



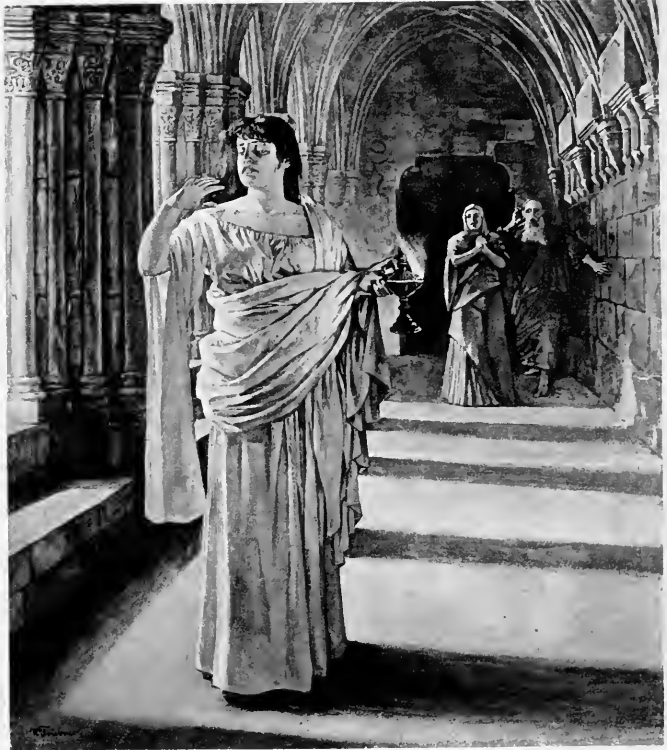


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Æsthetical and Philosophical Essays

Introducing the Dissertation on
the “Connection Between the
Animal and Spiritual Man”





Aesthetical and Philosophical Essays

VOLUME II.

The Ghost of

Macbeth

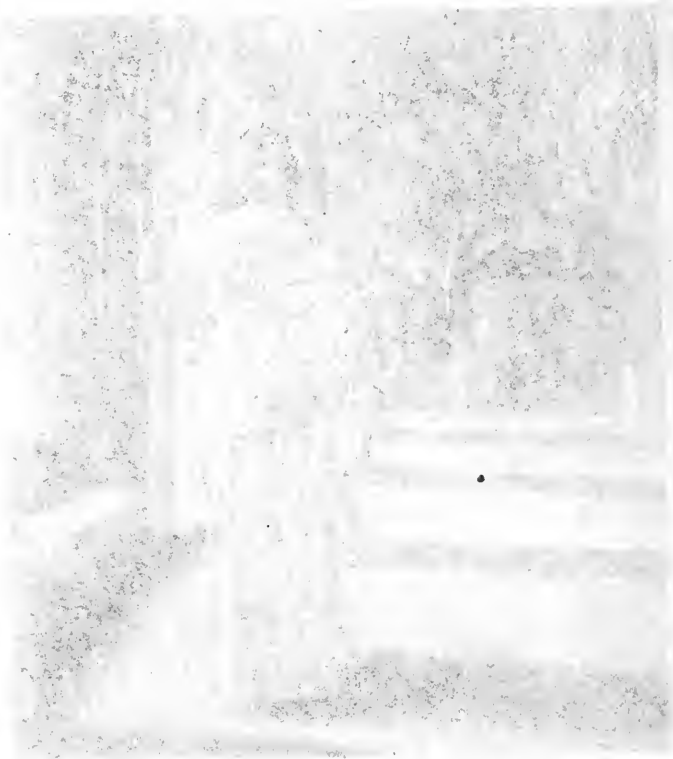
Friedrich Schiller



Edited by Nathan Haskell Doak

“‘The sight of Lady Macbeth . . . makes us shudder.’”

Photogravure after the painting by W. Trubner.



Photographe after the painting by W. Turner
The sight of Lady Macbeth . . . makes us shudder.

Aesthetical and
Philosophical Essays

VOLUME II.

The Ghost-Seeer
AND
The Sport of Destiny

BY
Friedrich Schiller



Edited by Nathan Haskell Dole

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Æsthetical Essays II. and Ghost Seer

Æsthetical and Philosophical Essays

SATIRICAL POETRY.

The poet is a satirist when he takes as subject the distance at which things are from nature, and the contrast between reality and the ideal: as regards the impression received by the soul, these two subjects blend into the same. In the execution, he may place earnestness and passion, or jests and levity, according as he takes pleasure in the domain of the will or in that of the understanding. In the former case it is avenging and pathetic satire; in the second case it is sportive, humorous, and mirthful satire.

Properly speaking, the object of poetry is not compatible either with the tone of punishment or that of amusement. The former is too grave for play, which should be the main feature of poetry; the latter is too trifling for seriousness, which should form the basis of all poetic play. Our mind is necessarily interested in moral contradictions, and these deprive the mind of its liberty. Nevertheless, all personal interest, and reference to a personal necessity, should be banished from poetic feeling. But mental contradictions do not touch the heart; nevertheless the poet deals with the highest

interests of the heart — nature and the ideal. Accordingly it is a hard matter for him not to violate the poetic form in pathetic satire, because this form consists in the liberty of movement; and in sportive satire he is very apt to miss the true spirit of poetry, which ought to be the infinite. The problem can only be solved in one way: by the pathetic satire assuming the character of the sublime, and the playful satire acquiring poetic substance by enveloping the theme in beauty.

In satire, the real as imperfection is opposed to the ideal, considered as the highest reality. In other respects it is by no means essential that the ideal should be expressly represented, provided the poet knows how to awaken it in our souls, but he must in all cases awaken it, otherwise he will exert absolutely no poetic action. Thus reality is here a necessary object of aversion; but it is also necessary, for the whole question centres here, that this aversion should come necessarily from the ideal, which is opposed to reality. To make this clear — this aversion might proceed from a purely sensuous source, and repose only on a *want* of which the satisfaction finds obstacles in the real. How often, in fact, we think we feel against society a *moral* discontent, while we are simply soured by the obstacles that it opposes to our inclination. It is this entirely material interest that the vulgar satirist brings into play; and as by this road he never fails to call forth in us movements connected with the affections, he fancies that he holds our heart in his hand, and thinks he has graduated in the pathetic. But all pathos derived from this source is unworthy of poetry, which ought only to move us through the medium of ideas, and reach our heart only by passing through the reason. Moreover, this impure and material pathos will never have its effect on minds, except by over-exciting the affective faculties and by occupying our hearts with

painful feelings; in this it differs entirely from the truly poetic pathos, which raises in us the feeling of moral independence, and which is recognised by the freedom of our mind persisting in it even while it is in the state of affection. And, in fact, when the emotion emanates from the ideal opposed to the real, the sublime beauty of the ideal corrects all impression of restraint; and the grandeur of the idea with which we are imbued raises us above all the limits of experience. Thus in the representation of some revolting reality, the essential thing is that the necessary be the foundation on which the poet or the narrator places the real; that he know how to dispose our mind for ideas. Provided the point from which we see and judge be elevated, it matters little if the object be low and far beneath us. When the historian Tacitus depicts the profound decadence of the Romans of the first century, it is a great soul which from a loftier position lets his looks drop down on a low object; and the disposition in which he places us is truly poetic, because it is the height where he is himself placed, and where he has succeeded in raising us, which alone renders so perceptible the baseness of the object.

Accordingly the satire of pathos must always issue from a mind deeply imbued with the ideal. It is nothing but an impulsion toward harmony that can give rise to that deep feeling of moral opposition and that ardent indignation against moral obliquity which amounted to the fulness of enthusiasm in Juvenal, Swift, Rousseau, Haller, and others. These same poets would have succeeded equally well in forms of poetry relating to all that is tender and touching in feeling, and it was only the accidents of life in their early days that diverted their minds into other walks. Nay, some amongst them actually tried their hand successfully in these other branches of poetry. The poets whose names have been just mentioned lived either at a period of

degeneracy, and had scenes of painful moral obliquity presented to their view, or personal troubles had combined to fill their souls with bitter feelings. The strictly austere spirit in which Rousseau, Haller, and others paint reality is a natural result, moreover, of the philosophical mind, when with rigid adherence to laws of thought it separates the mere phenomenon from the substance of things. Yet these outer and contingent influences, which always put restraint on the mind, should never be allowed to do more than decide the direction taken by enthusiasm, nor should they ever give the material for it. The substance ought always to remain unchanged, emancipated from all external motion or stimulus, and it ought to issue from an ardent impulsion toward the ideal, which forms the only true motive that can be put forth for satirical poetry, and indeed for all sentimental poetry.

While the satire of pathos is only adapted to elevated minds, playful satire can only be adequately represented by a heart imbued with *beauty*. The former is preserved from triviality by the serious nature of the theme; but the latter, whose proper sphere is confined to the treatment of subjects of morally unimportant nature, would infallibly adopt the form of frivolity, and be deprived of all poetic dignity, were it not that the substance is ennobled by the form, and did not the personal dignity of the poet compensate for the insignificance of the subject. Now, it is only given to mind imbued with beauty to impress its character, its entire image, on each of its manifestations, independently of the object of its manifestations. A sublime soul can only make itself known as such by single victories over the rebellion of the senses, only in certain moments of exaltation, and by efforts of short duration. In a mind imbued with *beauty*, on the contrary, the ideal acts in the same manner as nature, and therefore continuously; accordingly it can manifest itself in it in a state of re-

pose. The deep sea never appears more sublime than when it is agitated; the true beauty of a clear stream is in its peaceful course.

The question has often been raised as to the comparative preference to be awarded to tragedy or comedy. If the question is confined merely to their respective themes, it is certain that tragedy has the advantage. But if our inquiry be directed to ascertain which has the more important personality, it is probable that a decision may be given in favour of comedy. In tragedy the theme in itself does great things; in comedy the object does nothing and the poet all. Now, as in the judgments of taste no account must be kept of the matter treated of, it follows naturally that the æsthetic value of these two kinds will be in an inverse ratio to the proper importance of their themes.

The tragic poet is supported by the theme, while the comic poet, on the contrary, has to keep up the æsthetic character of his theme by his own individual influence. The former may soar, which is not a very difficult matter, but the latter has to remain one and the same in tone; he has to be in the elevated region of art, where he must be at home, but where the tragic poet has to be projected and elevated by a bound. And this is precisely what distinguishes a soul of beauty from a sublime soul. A soul of beauty bears in itself by anticipation all great ideas; they flow without constraint and without difficulty from its very nature — an infinite nature, at least in potency, at whatever point of its career you seize it. A sublime soul can rise to all kinds of greatness, but by an effort; it can tear itself from all bondage, to all that limits and constrains it, but only by strength of will. Consequently the sublime soul is only free by broken efforts; the other with ease and always.

The noble task of comedy is to produce and keep up in us this freedom of mind, just as the end of tragedy

is to reëstablish in us this freedom of mind by æsthetic ways, when it has been violently suspended by passion. Consequently it is necessary that in tragedy the poet, as if he made an experiment, should *artificially* suspend our freedom of mind, since tragedy shows its poetic virtue by reëstablishing it; in comedy, on the other hand, care must be taken that things never reach this suspension of freedom.

It is for this reason that the tragic poet invariably treats his theme in a practical manner, and the comic poet in a theoretic manner, even when the former, as happened with Lessing in his "Nathan," should have the curious fancy to select a theoretical, and the latter should have that of choosing a practical subject. A piece is constituted a tragedy or a comedy not by the sphere from which the theme is taken, but by the tribunal before which it is judged. A tragic poet ought never to indulge in tranquil reasoning, and ought always to gain the interest of the heart; but the comic poet ought to shun the pathetic and bring into play the understanding. The former displays his art by creating continual excitement, the latter by perpetually subduing his passion; and it is natural that the art in both cases should acquire magnitude and strength in proportion as the theme of one poet is abstract and that of the other pathetic in character. Accordingly, if tragedy sets out from a more exalted place, it must be allowed, on the other hand, that comedy aims at a more important end; and if this end could be actually attained it would make all tragedy not only unnecessary, but impossible. The aim that comedy has in view is the same as that of the highest destiny of man, and this consists in liberating himself from the influence of violent passions, and taking a calm and lucid survey of all that surrounds him, and also of his own being, and of seeing everywhere occurrence rather than fate or hazard, and ultimately rather smiling at the ab-

surditities than shedding tears and feeling anger at sight of the wickedness of man.

It frequently happens in human life that facility of imagination, agreeable talents, a good-natured mirthfulness are taken for ornaments of the mind. The same fact is discerned in the case of poetical displays.

Now, public taste scarcely if ever soars above the sphere of the agreeable, and authors gifted with this sort of elegance of mind and style do not find it a difficult matter to usurp a glory which is or ought to be the reward of so much real labour. Nevertheless, an infallible text exists to enable us to discriminate a natural facility of manner from ideal gentleness, and qualities that consist in nothing more than natural virtue from genuine moral worth of character. This test is presented by trials such as those presented by difficulty and events offering great opportunities. Placed in positions of this kind, the genius whose essence is elegance is sure infallibly to fall into platitudes, and that virtue which only results from natural causes drops down to a material sphere. But a mind imbued with true and spiritual beauty is in cases of the kind we have supposed sure to be elevated to the highest sphere of character and of feeling. So long as Lucian merely furnishes absurdity, as in his "Wishes," in the "Lapithas," in "Jupiter Tragædus," etc., he is only a humourist, and gratifies us by his sportive humour; but he changes character in many passages in his "Nigrinus," his "Timon," and his "Alexander," when his satire directs its shafts against moral depravity. Thus he begins in his "Nigrinus" his picture of the degraded corruption of Rome at that time in this way: "Wretch, why didst thou quit Greece, the sunlight, and that free and happy life? Why didst thou come here into this turmoil of splendid slavery, of service and festivals, of sycophants, flatterers, poisoners, orphan-robbers and false friends?" It is on such occasions that the poet

ought to show the lofty earnestness of soul which has to form the basis of all plays, if a poetical character is to be obtained by them. A serious intention may even be detected under the malicious jests with which Lucian and Aristophanes pursue Socrates. Their purpose is to avenge truth against sophistry, and to do combat for an ideal which is not always prominently put forward. There can be no doubt that Lucian has justified this character in his Diogenes and Demonax. Again, among modern writers, how grave and beautiful is the character depicted on all occasions by Cervantes in his Don Quixote! How splendid must have been the ideal that filled the mind of a poet who created a Tom Jones and a Sophonisba! How deeply and strongly our hearts are moved by the jests of Yorick when he pleases! I detect this seriousness also in our own Wieland: even the wanton sportiveness of his humour is elevated and impeded by the goodness of his heart; it has an influence even on his rhythm: nor does he ever lack elastic power, when it is his wish, to raise us up to the most elevated planes of beauty and of thought.

The same judgment cannot be pronounced on the satire of Voltaire. No doubt, also, in his case, it is the truth and simplicity of nature which here and there make us experience poetic emotions, whether he really encounters nature and depicts it in a simple character, as many times in his "Ingénu;" or whether he seeks it and avenges it as in his "Candide" and elsewhere. But when neither one nor the other takes place, he can doubtless amuse us with his fine wit, but he assuredly never touches us as a poet. There is always rather too little of the serious under his raillery, and this is what makes his vocation as poet justly suspicious. You always meet his intelligence only; never his feelings. No ideal can be detected under this light gauze envelope; scarcely can anything absolutely

fixed be found under this perpetual movement. His prodigious diversity of externals and forms, far from proving anything in favour of the inner fulness of his inspiration, rather testifies to the contrary; for he has exhausted all forms without finding a single one on which he has succeeded in impressing his heart. We are almost driven to fear that in the case of his rich talent the poverty of heart alone determined his choice of satire. And how could we otherwise explain the fact that he could pursue so long a road without ever issuing from its narrow rut? Whatever may be the variety of matter and of external forms, we see the inner form return everywhere with its sterile and eternal uniformity, and in spite of his so productive career, he never accomplished in himself the circle of humanity, that circle which we see joyfully traversed throughout by the satirists previously named.

ELEGIAC POETRY.

When the poet opposes nature to art, and the ideal to the real, so that nature and the ideal form the principal object of his pictures, and that the pleasure we take in them is the dominant impression, I call him an *elegiac* poet. In this kind, as well as in satire, I distinguish two classes. Either nature and the ideal are objects of sadness, when one is represented as lost to man and the other as unattained; or both are objects of joy, being represented to us as reality. In the first case it is *elegy* in the narrower sense of the term; in the second case it is the idyl in its most extended acceptation.

Indignation in the pathetic and ridicule in mirthful satire are occasioned by an enthusiasm which the ideal has excited; and thus also sadness should issue from the same source in elegy. It is this, and this only, that gives poetic value to elegy, and any other origin

for this description of poetical effusion is entirely beneath the dignity of poetry. The elegiac poet seeks after nature, but he strives to find her in her beauty, and not only in her mirth; in her agreement with conception, and not merely in her facile disposition toward the requirements and demands of sense. Melancholy at the privation of joys, complaints at the disappearance of the world's golden age, or at the vanished happiness of youth, affection, etc., can only become the proper themes for elegiac poetry if those conditions implying peace and calm in the sphere of the senses can moreover be portrayed as states of moral harmony. On this account I cannot bring myself to regard as poetry the complaints of Ovid, which he transmitted from his place of exile by the Black Sea; nor would they appear so to me however touching and however full of passages of the highest poetry they might be. His suffering is too devoid of spirit and nobleness. His lamentations display a want of strength and enthusiasm; though they may not reflect the traces of a vulgar soul, they display a low and sensuous condition of a noble spirit that has been trampled into the dust by its hard destiny. If, indeed, we call to mind that his regrets are directed to Rome, in the Augustan age, we forgive him the pain he suffers; but even Rome in all its splendour, except it be transfigured by the imagination, is a limited greatness, and therefore a subject unworthy of poetry, which, raised above every trace of the actual, ought only to mourn over what is infinite.

Thus the object of poetic complaint ought never to be an external object, but only an internal and ideal object; even when it deplores a real loss, it must begin by making it an ideal loss. The proper work of the poet consists in bringing back the finite object to the proportions of the infinite. Consequently the external matter of elegy, considered in itself, is always indiffer-

ent, since poetry can never employ it as it finds it, and because it is only by what it makes of it that it confers on it a poetic dignity. The elegiac poet seeks nature, but nature as an idea, and in a degree of perfection that it has never reached in reality, although he weeps over this perfection as something that has existed and is now lost. When Ossian speaks to us of the days that are no more, and of the heroes that have disappeared, his imagination has long since transformed these pictures represented to him by his memory into a pure ideal, and changed these heroes into gods. The different experiences of such or such a life in particular have become extended and confounded in the universal idea of transitoriness, and the bard, deeply moved, pursued by the increase of ruin everywhere present, takes his flight toward heaven, to find there in the course of the sun an emblem of what does not pass away.

I turn now to the elegiac poets of modern times. Rousseau, whether considered as a poet or a philosopher, always obeys the same tendency: to seek nature or to avenge it by art. According to the state of his heart, whether he prefers to seek nature or to avenge it, we see him at one time roused by elegiac feelings, at others showing the tone of the satire of Juvenal; and again, as in his *Julia*, delighting in the sphere of the idyl. His compositions have undoubtedly a poetic value, since their object is ideal; only he does not know how to treat it in a poetic fashion. No doubt his serious character prevents him from falling into frivolity; but this seriousness also does not allow him to rise to poetic play. Sometimes absorbed by passion, at others by abstractions, he seldom if ever reaches æsthetic freedom, which the poet ought to maintain in spite of his material before his object, and in which he ought to make the reader share. Either he is governed by his sickly sensibility and his impressions

become a torture, or the force of thought chains down his imagination and destroys by its strictness of reasoning all the grace of his pictures. These two faculties, whose reciprocal influence and intimate union are what properly make the poet, are found in this writer in an uncommon degree, and he only lacks one thing — it is that the two qualities should manifest themselves actually united; it is that the proper activity of thought should show itself mixed more with feeling, and the sensuous more with thought. Accordingly, even in the ideal which he has made of human nature, he is too much taken up with the limits of this nature, and not enough with its capabilities; he always betrays a want of physical *repose* rather than want of moral *harmony*. His passionate sensuousness must be blamed when, to finish as quickly as possible that struggle in humanity which offends him, he prefers to carry man back to the unintelligent uniformity of his primitive condition, rather than see that struggle carried out in the intellectual harmony of perfect cultivation, when, rather than await the fulfilment of art, he prefers not to let it begin; in short, when he prefers to place the aim nearer the earth, and to lower the ideal in order to reach it the sooner and the safer.

Among the poets of Germany who belong to this class, I shall only mention here Haller, Kleist, and Klopstock. The character of their poetry is sentimental; it is by the ideal that they touch us, not by sensuous reality; and that not so much because they are themselves nature, as because they know how to fill us with enthusiasm for nature. However, what is true *in general*, as well of these three poets as of every sentimental poet, does not evidently exclude the faculty of moving us, *in particular*, by beauties of the simple genus; without this they would not be poets. I only mean that it is not their proper and dominant characteristic to receive the impression of objects with a calm

feeling, simple, easy, and to give forth in like manner the impression received. Involuntarily the imagination in them anticipates intuition, and reflection is in play before the sensuous nature has done its function; they shut their eyes and stop their ears to plunge into internal meditations. Their souls could not be touched by any impression without observing immediately their own movements, without placing before their eyes and outside themselves what takes place in them. It follows from this that we never see the object itself, but what the intelligence and reflection of the poet have made of the object; and even if this object be the person itself of the poet, even when he wishes to represent to us his own feelings, we are not informed of his state immediately or at first hand; we only see how this state is reflected in his mind and what he has thought of it in the capacity of spectator of himself. When Haller deplores the death of his wife — every one knows this beautiful elegy — and begins in the following manner :

“If I must needs sing of thy death,
O Marian, what a song it would be!
When sighs strive against words,
And idea follows fast on idea,” etc.,

we feel that this description is strictly true, but we feel also that the poet does not communicate to us, properly speaking, his feelings, but the thoughts that they suggest to him. Accordingly, the emotion we feel on hearing him is much less vivid: people remark that the poet's mind must have been singularly cooled down to become thus a spectator of his own emotion.

Haller scarcely treated any subjects but the supersensuous, and part of the poems of Klopstock are also of this nature: this choice itself excludes them from the simple kind. Accordingly, in order to treat these supersensuous themes in a poetic fashion, as no body

could be given to them, and they could not be made the objects of sensuous intuition, it was necessary to make them pass from the finite to the infinite, and raise them to the state of objects of spiritual intuition. In general, it may be said, that it is only in this sense that a didactic poetry can be conceived without involving contradiction; for, repeating again what has been so often said, poetry has only two fields, the world of sense and the ideal world, since in the sphere of conceptions, in the world of the understanding, it cannot absolutely thrive. I confess that I do not know as yet any didactic poem, either among the ancients or among the moderns, where the subject is completely brought down to the individual, or purely and completely raised to the ideal. The most common case, in the most happy essays, is where the two principles are used together; the abstract idea predominates, and the imagination, which ought to reign over the whole domain of poetry, has merely the permission to serve the understanding. A didactic poem in which thought itself would be poetic, and would remain so, is a thing which we must still wait to see.

What we say here of didactic poems in general is true in particular of the poems of Haller. The thought itself of these poems is not poetical, but the execution becomes so sometimes, occasionally by the use of images, at other times by a flight toward the ideal. It is from this last quality only that the poems of Haller belong to this class. Energy, depth, a pathetic earnestness — these are the traits that distinguish this poet. He has in his soul an ideal that enkindles it, and his ardent love of truth seeks in the peaceful valleys of the Alps that innocence of the first ages that the world no longer knows. His complaint is deeply touching; he retraces in an energetic and almost bitter satire the wanderings of the mind and of the heart, and he lovingly portrays the beautiful

simplicity of nature. Only, in his pictures as well as in his soul, abstraction prevails too much, and the sensuous is overweighted by the intellectual. He constantly *teaches* rather than *paints*; and even in his paintings his brush is more energetic than lovable. He is great, bold, full of fire, sublime; but he rarely and perhaps never attains to beauty.

