obeyed the impulse of her heart, and she bent before him, kissing his sacred hand.

"Bless you! bless you, my child!" said he, laying his other hand upon her head. Louis's ready heart could not bear the sight of such a recognition, without a sensibility he feared to show; and he vanished into the recesses of the hall. The Pastor raised her in his arms, and bearing her gently into a room, put her into those of Cornelia, who had just embraced the Marchioness.

Cornelia dared hardly venture to clasp the beautiful phantom to her bosom, but tenderly supported her tremulous frame to a sofa, where she gently seated her; and, pressing her soft hand in hers, gazed at her through her crowding tears. Was this fragile being, just hanging like a broken lily, between the next breeze and the cold earth; was it she who had stood the fearful thunders of Ceuta;

who had raised her head, amidst the storm of war, to stanch the bleeding wounds of Louis de Montemar? to cherish his life, at the expense of her own?

"It was!" cried the full heart of Cornelia to herself; and, in inarticulate, but ardent language, she uttered her welcome.

The kindness of her voice drew the last sting from the bosom of Marcella. She looked up, and thanked her with her eyes. Something passed from them, so powerful, to the heart of Cornelia, that she gave way to the impulse of the impression; and, clasping the interesting Spaniard to her bosom, imprinted on her cheek a sister's kiss. That glance of Cornelia's noble countenance, had struck Marcella with its general resemblance to her cousin's; and she felt a pledge of something more than the welcome of a stranger, in this repeated embrace of Louis's most beloved relative.

The Marchioness acknowledged a father's presence, in that of the benign Pastor of Lindisfarne; and she, with Ferdinand, were making various interesting enquiries respecting Alice and Mrs. Coningsby, when Louis entered the room, after having introduced Don Garcia to the Duke.

Cornelia stretched out her hand to him.

"Louis," said she, "you must make an interest for me in the heart of Lady Marcella, before she sees Alice, whom she will doubly love, for her own sake, and for Don Ferdinand's."

Louis approached, with happy trepidation. What he said, was as little to the purpose as it was unheard by Marcella, and would have been marvelled at by Cornelia, had she not lately found a key in her own bosom, to explain language that had no visible meaning, and certain inconsistencies in demeanour, which betrayed all they meant to conceal.

CHAPTER XLIII.

A SOJOURN of several days, in which other feelings besides those of personal weakness, influenced Lady Marcella to keep her apartment, sufficiently restored the whole party, to enable them to recommence their journey northward without fear of fatigue.

The skill of the Spanish physician, (who united surgery with his medical science,) was so successful with Duke Wharton, that he, too, was pronounced capable of partaking the removal. A litter conveyed him to a hired yacht, which lay at the mouth of the Coquet. This mode of travel was chosen as the easiest for an invalid in his case; and Louis, with Don Garcia and Lorenzo, were his attendants. The wind was fair for Lindisfarne; and the smooth sea sparkled under a bright noonday sun, when the little party embarked.

Mr. Athelstone and Ferdinand accompanied the ladies by land. They had set off early in the morning, to travel by easy stages, so as to reach the island before night. The views were beautiful, and the Marchioness enjoyed comparing them with those of Spain; but Marcella, as well as Cornelia, sat unobserving, absorbed in meditation.

Cornelia had been benumbed with horror, when she first discovered that the noble invalid whom she had cherished as some illustrious foreigner, worthy to be loved by her virtuous cousin,—was the Duke of Wharton! Illustrious, indeed, in birth, and station, and talents; noble in figure, and beloved by her cousin! But the man, of all others in the world, whom she had most abhorred for the abuse of those faculties, which had been so richly bestowed, and so shamefully abandoned to the worst of purposes. She stood aghast at herself, when she found that she now not only knew him to be that once reprobated Wharton, but that, when he should close his eyes in death, (an event then hourly expected,) the world would henceforth be a desert to her.

It was in the moment when Mr. Athelsone flashed it at once upon her mind, *who* was her guest, that, as soon as the venerable man had left her to herself, she exclaimed, in the agony of such a recognition,—

"Oh, Wharton! thy sum is indeed sealed up! *Full of wisdom, and perfect in beauty. Thou wast prosperous in thy ways, from the day thou wast created, until iniquity was found in thee. And now they draw the sword against the beauty of thy wisdom. They defile thy brightness, and bring down thy glory to the ashes of the grave!*"

And who dare lament over such a grave? There is no sympathy for her, who deplores a dishonoured name. There is no pity for her, who weeps that the traitor is no more. She must glide by stealth to that lonely tomb. Her tears must fall in solitude on the trackless path; and, when lying on the neglected sod, there she may cry to Him alone, whose eye is over all, to pity and to pardon erring man!

"And so, Wharton!" exclaimed she, "I will lament and pray for thee!"

But, when her uncle informed her that this once offending and deprecated Wharton now regretted, with religious contrition, the transgressions of his youth; the severest pangs in her bosom were laid to rest; and she resumed, what she believed her last duties about the dying patient, with a chastised tenderness; as soothing as it was pure from any earthly sentiment.

When her cares, and the will of Providence, recalled him from the brink of the grave to all the cheering promises of a speedy recovery; then she remembered what he had been, and armed herself against the external graces of his person, by recollecting the snares they had been to his virtues. The enchantments of his conversation, and the subduing influence of his mute gratitude; his eloquent looks, and often implied love, she shut from her heart, by recalling the various reported instances of his former delusions over man and woman. In the dignity of unsullied virtue, she often strengthened herself by inwardly repeating,—"Wharton, thy former sins must be thy temporary

punishment; and my present weakness the lasting scourge of mine!"

Marcella's meditations were less painful than Cornelia's; for the object of her thoughts was spotless as her own purity. There was no torture in her retrospections, excepting the conviction, that Louis now knew the secret which she had hoped to have carried inviolate from all but her mother, to the grave. How could she again raise her eyes in his presence, when he was so sensible he divided her thoughts with the heaven to which he knew she was dedicated? But it was modesty, not shame, which caused her virgin heart to tremble within her. If she had been betrayed into love, the object was one, whom all she revered, delighted to honour! and that he had avowed she was dearest to him, though as a being passed beyond the skies, was a balm, she could not deny to herself, that was then busy at her heart, healing every wound.

"Louis!" often sighed she inwardly; "in those skies we shall meet, and be as one!"

The reception of the party at Lindisfarne, was that of the re-union of dear and long-acquainted friends. Mrs. Coningsby and the Marchioness met, with the frank cordiality of persons who already held that connection which the marriage of their children would confirm. Alice was bathed in tears, when her future second mother folded her to her breast, and put her hand into the rapturous grasp of Ferdinand. Marcella was greeted with equal kindness; and Mrs. Coningsby herself drew the old abbot's ebony couch into the circle for the accommodation of her gentle guest. Peter, the grey-headed butler, placed its cushions with assiduous care; and as Marcella thanked him in the English language, but in the Spanish custom stretched out her hand to him, he kissed it respectfully, and prayed God to bless her!

Tea was soon prepared in that room, where Ferdinand had first beheld the lovely sisters; and compared their unsophisticated beauties with those of more worldly charms. He was then a despairing wretch; he was now a happy lover! The same moon seemed shedding her silver light through the feathery shrubs at the window. The evening

was chill with all its brightness; and a fire blazed, as before, under the Gothic mantel-piece. The cat and the dog were also there; and the venerable Pastor completed the picture of delighted memory. He sat by the side of the glowing hearth, smiling in conscious piety, as, with one hand leaning on the couch of Marcella, he addressed her with all the tenderness of a parent. The Marchioness conversed animatedly with Mrs. Coningsby. His own Alice was at that moment dispensing the fragrant tea, in the very china from which he had drank it three years ago! Cornelia was by her side, enjoying, with a fond sister's delight, the perfect happiness of this evening's re-union.

When the tea-equipage was withdrawn, and they all drew into little groups, the artless Alice exclaimed, "Oh, how I wish Louis were here!"

"I wish so, too," rejoined Ferdinand, in the same affectionate tone; and, glancing at his sister, she had heard the tender apostrophe, and her kindling cheeks bore witness that she shared its sentiment.

Cornelia sighed; for she thought, "who is there, that would wish for Wharton?"