For the solidity and depth of ideas, Kleist is far inferior to Haller; in point of grace, perhaps, he would have the advantage — if, as happens occasionally, we did not impute to him as a merit, on the one side, that which really is a want on the other. The sensuous soul of Kleist takes especial delight at the sight of country scenes and manners; he withdraws gladly from the vain jingle and rattle of society, and finds in the heart of inanimate nature the harmony and peace that are not offered to him by the moral world. How touching is his “Aspiration after Repose!” how much truth and feeling there is in these verses!

“O world, thou art the tomb of true life!
 Often a generous instinct attracts me to virtue;
 My heart is sad, a torrent of tears bathes my cheeks,
 But example conquers, and thou, O fire of youth!
 Soon you dry these noble tears.
 A true man must live afar from men!”

But if the poetic instinct of Kleist leads him thus far away from the narrow circle of social relations, in solitude and among the fruitful inspirations of nature, the image of social life and of its anguish pursues him, and also, alas! its chains. What he flees from he carries in himself, and what he seeks remains entirely outside him: never can he triumph over the fatal influence of his time. In vain does he find sufficient flame in his heart and enough energy in his imagination to animate by painting the cold conceptions of the understanding; cold thought each time kills the

living creations of fancy, and reflection destroys the secret work of the sensuous nature. His poetry, it must be admitted, is of as brilliant colour and as variegated as the spring he celebrated in verse; his imagination is vivid and active; but it might be said that it is more variable than rich, that it sports rather than creates, that it always goes forward with a changeful gait, rather than stops to accumulate and mould things into shape. Traits succeed each other rapidly, with exuberance, but without concentrating to form an individual, without completing each other to make a living whole, without rounding to a form, a figure. Whilst he remains in purely lyrical poetry, and pauses amidst his landscapes of country life, on the one hand the greater freedom of the lyrical form, and on the other the more arbitrary nature of the subject, prevent us from being struck with this defect; in these sorts of works it is in general rather the feelings of the poet, than the object in itself, of which we expect the portraiture. But this defect becomes too apparent when he undertakes, as in *Cisseis* and *Paches*, or in his *Seneca*, to represent men and human actions; because here the imagination sees itself kept in within certain fixed and necessary limits, and because here the effect can only be derived from the *object* itself. Kleist becomes poor, tiresome, jejune, and insupportably frigid; an example full of lessons for those who, without having an inner vocation, aspire to issue from *musical* poetry, to rise to the regions of *plastic* poetry. A spirit of this family, Thomson, has paid the same penalty to human infirmity.

In the sentimental kind, and especially in that part of the sentimental kind which we name elegiac, there are but few modern poets, and still fewer ancient ones, who can be compared to our Klopstock. Musical poetry has produced in this poet all that can be attained out of the limits of the living form, and out of the sphere

of individuality, in the region of ideas. It would, no doubt, be doing him a great injustice to dispute entirely in his case that individual truth and that feeling of life with which the simple poet describes his pictures. Many of his odes, many separate traits in his dramas, and in his "Messiah," represent the object with a striking truth, and mark the outline admirably; especially, when the object is his own heart, he has given evidence on many occasions of a great natural disposition and of a charming simplicity. I mean only that it is not in this that the *proper* force of Klopstock consists, and that it would not perhaps be right to seek for this throughout his work. Viewed as a production of musical poetry, the "Messiah" is a magnificent work; but in the light of *plastic* poetry, where we look for determined forms and forms *determined* for the *intuition*, the "Messiah" leaves much to be desired. Perhaps in this poem the figures are sufficiently determined, but they are not so with intuition in view. It is abstraction alone that created them, and abstraction alone can discern them. They are excellent *types* to express ideas, but they are not individuals nor living figures. With regard to the imagination, which the poet ought to address, and which he ought to command by putting before it always perfectly determinate forms, it is left here much too free to represent as it wishes these men and these angels, these divinities and demons, this paradise and this hell. We see quite well the vague outlines in which the understanding must be kept to conceive these personages; but we do not find the limit clearly traced in which the imagination must be enclosed to represent them. And what I say here of characters must apply to all that in this poem is, or ought to be, action and life, and not only in this epœia, but also in the dramatic poetry of Klopstock. For the understanding all is perfectly determined and bounded in them, — I need only here recall his Judas,

his Pilate, his Philo, his Solomon in the tragedy that bears that name, — but for the imagination all this wants form too much, and I must readily confess I do not find that our poet is at all in his sphere here. His sphere is always the realm of ideas; and he knows how to raise all he touches to the infinite. It might be said that he strips away their bodily envelope, to spiritualise them from all the objects with which he is occupied, in the same way that other poets clothe all that is spiritual with a body. The pleasure occasioned by his poems must almost always be obtained by an exercise of the faculty of reflection; the feelings he awakens in us, and that so deeply and energetically, flow always from supersensuous sources. Hence the earnestness, the strength, the elasticity, the depth, that characterise all that comes from him; but from that also issues that perpetual tension of mind in which we are kept when reading him. No poet — except perhaps Young, who in this respect exacts even more than Klopstock, without giving us so much compensation — no poet could be less adapted than Klopstock to play the part of favourite author and guide in life, because he never does anything else than lead us out of life, because he never calls to arms anything save spirit, without giving recreation and refreshment to sensuous nature by the calm presence of any object. His muse is chaste, it has nothing of the earthly, it is immaterial and holy as his religion; and we are forced to admit with admiration that if he wanders sometimes on these high places, it never happened to him to fall from them. But precisely for this reason, I confess in all ingenuousness, that I am not free from anxiety for the common sense of those who quite seriously and unaffectedly make Klopstock the favourite book, the book in which we find sentiments fitting all situations, or to which we may revert at all times: perhaps even — and I suspect it — Germany has seen enough results of his danger-

ous influence. It is only in certain dispositions of the mind, and in hours of exaltation, that recourse can be had to Klopstock, and that he can be felt. It is for this reason that he is the idol of youth, without, however, being by any means the happiest choice that they could make. Youth, which always aspires to something beyond real life, which avoids all stiffness of form, and finds all limits too narrow, lets itself be carried away with love, with delight, into the infinite spaces opened up to them by this poet. But wait till the youth has become a man, and till, from the domain of ideas, he comes back to the world of experience, then you will see this enthusiastic love of Klopstock decrease greatly, without, however, a riper age changing at all the esteem due to this unique phenomenon, to this so extraordinary genius, to these noble sentiments — the esteem that Germany in particular owes to his high merit.

I have said that this poet was great specially in the elegiac style, and it is scarcely necessary to confirm this judgment by entering into particulars. Capable of exercising all kinds of action on the heart, and having graduated as master in all that relates to sentimental poetry, he can sometimes shake the soul by the most sublime pathos, at others cradle it with sweet and heavenly sensations. Yet his heart prefers to follow the direction of a lofty spiritual melancholy; and, however sublime be the tones of his harp and of his lyre, they are always the tender notes of his lute that resound with most truth and the deepest emotion. I take as witnesses all those whose nature is pure and sensuous: would they not be ready to give all the passages where Klopstock is strong, and bold; all those fictions, all the magnificent descriptions, all the models of eloquence which abound in the "Messiah," all those dazzling comparisons in which our poet excels, — would they not exchange them for the pages breathing tenderness, the "Elegy to Ebert" for example, or that admi-

rable poem entitled "Bardalus," or again, the "Tombs Opened before the Hour," the "Summer's Night," the "Lake of Zurich," and many other pieces of this kind? In the same way the "Messiah" is dear to me as a treasure of elegiac feelings and of ideal paintings, though I am not much satisfied with it as the recital of an action and as an epic.

I ought, perhaps, before quitting this department, to recall the merits in this style of Uz, Denis, Gessner, — in the "Death of Abel," — Jacobi, Gerstenberg, Hölty, De Göckingk, and several others, who all knew how to touch by ideas, and whose poems belong to the sentimental kind in the sense in which we have agreed to understand the word. But my object is not here to write a history of German poetry; I only wished to clear up what I said further back by some examples from our literature. I wished to show that the ancient and the modern poets, the authors of simple poetry and of sentimental poetry, follow essentially different paths to arrive at the same end: that the former move by nature, individuality, a very vivid *sensuous* element; while the latter do it by means of ideas and a high *spirituality*, exercising over our minds an equally powerful though less extensive influence.

It has been seen, by the examples which precede, how sentimental poetry conceives and treats subjects taken from nature; perhaps the reader may be curious to know how also simple poetry treats a subject of the sentimental order. This is, as it seems, an entirely new question, and one of special difficulty; for, in the first place, has a *subject of the sentimental order* ever been presented in primitive and simple periods? And in modern times, where is the *simple poet* with whom we could make this experiment? This has not, however, prevented genius from setting this problem, and solving it in a wonderfully happy way. A poet in whose mind nature works with a purer and more faith-

ful activity than in any other, and who is perhaps of all modern poets the one who departs the least from the sensuous truth of things, has proposed this problem to himself in his conception of a mind, and of the dangerous extreme of the sentimental character. This mind and this character have been portrayed by the modern poet we speak of, a character which with a burning sensuousness embraces the ideal and flies the real, to soar up to an infinite devoid of being, always occupied in seeking out of himself what he incessantly destroys in himself; a mind that only finds reality in his dreams, and to whom the realities of life are only limits and obstacles; in short, a mind that sees only in its own existence a barrier, and goes on, as it were, logically to break down this barrier in order to penetrate to true reality.

It is interesting to see with what a happy instinct all that is of a nature to feed the sentimental mind is gathered together in Werther: a dreamy and unhappy love, a very vivid feeling for nature, the religious sense coupled with the spirit of philosophic contemplation, and lastly, to omit nothing, the world of Ossian, dark, formless, melancholy. Add to this the aspect under which reality is presented: all is depicted which is least adapted to make it lovable, or rather all that is most fit to make it hated; see how all external circumstances unite to drive back the unhappy man into his ideal world; and now we understand that it was quite impossible for a character thus constituted to save itself, and issue from the circle in which it was enclosed. The same contrast reappears in the "Torquato Tasso" of the same poet, though the characters are very different. Even his last romance presents, like his first, this opposition between the poetic mind and the common sense of practical men, between the ideal and the real, between the subjective mode and the objective mode of seeing and representing things; it is the same

opposition, I say, but with what a diversity! Even in "Faust" we still find this contrast, rendered, I admit, — as the subject required, — much more coarsely on both hands and materialised. It would be quite worth while if a psychological explanation were attempted of this character, personified and specified in four such different ways.

It has been observed further back that a mere disposition to frivolity of mind, to a merry humour, if a certain fund of the ideal is not joined to it, does not suffice to constitute the vocation of a satirical poet, though this mistake is frequently made. In the same way a mere disposition for tender sentiments, softness of heart, and melancholy do not suffice to constitute a vocation for elegy. I cannot detect the true poetical talent, either on one side or the other; it wants the essential, I mean the energetic and fruitful principle that ought to enliven the subject and produce true beauty. Accordingly, the productions of this latter nature, of the tender nature, do nothing but enervate us; and without refreshing the heart, without occupying the mind, they are only able to flatter in us the sensuous nature. A constant disposition to this mode of feeling ends necessarily, in the long run, by weakening the character, and makes it fall into a state of passivity from which nothing real can issue, either for external or for internal life. People have, therefore, been quite right to persecute by pitiless raillery this fatal mania of *sentimentality* and of *tearful melancholy* which possessed Germany eighteen years since, in consequence of certain excellent works that were ill understood and indiscreetly imitated. People have been right, I say, to combat this perversity, though the indulgence with which men are disposed to receive the parodies of these elegiac caricatures, — that are very little better themselves, — the complaisance shown to bad wit, to heartless satire and spiritless mirth, show

clearly enough that this zeal against false sentimentalism does not issue from quite a pure source. In the balance of true taste one cannot weigh more than the other, considering that both here and there is wanting that which forms the æsthetic value of a work of art, the intimate union of spirit with matter, and the two-fold relation of the work with the faculty of perception as well as with the faculty of the ideal.

People have turned Siegwart¹ and his convent story into ridicule, and yet the "Travels into the South of France" are admired; yet both works have an equal claim to be esteemed in certain respects, and as little to be unreservedly praised in others. A true, though excessive, sensuousness gives value to the former of these two romances; a lively and sportive humour, a fine wit, recommends the other; but one totally lacks all sobriety of mind that would befit it, the other lacks all æsthetic dignity. If you consult experience, one is rather ridiculous; if you think of the ideal, the other is almost contemptible. Now, as true beauty must of necessity accord both with nature and with the ideal, it is clear that neither the one nor the other of these two romances could pretend to pass for a fine work. And notwithstanding all this, it is natural, as I know it by my own experience, that the romance of Thummel should be read with much pleasure. As a fact, it only wounds those requirements which have their principle in the ideal, and which consequently do not exist for the greater part of readers; requirements that, even in persons of most delicate feeling, do not make themselves felt at the moments when we read romances. With regard to the other needs of the mind, and especially to those of the senses, this book, on the other hand, affords unusual satisfaction. Accordingly, it must be, and will be so, that this book will remain justly one of the favourite works of our age, and of all

¹ "Siegwart," a novel by J. Müller, published at Ulm, 1776.

epochs when men only write æsthetic works to please, and people only read to get pleasure.

But does not poetical literature also offer, even in its classical monuments, some analogous examples of injuries inflicted or attempted against the ideal and its superior purity? Are there not some who, by the gross, sensuous nature of their subject, seem to depart strangely from the spiritualism I here demand of all works of art? If this is permitted to the poet, the chaste nursling of the Muses, ought it not to be conceded to the novelist, who is only the half-brother of the poet, and who still touches by so many points? I can the less avoid this question because there are masterpieces, both in the elegiac and in the satirical kind, where the authors seek and preach up a nature quite different from that I am discussing in this essay, and where they seem to defend it, not so much against bad as against good morals. The natural conclusion would be either that this sort of poem ought to be rejected, or that in tracing here the idea of elegiac poetry we have granted far too much to what is arbitrary.

The question I asked was, whether what was permitted by the poet might not be tolerated in a prose narrator too? The answer is contained in the question. What is allowed in the poet proves nothing about what must be allowed in one who is not a poet. This tolerancy, in fact, reposes on the very idea which we ought to make to ourselves of the poet, and only on this idea; what in his case is legitimate freedom is only a license worthy of contempt as soon as it no longer takes its source in the ideal, in those high and noble inspirations which make the poet.

The laws of decency are strangers to innocent nature; the experience of corruption alone has given birth to them. But when once this experience has been made and natural innocence has disappeared from

manners, these laws are henceforth sacred laws that man, who has a moral sense, ought not to infringe upon. They reign in an artificial world with the same right that the laws of nature reign in the innocence of primitive ages. But by what characteristic is the poet recognised? Precisely by his silencing in his soul all that recalls an artificial world, and by causing nature herself to revive in him with her primitive simplicity. The moment he has done this he is emancipated by this alone from all the laws by which a depraved heart secures itself against itself. He is pure, he is innocent, and all that is permitted to innocent nature is equally permitted to him. But you who read him or listen to him, if you have lost your innocence and if you are incapable of finding it again, even for a moment, in a purifying contact with the poet, it is *your own* fault and not his. Why do not you leave him alone? It is not for you that he has sung!

Here follows, therefore, in what relates to these kinds of freedoms, the rules that we can lay down.

Let us remark in the first place that nature only can justify these licenses; whence it follows that you could not legitimately take them up of your own choice, nor with a determination of imitating them; the will, in fact, ought always to be directed according to the laws of morality, and on its part all condescending to the sensuous is absolutely unpardonable. These licenses must, therefore, above all, be *simplicity*. But how can we be convinced that they are actually simple? We shall hold them to be so if we see them accompanied and supported by all the other circumstances which also have their spring of action in nature; for nature can only be recognised by the close and strict consistency, by the unity and uniformity of its effects. It is only a soul that has on all occasions a horror of all kinds of artifice, and which consequently rejects them even where they would be useful — it is only that soul

which we permit to be emancipated from them when the artificial conventionalities hamper and hinder it. A heart that submits to all the obligations of nature has alone the right to profit also by the liberties which it authorises. All the other feelings of that heart ought consequently to bear the stamp of nature; it will be true, simple, free, frank, sensible, and straightforward; all disguise, all cunning, all arbitrary fancy, all egotistical pettiness, will be banished from his character, and you will see no trace of them in his writings.

Second rule: *beautiful* nature alone can justify freedoms of this kind; whence it follows that they ought not to be a mere outbreak of the appetites; for all that proceeds exclusively from the wants of sensuous nature is contemptible. It is, therefore, from the totality and the fulness of human nature that these vivid manifestations must also issue. We must find *humanity* in them. But how can we judge that they proceed in fact from our whole nature, and not only from an exclusive and vulgar want of the sensuous nature? For this purpose it is necessary that we should see — that they should represent to us — this whole of which they form a particular feature. This disposition of the mind to experience the impressions of the sensuous is in itself an innocent and an indifferent thing. It does not sit well on a man only because of its being common to animals with him; it augurs in him the lack of true and perfect humanity. It only shocks us in the poem because, such a work having the pretension to please us, the author consequently seems to think us capable, *us also*, of this moral infirmity. But when we see in the man who has let himself be drawn into it by surprise all the other characteristics that human nature in general embraces; when we find in the work where these liberties have been taken the expression of all the realities of human nature, this motive of discontent dis-

appears, and we can enjoy, without anything changing our joy, this simple expression of a true and beautiful nature. Consequently this same poet who ventures to allow himself to associate us with feelings so basely human, ought to know, on the other hand, how to raise us to all that is grand, beautiful, and sublime in our nature.

We should, therefore, have found there a measure to which we could subject the poet with confidence, when he trespasses on the ground of decency, and when he does not fear to penetrate as far as that in order freely to paint nature. His work is common, base, absolutely inexcusable, from the moment it is frigid, and from the moment it is *empty*, because that shows a prejudice, a vulgar necessity, an unhealthy appeal to our appetites. His work, on the other hand, is beautiful and noble, and we ought to applaud it without any consideration for all the objections of frigid decency, as soon as we recognise in it simplicity, the alliance of spiritual nature and of the heart.

Perhaps I shall be told that if we adopt this criterion, most of the recitals of this kind composed by the French, and the best imitations made of them in Germany, would not perhaps find their interest in it; and that it might be the same, at least in part, with many of the productions of our most intellectual and amiable poets, without even excepting his masterpieces. I should have nothing to reply to this. The sentence after all is anything but new, and I am only justifying the judgment pronounced long since on this matter by all men of delicate perceptions. But these same principles which, applied to the works of which I have just spoken, seem perhaps in too strict a spirit, might also be found too indulgent when applied to some other works. I do not deny, in fact, that the same reasons which make me hold to be quite inexcusable the dangerous pictures drawn by the Roman

Ovid and the German Ovid, those of Crebillon, of Voltaire, of Marmontel, who pretends to write *moral* tales!—of Lacroix, and of many others—that these same reasons, I say, reconcile me with the elegies of the Roman Propertius and of the German Propertius, and even with some of the decried productions of Diderot. This is because the former of those works are only witty, prosaic, and voluptuous, while the others are poetic, human, and simple.

IDYL.

It remains for me to say a few words about this third kind of sentimental poetry—some few words and no more, for I propose to speak of it at another time with the developments particularly demanded by the theme.

This kind of poetry generally presents the idea and description of an innocent and happy humanity. This innocence and bliss seeming remote from the artificial refinements of fashionable society, poets have removed the scene of the idyl from crowds of worldly life to the simple shepherd's cot, and have given it a place in the infancy of humanity before the beginning of culture. These limitations are evidently accidental; they do not form the object of the idyl, but are only to be regarded as the most natural means to attain this end. The end is everywhere to portray man in a state of innocence: which means a state of harmony and peace with himself and the external world.

But a state such as this is not merely met with before the dawn of civilisation; it is also the state to which civilisation aspires, as to its last end, if only it obeys a determined tendency in its progress. The idea of a similar state, and the belief of the possible reality of this state, is the only thing that can reconcile man with all the evils to which he is exposed in the path of

civilisation; and if this idea were only a chimera, the complaints of those who accuse civil life and the culture of the intelligence as an evil for which there is no compensation, and who represent this primitive state of nature that we have renounced as the real end of humanity — their complaints, I say, would have a perfectly just foundation. It is, therefore, of infinite importance for the man engaged in the path of civilisation to see confirmed in a sensuous manner the belief that this idea can be accomplished in the world of sense, that this state of innocence can be realised in it; and as real experience, far from keeping up this belief, is rather made incessantly to contradict it, poetry comes here, as in many other cases, in aid of reason, to cause this idea to pass into the condition of an intuitive idea, and to realise it in a particular fact. No doubt this innocence of pastoral life is also a poetic idea, and the imagination must already have shown its creative power in that. But the problem, with this datum, becomes infinitely simpler and easier to solve; and we must not forget that the elements of these pictures already existed in real life, and that it was only requisite to gather up the separate traits to form a whole. Under a fine sky, in a primitive society, when all the relations are still simple, when science is limited to so little, nature is easily satisfied, and man only turns to savagery when he is tortured by want. All nations that have a history have a paradise, an age of innocence, a golden age. Nay, more than this, every man has his paradise, his golden age, which he remembers with more or less enthusiasm, according as he is more or less poetical. Thus experience itself furnishes sufficient traits to this picture which the pastoral idyl executes. But this does not prevent the pastoral idyl from remaining always a beautiful and an encouraging fiction; and poetic genius, in retracing these pictures, has really worked in favour of the ideal. For, to the

man who has once departed from simple nature, and who has been abandoned to the dangerous guidance of his reason, it is of the greatest importance to find the laws of nature expressed in a faithful copy, to see their image in a clear mirror, and to reject all the stains of artificial life. There is, however, a circumstance which remarkably lessens the æsthetic value of these sorts of poetry. By the very fact that the idyl is transported to the time that precedes civilisation, it also loses the advantages thereof; and by its nature finds itself in opposition to itself. Thus, in a *theoretical* sense, it takes us back at the same time that in a *practical* sense it leads us on and ennobles us. Unhappily it places *behind us* the end *toward which it ought to lead us*, and consequently it can only inspire us with the sad feeling of a loss, and not the joyous feeling of a hope. As these poems can only attain their end by dispensing with all art, and by simplifying human nature, they have the highest value for the *heart*, but they are also far too poor for what concerns the *mind*, and their uniform circle is too quickly traversed. Accordingly we can only seek them and love them in moments in which we need calm, and not when our faculties aspire after movement and exercise. A morbid mind will find its *cure* in them, a sound soul will not find its *food* in them. They cannot vivify, they can only soften. This defect, grounded in the essence of the pastoral idyl, has not been remedied by the whole art of poets. I know that this kind of poem is not without admirers, and that there are readers enough who prefer an Amyntus and a Daphnis to the most splendid masterpieces of the epic or the dramatic Muse; but in them it is less the æsthetic taste than the feeling of an individual want that pronounces on works of art; and their judgment, by that very fact, could not be taken into consideration here. The reader who judges with his mind, and whose heart is sensuous, without

being blind to the merit of these poems, will confess that he is rarely affected by them, and that they tire him most quickly. But they act with so much the more effect in the exact moment of need. But must the truly beautiful be reduced to await our hours of need? and is it not rather its office to awaken in our soul the want that it is going to satisfy?

The reproaches I here level against the bucolic idyl cannot be understood of the sentimental. The simple pastoral, in fact, cannot be deprived of æsthetic value, since this value is already found in *the mere form*. To explain myself: every kind of poetry is bound to possess an infinite ideal value, which alone constitutes it a true poetry; but it can satisfy this condition in two different ways. It can give us the feeling of the infinite as to form, by representing the object *altogether limited* and individualising it; it can awaken in us the feeling of the infinite as to matter, in *freeing its object from all limits* in which it is enclosed, by idealising this object; therefore it can have an ideal value either by an absolute representation or by the representation of an absolute. Simple poetry takes the former road, the other is that of sentimental poetry. Accordingly the simple poet is not exposed to failure in value so long as he keeps faithfully to nature, which is always completely circumscribed, that is, is infinite as regards form. The sentimental poet, on the contrary, by that very fact, that nature only offers him completely circumscribed objects, finds in it an obstruction when he wishes to give an absolute value to a particular object. Thus the sentimental poet understands his interests badly when he goes along the trail of the simple poet, and *borrowes his objects* from him — objects which by themselves are perfectly indifferent, and which only become poetical by the way in which they are treated. By this he imposes on himself without any necessity the same limits that confine the field of the simple

poet, without, however, being able to carry out the limitation properly, or to vie with his rival in absolute definiteness of representation. He ought rather, therefore, to depart from the simple poet, just in the choice of object; because, the latter having the advantage of him on the score of form, it is only by the nature of the objects that he can resume the upper hand.

Applying this to the pastoral idyls of the sentimental poet, we see why these poems, whatever amount of art and genius be displayed in them, do not fully satisfy the heart or the mind. An ideal is proposed in it, and, at the same time, the writer keeps to this narrow and poor medium of pastoral life. Would it not have been better, on the contrary, to choose for the ideal another frame, or for the pastoral world another kind of picture? These pictures are just ideal enough for painting to lose its individual truth in them, and again, just individual enough for the ideal in them to suffer therefrom. For example, a shepherd of Gessner can neither charm by the illusion of nature nor by the beauty of imitation; he is too ideal a being for that; but he does not satisfy us any more as an ideal by the infinity of the thought; he is a far too limited creature to give us this satisfaction. He will, therefore, please up to a *certain point* all classes of readers, without exception, because he seeks to unite the simple with the sentimental, and he thus gives a commencement of satisfaction to the two opposite exigencies that may be brought to bear on any particular part of a poem; but the author, in trying to unite the two points, does not *fully satisfy* either one or the other exigency, as you do not find in him either pure nature or the pure ideal; he cannot rank himself as entirely up to the mark of a stringent critical taste, for taste does not accept anything equivocal or incomplete in æsthetical matters. It is a strange thing that, in the poet whom I have named, this equivocal character extends to the language, which floats undecided

between poetry and prose, as if he feared either to depart too far from nature, by speaking rhythmical language, or if he completely freed himself from rhythm, to lose all poetic flight. Milton gives a higher satisfaction to the mind, in the magnificent picture of the first human pair, and of the state of innocence in paradise,—the most beautiful idyl I know of the sentimental kind. Here nature is noble, inspired, simple, full of breadth, and, at the same time, of depth; it is humanity in its highest moral value, clothed in the most graceful form.

Thus, even in respect to the idyl, as well as to all kinds of poetry, we must once for all declare either for individuality or ideality; for to aspire to give satisfaction to both exigencies is the surest means, unless you have reached the terminus of perfection, to miss both ends. If the modern poet thinks he feels enough of the Greeks' mind to vie with them, notwithstanding all the indocility of his matter, on their own ground, namely, that of simple poetry, let him do it exclusively, and place himself apart from all the requirements of the sentimental taste of his age. No doubt it is very doubtful if he comes up to his models; between the original and the happiest imitation there will always remain a notable distance; but, by taking this road, he is at all events secure of producing a really poetic work. If, on the other hand, he feels himself carried to the ideal by the instinct of sentimental poetry, let him decide to pursue this end fully; let him seek the ideal in its purity, and let him not pause till he has reached the highest regions without looking behind him to know if the real follows him, and does not leave him by the way. Let him not lower himself to this wretched expedient of spoiling the ideal to accommodate himself to the wants of human weakness, and to turn out *mind* in order to play more easily with the *heart*. Let him not take us back to our infancy, to

make us buy, at the cost of the most precious acquisitions of the understanding, a repose that can only last as long as the slumber of our spiritual faculties; but let him lead us on to emancipation, and give us this feeling of higher harmony which compensates for all his troubles and secures the happiness of the victor! Let him prepare as his task an idyl that realises the pastoral innocence, even in the children of civilisation, and in all the conditions of the most militant and excited life; of thought enlarged by culture; of the most refined art; of the most delicate social conventionalities — an idyl, in short, that is made, not to bring back man to *Arcadia*, but to lead him to *Elysium*.

This idyl, as I conceive it, is the idea of humanity definitely reconciled with itself, in the individual as well as in the whole of society; it is union freely reëstablished between inclination and duty; it is nature purified, raised to its highest moral dignity; in short, it is no less than the ideal of beauty applied to real life. Thus, the character of this idyl is to reconcile perfectly all the *contradictions between the real and the ideal*, which formed the matter of satirical and elegiac poetry, and, setting aside their contradictions, to put an end to all conflict between the feelings of the soul. Thus, the dominant expression of this kind of poetry would be *calm*; but the calm that follows the accomplishment, and not that of indolence — the calm that comes from the equilibrium reëstablished between the faculties, and not from the suspending of their exercise; from the fulness of our strength, and not from our infirmity; the calm, in short, which is accompanied in the soul by the feeling of an infinite power. But precisely because idyl thus conceived removes all idea of struggle, it will be infinitely more difficult than it was in two previously named kinds of poetry to express *movement*; yet this is an indispensable condition, without which

poetry can never act on men's souls. The most perfect unity is required, but unity ought not to wrong variety; the heart must be satisfied, but without the inspiration ceasing on that account. The solution of this problem is properly what ought to be given us by the theory of the idyl.

Now, what are the relations of the two poetries to one another, and their relations to the poetic ideal? Here are the principles we have established.

Nature has granted this favour to the simple poet, to act always as an indivisible unity, to be at all times identical and perfect, and to represent, in the real world, humanity at its highest value. In opposition, it has given a powerful faculty to the sentimental poet, or, rather, it has imprinted an ardent feeling on him; this is to replace out of himself this first unity that abstraction has destroyed in him, to complete humanity in his person, and to pass from a limited state to an infinite state. They both propose to represent human nature fully, or they would not be poets; but the simple poet has always the advantage of sensuous reality over the sentimental poet, by setting forth as a real fact what the other aspires only to reach. Every one experiences this in the pleasure he takes in simple poetry. We there feel that the human faculties are brought into play; no vacuum is felt; we have the feeling of unity, without distinguishing anything of what we experience; we enjoy both our spiritual activity and also the fulness of physical life. Very different is the disposition of mind elicited by the sentimental poet. Here we feel only a vivid *aspiration* to produce in us this harmony of which we had in the other case the consciousness and reality; to make of ourselves a single and same totality; to realise in ourselves the idea of humanity as a complete expression. Hence it comes that the mind is here all in movement, stretched, hesitating between contrary feel-

ings; whereas it was before calm and at rest, in harmony with itself, and fully satisfied.

But if the simple poet has the advantage over the sentimental poet on the score of reality; if he causes really to live that of which the other can only elicit a vivid instinct, the sentimental poet, in compensation, has this great advantage over the simple poet: to be in a position to offer to this instinct a *greater object* than that given by his rival, and the only one he could give. All reality, we know, is below the ideal; all that exists has limits, but thought is infinite. This limitation, to which everything is subject in sensuous reality, is therefore a disadvantage for the simple poet, while the absolute, unconditional freedom of the ideal profits the sentimental poet. No doubt the former accomplishes his object, but this object is limited; the second, I admit, does not entirely accomplish his, but his object is infinite. Here I appeal to experience. We pass pleasantly to real life and things from the frame of mind in which the simple poet has placed us. On the other hand, the sentimental poet will always disgust us, for a time, with real life. This is because the infinite character has, in a manner, enlarged our mind beyond its natural measure, so that nothing it finds in the world of sense can fill its capacity. We prefer to fall back in contemplation on ourselves, where we find food for this awakened impulse toward the ideal world; while, in the simple poet, we only strive to issue out of ourselves, in search of sensuous objects. Sentimental poetry is the offspring of retirement and science, and invites to it; simple poetry is inspired by the spectacle of life, and brings back life.

I have styled simple poetry a *gift of nature* to show that thought has no share in it. It is a first jet, a happy inspiration, that needs no correction, when it turns out well, and which cannot be rectified if ill turned out. The entire work of the simple genius is

accomplished by feeling; in that is its strength, and in it are its limits. If, then, he has not *felt* at once in a poetic manner, — that is, in a perfectly human manner, — no art in the world can remedy this defect. Criticism may help him to see the defect, but can place no beauty in its stead. Simple genius must draw all from nature; it can do nothing, or almost nothing, by its will; and it will fulfil the idea of this kind of poetry provided nature acts in it by an inner necessity. Now, it is true that all which happens by nature is necessary, and all the productions, happy or not, of the simple genius, which is disassociated from nothing so much as from arbitrary will, are also imprinted with this character of necessity; momentary constraint is one thing, and the internal necessity dependent on the totality of things another. Considered as a whole, nature is independent and infinite; in isolated operations it is poor and limited. The same distinction holds good in respect to the nature of the poet. The very moment when he is most happily inspired depends on a preceding instant, and consequently only a conditional necessity can be attributed to him. But now the problem that the poet ought to solve is to make an individual state similar to the human whole, and consequently to base it in an absolute and necessary manner on itself. It is therefore necessary that at the moment of inspiration every trace of a temporal need should be banished, and that the object itself, however limited, should not limit the flight of the poet. But it may be conceived that this is only possible in so far as the poet brings to the object an absolute freedom, an absolute fulness of faculties, and in so far as he is prepared by an anterior exercise to embrace all things, with all his humanity. Now, he cannot acquire this exercise except by the world in which he lives, and of which he receives the impressions immediately. Thus simple genius is in a state of dependence with regard to experience, while

the sentimental genius is forced from it. We know that the sentimental genius begins its operation at the place where the other finishes its own: its virtue is to complete by *the elements which it derives from itself* a defective object, and to transport itself by its own strength from a limited state to one of absolute freedom. Thus the simple poet needs a help from without, while the sentimental poet feeds his genius from his own fund, and purifies himself by himself. The former requires a picturesque nature, a poetical world, a simple humanity which casts its eyes around; for he ought to do his work without issuing from the sensuous sphere. If external aid fails him, if he be surrounded by matter not speaking to mind, one of two things will happen: either, if the general character of the poet-race is what prevails in him, he issues from the particular class to which he belongs as a poet, and becomes sentimental to be at any rate poetic; or, if his particular character as simple poet has the upper hand, he leaves his species and becomes a common nature, in order to remain at any rate natural. The former of these two alternatives might represent the case of the principal poets of the sentimental kind in Roman antiquity and in modern times. Born at another period of the world, transplanted under another sky, these poets who stir us now by ideas, would have charmed us by individual truth and simple beauty. The other alternative is the almost unavoidable quicksand for a poet who, thrown into a vulgar world, cannot resolve to lose sight of nature.

I mean, to lose sight of actual nature; but the greatest care must be given to distinguish actual nature from true nature, which is the subject of simple poetry. Actual nature exists everywhere; but true nature is so much the more rare because it requires an internal necessity that determines its existence. Every eruption of passion, however vulgar, is *real* — it may

be even *true* nature; but it is not true *human* nature, for true human nature requires that the self-directing faculty in us should have a share in the manifestation, and the expression of this faculty is always dignified. All moral baseness is an actual human phenomenon, but I hope not the real human nature, which is always noble. All the faults of taste cannot be surveyed that have been occasioned in criticism or the practice of art by this confusion between actual human nature and true human nature. The greatest trivialities are tolerated and applauded under the pretext that they are real nature. Caricatures not to be tolerated in the real world are carefully preserved in the poetic world and reproduced according to nature! The poet can certainly imitate a lower nature, and it enters into the very definition of a satirical poet: but then a beauty by its own nature must sustain and raise the object, and the vulgarity of the subject must not lower the imitator too much. If at the moment he paints he is true human nature himself, the object of his paintings is indifferent; but it is only on this condition we can tolerate a faithful reproduction of reality. Unhappy for us readers when the rod of satire falls into hands that nature meant to handle another instrument, and when, devoid of all poetic talent, with nothing but the ape's mimicry, they exercise it brutally at the expense of our taste!

But vulgar nature has even its dangers for the simple poet; for the simple poet is formed by this fine harmony of the feeling and thinking faculty, which yet is only an idea, never actually realised. Even in the happiest geniuses of this class, receptivity will always more or less carry the day over spontaneous activity. But receptivity is always more or less subordinate to external impressions, and nothing but a perpetual activity of the creative faculty could prevent matter from exercising a blind violence over this quality.

Now, every time this happens the feeling becomes vulgar instead of poetical.

No genius of the simple class, from Homer down to Bodmer, has entirely steered clear of this quicksand. It is evident that it is most perilous to those who have to struggle against external vulgarity, or who have parted with their refinement owing to a want of proper restraint. The first-named difficulty is the reason why even authors of high cultivation are not always emancipated from platitudes — a fact which has prevented many splendid talents from occupying the place to which they were summoned by nature. For this reason a comic poet whose genius has chiefly to deal with scenes of real life, is more liable to the danger of acquiring vulgar habits of style and expression — a fact evidenced in the case of Aristophanes, Plautus, and all the poets who have followed in their track. Even Shakespeare, with all his sublimity, suffers us to fall very low now and then. Again, Lope De Vega, Molière, Regnard, Goldoni worry us with frequent trifling. Holberg drags us down into the mire. Schlegel, a German poet, among the most remarkable for intellectual talent, with genius to raise him to a place among poets of the first order; Gellert, a truly simple poet, Rabener, and Lessing himself, if I am warranted to introduce his name in this category, — this highly-cultivated scholar of criticism and vigilant examiner of his own genius, — all these suffer in different degrees from the platitudes and uninspired movements of the natures they chose as the theme of their satire. With regard to more recent authors of this class, I avoid naming any of them, as I can make no exceptions in their case.

But not only is simple genius exposed to the danger of coming too near to vulgar reality; the ease of expression, even this too close approximation to reality, encourages vulgar imitators to try their hand in poetry.

Sentimental poetry, though offering danger enough, has this advantage, to keep this crowd at a distance, for it is not for the first comer to rise to the ideal; but simple poetry makes them believe that, with feeling and humour, you need only imitate real nature to claim the title of poet. Now nothing is more revolting than platitude when it tries to be simple and amiable, instead of hiding its repulsive nature under the veil of art. This occasions the incredible trivialities loved by the Germans under the name of simple and facetious songs, and which give them endless amusement round a well-garnished table. Under the pretext of good humour and of sentiment people tolerate these poverties, but this good humour and this sentiment ought to be carefully proscribed. The Muses of the Pleisse, in particular, are singularly pitiful; and other Muses respond to them, from the banks of the Seine, and the Elbe. If these pleasantries are flat, the passion heard on our tragic stage is equally pitiful, for, instead of imitating true nature, it is only an insipid and ignoble expression of *the actual*. Thus, after shedding torrents of tears, you feel as you would after visiting a hospital or reading the "Human Misery" of Saltzmann. But the evil is worse in satirical poetry and comic romance, kinds which touch closely on every-day life, and which consequently, as all frontier posts, ought to be in safer hands. In truth, he less than any other is called on to become the *painter* of his century, who is himself the child and *caricature* of his century. But as, after all, nothing is easier than to take in hand, among our acquaintances, a comic character — a big, fat man — and draw a coarse likeness of him on paper, the sworn enemies of poetic inspiration are often led to blot some paper in this way to amuse a circle of friends. It is true that a pure heart, a well-made mind, will never confound these vulgar productions with the inspirations of simple genius. But purity of

feeling is the very thing that is wanting, and in most cases nothing is thought of but satisfying a want of sense, without spiritual nature having any share. A fundamentally just idea, ill understood, that works of *bel esprit* serve to *recreate* the mind, contributes to keep up this indulgence, if indulgence it may be called when nothing higher occupies the mind, and reader as well as writer find their chief interest therein. This is because vulgar natures, if overstrained, can only be refreshed by vacuity; and even a higher intelligence, when not sustained by a proportional culture, can only rest from its work amidst sensuous enjoyments, from which spiritual nature is absent.

Poetic genius ought to have strength enough to rise with a free and innate activity above all the *accidental* hinderances which are inseparable from every confined condition, to arrive at a representation of humanity in the absolute plenitude of its powers; it is not, however, permitted, on the other hand, to emancipate itself from the necessary *limits* implied by the very idea of human nature; for the absolute only in the circle of humanity is its true problem. Simple genius is not exposed to overstep this sphere, but rather *not to fill it entirely*, giving too much scope to external necessity, to accidental wants, at the expense of the inner necessity. The danger for the sentimental genius is, on the other hand, by trying to remove all limits, of nullifying human nature absolutely, and not only rising, as is its right and duty, beyond finite and determinate reality, as far as absolute possibility, or in other terms to idealise; but of passing even beyond possibility, or, in other words, *dreaming*. This fault — overstraining — is precisely dependent on the specific property of the sentimental process, as the opposite defect, *inertia*, depends on the peculiar operation of the simple genius. The simple genius lets nature dominate, without restricting it; and as nature in her particular phenomena

is always subject to some want, it follows that the simple sentiment will not be always *exalted* enough to resist the accidental limitations of the present hour. The sentimental genius, on the contrary, leaves aside the real world, to rise to the ideal and to command its matter with free spontaneity. But while reason, according to law, aspires always to the unconditional, so the sentimental genius will not always remain *calm* enough to restrain itself uniformly and without interruption within the conditions implied by the idea of human nature, and to which reason must always, even in its freest acts, remain attached. He could only confine himself in these conditions by help of a receptivity proportioned to his free activity; but most commonly the activity predominates over receptivity in the sentimental poet, as much as receptivity over activity in the simple poet. Hence, in the productions of simple genius, if sometimes inspiration is wanting, so also in works of sentimental poetry the *object* is often missed. Thus, though they proceed in opposite ways, they will both fall into a *vacuum*, for before the æsthetic judgment an object without inspiration, and inspiration without an object, are both negations.

The poets who borrow their matter too much from thought, and rather conceive poetic pictures by the internal abundance of ideas than by the suggestions of feeling, are more or less likely to be addicted to go thus astray. In their creations reason makes too little of the limits of the sensuous world, and thought is always carried too far for experience to follow it. Now, when the idea is carried so far that not only no experience corresponds to it — as is the case in the *beau idéal* — but also that it is repugnant to the conditions of all possible experience, so that, in order to realise it, one must leave human nature altogether, it is no longer a poetic but an exaggerated thought; that is, supposing its claims to be representable and poetical,

for otherwise it is enough if it is not self-contradictory. If thought is contradictory, it is not exaggeration, but nonsense; for what does not exist cannot exceed. But when the thought is not an object proposed to the fancy, we are just as little justified in calling it exaggerated. For simple thought is infinite, and what is limitless also cannot exceed. Exaggeration, therefore, is only that which wounds, not logical truth, but sensuous truth, and what pretends to be sensuous truth. Consequently, if a poet has the unhappy chance to choose for his picture certain natures that are merely *superhuman* and *cannot possibly* be represented, he can only avoid exaggeration by ceasing to be a poet, and not trusting the theme to his imagination. Otherwise one of two things would happen: either imagination, applying its limits to the object, would make a limited and merely *human* object of an absolute object — which happened with the gods of Greece — or the object would take away limits from fancy, that is, would render it null and void, and this is precisely exaggeration.

Extravagance of feeling should be distinguished from extravagance of portraiture; we are speaking of the former. The object of the feeling may be unnatural, but the feeling itself is natural, and ought accordingly to be shadowed forth in the language of nature. While extravagant feelings may issue from a warm heart and a really poetic nature, extravagance of portraiture always displays a cold heart, and very often a want of poetic capacity. Therefore this is not a danger for the sentimental poet, but only for the imitator, who has no vocation; it is therefore often found with platitude, insipidity, and even baseness. Exaggeration of sentiment is not without truth, and must have a real object; as nature inspires it, it admits of simplicity of expression, and coming from the heart it goes to the heart. As its object, however, is not in nature, but

artificially produced by the understanding, it has only a logical reality, and the feeling is not purely human. It was not an illusion that Heloise had for Abelard, Petrarch for Laura, Saint Preux for his Julia, Werther for his Charlotte; Agathon, Phantias, and Peregrinus — in Wieland — for the object of their dreams: the feeling is true, only the object is factitious and outside nature. If their thought had kept to simple sensuous truth, it could not have taken this flight; but on the other hand a mere play of fancy, without inner value, could not have stirred the heart: this is only stirred by reason. Thus this sort of exaggeration must be called to order, but it is not contemptible: and those who ridicule it would do well to find out if the wisdom on which they pride themselves is not want of heart, and if it is not through want of reason that they are so acute. The exaggerated delicacy in gallantry and honour which characterises the chivalrous romances, especially of Spain, is of this kind; also the refined and even ridiculous tenderness of French and English sentimental romances of the best kind. These sentiments are not only subjectively true, but also objectively they are not without value; they are sound sentiments issuing from a moral source, only reprehensible as overstepping the limits of human truth. Without this moral reality how could they stir and touch so powerfully? The same remark applies to moral and religious fanaticism, patriotism, and the love of freedom when carried up to exaltation. As the object of these sentiments is always a pure idea, and not an external experience, imagination with its proper activity has here a dangerous liberty, and cannot, as elsewhere, be called back to bounds by the presence of a visible object. But neither the man nor the poet can withdraw from the law of nature, except to submit to that of reason. He can only abandon reality for the ideal; for liberty must hold to one or the other of these an-

chors. But it is far from the real to the ideal; and between the two is found fancy, with its arbitrary conceits and its unbridled freedom. It must needs be, therefore, that man in general, and the poet in particular, when he withdraws by liberty of his understanding from the dominion of feeling, without being moved to it by the laws of reason, — that is, when he abandons nature through pure liberty, — he finds himself *freed from all law*, and therefore a prey to the illusions of phantasy.

It is testified by experience that entire nations, as well as individual men, who have parted with the safe direction of nature, are actually in this condition; and poets have gone astray in the same manner. The true genius of sentimental poetry, if its aim is to raise itself to the rank of the ideal, must overstep the limits of the existing nature; but false genius oversteps all boundaries without any discrimination, flattering itself with the belief that the wild sport of the imagination is poetic inspiration. A true poetical genius can never fall into this error, because it only abandons the real for the sake of the ideal, or, at all events, it can only do so at certain moments when the poet forgets himself; but his main tendencies may dispose him to extravagance within the sphere of the senses. His example may also drive others into a chase of wild conceptions, because readers of lively fancy and weak understanding only remark the freedom which he takes with existing nature, and are unable to follow him in copying the elevated necessities of his inner being. The same difficulties beset the path of the sentimental genius, in this respect, as those which afflict the career of a genius of the simple order. If a genius of this class carries out every work, obedient to the free and spontaneous impulses of his nature, the man devoid of genius who seeks to imitate him is not willing to consider his own nature a worse guide than that of the

great poet. This accounts for the fact that masterpieces of simple poetry are commonly followed by a host of stale and unprofitable works in print, and masterpieces of the sentimental class by wild and fanciful effusions,—a fact that may be easily verified on questioning the history of literature.