She was near Marcella; and Marcella understanding whose image was in that invisible sign, almost unconsciously pressed the hand of her new friend, and softly whispered, "And the Duke, too!" Cornelia's blush was now more vivid than Marcella's; and it was accompanied by a glow of gratitude to her, which shed a distant gleam on him, she before shrunk at remembering. His idea, then, was not so obscured to the eye of virtue, but that Marcella, — the all pure and saintly Marcella, could think of him at that moment with the approbation of a wish!

The embrace with which the two friends parted at night, told much of this, without the agency of words.

That night, when all else in the family were gone to rest, Mr. Athelstone imparted to Mrs. Coningsby the whole history of Wharton; from the commencement of his friendship with Louis, to the time of his being found by him wounded and dying in the herdsman's hut.

When she listened to the explanation of his most suspicious, and even hostile, proceedings against her nephew;

when she was told the dangers he had exposed himself to, to shield that nephew; and considered his generous forbearance with regard to Ripperda; when she comprehended all his late exertions for the reputation of the one, and the rights of the other; she was in an ecstasy of amazement, and, with all the usual ardour of her nature, exclaimed —

"How is such a man to be sufficiently admired! How can he ever be repaid for such unexampled friendship?"

"By Him, who is the Chastener of hearts!" returned the Pastor; "by Him, who brings men through tribulation, to the knowledge of Himself; and from the struggle of repentance, to a new being here and hereafter! — *I will repay*, saith the Lord. Therefore, dear Catherine, Duke Wharton, in life or death, is in hands whose recompense is sure!"

CHAPTER XLIV.

THE next day rose in storms. The sky was covered with clouds, flying before the wind in infinite volumes of rolling blackness. The sea raged against the beetling rocks of Lindisfarne, as if it menaced the existence of the island; and the fishers, who had prepared their little barks all along the beach, for embarkation at the dawn, were seen on every side, drawing them ashore, to prevent the mischief which threatened such small craft from the beating of the waves.

Some that had been more adventurous, and set forth during the night, notwithstanding the warning elements, met the fate their more prudent comrades averted; and Peter came in, to take away the almost untasted breakfast, with the melancholy tidings, that the wreck of several boats had been dashed on shore.

Mr. Athelstone anticipated a sad summons from many a bereft family in his flock; and his own anxious fears for the yacht that carried his beloved nephew, unfolding to

him the apprehensions in every breast around him, he gently reproved the old man for bringing in the reports of the hour, to wound the tender spirits of invalids; and, glancing at Marcella, who had turned her deathlike face away, he piously ejaculated —

"But, the Lord makes darkness his secret place! His pavilion round about him is dark water, and thick clouds cover him. But at the brightness of his presence, the clouds shall be removed, and he shall take them who trust in him, out of many waters!"

Cornelia rose from her seat, and withdrew. And when the increase of the storm became too intolerable for Marcella to endure with any apparent tranquillity, she, too, left the abbot's chair, and, putting her unsteady hand upon the arm of her mother, hardly sustained herself out of the room.

The sky was red on the horizon, as if dyed in blood, and the lurid clouds, tumbling over each other, like an upward sea of molten fire, roared in the blast, amid the thundering of the waves below; which dashed their boiling surges, in mountainous and foaming heaps, against the stupendous cliffs of the opposite shore.

Mr. Athelstone and Ferdinand were both on different parts of the rock, each with his telescope in his hand, looking afar for the only object which now possessed their thoughts. But a furious tornado of sleet and rain, accompanied with thunder and lightning, and a darkness at noonday black as midnight, shrouded them at once; while the redoubling tempest, which burst forth above and beneath, seemed to shake the old rocks of Lindisfarne to their foundations.

At the fearful concussion, which appeared to the inhabitants of the Pastorage like the awful summons on the judgment-day, Marcella threw herself on the bosom of her mother, and murmured, "Louis!" till her swooning voice was heard no more.

Cornelia was alone, and fell from her knees, prostrate on the floor. She was found in that position, and insensible as her friend, when Alice ran into the room in the agony

of her fears; and her screams brought their terrified mother into the same apartment.