Two maxims are prevalent in relation to poetry, both of them quite correct in themselves, but mutually destructive in the way in which they are generally conceived. The first is, that “poetry serves as a means of amusement and recreation,” and we have previously observed that this maxim is highly favourable to aridity and platitudes in poetical fictions. The other maxim, that “poetry is conducive to the moral progress of humanity,” takes under its shelter theories and views of the most wild and extravagant character. It may be profitable to examine more attentively these two maxims, of which so much is heard, and which are so often imperfectly understood and falsely applied.

We say that a thing amuses us when it makes us pass from a forced state to the state that is natural to us. The whole question here is to know in what our natural state ought to consist, and what a forced state means. If our natural state is made to consist merely in the free development of all our physical powers, in emancipation from all constraint, it follows that every act of reason, by resisting what is sensuous, is a violence we undergo, and rest of mind combined with physical movement will be a recreation *par excellence*. But if we make our natural state consist in a limitless power of human expression and of freely disposing of all our strength, all that divides these forces will be a forced state, and recreation will be what brings all our nature to harmony. Thus, the first of these ideal recreations is simply determined by the wants of our *sensuous nature*; the second, by the autonomous activity of *human nature*. Which of these two kinds of recrea-

tion can be demanded of the poet? Theoretically, the question is inadmissible, as no one would put the *human* ideal beneath the brutal. But in practice the requirements of a poet have been especially directed to the sensuous ideal, and for the most part *favour*, though not the *esteem*, for these sorts of works is regulated thereby. Men's minds are mostly engaged in a labour that exhausts them, or an enjoyment that sets them asleep. Now labour makes rest a sensible want, much more imperious than that of the moral nature; for physical nature must be satisfied before the mind can show its requirements. On the other hand, enjoyment paralyses the moral instinct. Hence these two dispositions common in men are very injurious to the feeling for true beauty, and thus very few even of the best judge soundly in æsthetics. Beauty results from the harmony between spirit and sense; it addresses all the faculties of man, and can only be appreciated if a man employs fully all his strength. He must bring to it an open sense, a broad heart, a spirit full of freshness. All a man's nature must be on the alert, and this is not the case with those divided by abstraction, narrowed by formulas, enervated by application. They demand, no doubt, a material for the senses; but not to quicken, only to suspend thought. They ask to be freed from what? From a load that oppressed their indolence, and not a rein that curbed their activity.

After this can one wonder at the success of mediocre talents in æsthetics? or at the bitter anger of small minds against true energetic beauty? They reckon on finding therein a congenial recreation, and regret to discover that a display of strength is required to which they are unequal. With mediocrity they are always welcome; however little mind they bring, they want still less to exhaust the author's inspiration. They are relieved of the load of thought; and their nature can lull itself in beatific nothings on the soft

pillow of *platitude*. In the temple of Thalia and Melpomene — at least, so it is with us — the stupid *savant* and the exhausted man of business are received on the broad bosom of the goddess, where their intelligence is wrapped in a magnetic sleep, while their sluggish senses are warmed, and their imagination with gentle motions rocked.

Vulgar people may be excused what happens to the best capacities. Those moments of repose demanded by nature after lengthy labour are not favourable to æsthetic judgment, and hence in the busy classes few can pronounce safely on matters of taste. Nothing is more common than for scholars to make a ridiculous figure, in regard to a question of beauty, besides cultured men of the world; and technical critics are especially the laughing-stock of connoisseurs. Their opinion, from exaggeration, crudeness, or carelessness, guides them generally quite awry, and they can only devise a *technical* judgment, and not an *æsthetic* one, embracing the whole work, in which feeling should decide. If they would kindly keep to technicalities they might still be useful, for the poet in moments of inspiration and readers under his spell are little inclined to consider details. But the spectacle which they afford us is only the more ridiculous inasmuch as we see these crude natures — with whom all labour and trouble only develop at the most a particular aptitude — when we see them set up their paltry individualities as the representation of universal and complete feeling, and in the sweat of their brow pronounce judgment on beauty.

We have just seen that the kind of recreation poetry ought to afford is generally conceived in too restricted a manner, and only referred to a simple sensuous want. Too much scope, however, is also given to the other idea, the moral ennobling the poet should have in view, inasmuch as too purely an ideal aim is assigned.

In fact, according to the pure ideal, the ennobling goes on to infinity, because reason is not restricted to any sensuous limits, and only finds rest in absolute perfection. Nothing can satisfy whilst a superior thing can be conceived; it judges strictly and admits no excuses of infirmity and finite nature. It only admits for limits those of thought, which transcends time and space. Hence the poet could no more propose to himself such an ideal of ennobling (traced for him by pure [didactic] reason) any more than the coarse ideal of recreation of sensuous nature. The aim is to free human nature from accidental hinderances, without destroying the essential ideal of our humanity, or displacing its limits. All beyond this is exaggeration, and a quicksand in which the poet too easily suffers shipwreck if he mistakes the idea of nobleness. But, unfortunately, he cannot rise to the true ideal of ennobled human nature without going some steps beyond it. To rise so high he must abandon the world of reality, for, like every ideal, it is only to be drawn from its inner moral source. He does not find it in the turmoil of worldly life, but only in his heart, and that only in calm meditation. But in this separation from real life he is likely to lose sight of all the limits of human nature, and seeking pure form he may easily lose himself in arbitrary and baseless conceptions. Reason will abstract itself too much from experience, and the practical man will not be able to carry out, in the crush of real life, what the contemplative mind has discovered on the peaceful path of thought. Thus, what makes a dreamy man is the very thing that alone could have made him a sage; and the advantage for the latter is not that he has never been a dreamer, but rather that he has not remained one.

We must not, then, allow the workers to determine recreation according to their wants, nor thinkers that of nobleness according to their speculations, for fear of

either a too low physical poetry, or a poetry too given to hyperphysical exaggeration. And as these two ideas direct most men's judgments on poetry, we must seek a class of mind at once active, but not slavishly so, and idealising, but not dreamy; uniting the reality of life within as few limits as possible, obeying the current of human affairs, but not enslaved by them. Such a class of men can alone preserve the beautiful unity of human nature, that harmony which all work for a moment disturbs, and a life of work destroys; such alone can, in all that is purely human, give by its feelings universal rules of judgment. Whether such a class exists, or whether the class now existing in like conditions answers to this ideal conception, I am not concerned to inquire. If it does not respond to the ideal it has only itself to blame. In such a class — here regarded as a mere ideal — the simple and sentimental would keep each other from extremes of extravagance and relaxation. For the idea of a beautiful humanity is not exhausted by either, but can only be presented in the union of both.

THE STAGE AS A MORAL INSTITUTION.

SULZER has remarked that the stage has arisen from an irresistible longing for the new and extraordinary. Man, oppressed by divided cares, and satiated with sensual pleasure, felt an emptiness or want. Man, neither altogether satisfied with the senses, nor for ever capable of thought, wanted a middle state, a bridge between the two states, bringing them into harmony. Beauty and æsthetics supplied that for him. But a good lawgiver is not satisfied with discovering the bent of his people — he turns it to account as an instrument for higher use; and hence he chose the stage, as giving nourishment to the soul, without straining it, and uniting the noblest education of the head and heart.

The man who first pronounced religion to be the strongest pillar of the state, unconsciously defended the stage, when he said so, in its noblest aspect. The uncertain nature of political events, rendering religion a necessity, also demands the stage as a moral force. Laws only prevent disturbances of social life; religion prescribes positive orders sustaining social order. Law only governs actions; religion controls the heart and follows thought to the source.

Laws are flexible and capricious; religion binds for ever. If religion has this great sway over man's heart, can it also complete his culture? Separating the political from the divine element in it, religion acts mostly on the senses; she loses her sway if the senses are gone. By what channel does the stage operate? To most men religion vanishes with the loss of her symbols, images, and problems; and yet they are only pictures of the imagination, and insolvable problems. Both laws and religion are strengthened by a union with the stage, where virtue and vice, joy and sorrow, are thoroughly displayed in a truthful and popular way; where a variety of providential problems are solved; where all secrets are unmasked, all artifice ends, and truth alone is the judge, as incorruptible as Rhadamanthus.

Where the influence of civil laws ends that of the stage begins. Where venality and corruption blind and bias justice and judgment, and intimidation perverts its ends, the stage seizes the sword and scales and pronounces a terrible verdict on vice. The fields of fancy and of history are open to the stage; great criminals of the past live over again in the drama, and thus benefit an indignant posterity. They pass before us as empty shadows of their age, and we heap curses on their memory while we enjoy on the stage the very horror of their crimes. When morality is no more taught, religion no longer received, or laws exist,

Medea would still terrify us with her infanticide. The sight of Lady Macbeth, while it makes us shudder, will also make us rejoice in a good conscience, when we see her, the sleep-walker, washing her hands and seeking to destroy the awful smell of murder. Sight is always more powerful to man than description; hence the stage acts more powerfully than morality or law.

But in this the stage only aids justice. A far wider field is really open to it. There are a thousand vices unnoticed by human justice, but condemned by the stage; so, also, a thousand virtues overlooked by man's laws are honoured on the stage. It is thus the handmaid of religion and philosophy. From these pure sources it draws its high principles and the exalted teachings, and presents them in a lovely form. The soul swells with noblest emotions when a divine ideal is placed before it. When Augustus offers his forgiving hand to Cinna, the conspirator, and says to him: "Let us be friends, Cinna!" what man at the moment does not feel that he could do the same? Again, when Francis von Sickingen, proceeding to punish a prince and redress a stranger, on turning sees the house, where his wife and children are, in flames, and yet goes on for the sake of his word — how great humanity appears, how small the stern power of fate!

Vice is portrayed on the stage in an equally telling manner. Thus, when old Lear, blind, helpless, childless, is seen knocking in vain at his daughters' doors, and in tempest and night he recounts by telling his woes to the elements, and ends by saying: "I have given you all," — how strongly impressed we feel at the value of filial piety, and how hateful ingratitude seems to us!

The stage does even more than this. It cultivates the ground where religion and law do not think it dignified to stop. Folly often troubles the world as

much as crime; and it has been justly said that the heaviest loads often hang suspended by the slightest threads. Tracing actions to their sources, the list of criminals diminish, and we laugh at the long catalogue of fools. In our sex all forms of evil emanate almost entirely from *one* source, and all our excesses are only varied and higher forms of one quality, and that a quality which in the end we smile at and love; and why should not nature have followed this course in the opposite sex too? In man there is only one secret to guard against depravity; that is, to protect his heart against wickedness.

Much of all this is shown up on the stage. It is a mirror to reflect fools and their thousand forms of folly, which are there turned to ridicule. It curbs vice by terror, and folly still more effectually by satire and jest. If a comparison be made between tragedy and comedy, guided by experience, we should probably give the palm to the latter as to effects produced. Hatred does not wound the conscience so much as mockery does the pride of man. We are exposed specially to the sting of satire by the very cowardice that shuns terrors. From sins we are guarded by law and conscience, but the ludicrous is specially punished on the stage. Where we allow a friend to correct our morals, we rarely forgive a laugh. We may bear heavy judgment on our transgressions, but our weaknesses and vulgarities must not be criticised by a witness.

The stage alone can do this with impunity, chastising us as the anonymous fool. We can bear this rebuke without a blush, and even gratefully.

But the stage does even more than this. It is a great school of practical wisdom, a guide for civil life, and a key to the mind in all its sinuosities. It does not, of course, remove egoism and stubbornness in evil ways; for a thousand vices hold up their heads in

spite of the stage, and a thousand virtues make no impression on cold-hearted spectators. Thus, probably, Molière's Harpagon never altered a usurer's heart, nor did the suicide in Beverley save any one from the gaming-table. Nor, again, is it likely that the high-roads will be safer through Karl Moor's untimely end. But, admitting this, and more than this, still how great is the influence of the stage! It has shown us the vices and virtues of men with whom we have to live. We are not surprised at their weaknesses, we are prepared for them. The stage points them out to us, and their remedy. It drags off the mask from the hypocrite, and betrays the meshes of intrigue. Duplicity and cunning have been forced by it to show their hideous features in the light of day. Perhaps the dying Sarah may not deter a single debauchee, nor all the pictures of avenged seduction stop the evil; yet unguarded innocence has been shown the snares of the corrupter, and taught to distrust his oaths.

The stage also teaches men to bear the strokes of fortune. Chance and design have equal sway over life. We have to bow to the former, but we control the latter. It is a great advantage if inexorable facts do not find us unprepared and unexercised, and if our breast has been steeled to bear adversity. Much human woe is placed before us on the stage. It gives us momentary pain in the tears we shed for strangers' troubles, but as a compensation it fills us with a grand new stock of courage and endurance. We are led by it, with the abandoned Ariadne, through the Isle of Naxos, and we descend the Tower of Starvation in Ugolino; we ascend the terrible scaffold, and we are present at the awful moment of execution. Things remotely present in thought become palpable realities now. We see the deceived favourite abandoned by the queen. When about to die, the perfidious Moor is abandoned by his own sophistry. Eternity reveals the

secrets of the unknown through the dead, and the hateful wretch loses all screen of guilt when the tomb opens to condemn him.

Then the stage teaches us to be more considerate to the unfortunate, and to judge gently. We can only pronounce on a man when we know his whole being and circumstances. Theft is a base crime, but tears mingle with our condemnation, when we read what obliged Edward Ruhberg to do the horrid deed. Suicide is shocking; but the condemnation of an enraged father, her love, and the fear of a convent, lead Marianne to drink the cup, and few would dare to condemn the victim of a dreadful tyranny. Humanity and tolerance have begun to prevail in our time at courts of princes and in courts of law. A large share of this may be due to the influence of the stage in showing man and his secret motives.

The great of the world ought to be especially grateful to the stage, for it is here alone that they hear the truth.

Not only man's mind, but also his intellectual culture, has been promoted by the higher drama. The lofty mind and the ardent patriot have often used the stage to spread enlightenment.

Considering nations and ages, the thinker sees the masses enchained by opinion and cut off by adversity from happiness; truth only lights up a few minds, who perhaps have to acquire it by the trials of a lifetime. How can the wise ruler put these within the reach of his nation?

The thoughtful and the worthier section of the people diffuse the light of wisdom over the masses through the stage. Purer and better principles and motives issue from the stage and circulate through society; the night of barbarism and superstition vanishes. I would mention two glorious fruits of the higher class of dramas. Religious toleration has latterly

become universal. Before Nathan the Jew and Saladin the Saracen put us to shame, and showed that resignation to God's will did not depend on a fancied belief of his nature, — even before Joseph II. contended with the hatred of a narrow piety, — the stage had sown seeds of humanity and gentleness: pictures of fanaticism had taught a hatred of intolerance, and Christianity, seeing itself in this awful mirror, washed off its stains. It is to be hoped that the stage will equally combat mistaken systems of education. This is a subject of the first political importance, and yet none is so left to private whims and caprice. The stage might give stirring examples of mistaken education, and lead parents to juster, better views of the subject. Many teachers are led astray by false views, and methods are often artificial and fatal.

Opinions about governments and classes might be reformed by the stage. Legislation could thus justify itself by foreign symbols, and silence doubtful aspirations without offence.

Now, if poets would be patriotic they could do much on the stage to forward invention and industry. A standing theatre would be a material advantage to a nation. It would have a great influence on the national temper and mind by helping the nation to agree in opinions and inclinations. The stage alone can do this, because it commands all human knowledge, exhausts all positions, illumines all hearts, unites all classes, and makes its way to the heart and understanding by the most popular channels.

If one feature characterised all dramas; if the poets were allied in aim, — that is, if they selected well and from national topics, — there would be a national stage, and we should become a nation. It was this that knit the Greeks so strongly together, and this gave to them the all-absorbing interest in the republic and the advancement of humanity.

Another advantage belongs to the stage; one which seems to have become acknowledged even by its censurers. Its influence on intellectual and moral culture, which we have till now been advocating, may be doubted; but its very enemies have admitted that it has gained the palm over all other means of amusement. It has been of much higher service here than people are often ready to allow.

Human nature cannot bear to be always on the rack of business, and the charms of sense die out with their gratification. Man, oppressed by appetites, weary of long exertion, thirsts for refined pleasure, or rushes into dissipations that hasten his fall and ruin, and disturb social order. Bacchanal joys, gambling, follies of all sorts to disturb ennui, are unavoidable if the lawgiver produces nothing better. A man of public business, who has made noble sacrifices to the state, is apt to pay for them with melancholy, the scholar to become a pedant, and the people brutish, without the stage. The stage is an institution combining amusement with instruction, rest with exertion, where no faculty of the mind is overstrained, no pleasure enjoyed at the cost of the whole. When melancholy gnaws the heart, when trouble poisons our solitude, when we are disgusted with the world, and a thousand worries oppress us, or when our energies are destroyed by over-exercise, the stage revives us, we dream of another sphere, we recover ourselves, our torpid nature is roused by noble passions, our blood circulates more healthily. The unhappy man forgets his tears in weeping for another. The happy man is calmed, the secure made provident. Effeminate natures are steeled, savages made man, and, as the supreme triumph of nature, men of all ranks, zones, and conditions, emancipated from the chains of conventionality and fashion, fraternise here in a universal sympathy, forget the world, and come nearer to their heavenly destination. The individual shares

in the general ecstasy, and his breast has now only space for an emotion : he is a *man*.

ON THE TRAGIC ART.

THE state of passion in itself, independently of the good or bad influence of its object on our morality, has something in it that charms us. We aspire to transport ourselves into that state, even if it costs us some sacrifices. You will find this instinct at the bottom of all our most habitual pleasures. As to the nature itself of the affection, whether it be one of aversion or desire, agreeable or painful, this is what we take little into consideration. Experience teaches us that painful affections are those which have the most attraction for us, and thus that the pleasure we take in an affection is precisely in an inverse ratio to its nature. It is a phenomenon common to all men, that sad, frightful things, even the horrible, exercise over us an irresistible seduction, and that in presence of a scene of desolation and of terror we feel at once repelled and attracted by two equal forces. Suppose the case be an assassination. Then every one crowds round the narrator and shows a marked attention. Any ghost story, however embellished by romantic circumstances, is greedily devoured by us, and the more readily in proportion as the story is calculated to make our hair stand on end.

This disposition is developed in a more lively manner when the objects themselves are placed before our eyes. A tempest that would swallow up an entire fleet would be, seen from shore, a spectacle as attractive to our imagination as it would be shocking to our heart. It would be difficult to believe with Lucretius that this natural pleasure results from a comparison between our own safety and the danger of which we are witnesses. See what a crowd accompanies a

criminal to the scene of his punishment! This phenomenon cannot be explained either by the pleasure of satisfying our love of justice, nor the ignoble joy of vengeance. Perhaps the unhappy man may find excuses in the hearts of those present; perhaps the sincerest pity takes an interest in his reprieve: this does not prevent a lively curiosity in the spectators to watch his expressions of pain with eye and ear. If an exception seems to exist here in the case of a well-bred man, endowed with a delicate sense, this does not imply that he is a complete stranger to this instinct; but in his case the painful strength of compassion carries the day over this instinct, or it is kept under by the laws of decency. The man of nature, who is not chained down by any feeling of human delicacy, abandons himself without any sense of shame to this powerful instinct. This attraction must, therefore, have its spring of action in an original disposition, and it must be explained by a psychological law common to the whole species.

But if it seems to us that these brutal instincts of nature are incompatible with the dignity of man, and if we hesitate, for this reason, to establish on this fact a law common to the whole species, yet no experiences are required to prove, with the completest evidence, that the pleasure we take in painful emotions is real, and that it is general. The painful struggle of a heart drawn asunder between its inclinations or contrary duties, a struggle which is a cause of misery to him who experiences it, delights the person who is a mere spectator. We follow with always heightening pleasure the progress of a passion to the abyss into which it hurries its unhappy victim. The same delicate feeling that makes us turn our eyes aside from the sight of physical suffering, or even from the physical expression of a purely moral pain, makes us experience a pleasure heightened in sweetness, in the sympathy

for a purely moral pain. The interest with which we stop to look at the painting of these kinds of objects is a general phenomenon.

Of course this can only be understood of sympathetic affections, or those felt as a secondary effect after their *first impression*; for commonly *direct* and *personal* affections immediately call into life in us the instinct of our own happiness, they take up all our thoughts, and seize hold of us too powerfully to allow any room for the feeling of pleasure that accompanies them, when the affection is freed from all personal relation. Thus, in the mind that is really a prey to painful passion, the feeling of pain commands all others notwithstanding all the charm that the painting of its moral state may offer to the hearers and the spectators. And yet the painful affection is not deprived of all pleasure, even for him who experiences it directly; only this pleasure differs in degree according to the nature of each person's mind. The sports of chance would not have half so much attraction for us were there not a kind of enjoyment in anxiety, in doubt, and in fear; danger would not be encountered from mere foolhardiness; and the very sympathy which interests us in the trouble of another would not be to us that pleasure which is never more lively than at the very moment when the illusion is strongest, and when we substitute ourselves most entirely in the place of the person who suffers. But this does not imply that disagreeable affections cause pleasure of themselves, nor do I think any one will uphold this view; it suffices that these states of the mind are the conditions that alone make possible for us certain kinds of pleasure. Thus the hearts particularly sensitive to this kind of pleasure, and most greedy of them, will be more easily led to share these disagreeable affections, which are the condition of the former; and even in the most violent storms of

passion they will always preserve some remains of their freedom.

The displeasure we feel in disagreeable affections comes from the relation of our sensuous faculty or of our moral faculty with their object. In like manner, the pleasure we experience in agreeable affections proceeds from the very same source. The degree of liberty that may prevail in the affections depends on the proportion between the moral nature and the sensuous nature of a man. Now it is well known that in the moral order there is nothing arbitrary for us, that, on the contrary, the sensuous instinct is subject to the laws of reason and consequently depends more or less on our will. Hence it is evident that we can keep our liberty full and entire in all those affections that are concerned with the instinct of self-love, and that we are the masters to determine the degree which they ought to attain. This degree will be less in proportion as the moral sense in a man will prevail over the instinct of happiness, and as by obeying the universal laws of reason he will have freed himself from the selfish requirements of his individuality, his Ego. A man of this kind must therefore, in a state of passion, feel much less vividly the relation of an object with his own instinct of happiness, and consequently he will be much less sensible of the displeasure that arises from this relation. On the other hand, he will be perpetually more attentive to the relation of this same object with his moral nature, and for this very reason he will be more sensible to the pleasure which the relation of the object with morality often mingles with the most painful affections. A mind thus constituted is better fitted than all others to enjoy the pleasure attaching to compassion, and even to regard a personal affection as an object of simple compassion. Hence the inestimable value of a moral philosophy, which, by raising our eyes constantly

toward general laws, weakens in us the feeling of our individuality, teaches us to plunge our paltry personality in something great, and enables us thus to act to ourselves as to strangers. This sublime state of the mind is the lot of strong philosophic minds, which by working assiduously on themselves have learned to bridle the egotistical instinct. Even the most cruel loss does not drive them beyond a certain degree of sadness, with which an appreciable sum of pleasure can always be reconciled. These souls, which are alone capable of separating themselves from themselves, alone enjoy the privilege of sympathising with themselves and of receiving of their own sufferings only a reflex, softened by sympathy.

The indications contained in what precedes will suffice to direct our attention to the sources of the pleasure that the affection in itself causes, more particularly the sad affection. We have seen that this pleasure is more energetic in moral souls, and it acts with greater freedom in proportion as the soul is more independent of the egotistical instinct. This pleasure is, moreover, more vivid and stronger in sad affections, when self-love is painfully disquieted, than in gay affections, which imply a satisfaction of self-love. Accordingly this pleasure increases when the egotistical instinct is wounded, and diminishes when that instinct is flattered. Now we only know of two sources of pleasure — the satisfaction of the instinct of happiness, and the accomplishment of the moral laws. Therefore, when it is shown that a particular pleasure does not emanate from the former source, it must of necessity issue from the second. It is therefore from our moral nature that issues the charm of the painful affections shared by sympathy, and the pleasure that we sometimes feel even where the painful affection directly affects ourselves.