Mr. Athelstone's look-out of utter hopelessness, was succeeded by the now doubly afflicting duty of visiting and consoling the widows and the orphans, which the present horrors had rendered dependent on his spiritual comfort. More than one drowned body was carried before him, into the sorrowing cottage which had once been its home; and, after he had soothed the wretched inhabitants, with "the hope which is to come;" he took his way to the Pastorage, to prepare his own family for the dreadful catastrophe to its happiness, which, he did not doubt, that night, or the next morning, would unfold.

Ferdinand would not relinquish his more cheering expectations, till despair should appear before him, in the lifeless bodies of his friends.

Noon, and evening, and approaching night, were only marked, to the lately so happy Pastorage, now the house of mourning, by the fits of the storm. Marcella lay speechless in her mother's arms, but no longer disguising the condition of her heart. And the Marchioness, in more audible anguish, wrung her hands over her, frequently exclaiming—

"Oh, most unholy island! Would to God we had never seen its rocks! Marcella! my child, my child! Still live for your fond mother."

Mr. Athelstone knew that this terrific hour of suspense, was not the time to do more than repeat his first injunctions to hope, even while they feared; and to trust in the preserving power, or the support, of Him, who alike commanded the great deep, and the firm land.

None in the island slept that tremendous night, but those whose eyes the surge had closed, never to wake again till time should be no more. Mr. Athelstone remained alone in his study, composing himself for the task he dreaded the morning would call upon him to fulfil; or walking to and fro, struggling with the human affections, which unmanned all his resignation, when he pictured the lifeless body of his beloved Louis, weltering in the furious waves.

"Oh, my child!" cried he, "was it for this, that all those endowments were bestowed?—that all these trials have been sustained?"

But he checked the rebellious grief, that channelled his venerable cheeks with tears; and bowing before Him, whose gracious providence he preached, he exclaimed,—"Not my will, but thine, be done! I asked of Thee life for him, and honour; but Thou hast given him immortality, and glory, even for ever!"

Whilst the good man was in the depths of these devotions, the violence of the storm gradually subsided, and a stillness horrid to meditation succeeded. It was a pause in nature, that seemed to declare the work of destruction was accomplished, and the destroying agents might repose.

The dawn slowly broke, and found the pious man with his Bible before him. A suppressed bustle sounded from the hall. He started from his seat, and, entering the intervening room, met Ferdinand with his clothes and hair dripping, having neither hat nor cloak; but joy was in his countenance.

"They are safe!" cried he: "my father and Sir Anthony bring the good tidings! The yacht is safe!

The Pastor bent his silvered head, for a moment, on the shoulder of Ferdinand, and the holy man's sacred response ascended to heaven. When he looked up, the Marquis Santa Cruz and Sir Anthony were in the room; and they replied to his grateful questions, by informing him, in detail, of what the following is a brief account.

The Marquis, and the Baronet, had met at the young King's levee. They mutually recognised each other; and when their respective businesses in London were finished, they agreed to return together to Lindisfarne. The tempest which produced such calamitous effects at sea, had extended itself to the land; and the travellers encountering its worst fury in the road near Bamborough, the Baronet had deemed it prudent to proceed to the Castle, and remain there till the state of the weather would allow a boat to cross without risk.

During the night, and in the greatest press of the storm, he heard a gun of distress. A beacon always burnt on what

was called the beltane-tower of the castle; but on the present intimation of some ship in danger, he ordered other lights to be lit on a promontory which shot farther into the sea. His life-boat also was despatched to the assistance of the vessel. It came up with her in the crisis of her fate; "and the result was," cried Sir Anthony, "she was hauled safely into the Castle-creek."

"And her freight," rejoined the Marquis, "was Sir Anthony's old friend, and our dear De Montemar!"

"Oh, Providence!" piously exclaimed the Pastor, "how measureless ought to be our gratitude to Thee!"

"It shall be registered on those very rocks!" cried the Baronet. "When Louis blessed those well-known lights of Bamborough, the act of gratitude struck at once upon his mind, to make those towers, for ever, a beacon and a refuge from the waves! And they shall be so!" added the Baronet, solemnly striking his hand upon his breast, "so help me, Heaven!"*

The news was soon spread throughout the house. And when Mr. Athelstone returned from imparting it to the two chambers of the deepest anxiety, it was with the grateful tears of both Cornelia and Marcella, wet upon his venerable cheeks, that he re-entered the room.