Many attempts have been made to account for the

pleasure of pity, but most of these solutions had little chance of meeting the problem, because the principle of this phenomenon was sought for rather in the accompanying circumstances than in the nature of the affection itself. To many persons the pleasure of pity is simply the pleasure taken by the mind in exercising its own sensibility. To others it is the pleasure of occupying their forces energetically, of exercising the social faculty vividly — in short, of satisfying the instinct of restlessness. Others again make it derived from the discovery of morally fine features of character, placed in a clear light by the struggle against adversity or against the passions. But there is still the difficulty to explain why it should be exactly the very feeling of pain — *suffering* properly so called — that in objects of pity attracts us with the greatest force, while, according to those elucidations, a less degree of suffering ought evidently to be more favourable to those causes to which the source of the emotion is traced. Various matters may, no doubt, increase the pleasure of the emotion without occasioning it. Of this nature are: the vividness and force of the ideas awakened in our imagination, the moral excellence of the suffering persons, the reference to himself of the person feeling pity. I admit that the suffering of a weak soul, and the pain of a wicked character, do not procure us this enjoyment. But this is because they do not excite our pity to the same degree as the hero who suffers, or the virtuous man who struggles. Thus we are constantly brought back to the first question: why is it precisely the degree of suffering that determines the degree of sympathetic pleasure which we take in an emotion? and one answer only is possible; it is because the attack made on our sensibility is precisely the condition necessary to set in motion that quality of mind of which the activity produces the pleasure we feel in sympathetic affections.

Now this faculty is no other than the reason; and because the free exercise of reason, as an absolutely independent activity, deserves *par excellence* the name of activity; as, moreover, the heart of man only feels itself perfectly free and independent in its moral acts, it follows that the charm of tragic emotions is really dependent on the fact that this instinct of activity finds its gratification in them. But, even admitting this, it is neither the great number nor the vivacity of the ideas that are awakened then in our imagination, nor in general the exercise of the social faculty, but a certain kind of ideas and a certain activity of the social faculty brought into play by reason, which is the foundation of this pleasure.

Thus the sympathetic affections in general are for us a source of pleasure because they give satisfaction to our instinct of activity, and the sad affections produce this effect with more vividness because they give more satisfaction to this instinct. The mind only reveals all its activity when it is in full possession of its liberty, when it has a perfect consciousness of its rational nature, because it is only then that it displays a force superior to all resistance.

Hence the state of mind which allows most effectually the manifestation of this force, and awakens most successfully its activity, is that state which is most suitable to a rational being, and which best satisfies our instincts of activity: whence it follows that a greater amount of pleasure must be attached necessarily to this state. Now it is the tragic states that place our soul in this state, and the pleasure found in them is necessarily higher than the charm produced by gay affections, in the same degree that moral power in us is superior to the power of the senses.

Points that are only subordinate and partial in a system of final causes may be considered by art independently of that relation with the rest, and may be

converted into principal objects. It is right that in the designs of nature pleasure should only be a mediate end, or a means; but for art it is the highest end. It is therefore essentially important for art not to neglect this high enjoyment attaching to the tragic emotion. Now, *tragic* art, taking this term in its widest acceptance, is that among the fine arts which proposes as its principal object the pleasure of pity.

Art attains its end by the *imitation of nature*, by satisfying the conditions which make pleasure possible in reality, and by combining, according to a plan traced by the intelligence, the scattered elements furnished by nature, so as to attain as a principal end to that which, for nature, was only an accessory end. Thus tragic art ought to imitate nature in those kinds of actions that are specially adapted to awaken pity.

It follows that, in order to determine generally the system to be followed by tragic art, it is necessary before all things to know on what conditions in real life the pleasure of the emotion is commonly produced in the surest and the strongest manner; but it is necessary at the same time to pay attention to the circumstances that restrict or absolutely extinguish this pleasure.

After what we have established in our essay "On the Cause of the Pleasure We Derive from Tragic Objects," it is known that in every tragic emotion there is an idea of incongruity, which, though the emotion may be attended with charm, must always lead on to the conception of a higher consistency. Now it is the relation that these two opposite conceptions mutually bear which determines in an emotion if the prevailing impression shall be pleasurable or the reverse. If the conception of incongruity be more vivid than that of the contrary, or if the end sacrificed is more important than the end gained, the prevailing impression will always be displeasure, whether this be



Photograph after the painting by J. Kober
King Lear . . . so people gaze up his crown."

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"King Lear . . . so weakly gave up his crown."

Photogravure after the painting by T. Koppen.





understood *objectively* of the human race in general, or only *subjectively* of certain individuals.

If the cause that has produced a misfortune gives us too much displeasure, our compassion for the victim is diminished thereby. The heart cannot feel simultaneously, in a high degree, two absolutely contrary affections. Indignation against the person who is the primary cause of the suffering becomes the prevailing affection, and all other feeling has to yield to it. Thus our interest is always enfeebled when the unhappy man whom it would be desirable to pity had cast himself into ruin by a personal and an inexcusable fault; or if, being able to save himself, he did not do so, either through feebleness of mind or pusillanimity. The interest we take in unhappy King Lear, ill treated by two ungrateful daughters, is sensibly lessened by the circumstances that this aged man, in his second childhood, so weakly gave up his crown, and divided his love among his daughters with so little discernment. In the tragedy of Kronegk, "Olinda and Sophronia," the most terrible suffering to which we see these martyrs to their faith exposed only excites our pity feebly, and all their heroism only stirs our admiration moderately, because madness alone can suggest the act by which Olinda has placed himself and all his people on the brink of the precipice.

Our pity is equally lessened when the primary cause of a misfortune, whose innocent victim ought to inspire us with compassion, fills our mind with horror. When the tragic poet cannot clear himself of his plot without introducing a wretch, and when he is reduced to derive the greatness of suffering from the greatness of wickedness, the supreme beauty of his work must always be seriously injured. Iago and Lady Macbeth in Shakespeare, Cleopatra in the tragedy of "Rodogune," or Franz Moor in "The Robbers," are so many proofs in support of this assertion. A poet who understands his

real interest will not bring about the catastrophe through a malicious will which proposes misfortune as its end; nor, and still less, by want of understanding: but rather through the imperious force of circumstances. If this catastrophe does not come from moral sources, but from outward things, which have no volition and are not subject to any will, the pity we experience is more pure, or at all events it is not weakened by any idea of moral incongruity. But then the spectator cannot be spared the disagreeable feeling of an incongruity in the order of nature, which can alone save in such a case moral propriety. Pity is far more excited when it has for its object both him who suffers and him who is the primary cause of the suffering. This can only happen when the latter has neither elicited our contempt nor our hatred, but when he has been brought against his inclination to become the cause of this misfortune. It is a singular beauty of the German play of "Iphigenia" that the King of Tauris, the only obstacle who thwarts the wishes of Orestes and of his sister, never loses our esteem, and that we love him to the end.

There is something superior even to this kind of emotion; this is the case when the cause of the misfortune not only is in no way repugnant to morality, but only becomes possible through morality, and when the reciprocal suffering comes simply from the idea that a fellow creature has been made to suffer. This is the situation of Chimene and Rodrigue in "The Cid" of Pierre Corneille, which is undeniably in point of intrigue the masterpiece of the tragic stage. Honour and filial love arm the hand of Rodrigue against the father of her whom he loves, and his valour gives him the victory. Honour and filial love rouse up against him, in the person of Chimene, the daughter of his victim, an accuser and a formidable persecutor. Both act in opposition to their inclination, and they tremble with anguish at the thought of the misfortune of the object

against which they arm themselves, in proportion as zeal inspires them for their duty to inflict this misfortune. Accordingly both conciliate our esteem in the highest sense, as they accomplish a moral duty at the cost of inclination; both inflame our pity in the highest degree, because they suffer spontaneously for a motive that renders them in the highest degree to be respected. It results from this that our pity is in this case so little modified by any opposite feeling that it burns rather with a double flame; only the impossibility of reconciling the idea of misfortune with the idea of a morality so deserving of happiness might still disturb our sympathetic pleasure, and spread a shade of sadness over it. It is besides a great point, no doubt, that the discontent given us by this contradiction does not bear upon our moral being, but is turned *aside* to a harmless place, to necessity only; but this blind subjection to destiny is always afflicting and humiliating for free beings, who determine themselves. This is the cause that always leaves something to be wished for even in the best Greek pieces. In all these pieces, at the bottom of the plot it is always fatality that is appealed to, and in this there is a knot that cannot be unravelled by our reason, which wishes to solve everything.

But even this knot is untied, and with it vanishes every shade of displeasure, at the highest and last step to which man perfected by morality rises, and at the highest point which is attained by the art which moves the feelings. This happens when the very discontent with destiny becomes effaced, and is resolved in a presentiment or rather a clear consciousness of a teleological concatenation of things, of a sublime order, of a beneficent will. Then, to the pleasure occasioned in us by moral consistency is joined the invigorating idea of the most perfect suitability in the great whole of nature. In this case the thing that seemed to militate against this order, and that caused us pain, in a

particular case, is only a spur that stimulates our reason to seek in general laws for the justification of this particular case, and to solve the problem of this separate discord in the centre of the general harmony. Greek art never rose to this supreme serenity of tragic emotion, because neither the national religion, nor even the philosophy of the Greeks, lighted their step on this advanced road. It was reserved for modern art, which enjoys the privilege of finding a purer matter in a purer philosophy, to satisfy also this exalted want, and thus to display all the moral dignity of art.

If we moderns must resign ourselves never to reproduce Greek art because the philosophic genius of our age, and modern civilisation in general are not favourable to poetry, these influences are at all events less hurtful to tragic art, which is based rather on the moral element. Perhaps it is in the case of this art only that our civilisation repairs the injury that it has caused to art in general.

In the same manner as the tragic emotion is weakened by the admixture of conflicting ideas and feelings, and the charm attaching to it is thus diminished, so this emotion can also, on the contrary, by approaching the excess of direct and personal affection, become exaggerated to the point where pain carries the day over pleasure. It has been remarked that displeasure, in the affections, comes from the relation of their object with our senses, in the same way as the pleasure felt in them comes from the relation of the affection itself to our moral faculty. This implies, then, between our senses and our moral faculty a determined relation, which decides as regards the relation between pleasure and displeasure in tragic emotions. Nor could this relation be modified or overthrown without overthrowing at the same time the feelings of pleasure and displeasure which we find in the emotions, or even without changing them into their opposites. In the same ratio

that the senses are vividly roused in us, the influence of morality will be proportionately diminished; and reciprocally, as the sensuous loses, morality gains ground. Therefore that which in our hearts gives a preponderance to the sensuous faculty, must of necessity, by placing restrictions on the moral faculty, diminish the pleasure that we take in tragic emotions, a pleasure which emanates exclusively from this moral faculty. In like manner, all that in our heart impresses an impetus on this latter faculty, must blunt the stimulus of pain even in direct and personal affections. Now our sensuous nature actually acquires this preponderance, when the ideas of suffering rise to a degree of vividness that no longer allows us to distinguish a sympathetic affection from a personal affection, or our own proper Ego from the subject that suffers, — reality, in short, from poetry. The sensuous also gains the upper hand when it finds an aliment in the great number of its objects, and in that dazzling light which an over-excited imagination diffuses over it. On the contrary, nothing is more fit to reduce the sensuous to its proper bounds than to place alongside it supersensuous ideas, moral ideas, to which reason, oppressed just before, clings as to a kind of spiritual props, to right and raise itself above the fogs of the sensuous to a serener atmosphere. Hence the great charm which general truths or moral sentences, scattered opportunely over dramatic dialogue, have for all cultivated nations, and the almost excessive use that the Greeks made of them. Nothing is more agreeable to a moral soul than to have the power, after a purely passive state that has lasted too long, of escaping from the subjection of the senses, and of being recalled to its spontaneous activity, and restored to the possession of its liberty.

These are the remarks I had to make respecting the causes that restrict our pity and place an obstacle to our pleasure in tragic emotions. I have next to show

on what conditions pity is solicited and the pleasure of the emotion excited in the most infallible and energetic manner.

Every feeling of pity implies the idea of suffering, and the degree of pity is regulated according to the degree more or less of vividness, of truth, of intensity, and of duration of this idea.

1st. The moral faculty is provoked to reaction in proportion to the vividness of ideas in the soul, which incites it to activity and solicits its sensuous faculty. Now the ideas of suffering are conceived in two different manners, which are not equally favourable to the vividness of the impression. The sufferings that we witness affect us incomparably more than those that we have through a description or a narrative. The former suspend in us the free play of the fancy, and striking our senses immediately penetrate by the shortest road to our heart. In the narrative, on the contrary, the particular is first raised to the general, and it is from this that the knowledge of the special case is afterward derived; accordingly, merely by this necessary operation of the understanding, the impression already loses greatly in strength. Now a weak impression cannot take complete possession of our mind, and it will allow other ideas to disturb its action and to dissipate the attention. Very frequently, moreover, the narrative account transports us from the moral disposition, in which the acting person is placed, to the state of mind of the narrator himself, which breaks up the illusion so necessary for pity. In every case, when the narrator in person puts himself forward, a certain stoppage takes place in the action, and, as an unavoidable result, in our sympathetic affection. This is what happens even when the dramatic poet forgets himself in the dialogue, and puts in the mouth of his dramatic persons reflections that could only enter the mind of a disinterested spectator. It would be difficult

to mention a single one of our modern tragedies quite free from this defect; but the French alone have made a rule of it. Let us infer, then, that the immediate vivid and sensuous presence of the object is necessary to give to the ideas impressed on us by suffering that strength without which the emotion could not rise to a high degree.

2d. But we can receive the most vivid impressions of the idea of suffering without, however, being led to a remarkable degree of pity, if these impressions lack *truth*. It is necessary that we should form of suffering an *idea* of such a nature that we are obliged to share and take part in it. To this end there must be a certain agreement between this suffering and something that we have already in us. In other words, pity is only possible inasmuch as we can prove or suppose a resemblance between ourselves and the subject that suffers. Everywhere where this resemblance makes itself known, pity is necessary; where this resemblance is lacking, pity is impossible. The more visible and the greater is the resemblance, the more vivid is our pity; and they mutually slacken in dependence on each other. In order that we may feel the affections of another after him, all the *internal* conditions demanded by this affection must be found beforehand in us, in order that the *external* cause which, by meeting with the internal conditions, has given birth to the affection, may also produce on us a like effect. It is necessary that, without doing violence to ourselves, we should be able to exchange persons with another, and transport our Ego by an instantaneous substitution in the state of the subject. Now, how is it possible to feel in us the state of another, if we have not beforehand recognised ourselves in this other?

This resemblance bears on the totality of the constitution of the mind, in as far as that is necessary and universal. Now, this character of necessity and of

universality belongs especially to our moral nature. The faculty of feeling can be determined differently by accidental causes: our cognitive faculties themselves depend on variable conditions: the moral faculty only has its principle in itself, and by that very fact it can best give us a general measure and a certain criterion of this resemblance. Thus an idea which we find in accord with our mode of thinking and of feeling, which offers at once a certain relationship with the train of our own ideas, which is easily grasped by our heart and our mind, we call a true idea. If this relationship bears on what is peculiar to our heart, on the *private* determinations that modify in us the common fundamentals of humanity, and which may be withdrawn without altering this general character, this idea is then simply true *for us*. If it bears on the general and necessary form that we suppose in the whole species, the truth of this idea ought to be held to be equal to objective truth. For the Roman, the sentence of the first Brutus and the suicide of Cato are of subjective truth. The ideas and the feelings that have inspired the actions of these two men are not an immediate consequence of human nature in general, but the mediate consequence of a human nature determined by particular modifications. To share with them these feelings we must have a Roman soul, or at least be capable of assuming for a moment a Roman soul. It suffices, on the other hand, to be a *man in general*, to be vividly touched by the heroic sacrifice of Leonidas, by the quiet resignation of Aristides, by the voluntary death of Socrates, and to be moved to tears by the terrible changes in the fortunes of Darius. We attribute to these kinds of ideas, in opposition to the preceding ones, an objective truth because they agree with the *nature* of all human subjects, which gives them a character of universality and of necessity as strict as if they were independent of every subjective condition.

Moreover, although the subjectively true description is based on accidental determinations, this is no reason for confounding it with an arbitrary description. After all, the subjectively true emanates also from the general constitution of the human soul, modified only in particular directions by special circumstances; and the two kinds of truth are equally necessary conditions of the human mind. If the resolution of Cato were in contradiction with the general laws of human nature, it could not be true, even subjectively. The only difference is that the ideas of the second kind are enclosed in a narrower sphere of action; because they imply, besides the general modes of the human mind, other special determinations. Tragedy can make use of it with a very intense effect, if it will renounce the extensive effect; still the unconditionally true, what is purely *human* in human relations, will be always the richest matter for the tragic poet, because this ground is the only one on which tragedy, without ceasing to aspire to strength of expression, can be certain of the *generality* of this impression.

3d. Besides the vividness and the truth of tragic pictures, there must also be *completeness*. None of the external data that are necessary to give to the soul the desired movement ought to be omitted in the representation. In order that the spectator, however Roman his sentiments may be, may understand the moral state of Cato — that he may make his own the high resolution of the republican, this resolution must have its principle, not only in the mind of the Roman, but also in the circumstances of the action. His external situation as well as his internal situation must be before our eyes in all their consequences and extent: and we must, lastly, have unrolled before us, without omitting a single link, the whole chain of determinations to which are attached the high resolution of the Roman as a necessary consequence. It may be said in general that, without

this third condition, even the truth of a painting cannot be recognised ; for the similarity of *circumstances*, which ought to be fully evident, can alone justify our judgment on the similarity of the *feelings*, since it is only from the competition of external conditions and of internal conditions that the affective phenomenon results. To decide if we should have acted like Cato, we must before all things transport ourselves in thought to the external situation in which Cato was placed, and then only we are entitled to place our feelings alongside his, to pronounce if there is or is not likeness, and to give a verdict on the truth of these feelings.

A complete picture, as I understand it, is only possible by the concatenation of several separate ideas, and of several separate feelings, which are connected together as cause and effect, and which, in their sum total, form one single whole for our cognitive faculty. All these ideas, in order to affect us closely, must make an immediate impression on our senses ; and, as the narrative form always weakens this impression, they must be produced by a present action. Thus, in order that a tragic picture may be complete, a whole series is required of particular actions, rendered sensuous and connected with the tragic action as to one whole.

4th. It is necessary, lastly, that the ideas we receive of suffering should act on us in a durable manner, to excite in us a high degree of emotion. The affection created in us by the suffering of another is to us a constrained state from which we hasten to get free ; and the illusion so necessary for pity easily disappears in this case. It is, therefore, a necessity to fasten the mind closely to these ideas, and not to leave it the freedom to get rid too soon of the illusion. The vividness of sudden ideas and the energy of sudden impressions, which in rapid succession affect our senses, would not suffice for this end. For the power of reac-

tion in the mind is manifested in direct proportion to the force with which the receptive faculty is solicited, and it is manifested to triumph over this impression. Now, the poet who wishes to move us ought not to weaken this independent power in us, for it is exactly in the struggle between it and the suffering of our sensuous nature that the higher charm of tragic emotions lies. In order that the heart, in spite of that spontaneous force which reacts against sensuous affections, may remain attached to the impressions of sufferings, it is, therefore, necessary that these impressions should be cleverly suspended at intervals, or even interrupted and intercepted by contrary impressions, to return again with twofold energy and renew more frequently the vividness of the first impression. Against the exhaustion and languor that result from habit, the most effectual remedy is to propose new objects to the senses; this variety retempers them, and the gradation of impressions calls forth the innate faculty, and makes it employ a proportionately stronger resistance. This faculty ought to be incessantly occupied in maintaining its independence against the attacks of the senses, but it must not triumph before the end, still less must it succumb in the struggle. Otherwise, in the former case, suffering, and, in the latter, moral activity is set aside; while it is the union of these two that can alone elicit emotion. The great secret of the tragic art consists precisely in managing this struggle well; it is in this that it shows itself in the most brilliant light.

For this, a succession of alternate ideas is required; therefore a suitable combination is wanted of several particular actions corresponding with these different ideas; actions round which the principal action and the tragic impression which it is wished to produce through it unroll themselves like the yarn from the distaff, and end by enlacing our souls in nets, through which they cannot break. Let me be permitted to

make use of a simile, by saying that the artist ought to begin by gathering up with parsimonious care all the separate rays that issue from the object by aid of which he seeks to produce the tragic effect that he has in view, and these rays, in his hands, become a lightning flash, setting the hearts of all on fire. The tyro casts suddenly and vainly all the thunderbolts of horror and fear into the soul; the artist, on the contrary, advances step by step to his end; he only strikes with measured strokes, but he penetrates to the depth of our soul, precisely because he has only stirred it by degrees.

If we now form the proper deductions from the previous investigation, the following will be the conditions that form bases of the tragic art. It is necessary, in the first place, that the object of our pity should belong to our own species — I mean belong in the full sense of the term — and that the action in which it is sought to interest us be a moral action; that is, an action comprehended in the field of free-will. It is necessary, in the second place, that suffering, its sources, its degrees, should be completely communicated by a series of events chained together. It is necessary, in the third place, that the object of the passion be rendered present to our senses, not in a mediate way and by description, but immediately and in action. In tragedy art unites all these conditions and satisfies them.

According to these principles tragedy might be defined as the poetic imitation of a coherent series of particular events (forming a complete action): an imitation which shows us man in a state of suffering, and which has for its end to excite our pity.

I say first that it is the *imitation* of an action; and this idea of imitation already distinguishes tragedy from the other kinds of poetry, which only narrate or describe. In tragedy particular events are presented

to our imagination or to our senses at the very time of their accomplishment ; they are present, we see them immediately, without the intervention of a third person. The epos, the romance, simple narrative, even in their form, withdraw action to a distance, causing the narrator to come between the acting person and the reader. Now what is distant and past always weakens, as we know, the impressions and the sympathetic affection ; what is present makes them stronger. All narrative forms make of the present something past ; all dramatic form makes of the past a present.

Secondly, I say that tragedy is the imitation of a succession of *events*, of an action. Tragedy has not only to represent by imitation the feelings and the affections of tragic persons, but also the events that have produced these feelings, and the occasion on which these affections are manifested. This distinguishes it from lyric poetry, and from its different forms, which no doubt offer, like tragedy, the poetic imitation of certain states of the mind, but not the poetic imitation of certain actions. An elegy, a song, an ode, can place before our eyes, by imitation, the moral state in which the poet actually is — whether he speaks in his own name, or in that of an ideal person — a state determined by particular circumstances ; and up to this point these lyric forms seem certainly to be incorporated in the idea of tragedy ; but they do not complete that idea, because they are confined to representing our feelings. There are still more essential differences, if the end of these lyrical forms and that of tragedy are kept in view.

I say, in the third place, that tragedy is the imitation of a complete action. A separate event, though it be ever so tragic, does not in itself constitute a tragedy. To do this, several events are required, based one on the other, like cause and effect, and suitably connected so as to form a whole ; without which the truth of the

feeling represented, of the character, etc.,—that is, their conformity with the nature of our mind, a conformity which alone determines our sympathy—will not be recognised. If we do not feel that we ourselves in similar circumstances should have experienced the same feelings and acted in the same way, our pity would not be awakened. It is, therefore, important that we should be able to follow in all its concatenation the action that is represented to us, that we should see it issue from the mind of the agent by a natural gradation, under the influence and with the concurrence of external circumstances. It is thus that we see spring up, grow, and come to maturity under our eyes, the curiosity of *Œdipus* and the jealousy of *Iago*. It is also the only way to fill up the great gap that exists between the joy of an innocent soul and the torments of a guilty conscience, between the proud serenity of the happy man and his terrible catastrophe; in short, between the state of calm, in which the reader is at the beginning, and the violent agitation he ought to experience at the end.