He found that Ferdinand, who was now gone to throw off his wet garments, had never been within the whole night; but had passed it in traversing the island from rock to rock, vainly listening to the roaring ocean; and gazing through the darkness, for what he feared he should never see again. He was the first object, the crossing boat of Sir Anthony saw on the western cliffs of Lindisfarne. Ferdinand had descried the little vessel at a distance; and, hastening down to see what it contained, he recognised his father, and soon was told the joyful tidings which had sent it so early across the strait.

The perils which the yacht had weathered, were not to be described; and the Duke was so exhausted in consequence, Don Garcia would not allow him to attempt the island, until he had taken some repose.

* All who are acquainted with the northern coast, know that such has long been the use of Bamborough Castle.

Cornelia was too much shaken by her late mental suffering, to be yet able to leave her room; but her indulgent mother had now read all her soul; and, dwelling with delight on the regenerated mind of the Duke, Cornelia heard her pronounce a full approval of their mutual love.

"No, no," replied Cornelia; "I loved him in my weakness. I feel my sin, and would resist it."

Mrs. Coningsby wept over her daughter; and, in the benevolent spirit of Him who said, "Neither do I condemn thee: go, and sin no more!" she combated all her agitated arguments, against uniting her fate with the person, whom she confessed to be dearest to her in the world.

"My mother!" said Cornelia, "am I not commanded, —in some cases, to cut off my right hand? I would do it now."

"In what cases?" enquired the tender parent.

"In those which might separate me from my duty towards my Creator."

"But be careful to distinguish!" replied her mother: "ask yourself, what duty you will transgress, in becoming the wife of a man, whose errors have been expiated by repentance; and whose reformation has been proved, by his conduct towards the memory of the Duke of Ripperda, and his zeal for the rights of his son. I leave you, my Cornelia, to ponder on these things. Be merciful to yourself, and just to Duke Wharton, and Heaven will bless the sentence of your heart!"

CHAPTER XLV.

In the evening, when every breeze was calm, and "the bright-haired sun was making a golden set," the Marquis Santa Cruz sat alone with his daughter. Their conference was long; and the communications so amazing to Marcella, that she fainted with excess of surprise and happiness. The

Marquis told her, he had gone on a double errand to Rome. He loved Louis de Montemar, as his own son; and his irrepressible tenderness for Marcella, was now not only sanctioned by her father's heart, but by his conscience!

She was just recovering to perfect recollection, and shedding the tears of her unutterable feelings in the bosom of her happy parent, when Lorenzo entered, to summon the Marquis below.

Mr. Athelstone had feared to agitate her, by an abrupt annunciation of the arrival of his nephew, but the appearance of Lorenzo, who had been the companion of his perilous voyage, was enough; and in the same speechless gratitude, she pressed her father's hand to her lips, as he rose to obey the call.

The Marchioness and Mrs. Coningsby, and all of the family, excepting Cornelia and Marcella, were in the sitting-room when the Marquis entered. The Duke still lay on the litter, on which he had been brought on shore; and he was looking around, with a melancholy smile, on the rapturous greetings with which every body met his friend. They were the sacred transports of dear, domestic kindred; where all was pure, and full of innoxious pleasure.

"I never had a family!" said he to himself, "and yet I have seen, and felt transports!—and may their memory perish!" cried he, in the same inward voice, "for nothing but selfish passions were there."

Mrs. Coningsby approached the Duke, and welcomed him with her accustomed hospitable grace. Every one had now something of the same import to say to him; all but Alice, and she still continued to view from a distance, this formidable Wharton, whom she had so often designated under the alarming appellatives of hideous, wicked, and detestable. Cornelia had, as frequently as herself, given him these abhorring epithets; and that Cornelia should now be as much infatuated with him, as had ever been their cousin Louis, Alice could not consider as the least enormity of his heart.

The Duke caught a glimpse of her, as she hovered behind the chair of her mother. He was then gaily talking to Ferdinand; but he started from the subject, and

begged Mrs. Coningsby to present him to her youngest daughter. Mrs. Coningsby took her hand, and drew her reluctant steps towards him.

"Sweet lady," said he, with a gentle seriousness passing over his face, "you are the sister of my best benefactress; and all of my heart that I can spare from her virtues I lay at the feet of yours!"

There was a melody and a charm in these tenderer tones of his voice, the effect of which astonished Alice; for, feeling as if she had heard the voice of truth itself, she lingered to hear him speak again, though she only answered him by a silent curtesy. Ferdinand observed the sudden change; and, repeating his smile more archly to the Duke, whispered —

"I shall be jealous of that *vox amantis:* or teach me your note."

"Apply to her sister," replied Wharton, turning his brightening countenance towards approaching steps in the adjoining room. The careless hilarity of his features vanished at once, and gave place to an agitated sensibility, that sufficiently showed, if his voice were the organ of tenderness, the power itself dwelt in his heart. He half rose from the sofa, to which he had been removed from the litter; and Louis, with an emotion not less apparent, started towards the opening door.

Cornelia, who had taken her resolution, came into the room alone; and was advancing, with a modest dignity, towards the returned party: but her step was hasty, as her eye instantly fell on her beloved cousin, and all the dangers he had just escaped rushed at once upon her heart. Marcella entered at that moment, leaning on her mother, and looked confusedly round. She also saw the object dearest to her; but she durst not allow her eye to rest there. The same glance showed her Cornelia; and, being near her, unknowing what she did, she threw herself into her arms.

But the soul's unutterable language was not confined to the bosoms of those two conscious friends. In the same moment Cornelia's hand was pressed to the lips of Wharton, and Marcella's to those of Louis. They knew whose

lips were there; and, for that moment, they did not recall the hands so transiently blest.

The Marquis raised his daughter from the neck of her friend; and, having embraced her himself, as she leaned on his bosom, put her hand again into that of Louis, and, pressing them together, "There, my children!" said he; receive a father's blessing, as you continue to love each other, and are worthy of this providence of God!"

Marcella fell on the breast of her lover; and Louis bore her in his enraptured arms into the next room, to the extended ones of her mother.

Mr. Athelstone had not stood mutely by, during this blameless eloquence of nature; but, in the moment of the Marquis separating his daughter from Cornelia, he clasped the hands of Wharton and Cornelia in his, and said, in a low and impressive voice, "Though he has lain in ashes, yet he shall have wings like a dove! And, against what the Lord hath purified, who shall dare make an exception!"

Cornelia trembled every where, but in her steadfast heart. She could not withdraw her hand, or speak; and Wharton softly whispered, "Oh, my Cornelia! what that sacred hand has joined together, let not thy voice put asunder!" With the words, he gently glided a ring from his own finger upon hers; and firmly added, "We have met to part no more!"

She sighed convulsively, and her head fell upon the shoulder of her Pastor-uncle. He had seen the ring; and, pressing her to his breast, tenderly rejoined, "Be to him, my Cornelia, as a lamp to his paths; and, at the resurrection of the just, he will be to you as the sun at noonday, increasing your glory by the brightness of his light!"

She put the hand of her uncle, which again clasped hers and the Duke's, to her lips; and her tears were left on Wharton's in the action. "Oh, the bliss of virtue, and of virtuous love!" exclaimed he to himself, as he dried them with a fervent kiss.

Those tears relieved her oppressed bosom — oppressed by the love she bore him — oppressed by the boundless and precious disclosure of his, and with her determination to inflict a penalty on each. She raised her head from Mr.

Athelstone's breast; and, turning upon Wharton, with a look which betrayed all the tenderness of her soul, while she declared her final sentiments, she gently but steadily said —

"I do not return you your ring: it shall go with me to my grave. But I was weak, and you know it. I must redeem myself to you, and to the world, by not giving you this hand, until a year's probation at least. When you are far from me and the precepts of my uncle, your conduct must prove to all that his niece gives herself to the virtuous as well as to the *charming* Duke Wharton!" She uttered the last epithet with a tearful smile; but she would hear of no change in her resolution; and as it was dictated by the truest principles of love and honour, Wharton was at last prevailed on by her approving uncle to acquiesce.