A series of several connected incidents is required to produce in our souls a succession of different movements which arrest the attention, which, appealing to all the faculties of our minds, enliven our instinct of activity when it is exhausted, and which, by delaying the satisfaction of this instinct, do not kindle it the less. Against the suffering of sensuous nature the human heart has only recourse to its moral nature as counterpoise. It is, therefore, necessary, in order to stimulate this in a more pressing manner, for the tragic poet to prolong the torments of sense, but he must also give a glimpse to the latter of the satisfaction of its wants, so as to render the victory of the moral sense so much the more difficult and glorious. This twofold end can only be attained by a succession of actions judiciously chosen and combined to this end.

In the fourth place, I say that tragedy is the poetic *imitation* of an action deserving of pity, and, therefore, tragic imitation is opposed to *historic* imitation. It would only be a historic imitation if it proposed a historic end, if its principal object were to *teach* us that a thing has taken place, and how it took place. On this hypothesis it ought to keep rigorously to historic accuracy, for it would only attain its end by representing faithfully that which really took place. But tragedy has a *poetic* end, that is to say, it represents an action to *move* us, and to *charm* our souls by the medium of this emotion. If, therefore, a matter being given, tragedy treats it conformably with this poetic end, which is proper to it, it becomes, by that very thing, free in its imitation. It is a right — nay, more, it is an obligation — for tragedy to subject historic truth to the laws of poetry, and to treat its matter in conformity with requirements of this art. But as it cannot attain its end, which is emotion, except on the condition of a perfect conformity with the laws of nature, tragedy is, notwithstanding its freedom in regard to history, strictly subject to the laws of natural truth, which, in opposition to the truth of history, takes the name of poetic truth. It may thus be understood how much poetic truth may lose, in many cases, by a strict observance of historic truth, and, reciprocally, how much it may gain by even a very serious alteration of truth according to history. As the tragic poet, like poets in general, is only subject to the laws of poetic truth, the most conscientious observance of historic truth could never dispense him from his duties as poet, and could never excuse in him any infraction of poetic truth or lack of interest. It is, therefore, betraying very narrow ideas on tragic art, or rather on poetry in general, to drag the tragic poet before the tribunal of history, and to require *instruction* of the man who by his very title is only bound to move and charm

you. Even supposing the poet, by a scrupulous submission to historic truth, had stripped himself of his privilege of artist, and that he had tacitly acknowledged in history a jurisdiction over his work, art retains all her rights to summon him before its bar; and pieces such as "The Death of Hermann," "Minona," "Fust of Stromberg," if they could not stand the test on this side, would only be tragedies of mediocre value, notwithstanding all the minuteness of costume — of national costume — and of the manners of the time.

Fifthly, tragedy is the imitation of an action that lets us see *man suffering*. The word *man* is essential to mark the limits of tragedy. Only the suffering of a being like ourselves can move our pity. Thus, evil genii, demons — or even men like them without morals — and again pure spirits, without our weaknesses, are unfit for tragedy. The very idea of suffering implies a man in the full sense of the term. A pure spirit cannot suffer, and a man approaching one will never awaken a high degree of sympathy. A purely sensuous being can indeed have terrible suffering; but without moral sense it is a prey to it, and a suffering with reason inactive is a disgusting spectacle. The tragedian is right to prefer mixed characters, and to place the ideal of his hero half-way between utter perversity and entire perfection.

Lastly, tragedy unites all these requisites to excite pity. Many means the tragic poet takes might serve another object; but he frees himself from all requirements not relating to this end, and is thereby obliged to direct himself with a view to this supreme object.

The final aim to which all the laws tend is called the *end* of any style of poetry. The means by which it attains this are its *form*. The end and form are, therefore, closely related. The form is determined by the end, and when the form is well observed the end is generally attained. Each kind of poetry having a

special end must have a distinguishing form. What it exclusively produces it does in virtue of this special nature it possesses. The end of tragedy is *emotion*; its form is the imitation of an action that leads to suffering. Many kinds may have the same object as tragedy, of emotion, though it be not their principal end. Therefore, what distinguishes tragedy is the relation of its form to its end, the way in which it attains its end by means of its subject.

If the end of tragedy is to awaken sympathy, and its form is the means of attaining it, the imitation of an action fit to move must have all that favours sympathy. Such is the form of tragedy.

The production of a kind of poetry is perfect when the form peculiar to its kind has been used in the best way. Thus, a perfect tragedy is that where the form is best used to awaken sympathy. Thus, the best tragedy is that where the pity excited results more from the treatment of the poet than the theme. Such is the ideal of a tragedy.

A good number of tragedies, though fine as poems, are bad as dramas, because they do not seek their end by the best use of tragic form. Others, because they use the form to attain an end different from tragedy. Some very popular ones only touch us on account of the subject, and we are blind enough to make this a merit in the poet. There are others in which we seem to have quite forgotten the object of the poet, and, contented with pretty plays of fancy and wit, we issue with our hearts cold from the theatre. Must art, so holy and venerable, defend its cause by such champions before such judges? The indulgence of the public only emboldens mediocrity: it causes genius to blush, and discourages it.

OF THE CAUSE OF THE PLEASURE WE DERIVE FROM
TRAGIC OBJECTS.

WHATEVER pains some modern æsthetics give themselves to establish, contrary to general belief, that the arts of imagination and of feeling have not pleasure for their object, and to defend them against this degrading accusation, this belief will not cease : it reposes upon a solid foundation, and the fine arts would renounce with a bad grace the beneficent mission which has in all times been assigned to them, to accept the new employment to which it is generously proposed to raise them. Without troubling themselves whether they lower themselves in proposing our pleasure as object, they become rather proud of the advantages of reaching immediately an aim never attained except mediately in other routes followed by the activity of the human mind. That the aim of nature, with relation to man, is the happiness of man, — although he ought of himself, in his moral conduct, to take no notice of this aim, — is what, I think, cannot be doubted in general by any one who admits that nature has an aim. Thus the fine arts have the same aim as nature, or rather as the Author of nature, namely, to spread pleasure and render people happy. It procures for us in play what at other more austere sources of good to man we extract only with difficulty. It lavishes as a pure gift that which elsewhere is the price of many hard efforts. With what labour, what application, do we not pay for the pleasures of the understanding ; with what painful sacrifices the approbation of reason ; with what hard privations the joys of sense ! And if we abuse these pleasures, with what a succession of evils do we expiate excess ! Art alone supplies an enjoyment which requires no appreciable effort, which costs no sacrifice, and which we need not repay with repentance. But who could class the merit of charming in this manner

with the poor merit of amusing? Who would venture to deny the former of these two aims of the fine arts solely because they have a tendency higher than the latter?

The praiseworthy object of pursuing everywhere moral good as the supreme aim, which has already brought forth in art so much mediocrity, has caused also in theory a similar prejudice. To assign to the fine arts a really elevated position, to conciliate for them the favour of the state, the veneration of all men, they are pushed beyond their true domain, and a vocation is imposed upon them contrary to their nature. It is supposed that a great service is awarded them by substituting for a frivolous aim — that of charming — a moral aim; and their influence upon morality, which is so apparent, necessarily militates in favour of this pretension. It is found illogical that the art which contributes in so great a measure to the development of all that is most elevated in man, should produce but accessorially this effect, and make its chief object an aim so vulgar as we imagine pleasure to be. But this apparent contradiction it would be very easy to conciliate if we had a good theory of pleasure, and a complete system of æsthetic philosophy.

It would result from this theory that a free pleasure, as that which the fine arts procure for us, rests wholly upon moral conditions, and all the moral faculties of man are exercised in it. It would further result that this pleasure is an aim which can never be attained but by moral means, and consequently that art, to tend and perfectly attain to pleasure, as to a real aim, must follow the road of healthy morals. Thus it is perfectly indifferent for the dignity of art whether its aim should be a moral aim, or whether it should reach only through moral means; for in both cases it has always to do with the morality, and must be rigorously in unison with the sentiment of duty; but for the perfection of

art, it is by no means indifferent which of the two should be the aim and which the means. If it is the aim that is moral, art loses all that by which it is powerful, — I mean its freedom, and that which gives it so much influence over us — the charm of pleasure. The play which recreates is changed into serious occupation, and yet it is precisely in recreating us that art can the better complete the great affair — the moral work. It cannot have a salutary influence upon the morals but in exercising its highest æsthetic action, and it can only produce the æsthetic effect in its highest degree in fully exercising its liberty.

It is certain, besides, that all pleasure, the moment it flows from a moral source, renders man morally better, and then the effect in its turn becomes cause. The pleasure we find in what is beautiful, or touching, or sublime, strengthens our moral sentiments, as the pleasure we find in kindness, in love, etc., strengthens these inclinations. And just as contentment of mind is the sure lot of the morally excellent man, so moral excellence willingly accompanies satisfaction of heart. Thus the moral efficacy of art is, not only because it employs moral means in order to charm us, but also because even the pleasure which it procures us, is a means of morality.

There are as many means by which art can attain its aim as there are in general sources from which a free pleasure for the mind can flow. I call a free pleasure that which brings into play the spiritual forces — reason and imagination — and which awakens in us a sentiment by the representation of an idea, in contradistinction to physical or sensuous pleasure, which places our soul under the dependence of the blind forces of nature, and where sensation is immediately awakened in us by a physical cause. Sensual pleasure is the only one excluded from the domain of the fine arts; and the talent of exciting this kind of pleasure

could never raise itself to the dignity of an art, except in the case where the sensual impressions are ordered, reinforced or moderated, after a plan which is the production of art, and which is recognised by representation. But, in this case even, that alone here can merit the name of art which is the object of a free pleasure — I mean good taste in the regulation, which pleases our understanding, and not physical charms themselves, which alone flatter our sensibility.

The general source of all pleasure, even of sensual pleasure, is propriety, the conformity with the aim. Pleasure is sensual when this propriety is manifested by means of some necessary law of nature which has for physical result the sensation of pleasure. Thus the movement of the blood, and of the animal life, when in conformity with the aim of nature, produces in certain organs, or in the entire organism, corporeal pleasure with all its varieties and all its modes. We feel this conformity by the means of agreeable sensation, but we arrive at no representation of it, either clear or confused.

Pleasure is free when we represent to ourselves the conformability, and when the sensation that accompanies this representation is agreeable. Thus all the representations by which we have noticed that there is propriety and harmony between the end and the means, are for us the sources of free pleasure, and consequently can be employed to this end by the fine arts. Thus, all the representations can be placed under one of these heads: the good, the true, the perfect, the beautiful, the touching, the sublime. The good especially occupies our reason; the true and perfect, our intelligence; the beautiful interests both the intelligence and the imagination; the touching and the sublime, the reason and the imagination. It is true that we also take pleasure in the charm (*Reiz*) or the power called out by action from play, but art uses charm only to

accompany the higher enjoyments which the idea of propriety gives to us. Considered in itself the charm or attraction is lost amid the sensations of life, and art disdains it together with all merely sensual pleasures.

We could not establish a classification of the fine arts only upon the difference of the sources from which each of them draws the pleasure which it affords us; for in the same class of the fine arts many sorts of pleasures may enter, and often all together. But in as far as a certain sort of pleasure is pursued as a principal aim, we can make of it, if not a specific character of a class properly so-called, at least the principle and the tendency of a class in the works of art. Thus, for example, we could take the arts which, above all, satisfy the intelligence and imagination, — consequently those which have as chief object the true, the perfect, and the beautiful, — and unite them under the name of the fine arts (arts of taste, arts of intelligence); those, on the other hand, which especially occupy the imagination and the reason, and which, in consequence, have for principal object the good, the sublime and the touching, could be limited in a particular class under the denomination of touching arts (arts of sentiment, arts of the heart). Without doubt it is impossible to separate absolutely the touching from the beautiful, but the beautiful can perfectly subsist without the touching. Thus, although we are not authorised to base upon this difference of principle a rigorous classification of the liberal arts, it can at least serve to determine with more of precision the criterion, and prevent the confusion in which we are inevitably involved, when, drawing up laws of æsthetic things, we confound two absolutely different domains, as that of the touching and that of the beautiful.

The touching and the sublime resemble in this point, that both one and the other produce a pleasure by a feeling at first of displeasure, and that consequently

(pleasure proceeding from suitability, and displeasure from the contrary) they give us a feeling of suitability which presupposes an unsuitability.

The feeling of the sublime is composed in part of the feeling of our feebleness, of our impotence to embrace an object; and, on the other side, of the feeling of our moral power — of this superior faculty which fears no obstacle, no limit, and which subdues spiritually that even to which our physical forces give way. The object of the sublime thwarts, then, our physical power; and this contrariety (impropriety) must necessarily excite a displeasure in us. But it is, at the same time, an occasion to recall to our conscience another faculty which is in us — a faculty which is even superior to the objects before which our imagination yields. In consequence, a sublime object, precisely because it thwarts the senses, is suitable with relation to reason, and it gives to us a joy by means of a higher faculty, at the same time that it wounds us in an inferior one.

The touching, in its proper sense, designates this mixed sensation, into which enters at the same time suffering and the pleasure that we find in suffering. Thus we can only feel this kind of emotion in the case of a personal misfortune, only when the grief that we feel is sufficiently tempered to leave some place for that impression of pleasure that would be felt by a compassionate spectator. The loss of a great good prostrates for the time, and the remembrance itself of the grief will make us experience emotion after a year. The feeble man is always the prey of his grief; the hero and the sage, whatever the misfortune that strikes them, never experience more than emotion.

Emotion, like the sentiment of the sublime, is composed of two affections — grief and pleasure. There is, then, at the bottom a propriety, here as well as there, and under this propriety a contradiction. Thus

it seems that it is a contradiction in nature that man, who is not born to suffer, is nevertheless a prey to suffering, and this contradiction hurts us. But the evil which this contradiction does us is a propriety with regard to our reasonable nature in general, inasmuch as this evil solicits us to act: it is a propriety also with regard to human society; consequently, even displeasure, which excites in us this contradiction, ought necessarily to make us experience a sentiment of pleasure, because this displeasure is a propriety. To determine in an emotion if it is pleasure or displeasure which triumphs, we must ask ourselves if it is the idea of impropriety or that of propriety which affects us the more deeply. That can depend either on the number of the aims reached or abortive, or on their connection with the final aim of all.

The suffering of the virtuous man moves us more painfully than that of the perverse man, because in the first case there is contradiction not only to the general destiny of man, which is happiness, but also to this other particular principle, viz., that virtue renders happy; whilst in the second case there is contradiction only with regard to the end of man in general. Reciprocally, the happiness of the wicked also offends us much more than the misfortune of the good man, because we find in it a double contradiction: in the first place vice itself, and, in the second place, the recompense of vice.

There is also this other consideration, that virtue is much more able to recompense itself than vice, when it triumphs, is to punish itself; and it is precisely for this that the virtuous man in misfortune would much more remain faithful to the cultus of virtue than the perverse man would dream of converting himself in prosperity.

But what is above all important in determining in the emotions the relation of pleasure and displeasure,

is to compare the two ends — that which has been fulfilled and that which has been ignored — and to see which is the most considerable. There is no propriety which touches us so nearly as moral propriety, and no superior pleasure to that which we feel from it. Physical propriety could well be a problem, and a problem for ever unsolvable. Moral propriety is already demonstrated. It alone is founded upon our reasonable nature and upon internal necessity. It is our nearest interest, the most considerable, and, at the same time, the most easily recognised, because it is not determined by any external element, but by an internal principle of our reason: it is the palladium of our liberty.

This moral propriety is never more vividly recognised than when it is found in conflict with another propriety, and still keeps the upper hand; then only the moral law awakens in full power, when we find it struggling against all the other forces of nature, and when all those forces lose in its presence their empire over a human soul. By these words, “the other forces of nature,” we must understand all that is not moral force, all that is not subject to the supreme legislation of reason: that is to say, feelings, affections, instincts, passions, as well as physical necessity and destiny. The more redoubtable the adversary, the more glorious the victory; resistance alone brings out the strength of the force and renders it visible. It follows that the highest degree of moral consciousness can only exist in strife, and the highest moral pleasure is always accompanied by pain.

Consequently, the kind of poetry which secures us a high degree of moral pleasure must employ mixed feelings, and please us through pain or distress, — this is what tragedy does specially; and her realm embraces all that sacrifices a physical propriety to a moral one; or one moral propriety to a higher one. It might be possible, perhaps, to form a measure of moral pleas-

ure from the lowest to the highest degree, and to determine by this principle of propriety the degree of pain or pleasure experienced. Different orders of tragedy might be classified on the same principle, so as to form a complete exhaustive tabulation of them. Thus, a tragedy being given, its place could be fixed, and its genus determined. Of this subject more will be said separately in its proper place.

A few examples will show how far moral propriety commands physical propriety in our souls.

Theron and Amanda are both tied to the stake as martyrs, and free to choose life or death by the terrible ordeal of fire — they select the latter. What is it which gives such pleasure to us in this scene? Their position so conflicting with the smiling destiny they reject, the reward of misery given to virtue — all here awakens in us the feeling of impropriety; it ought to fill us with great distress. What is nature, and what are her ends and laws, if all this impropriety shows us moral propriety in its full light? We here see the triumph of the moral law, so sublime an experience for us that we might even hail the calamity which elicits it. For harmony in the world of moral freedom gives us infinitely more pleasure than all the discords in nature give us pain.

When Coriolanus, obedient to duty as husband, son, and citizen, raises the siege of Rome, then almost conquered, withdrawing his army, and silencing his vengeance, he commits a very contradictory act evidently. He loses all the fruit of previous victories, he runs spontaneously to his ruin; yet what moral excellence and grandeur he offers! How noble to prefer any impropriety rather than wound moral sense; to violate natural interests and prudence in order to be in harmony with the higher moral law! Every sacrifice of a life is a contradiction, for life is the condition of all good; but in the light of morality the sacrifice

of life is in a high degree proper, because life is not great in itself, but only as a means of accomplishing the moral law. If then the sacrifice of life be the way to do this, life must go. "It is not necessary for me to live, but it is necessary for Rome to be saved from famine," said Pompey, when the Romans embarked for Africa, and his friends begged him to defer his departure till the gale was over.

But the sufferings of a criminal are as charming to us tragically as those of a virtuous man; yet here is the idea of moral impropriety. The antagonism of his conduct to moral law, and the moral imperfection which such conduct presupposes, ought to fill us with pain. Here there is no satisfaction in the morality of his person, nothing to compensate for his misconduct. Yet both supply a valuable object for art; this phenomenon can easily be made to agree with what has been said.

We find pleasure not only in obedience to morality, but in the punishment given to its infraction. The pain resulting from moral imperfection agrees with its opposite, the satisfaction at conformity with the law. Repentance, even despair, have nobleness morally, and can only exist if an incorruptible sense of justice exists at the bottom of the criminal heart, and if conscience maintains its ground against self-love. Repentance comes by comparing our acts with the moral law, hence in the moment of repenting the moral law speaks loudly in man. Its power must be greater than the gain resulting from the crime as the infraction poisons the enjoyment. Now, a state of mind where duty is sovereign is morally proper, and therefore a source of moral pleasure. What, then, sublimer than the heroic despair that tramples even life underfoot, because it cannot bear the judgment within? A good man sacrificing his life to conform to the moral law, or a criminal taking his own life because of the morality he has

violated: in both cases our respect for the moral law is raised to the highest power. If there be any advantage it is in the case of the latter: for the good man may have been encouraged in his sacrifice by an approving conscience, thus detracting from his merit. Repentance and regret at past crimes show us some of the sublimest pictures of morality in active condition. A man who violates morality comes back to the moral law by repentance.

But moral pleasure is sometimes obtained only at the cost of moral pain. Thus one duty may clash with another. Let us suppose Coriolanus encamped with a Roman army before Antium or Corioli, and his mother a Volscian; if her prayers move him to desist, we now no longer admire him. His obedience to his mother would be at strife with a higher duty, that of a citizen. The governor to whom the alternative is proposed, either of giving up the town or of seeing his son stabbed, decides at once on the latter, his duty as father being beneath that of citizen. At first our heart revolts at this conduct in a father, but we soon pass to admiration that moral instinct, even combined with inclination, could not lead reason astray in the empire where it commands. When Timoleon of Corinth puts to death his beloved but ambitious brother, Timophanes, he does it because his idea of duty to his country bids him to do so. The act here inspires horror and repulsion as against nature and the moral sense, but this feeling is soon succeeded by the highest admiration for his heroic virtue, pronouncing, in a tumultuous conflict of emotions, freely and calmly, with perfect rectitude. If we differ with Timoleon about his duty as a republican, this does not change our view. Nay, in those cases, where our understanding judges differently, we see all the more clearly how high we put moral propriety above all other.

But the judgments of men on this moral phenome-

non are exceedingly various, and the reason of it is clear. Moral sense is common to all men, but differs in strength. To most men it suffices that an act be partially conformable with the moral law to make them obey it; and to make them condemn an action it must glaringly violate the law. But to determine the relation of moral duties with the highest principle of morals requires an enlightened intelligence and an emancipated reason. Thus an action which to a few will be a supreme propriety, will seem to the crowd a revolting impropriety, though both judge morally; and hence the emotion felt at such actions is by no means uniform. To the mass the sublimest and highest is only exaggeration, because sublimity is perceived by reason, and all men have not the same share of it. A vulgar soul is oppressed or overstretched by those sublime ideas, and the crowd sees dreadful disorder where a thinking mind sees the highest order.

This is enough about moral propriety as a principle of tragic emotion, and the pleasure it elicits. It must be added that there are cases where natural propriety also seems to charm our mind even at the cost of morality. Thus we are always pleased by the sequence of machinations of a perverse man, though his means and end are immoral. Such a man deeply interests us, and we tremble lest his plan fail, though we ought to wish it to do so. But this fact does not contradict what has been advanced about moral propriety, and the pleasure resulting from it.

Propriety, the reference of means to an end, is to us, in all cases, a source of pleasure; even disconnected with morality. We experience this pleasure unmixed, so long as we do not think of any moral end which disallows action before us. Animal instincts give us pleasure — as the industry of bees — without reference to morals; and in like manner human actions are a pleasure to us when we consider in them only the

relation of means to ends. But if a moral principle be added to these, and impropriety be discovered, if the idea of moral agent comes in, a deep indignation succeeds our pleasure, which no intellectual propriety can remedy. We must not call to mind too vividly that Richard III., Iago, and Lovelace are *men*; otherwise our sympathy for them infallibly turns into an opposite feeling. But, as daily experience teaches, we have the power to direct our attention to different sides of things; and pleasure, only possible through this abstraction, invites us to exercise it, and to prolong its exercise.

Yet it is not rare for intelligent perversity to secure our favour by being the means of procuring us the pleasure of moral propriety. The triumph of moral propriety will be great in proportion as the snares set by Lovelace for the virtue of Clarissa are formidable, and as the trials of an innocent victim by a cruel tyrant are severe. It is a pleasure to see the craft of a seducer foiled by the omnipotence of the moral sense. On the other hand, we reckon as a sort of merit the victory of a malefactor over his moral sense, because it is the proof of a certain strength of mind and intellectual propriety.

Yet this propriety in vice can never be the source of a perfect pleasure, except when it is humiliated by morality. In that case it is an essential part of our pleasure, because it brings moral sense into stronger relief. The last impression left on us by the author of Clarissa is a proof of this. The intellectual propriety in the plan of Lovelace is greatly surpassed by the rational propriety of Clarissa. This allows us to feel in full the satisfaction caused by both.

When the tragic poet has for object to awaken in us the feeling of moral propriety, and chooses his means skilfully for that end, he is sure to charm doubly the connoisseur, by moral and by natural propriety. The first satisfies the heart, the second the mind. The crowd

is impressed through the heart without knowing the cause of the magic impression. But, on the other hand, there is a class of connoisseurs on whom that which affects the heart is entirely lost, and who can only be gained by the appropriateness of the means ; a strange contradiction resulting from over-refined taste, especially when moral culture remains behind intellectual. This class of connoisseurs seek only the intellectual side in touching and sublime themes. They appreciate this in the justest manner, but you must beware how you appeal to their heart ! The over-culture of the age leads to this shoal, and nothing becomes the cultivated man so much as to escape by a happy victory this twofold and pernicious influence. Of all other European nations, our neighbours, the French, lean most to this extreme, and we, as in all things, strain every nerve to imitate this model.

Philosophical Letters

PREFATORY REMARKS.

THE reason passes, like the heart, through certain epochs and transitions, but its development is not so often portrayed. Men seem to have been satisfied with unfolding the passions in their extremes, their aberration, and their results, without considering how closely they are bound up with the intellectual constitution of the individual. Degeneracy in morals roots in a one-sided and wavering philosophy, doubly dangerous, because it blinds the beclouded intellect with an appearance of correctness, truth, and conviction, which places it less under the restraining influence of man's instinctive moral sense. On the other hand, an enlightened understanding ennobles the feelings,—the heart must be formed by the head.

The present age has witnessed an extraordinary increase of a thinking public, by the facilities afforded to the diffusion of reading; the former happy resignation to ignorance begins to make way for a state of half-enlightenment, and few persons are willing to remain in the condition in which their birth has placed them. Under these circumstances it may not be unprofitable to call attention to certain periods of the awakening and progress of the reason, to place in their proper light certain truths and errors, closely connected with morals, and calculated to be a source of happiness or misery, and, at all events, to point out the hidden shoals on which the reason of man has so often suffered shipwreck. Rarely do we arrive at the summit

of truth without running into extremes; we have frequently to exhaust the part of error, and even of folly, before we work our way up to the noble goal of tranquil wisdom.

Some friends, inspired by an equal love of truth and moral beauty, who have arrived at the same conviction by different roads, and who view with serener eye the ground over which they have travelled, have thought that it might be profitable to present a few of these resolutions and epochs of thought. They propose to represent these and certain excesses of the inquiring reason in the form of two young men, of unequal character, engaged in epistolary correspondence. The following letters are the beginning of this essay.

The opinions that are offered in these letters can only be true and false relatively, and in the form in which the world is mirrored in the soul of the correspondent, and of him only. But the course of the correspondence will show that the one-sided, often exaggerated and contradictory opinions at length issue in a general, purified, and well-established truth.

Scepticism and free-thinking are the feverish paroxysms of the human mind, and must needs at length confirm the health of well-organised souls by the unnatural convulsion which they occasion. In proportion to the dazzling and seducing nature of error will be the greatness of the triumphs of truth: the demand for conviction and firm belief will be strong and pressing in proportion to the torment occasioned by the pangs of doubt. But doubt was necessary to elicit these errors; the knowledge of the disease had to precede its cure. Truth suffers no loss if a vehement youth fails in finding it, in the same way that virtue and religion suffer no detriment if a criminal denies them.

It was necessary to offer these prefatory remarks to throw a proper light on the point of view from which the following correspondence has to be read and judged.

LETTER I.

Julius to Raphael.

October.

YOU are gone, Raphael, — and the beauty of nature departs: the sere and yellow leaves fall from the trees, while a thick autumn fog hangs suspended like a bier over the lifeless fields. Solitary, I wander through the melancholy country. I call aloud your name, and am irritated that my Raphael does not answer me.

I had received your last embrace. The mournful sound of the carriage wheels that bore you away had at length died upon my ear. In happier moments I had just succeeded in raising a tumult over the joys of the past, but now again you stand up before me, as your departed spirit, in these regions, and you accompany me to each favourite haunt and pleasant walk. These rocks I have climbed by your side; by your side have my eyes wandered over this immense landscape. In the dark sanctuary of this beech-grove we first conceived the bold ideal of our friendship. It was here that we unfolded the genealogical tree of the soul, and that we found that Julius was so closely related to Raphael. Not a spring, not a thicket, or a hill exists in this region where some memory of departed happiness does not come to destroy my repose. All things combine to prevent my recovery. Wherever I go, I repeat the painful scene of our separation.

What have you done to me, Raphael? What am I become? Man of dangerous power! would that I had never known or never lost you! Hasten back; come on the wings of friendship, or the tender plant, your nursling, shall have perished. How could you, endowed with such tender feelings, venture to leave the work you had begun, but still so incomplete? The foundations that your proud wisdom tried to establish

in my brain and heart are tottering; all the splendid palaces which you erected are crumbling, and the worm crushed to earth is writhing under the ruins.

Happy, heavenly time, when I groped through life, with bandaged eyes, like a drunken man,— when all my knowledge and my wishes were confined to the narrow horizon of my childhood's teachings! Blessed time, when a cheerful sunset raised no higher aspiration in my soul than the wish of a fine day on the morrow; when nothing reminded me of the world save the newspaper; nothing spoke of eternity save the passing bell; only ghost-stories brought to mind the thought of death and judgment; when I trembled at the thought of the devil, and was proportionately drawn to the Godhead! I felt and was happy. Raphael has taught me to think I am on the way to regret that I was ever created.

Creation? No, that is only a sound lacking all meaning, which my reason cannot receive. There was a time when I knew nothing, when no one knew me: accordingly, it is usual to say, I was not. That time is past: therefore it is usual to say that I was created. But also of the millions who existed centuries ago nothing more is now known, and yet men are wont to say, they are. On what do we found the right to grant the beginning and to deny the end? It is assumed that the cessation of thinking beings contradicts Infinite Goodness. Did, then, Infinite Goodness come first into being at the creation of the world? If there was a period when there were no spirits, Infinite Goodness must have been imperative for a whole eternity. If the fabric of the universe is a perfection of the Creator, he, therefore, lacked a perfection before the creation of the world. But an assumption like this contradicts the idea of perfect goodness, therefore there is no creation. To what have I arrived, Raphael? Terrible fallacy of my conclusions! I give up the

Creator as soon as I believe in a God. Wherefore do I require a God, if I suffice without the Creator?

You have robbed me of the thought that gave me peace. You have taught me to despise where I prayed before. A thousand things were venerable in my sight till your dismal wisdom stripped off the veil from them. I saw a crowd of people streaming to church, I heard their enthusiastic devotion poured forth in a common act of prayer and praise; twice did I stand beside a death-bed, and saw — wonderful power of religion! — the hope of heaven triumphant over the terror of annihilation, and the serene light of joy beaming from the eyes of those departing.

“Surely that doctrine must be divine,” I exclaimed, “which is acknowledged by the best among men, which triumphs and comforts so wondrously!” Your cold-blooded wisdom extinguished my enthusiasm. You affirmed that an equal number of devotees streamed formerly round the *Irmensäule* and to Jupiter’s temple; an equal number of votaries, with like exultation, ascended the stake kindled in honour of Brahma. “Can the very feeling,” you added, “which you found so detestable in heathenism prove the truth of your doctrine?”

You proceeded to say: “Trust nothing but your own reason. There is nothing holy, save truth.” I have obeyed you: I have sacrificed all my opinions, I have set fire to all my ships when I landed on this island, and I have destroyed all my hopes of return. Never can I become reconciled to a doctrine which I joyfully welcomed once. My reason is now all to me — my only warrant for God, virtue, and immortality. Woe to me if I catch this, my only witness, in a contradiction! if my esteem for its conclusions diminishes! if a broken vessel in my brain diverts its action! My happiness is henceforth entrusted to the harmonious action of my sensorium: woe to me if the strings

of this instrument give a false note in the critical moments of my life — if my convictions vary with my pulsations!

LETTER II.

Julius to Raphael.

YOUR doctrine has flattered my pride. I was a prisoner: you have led me out into the daylight; the golden shimmer and the measureless vault have enraptured my eye. Formerly, I was satisfied with the modest reputation of being a good son of my father's house, a friend of my friends, a useful member of society. You have changed me into a citizen of the universe. At that time my wishes had not aspired to infringe on the rights of the great: I tolerated these fortunate people because beggars tolerated me. I did not blush to envy a part of the human race, because there was a still larger part of humanity that I was obliged to pity. Meeting you, I learned for the first time that my claims on enjoyment were as well founded as those of my brethren. Now, for the first time, I learned that, raised one stratum above this atmosphere, I weighed just as much and as little as the rulers of this world. Raphael severed all bonds of agreement and of opinion. I felt myself quite free; for reason, as Raphael declared, is the only monarchy in the world of spirits, and I carried my imperial throne in my brain. All things in heaven and earth have no value, no estimation, except that which my reason grants them. The whole creation is mine, for I possess an irresistible omnipotence, and am empowered to enjoy it fully. All spirits — one degree below the most perfect Spirit — are my brethren, because we all obey one rule, and do homage to one supremacy.

How magnificent and sublime this announcement sounds! What a field for my thirst of knowledge!

But — unlucky contradiction of nature — this free and soaring spirit is woven together with the rigid, immovable clockwork of a mortal body, mixed up with its little necessities, and yoked to its fate — this god is banished into a world of worms. The immense space of nature is opened to his research, but he cannot think two ideas at the same time. With his eyes he reaches up to the sunny focus of the Godhead, but he himself is obliged to creep after him slowly and wearily through the elements of time. To absorb one enjoyment he must give up all others: two unlimited desires are too great for his little heart. Every fresh joy costs him the sum of all previous joys. The present moment is the sepulchre of all that went before it. An idyllic hour of love is an intermittent pulsation of friendship.

Wherever I look, Raphael, how limited man appears! How great the distance between his aims and their fulfilment! — yet do not begrudge him his soothing slumber. Wake him not! He was so happy before he began to inquire whither he was to go and whence he came! Reason is a torch in a prison. The prisoner knew nothing of the light, but a dream of freedom appeared over him like a flash in the night which leaves the darkness deeper than before. Our philosophy is the unhappy curiosity of Œdipus, who did not cease to inquire till the dreadful oracle was unravelled. Mayest thou never learn who thou art!

Does your wisdom replace what it has set aside? If you had no key to open heaven, why did you lead me away from earth? If you knew beforehand that the way to wisdom leads through the frightful abyss of doubt, why did you venture the innocence of your friend Julius on this desperate throw? —

If to the good, which I propose to do,
Something very bad borders far too near,
I prefer not to do this good.

You have pulled down a shelter that was inhabited, and founded a splendid but lifeless palace on the spot.

Raphael, I claim my soul from you! I am unhappy. My courage is gone. I despair of my own strength. Write to me soon!— your healing hand alone can pour balm on my burning wounds.

LETTER III.

Raphael to Julius.

JULIUS, happiness such as ours, if unbroken, would be too much for human lot. This thought often haunted me even in the full enjoyment of our friendship. This thought, then darkening our happiness, was a salutary foretaste, intended to mitigate the pain of my present position. Hardened in the stern school of resignation, I am still more susceptible of the comfort of seeing in our separation a slight sacrifice whose merit may win from fate the reward of our future reunion. You did not yet know what privation was. You suffer for the first time.

And yet it is perhaps an advantage for you that I have been torn from you exactly at this time. You have to endure a malady, from which you can only perfectly recover by your own energy, so as not to suffer a relapse. The more deserted you feel, the more you will stir up all healing power in yourself, and in proportion as you derive little or no benefit from temporary and deceptive palliatives, the more certainly will you succeed in eradicating the evil fundamentally.

I do not repent that I roused you from your dream, though your present position is painful. I have done nothing more than hasten a crisis, which every soul like yours has sooner or later to pass through, and where the essential thing is, at what time of life it is

endured. There are times and seasons when it is terrible to doubt truth and virtue. Woe to the man who has to fight through the quibbles of a self-sufficient reason while he is immersed in the storms of the passions. I have felt in its fulness all that is expressed by this, and, to preserve you from similar troubles, I could devise no means but to ward off the pestilence by timely inoculation.

Nor could I, my dear Julius, choose a more propitious time. I met you in the full and glorious bloom of youthful intelligence and bodily vigour, before you had been oppressed by care or enchained by passion; fully prepared, in your freedom and strength, to stand the great fight, of which a sublime tranquillity, produced by conviction, is the prize. Truth and error had not yet been interwoven with your interests. Your enjoyments and virtues were independent of both. You required no images of terror to tear you from low dissipation. The feeling for nobler joys had made these odious to you. You were good from instinct and from unconsecrated moral grace. I had nothing to fear for your morality, if a building crumbled down on which it was not founded. Nor do your anxieties alarm me, though you may conjure up many dark anticipations in your melancholy mood. I know you better, Julius!

You are ungrateful, too! You despise the reason, and forget what joys it has procured you. Though you might have escaped the dangers of doubt all your life, still it was my duty not to deprive you of the pleasures which you were capable of enjoying. The height at which you were was not worthy of you. The way up which you climbed gave you compensation for all of which I deprived you. I still recall the delight — with what delight you blessed the moment when the bandage dropped from your eyes! The warmth with which you grasped the truth possibly

may have led your all-devouring imagination to an abyss at sight of which you draw back shuddering.

I must follow the course of your inquiries to discover the sources of your complaints. You have written down the results of your thoughts: send me these papers and then I will answer you.

LETTER IV.

Julius to Raphael.

I HAVE been looking over my papers this morning. Among them I have found a lost memorandum written down in those happy hours when I was inspired with a proud enthusiasm. But on looking over it, how different seem all the things treated of! My former views look like the gloomy boarding of a playhouse when the lights have been removed. My heart sought a philosophy, and imagination substituted her dreams. I took the warmest for the truest colouring.

I seek for the laws of spirits — I soar up to the infinite, but I forget to prove that they really exist. A bold attack of materialism overthrows my creation.

You will read through this fragment, my dear Raphael. Would that you could succeed in kindling once again the extinct flames of my enthusiasm, to reconcile me again to my genius! But my pride has sunk so low that even Raphael's friendly hand can hardly raise me up again.

THEOSOPHY OF JULIUS.

THE WORLD AND THE THINKING BEING.

The universe is a thought of God. After this ideal thought-fabric passed out into reality, and the new-born world fulfilled the plan of its Creator — permit me to

use this human simile — the first duty of all thinking beings has been to retrace the original design in this great reality; to find the principle in the mechanism, the unity in the compound, the law in the phenomenon, and to pass back from the structure to its primitive foundation. Accordingly to me there is only one appearance in nature — the thinking being. The great compound called the world is only remarkable to me because it is present to shadow forth symbolically the manifold expressions of that being. All in me and out of me is only the hieroglyph of a power which is like to me. The laws of nature are the ciphers which the thinking mind adds on to make itself understandable to intelligence — the alphabet by means of which all spirits communicate with the most perfect Spirit and with one another. Harmony, truth, order, beauty, excellence, give me joy, because they transport me into the active state of their author, of their possessor, because they betray the presence of a rational and feeling Being, and let me perceive my relationship with that Being. A new experience in this kingdom of truth: gravitation, the circulation of the blood, the natural system of Linnæus, correspond essentially in my mind to the discovery of an antique dug up at Herculaneum — they are both only the reflections of one spirit, a renewed acquaintance with a being like myself. I speak with the Eternal through the instrument of nature — through the world's history: I read the soul of the artist in his Apollo.

If you wish to be convinced, my dear Raphael, look back. Each state of the human mind has some parable in the physical creation by which it is shadowed forth; nor is it only artists and poets, but even the most abstract thinkers that have drawn from this source. Lively activity we name fire; time is a stream that rolls on, sweeping all before it; eternity is a circle; a mystery is hid in midnight gloom, and truth dwells in

the sun. Nay, I begin to believe that even the future destiny of the human race is prefigured in the dark oracular utterances of bodily creation. Each coming spring, forcing the sprouts of plants out of the earth, gives me explanations of the awful riddle of death, and contradicts my anxious fears about an everlasting sleep. The swallow that we find stiffened in winter, and see waking up to life after; the dead grub coming to life again as the butterfly and rising into the air, — all of these give excellent pictures of our immortality.

How strange all seems to me now, Raphael! Now all seems peopled round about me. To me there is no solitude in nature. Wherever I see a body I anticipate a spirit. Wherever I trace movement I infer thought.

Where no dead lie buried, where no resurrection will be, Omnipotence speaks to me this through his works, and thus I understand the doctrine of the omnipresence of God.

IDEA.

All spirits are attracted by perfection. There may be deviations, but there is no exception to this, for all strive after the condition of the highest and freest exercise of their powers; all possess the common instinct of extending their sphere of action; of drawing all, and centring all in themselves; of appropriating all that is good, all that is acknowledged as charming and excellent. When the beautiful, the true, and the excellent are once seen, they are immediately grasped at. A condition once perceived by us, we enter into it immediately. At the moment when we think of them, we become possessors of a virtue, authors of an action, discoverers of a truth, possessors of a happiness. We ourselves become the object perceived. Let no ambiguous smile from you, dear Raphael, disconcert me here, — this assumption is the basis on which I found

all that follows, and we must be agreed before I take courage to complete the structure.

His inner feeling or innate consciousness tells every man almost the same thing. For example, when we admire an act of magnanimity, of bravery and wisdom, does not a secret feeling spring up in our heart that we are capable of doing the same? Does not the rush of blood colouring our cheeks on hearing narratives of this kind proclaim that our modesty trembles at the admiration called forth by such acts? that we are confused at the praise which this ennobling of our nature must call down upon us? Even our body at such moments agrees with the attitude of the man, and shows clearly that our soul has passed into the state we admire. If you were ever present, Raphael, when a great event was related to a large assembly, did you not see how the relater waited for the incense of praise, how he devoured it, though it was given to the hero of his story,— and if you were ever a relater did you not trace how your heart was subject to this pleasing deception? You have had examples, my dear Raphael, of how easily I can wrangle with my best friend respecting the reading aloud of a pleasing anecdote or of a beautiful poem, and my heart told me truly on these occasions that I was only displeased at your carrying off the laurels because these passed from the head of author to that of the reader. A quick and deep artistic appreciation of virtue is justly held to be a great aptitude for virtue, in the same way as it is usual to have no scruple in distrusting the heart of a man whose intelligence is slow to take in moral beauty.

You need not advance as an objection that, frequently, coupled with a lively perception of a perfection, the opposite failing is found to coexist, that evil-doers are often possessed with strong enthusiasm for what is excellent, and that even the weak flame up into enthusiasm of herculean growth. I know, for ex-

ample, that our admired Haller, who unmasked in so manly a spirit the sickly nothingness of vain honours; a man whose philosophical greatness I so highly appreciated, that he was not great enough to despise the still greater vanity of an order of knighthood, which conferred an injury on his greatness. I am convinced that in the happy moment of their ideal conceptions, the artist, the philosopher, and the poet are really the great and good man whose image they throw out; but with many this ennobling of the mind is only an unnatural condition occasioned by a more active stirring of the blood, or a more rapid vibration of the fancy: it is accordingly very transient, like every other enchantment, disappearing rapidly and leaving the heart more exhausted than before, and delivered over to the despotic caprice of low passions. I expressly said more exhausted than before, for universal experience teaches that a relapsing criminal is always the most furious, and that the renegades of virtue seek additional sweets in the arms of crime to compensate for the heavy pressure of repentance.

I wished to establish, my Raphael, that it is our own condition, when we feel that of another, that perfection becomes ours for the moment during which we raise in ourselves the representation of it; that the delight we take in truth, beauty, and virtue shows itself when closely analysed to be the consciousness of our individual ennobling and enriching; and I think I have proved this.

We have ideas of the wisdom of the highest Being, of his goodness, of his justice, but none of his omnipotence. To describe his omnipotence, we help ourselves by the graduated representation of three successions: Nothing, His Will, and Something. It is waste and empty; God calls on light; and there is light. If we had a real idea of his operative omnipotence we should be creators, as he.

Accordingly, every perfection which I perceive becomes my own; it gives me joy, because it is my own; I desire it, because I love myself. Perfection in nature is no property of matter, but of spirits. All spirits are happy through their perfection. I desire the happiness of all souls, because I love myself. The happiness which I represent to myself becomes my happiness; accordingly I am interested in awakening these representations, to realise them, to exalt them; I am interested in diffusing happiness around me. Whenever I produce beauty, excellence, or enjoyment beyond myself, I produce myself; when I neglect or destroy anything, I neglect, I destroy myself. I desire the happiness of others, because I desire my own; and the desire of the happiness of others we call benevolence and love.

LOVE.

Now, my most worthy Raphael, let me look round. The height has been ascended, the mist is dissipated; I stand in the midst of immensity, as in the middle of a glowing landscape. A purer ray of sunlight has clarified all my thoughts. Love is the noblest phenomenon in the world of souls, the all-powerful magnet in the spiritual sphere, the source of devotion and of the sublimest virtue. Yet love is only the reflection of this single original power, an attraction of the excellent, based upon an instantaneous permutation of individuality, an interchange of being.

When I hate, I take something from myself; when I love, I become richer by what I love. To pardon is to recover a property that has been lost. Misanthropy is a protracted suicide: egotism is the supremest poverty of a created being.

When Raphael tore himself from my embrace my soul was rent in twain, and I weep over the loss of my nobler half. On that holy evening — you must re-

member it — when our souls first communed together in ardent sympathy, all your great emotions became my own, and I only entered into my unvarying right of property over your excellence; I was prouder to love you than to be loved by you, for my own affection had changed me into Raphael.

Was it not this almighty instinct
That forced our hearts to meet
In the eternal bond of love?
Raphael! enraptured, resting on your arm,
I venture, joyful, the march toward perfection,
That leadeth to the spiritual sun.

Happy! happy! I have found thee,
Have secured thee 'midst millions,
And of all this multitude thou art mine!
Let the wild chaos return;
Let it cast adrift the atoms!
For ever our hearts fly to meet each other.

Must I not draw reflections of my ecstasy
From thy radiant, ardent eyes?
In thee alone do I wonder at myself.
The earth in brighter tints appears,
Heaven itself shines in more glowing light,
Seen through the soul and action of my friend.

Sorrow drops the load of tears;
Soothed, it rests from passion's storms,
Nursed upon the breast of love.
Nay, delight grows torment, and seeks
My Raphael, basking in thy soul,
Sweetest sepulchre! impatiently.

If I alone stood in the great All of things,
Dreamed I of souls in the very rocks,
And, embracing, I would have kissed them.
I would have sighed my complaints into the air;
The chasms would have answered me.
O fool! sweet sympathy was every joy to me.

Love does not exist between monotonous souls, giving out the same tone; it is found between harmonious souls. With pleasure I find again my feelings in the mirror of yours, but with more ardent longing I devour the higher emotions that are wanting in me. Friendship and love are led by one common rule. The gentle Desdemona loves Othello for the dangers through which he has passed; the manly Othello loves her for the tears that she shed hearing of his troubles.

There are moments in life when we are impelled to press to our heart every flower, every remote star, each worm, and the sublimest spirit we can think of. We are impelled to embrace them, and all nature, in the arms of our affection, as things most loved. You understand me, Raphael. A man who has advanced so far as to read off all the beauty, greatness, and excellence in the great and small of nature, and to find the great unity for this manifold variety, has advanced much nearer to the Divinity. The great creation flows into his personality. If each man loved all men, each individual would possess the whole world.