This scene passed without any other auditor than themselves; for when Mr. Athelstone first perceived the great agitation of his niece, he had made a sign to her mother to draw the rest of the party into another apartment.

A fortnight's tranquil residence at the Pastorage, composed the whole circle into that "sober certainty of waking bliss" which no language can describe; but happy are they who understand it by the knowledge of experience! Cornelia was, however, proof against the supplications of that voice, which, she tremblingly believed, might charm an angel from its orb; and, finding her inflexible in her virtuous resolution, the Duke determined to relieve his English friends of his dangerous presence, a few days before the celebration of their nuptials. He meant to sail direct from Lindisfarne to the nearest foreign port; thence proceed to Spain; and there enter on the probation which, he trusted, would end with the year, by the re-union of the whole party at Paris, where Santa Cruz was appointed ambassador, and his children had promised to rejoin him.

The Duke's wounds were healed, and a pause stood in every happy heart at the near prospect of his departure. He was trying his last entreaties for a shorter term of separation, when a stranger was unguardedly introduced by one of the under-servants, and it proved to be an officer from the Secretary of State. Wharton was sitting in a distant

recess with Cornelia when he entered; and the instant bustle in the room, with some words that dropped from Mr. thelstone respecting the Duke, so alarmed her, that, turning in agony towards him, she fainted on his breast.

The Duke was under the same impression with herself; and, relinquishing her, in some agitation, to her mother, walked calmly towards the group in the room; while the other ladies assisted Mrs. Coningsby to bear her insensible daughter from the expected trying scene.

But such was not the import of the messenger. He was a younger brother of General Stanhope, and brought favourable despatches. Some were dictated by the King himself, and others by his ministers. Part informed the Marquis de Montemar, that his Majesty had received from the Empress of Germany an exoneration of all that had been alleged against him at her court. A favourite mistress of Count Routemberg, in her dying moments, had declared the whole conspiracy of the Count and others against Ripperda and his son; and the Empress now made the only atonement in her power to the memory of the one and the honour of the other, by thus clearing the Marquis de Montemar in the eyes of his present sovereign.

Her royal kinsman noticed also the accounts he had received from Gibraltar, of Louis's disinterested conduct, as a son and a Protestant, and a freeborn descendant of one of the most ancient families in England. These virtues, the gracious monarch added, should have an adequate reward. Extraordinary disinterestedness could only be repaid by something of the same character!

By such a disinterestedness did this noble representative of the long line of British kings, uniting the royal blood of Scotland and of England in the bosom of George of Brunswick, rivet the loyalty of Louis de Montemar to the country of his maternal ancestors! Certain well-informed agents of the crown, had lodged private information with the secretary of state, that Philip Duke of Wharton was secreted at Lindisfarne. But the same agents had also reported the calamitous circumstances which had thrown him under that protection; and the King, knowing the friendship which had subsisted between the Marquis de Monte-

mar and the outlawed Duke; for the sake of De Montemar's virtues and approved loyalty, now transmitted to him a free pardon to his friend: an amnesty that re-invested him with his former right, as a British Peer and Landholder!

"'Tis well!" answered the Duke, with a kindling cheek; "I accept the amnesty, that I may now witness the nuptials of my friend in the face of day; and that, hereafter, my Cornelia need not shrink from giving her hand to a man under sentence of the scaffold! But, for my rights as a British Peer, I derived them from the House of Stuart, and will not hold their possession by the sale of my honour. George of Brunswick may be the people's King; James Stuart is mine! I give what I claim. And, while your Sovereign reigns in their hearts, I shall not dispute his possession. Meanwhile, Saint-Germains is my country, — though my sword may sleep in its scabbard!"

There was no voice in that room to expostulate against principle; and the messenger himself, who was a soldier, and a man of honour, venerating the same, though it pointed differently from his own, merely answered: —

"Permit me, Duke, to explain the mistake of those, who suppose that the throne of Great Britain came to the House of Brunswick, not by the right of blood, but by virtue of an act of parliament. George the First was descended from a daughter of James the First; and the Act of Settlement neither creates nor confers any new right, but only confirms that which was inherent in the House of Brunswick upon the exclusion of the Papist branch of the royal line. To assert the contrary, is to subvert the ancient constitution; and, from an hereditary, to turn this into an elective monarchy."

The Duke smiled, and bowed.

"This is an intricate question, and I am not the man to dispute its consequence. However, happy is the prince whose throne is so well founded, that it may be disputed whether it rests most on his birthright, or his people's will!"

With this remark he quitted the room; and, leaving all other thoughts but those of love and gratitude behind

him, hastened to the spot where he hoped to find her, whose arms had never closed on him, till she thought he could receive no other comforter.

Louis had left the room in the midst of Mr. Stanhope's conversation with his friend, to relieve the alarm of his cousin. Wharton met him at the door of Cornelia's chamber, where she was resting from the awful interchanges of her feelings, on the breast of her mother. Louis pressed the hand of his friend as he passed him.

"You will find her," said he, "all your own!"

But in this, even her cousin, who best knew the movements of her soul, was mistaken.

Cornelia suffered the grateful, the happy Wharton, to fold her to his heart, in the sacred emotion of a meeting, redeemed as from the grave; for, when they parted a few minutes before, the scaffold appeared to each the scene of their next separation, and the world to come, where they could only meet again! But Cornelia remained firm to her first resolution.

Mr. Stanhope did not pass that day only, with the Pastor and his interesting household; he remained to witness the most heartfelt ceremony, that ever took place in the little humble church, which had succeeded the once magnificent abbey of Lindisfarne.

The double marriages of their beloved Louis and Alice were to be solemnised there; and every fisherman's hut sent forth its inmates, to honour the holy ceremony.

The stars of many orders might have glared on the noble breast of Wharton, as he followed the happy group under the rustic archway; but he chose only the badge of the Garter. It was bestowed on him by James Stuart, when three of the greatest kings in Europe signed a league for his support; and it was the Duke's pride, doubly to acknowledge the prince that bestowed it, by wearing it now, in the utter despair of his fortunes.

Louis looked so like his former self, in the brightness of unclouded happiness, that every lip moved in rapturous blessings as he passed; and so great was the acclaim of the honest fishermen, around this their often venturous companion, and ever darling master; that no sense was left un-

occupied to bestow a glance on the waving plumes of Ferdinand, though many a benison followed the downcast looks of his blushing Alice.

Mr. Athelstone stood on the steps of the altar. He began—and he finished the holy ceremony, which was to bind so many faithful hearts into one interest, in this world, and in the next. And when he consigned the married pairs to the benediction of their parents, (in the light of one of whom, stood Sir Anthony Athelstone,) he raised his devout hands, and solemnly pronounced the general blessing.

Cornelia wept in sisterly congratulation on Alice's bosom; and when she relinquished her to the enraptured Ferdinand, her sweetest tears dropped on the shoulder of the no less happy Marcella. Wharton's arm supported the agitated frame of his future bride, while he clasped his friend's hand in his, with a felicitation that knew no utterance. Mr. Athelstone looked on the kindred group, with the feelings of a parent; and piously exclaimed,—

"Oh, how amiable are thy dwellings, thou Lord of Hosts! For here, mercy and truth are met together. Righteousness and peace have kissed each other!"

On the succeeding morning, a yacht appeared in the little bay of Lindisfarne; the streamers were floating on the wind towards the Gallic shore. Wharton came from his room, ready for his voyage. He was clasped to every affectionate heart. Louis held him to his, as if he should grow there. "Return, return, my friend!" cried he, "and complete my happiness!"

"But for thee, Cornelia," said the Duke, in a stifled voice, as he pressed her to his bosom—

"Your happiness, as well as mine," cried she, "compels the sacrifice. Another year, and, dearest Wharton! instead of my going to seek my affianced husband in a foreign land, he may come to claim me in the hall of my fathers!"

Another year rolled round; but the bark which bore Duke Wharton away, never returned to the island of Lindisfarne. A low stone rises in the church of the Bernar-

dines at Tarragona: there his name may be read; and there a record may yet be seen, in the old chancel of the monastery, noting the visit of a devout stranger to the relics below; and the endowment of an asylum for penitents, dedicated to the memory of Philip Duke of Wharton.

THE END.

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