I fear that the philosophy of our time contradicts this doctrine. Many of our thinking brains have undertaken to drive out by mockery this heavenly instinct from the human soul, to efface the effigy of Deity in the soul, and to dissolve this energy, this noble enthusiasm, in the cold, killing breath of a pusillanimous indifference. Under the slavish influence of their own unworthiness they have entered into terms with self-interest, the dangerous foe of benevolence; they have done this to explain a phenomenon which was too godlike for their narrow hearts. They have spun their comfortless doctrine out of a miserable egotism, and they have made their own limits the measure of the Creator; degenerate slaves decrying freedom amidst the rattle of their own chains. Swift,

who exaggerated the follies of men till he covered the whole race with infamy, and wrote at length his own name on the gallows which he had erected for it — even Swift could not inflict such deadly wounds on human nature as these dangerous thinkers, who, laying great claim to penetration, adorn their system with all the specious appearance of art, and strengthen it with all the arguments of self-interest.

Why should the whole species suffer for the shortcomings of a few members?

I admit freely that I believe in the existence of a disinterested love. I am lost if I do not exist; I give up the Deity, immortality, and virtue. I have no remaining proof of these hopes if I cease to believe in love. A spirit that loves itself alone is an atom giving out a spark in the immeasurable waste of space.

SACRIFICE.

But love has produced effects that seem to contradict its nature.

It can be conceived that I increase my own happiness by a sacrifice which I offer for the happiness of others; but suppose this sacrifice is my life? History has examples of this kind of sacrifice, and I feel most vividly that it would cost me nothing to die in order to save Raphael. How is it possible that we can hold death to be a means of increasing the sum of our enjoyments? How can the cessation of my being be reconciled with the enriching of my being?

The assumption of immortality removes this contradiction; but it also displaces the supreme gracefulness of this act of sacrifice. The consideration of a future reward excludes love. There must be a virtue which even without the belief in immortality, even at the peril of annihilation, suffices to carry out this sacrifice.

I grant it is ennobling to the human soul to sacrifice present enjoyment for a future eternal good ; it is the noblest degree of egotism ; but egotism and love separate humanity into two very unlike races, whose limits are never confounded.

Egotism erects its centre in itself ; love places it out of itself in the axis of the universal whole. Love aims at unity, egotism at solitude. Love is the citizen ruler of a flourishing republic, egotism is a despot in a devastated creation. Egotism sows for gratitude, love for the ungrateful. Love gives, egotism lends ; and love does this before the throne of judicial truth, indifferent if for the enjoyment of the following moment, or with the view to a martyr's crown — indifferent whether the reward is in this life or in the next.

Think, O Raphael, of a truth that benefits the whole human race to remote ages ; add that this truth condemns its confessor to death ; that this truth can only be proved and believed if he dies. Conceive this man gifted with the clear all-embracing and illumining eye of genius, with the flaming torch of enthusiasm, with all the sublime adaptations for love ; let the grand ideal of this great effect be presented to his soul ; let him have only an obscure anticipation of all the happy beings he will make ; let the present and future crowd at the same time into his soul ; and then answer me, — does this man require to be referred to a future life ?

The sum of all these emotions will become confounded with his personality ; will flow together in his personal identity, his I or Ego. The human race he is thinking of is himself. It is a body, in which his life swims forgotten like a blood-drop, forgotten, but essential to the welfare of the economy ; and how quickly and readily he will shed it to secure his health.

GOD.

All perfections in the universe are united in God. God and nature are two magnitudes which are quite alike. The whole sum of harmonic activity which exists together in the divine substance, is in nature the antitype of this substance, united to incalculable degrees, and measures, and steps. If I may be allowed this expressive imagery, nature is an infinitely divided God.

Just as in the prism a white ray of light is split up into seven darker shades of colour, so the divine personality or Ego has been broken into countless susceptible substances. As seven darker shades melt together in one clear pencil of light, out of the union of all these substances a divine being would issue. The existing form of nature's fabric is the optical glass, and all the activities of spirits are only an endless play of colours of that simple divine ray. If it pleased Omnipotence some day to break up this prism, the barrier between it and the world would fall down, all spirits would be absorbed in one infinite spirit, all accords would flow together in one common harmony, all streams would find their end in the ocean.

The bodily form of nature came to pass through the attractive force of the elements. The attraction of spirits, varied and developed infinitely, would at length lead to the cessation of that separation (or may I venture the expression), would produce God. An attraction of this kind is love.

Accordingly, my dear Raphael, love is the ladder by which we climb up to likeness to God. Unconsciously to ourselves, without laying claim to it, we aim at this.

Lifeless masses are we, when we hate ;
Gods, when we cling in love to one another,
Rejoicing in the gentle bond of love.

Upwards this divinest impulse holdeth sway
Through the thousandfold degrees of creation
Of countless spirits who did not create.

Arm in arm, higher and still higher,
From the savage to the Grecian seer,
Who is linked to the last seraph of the ring,
We turn, of one mind, in the same magic dance,
Till measure, and e'en time itself,
Sink at death in the boundless, glowing sea.

Friendless was the great world's Master ;
And feeling this, he made the spirit world
Blessed mirrors of his own blessedness !
And though the Highest found no equal,
Yet infinitude foams upward unto him
From the vast basin of creation's realm.

Love is, Raphael, the great secret that can restore the dishonoured king of gold from the flat, unprofitable chalk ; that can save the eternal from the temporal and transient, and the great oracle of duration from the consuming conflagration of time.

What does all that has been said amount to ?

If we perceive excellence, it is ours. Let us become intimate with the high ideal unity, and we shall be drawn to one another in brotherly love. If we plant beauty and joy we shall reap beauty and joy. If we think clearly we shall love ardently. "Be ye perfect, as your Father in heaven is perfect," says the Founder of our faith. Weak human nature turned pale at this command, therefore he explained himself in clearer terms: "Love one another!"

Wisdom, with thy sunlike look,
Awful goddess ! turn thee back,
And give way to Love ;
Who before thee went, with hero heart,
Up the steep and stormy path
To the Godhead's very throne ;

Who, unveiling the Holiest,
Showed to thee Elysium
Through the vaulted sepulchre.
Did it not invite us in?
Could we reach immortality—
Or could we seek the spirit
Without Love, the spirit's master?
Love, Love leadeth only to Nature's Father,
Only love the spirits.

I have now given you, Raphael, my spirit's confession of faith—a flying outline of the creation I have undertaken. As you may perceive, the seed which you scattered in my soul took root. Mock or rejoice, or blush at your scholar, as you please. Certain it is this philosophy has ennobled my heart, and extended and beautified the perspective of my life. It is possible, my excellent friend, that the entire structure of my conclusions may have been a baseless and visionary edifice. Perhaps the world, as I depicted it, nowhere exists, save in the brain of your Julius. Perhaps after the lapse of thousands on thousands of years, when the wiser Judge promised in the future sits on the judgment-seat, at the sight of the true original, filled with confusion, I should tear in pieces my schoolboy's design. All this may happen—I expect it; and even if not a vestige of reality is found in my dream, the reality will fill me with proportionately greater delight and wonder. Ought my ideas to be more beautiful than those of the Creator? How so? Could we tolerate that his exalted artistic structure should fall beneath the expectations of a mortal connoisseur? This is exactly the fiery probation of his great perfection, and the sweetest triumph for the Exalted Spirit, that false conclusions and deception do not injure his acknowledgment; that all tortuous deviations of the wandering reason at length strike into the straight road of everlasting truth; that all diverging arms and currents ultimately meet in the main stream. What

an idea, Raphael, I form of the Great Artist, who, differently travestied in a thousand copies, still retains identical features in all this diversity, from which even the depreciating hand of a blunderer cannot remove admiration.

Moreover, my representation may certainly be fallacious, wholly an invention, — nay, I am persuaded that it must necessarily be so; and yet it is possible that all results of this may come to pass. All great sages are agreed that our whole knowledge moves on ultimately to a conventional deception, with which, however, the strictest truth can coexist. Our purest ideas are by no means images of things, but only their signs or symbols determined by necessity, and coexisting with them.

Neither God, nor the human soul, nor the world, are really what we consider them. Our thoughts of these are only the endemic forms in which the planet we inhabit hands them to us. Our brain belongs to this planet; accordingly, also, the idioms of our ideas, which are treasured up in it. But the power of the soul is peculiar, necessary, and always consistent: the capricious nature of the materials through which it finds expression changes nothing in the eternal laws, as long as this capriciousness does not stand in contradiction with itself, and so long as the sign remains true to the thing it designates. As the thinking power develops the relations of the idioms, these relations of things must also really be present in them. Therefore, truth is no property of the idioms, but of the conclusion; it is not the likeness of the sign with the thing signified, of the conception with the object, but the agreement of this conception with the laws of thought. In a similar manner, the doctrine of quantity makes use of ciphers which are nowhere present, except upon paper, and yet it finds with them what is present in the world of reality. For example, what resemblance is

there between the letters A and B, the signs: and =, —, and —, and the fact that has to be ascertained? Yet the comet, foretold centuries before, advances from a remote corner of the heavens, and the expected planet eclipses the disk at the proper time. Trusting to the infallibility of his calculation, the discoverer Columbus plunges into unknown regions of the sea to seek the missing other half of the known hemisphere—the great island of Atlantis—to fill up a blank in his geographical map. He found this island of his paper calculation, and his calculation was right. Would it have been less great if a hostile storm had shattered his fleet or driven it back? The human mind makes a similar calculation when it measures the supersensual by means of the sensible, and when mathematics applies its conclusions to the hidden physics of the superhuman. But the last test of its calculations is still wanting, for no traveller has come back from that land to relate his discovery. Human nature has its proper bounds, and so also has the individual. We will give each other mutual comfort respecting the former: Raphael will concede this to the boyish age of his Julius. I am poor in conceptions, a stranger in many branches of knowledge which are thought to be essential in inquiries of this nature. I have not belonged to any philosophical school, nor have I read many printed books. It may quite well be that I occasionally substitute my fancies in the place of stricter logical proofs, that I mistake the rush of my blood or the hopes of my heart for sound wisdom; yet, my dear friend, you must not grudge me the moments I have thus lost. It is a real gain for universal perfection: it was the provision of the Wisest Spirit that the erring reason should also people the chaotic world of dreams, and make fruitful even the barren ground of contradiction. It is not only the mechanical artist who polishes the rough diamond into a brilliant whom we ought to

value, but also that one who ennobles mere ordinary stones by giving them the apparent dignity of the diamond. The industry displayed in the forms may sometimes make us forget the massive truth of the substance. Is not every exercise of the thinking power, every sharpening of the edge of the spirit, a little step toward its perfection? And every perfection has to obtain a being and substantial existence in a complete and perfect world. Reality is not confined to the absolutely necessary; it also embraces the conditionally necessary: every offspring of the brain, every work elaborated by the wit, has an irresistible right of citizenship in this wider acceptance of creation. In the measureless plan of nature no activity was to be left out, no degree of enjoyment was to be wanting in universal happiness. The great Inventive Spirit would not even permit error to be wasted, nor allow this wide world of thought to remain empty and chaotic in the mind of man. For the Great Ruler of his world does not even allow a straw to fall without use, leaves no space uninhabited where life may be enjoyed; for he converts the very poison of man into the food of vipers; he even raises plants from the realm of corruption, and hospitably grants the little glimmer of pleasure that can coexist with madness. He turns crime and folly into excellence, and weaves out of the very vices of a Tarquin the great idea of the universal monarchy of Rome. Every facility of the reason, even in error, increases its readiness to accept truth.

Dear friend of my soul, suffer me to add my contribution to the great woof of human wisdom. The image of the sun is reflected differently in the dewdrop and in the majestic mirror of the wide-stretching ocean. Shame to the turbid, murky swamp, which never receives and never reflects this image! Millions of plants drink from the four elements of nature; a magazine of supplies is open for all: but they mix their sap in a

thousand different ways, and return it in a thousand new forms. The most beautiful variety proclaims a rich Lord of this house. There are four elements from which all spirits draw their supplies: their Ego or individuality, Nature, God, and the Future. All intermingle in millions of ways and offer themselves in a million differences of result; but one truth remains which, like a firm axis, goes through all religions and systems—draw nigh to the Godhead of whom you think!

LETTER V.

Raphael to Julius.

It would be very unfortunate, my dear Julius, if there were no other way of quieting you than by restoring the first-fruits of your belief in you. I found with delight these ideas, which I saw gaining in you, written down in your papers. They are worthy of a soul like yours, but you could not remain stationary in them. There are joys for every age and enjoyments for each degree of spirits. It must have been a difficult thing for you to sever yourself from a system that was entirely made to meet the wants of your heart. I would wager that no other system will strike such deep roots in you, and, possibly, if left quite to your own direction, you would sooner or later become reconciled to your favourite ideas. You would soon remark the weakness of the opposite system, and then, if both systems appeared equally deficient in proof, you would prefer the most desirable one, or, perhaps, you would find new arguments to preserve at least the essential features of your former theory, even if a few more doubtful points had to be given up.

But all this is remote from my plan. You must arrive at a higher *freedom of mind*, where you no

longer require support. I grant that this is not the affair of a moment. The first aim of the earliest teaching is commonly the subjugation of the mind, and among all the artifices of the art of education this generally succeeds the first. Even you, though endowed with great elasticity of character, yet appear destined to submit readily to the sway of *opinions*, and even more inclined to this than thousands; and this state of infancy might last very long with you, as you do not readily feel the oppression of it. Your head and heart are in very close connection. A doctrine is sweet to you on account of the teacher. You soon succeeded in finding an interesting side in this doctrine, you ennobled it according to the wants of your heart, and you suffered your mind to be resigned to other points that must needs appear strange to you. You regarded attacks on this doctrine as boyish revenge taken by a slavish soul against the rod of its tutor. You played with your chains, which you thought you carried by your own free will.

I found you in this situation, and the sight gave me pain — how, in the midst of the enjoyment of your glowing life, and while giving expression to your noblest powers, you were hemmed in by narrow considerations. The very logical consistency with which you acted according to your convictions, and the strength of soul that made every sacrifice light to you, were twofold hinderances to your activity and to your joys. I then resolved to set aside these clumsy efforts by which it had been endeavoured to cramp a soul like yours in the measure of ordinary natures. The result of your first exertions favoured my intentions. I admit that your imagination was more actively employed upon the work than was your penetration. The loss of your fondest convictions was more than atoned for by your presentiments, which gathered results much more rapidly than the tortoise pace of cold scientific

inquiry, passing from the known to the unknown. Your kind of inspired system gave you your first enjoyment in this new field of activity, and I was very careful not to destroy a welcome enthusiasm which was very favourable to the development of your excellent disposition. The scene is now changed. A return into the restrictions of infancy is closed for ever. Your way leads onwards, and you require no further precautions.

You must not be surprised to find that a system such as yours cannot resist the searching of a severe criticism. All essays of this kind, equal in breadth and boldness to yours, have had no other fate. It was also most natural that your philosophical progress began with you individually, as with the human race in general. The *first object* on which man's spirit of inquiry first attempted its strength was, at all times, the universe. Hypotheses relating to the origin of the world, and the combination of its parts, had occupied the greatest thinkers, for ages, when Socrates called down the philosophy of his day from heaven to earth. But the limits of human wisdom were too narrow for the proud intellect of his followers. New systems arose on the ruins of the former ones. The penetrating mind of subsequent ages explored the immeasurable field of possible answers to those ever-recurring questions, bearing on the mysterious interior of nature, which could not be disclosed by any human intellect. Some, indeed, succeeded in giving a certain colouring of distinctness, completeness, and evidence to their views. There are many conjuring tricks by which the pride of reason seeks to avoid the disgrace of not being able to exceed the bounds of human nature in extending the circle of its knowledge. It is a frequent conceit with men to believe that they have discovered new truths, when they have dissected a conception into the separate elements out of which it was first compounded by an act of caprice. Not unfre-

quently an imperceptible assumption lies at the basis of a chain of consequences, whose breaks and deficiencies are cunningly concealed, while the false conclusions are admired as sublime wisdom. In other cases, partial experiences are accumulated to found a hypothesis, and all contradictory phenomena are either ignored, or the meaning of words is changed according to the requirements of the reasoning. Nor is it only the philosophical quack who employs these conjuring tricks to deceive the public; without being conscious of it, the most upright and the least prejudiced thinker uses analogous means to satisfy his thirst for knowledge directly that he issues from the only sphere where reason can legitimately enjoy the fruit of its activity.

After what you have heard me say on former occasions, Julius, these expressions must cause you no little astonishment; yet they are not the product of a sceptical caprice. I could lay before you the foundations on which they rest, but this would require, as prelude, a somewhat dry examination into the nature of human knowledge,—and I prefer to reserve this for a time when you will feel the want of it. You have not yet arrived at that state of mind when humiliating truths on the limits of human knowledge can have any interest for you. Make a first essay with the system which has supplanted your own in your mind. Examine it with the same impartiality as severity. Proceed in the same manner with other theories with which you have recently become acquainted; and if none of them can fully satisfy your requirements, you will ask yourself if, after all, these requirements are reasonable.

Perhaps you will tell me this is a poor consolation. You will infer that resignation is your only refuge after so many brilliant hopes had been raised. “Was it worth while,” you will say, “to challenge me to a full

exercise of my reason in order to set bounds to it at the very moment when it was beginning to bear the noblest fruit? Was I only to become acquainted with a higher enjoyment in order to feel with a double keenness how painful it is to be thus bounded?"

Nevertheless, it is this very feeling of discouragement that I expressly wish to banish from your soul. My aim is this: to remove all that places an obstacle to the free enjoyment of your being, to bring to life in you the germ of all lofty inspiration — the consciousness of the nobility of your soul. You have been awakened from the slumber in which you were rocked by the slavery of others' opinions; but you would never reach the degree of grandeur to which you are called if you dissipated your strength in the pursuit of an unattainable end. This course was all proper up to the present time; it was the natural consequence of your recently acquired freedom. It was necessary that the ideas which had most engaged you previously should give the first impulse to the activity of your mind. Among all possible directions that your mind could take, is its present course the most fertile in results? The answer would be given, sooner or later, by your own experience. My part was confined to hastening, if possible, this crisis.

It is a common prejudice to take as a measure of the greatness of man that matter on which he works, and not the manner of his work. But it is certain that a superior Being honours the stamp of perfection even in the most limited sphere, whilst he casts an eye of pity on the vain attempts of the insect which seeks to overlook the universe. It follows from this that I am especially unwilling to agree to the proposition in your papers, which assumes that the high destiny of man is to detect the spirit of the Divine Artist in the work of creation. To express the activity of infinite perfection, I admit that I do not know any sublimer image than

art ; but you appear to have overlooked an important distinction. The universe is not the pure expression of an ideal, like the accomplished work of a human artist. The latter governs despotically the inanimate matter which he uses to give a body to his ideas. But in the divine work the proper value of each one of its parts is respected, and this conservative respect with which the Great Architect honours every germ of activity, even in the lowliest creature, glorifies it as much as the harmony of the immeasurable whole. Life and liberty to all possible extent are the seal of divine creation ; nowhere is it more sublime than where it seems to have departed most widely from its ideal. But it is precisely this highest perfection that prevents us from grasping the limits in which we are at present confined. We embrace only too small a part of the universe, and the explanation of most of its discords is inaccessible to our faculties. Each step we climb in the scale of being will make us more susceptible of these enjoyments of art ; but even then their only value will be that of means, and to excite us to an analogous exercise of our activity. The idle admiration of a greatness foreign to ourselves can never be a great merit. A superior man is never wanting in matter for his activity, nor in the forces necessary to become himself a creator in his sphere. This vocation is yours also, Julius ; when you have recognised this you will never have a thought of complaining of the limits that your desire of knowledge cannot overstep.

When you have arrived at this conviction I expect to find you wholly reconciled to me. You must first know fully the extent of your strength before you can appreciate the value of its freest manifestation. Till then, continue to be dissatisfied with me, but do not despair of yourself.

On the Connection Between the Animal and the Spiritual Nature in Man

“It behooves us to clearly realise, as the broad facts which have most wide-reaching consequences in mental physiology and pathology, that all parts of the body, the highest and the lowest, have a sympathy with one another more intelligent than conscious intelligence can yet, or perhaps ever will, conceive ; that there is not an organic motion, visible, or invisible, sensible or insensible, ministrant to the noblest or to the most humble purposes, which does not work its appointed effect in the complex recesses of the mind, *and that the mind, as the crowning achievement of organisation, and the consummation and outcome of all its energies, really comprehends the bodily life.*” — MAWDESLEY, “*Body and Mind.*”

“It is an indisputable truth that what we call the material world is only known to us under the forms of the ideal world, and, as Descartes tells us, our knowledge of the soul is more intimate and certain than our knowledge of the body.” — HUXLEY.

INTRODUCTION.

§ 1.

MANY philosophers have asserted that the body is, as it were, the prison-house of the spirit, holding it only too firmly to what is earthly, and checking its so-called flight toward perfection. On the other hand, it has been held by another philosophic school that knowledge and virtue are not so much an end as a means toward happiness, and that the whole perfection of man culminates in the amelioration of his body.

Both opinions,¹ methinks, are one-sided. The latter system has almost entirely disappeared from our schemes of ethics and philosophy, and is, I am inclined to think, not seldom cast out with over-fanatical zeal — (nothing assuredly is so dangerous to truth as when one-sided opinions meet with one-sided opponents). The former system has on the whole been more patiently endured, since it has the greatest capacity for warming the heart toward virtue, and has already justified its value in the case of truly great souls. Who is there that does not admire the strength of mind of a Cato, the lofty virtue of a Brutus and Aure-

¹ Huxley, speaking of psychology and physiology (idealism and materialism), says: "Our stem divides into two main branches, which grow in opposite ways, and bear flowers which look as different as they can well be. But each branch is sound and healthy, and has as much life and vigour as the other. If a botanist found this state of things in a new plant, I imagine he might be inclined to think that his tree was monœcious, that the flowers were of different sexes, and that, so far from setting up a barrier between the branches of the tree, the only hope of fertility lay in bringing them together. This is my notion of what is to be done with physics and metaphysics. Their differences are complementary, not antagonistic, and thought will never be completely fruitful until the one unites with the other." — HUXLEY, *Macmillan's Mag.*, May, 1870.

Descartes's method (according to Huxley) leads straight up to the critical idealism of his great successor, Kant, in declaring that the ultimate fact of all knowledge is a consciousness — *and therefore affirming that the highest of all certainties, and indeed the only absolute certainty, is the existence of mind.* But it stops short of Berkeley in declaring that matter does not exist: his arguments against its existence would equally tend to prove the non-existence of soul. In Descartes's system, the body is simply a machine, in the midst of which the rational soul (peculiar to man) is lodged, and which it directs at its will, as a skilful engineer familiar with its working might do — through will and through affection he can "increase, slacken, and alter their movements at his pleasure." At the same time, he admits, in all that regards its mere animal life, — in active functions, such as those connected with hunger, respiration, sleep, digestion; in many passive ones, such as we are accustomed to call mental, as in memory, the perception of colour, sound, — a purely automatic action of the body, which it pursues simply by following out its own laws, independent of the soul's direction or interference.

lius, the equanimity of an Epictetus and a Seneca? But, in spite of all this, the system in question is nothing more than a beautiful aberration of the understanding, a real extreme, which in its wild enthusiasm underrates one part of our human nature, and desires to raise us into the order of ideal beings, without at the same time relieving us of our humanity, — a system which runs directly contrary to all that we historically know or philosophically can explain either of the evolution of the single man or of that of the entire race, and can in no way be reconciled with the limitations of our human soul. It is therefore here, as ever, the wisest plan to hold the balance between the two opinions, and thus reach with greater certainty the middle line of truth. But, inasmuch as a mistake has very often been committed by treating the mental powers in an exclusive way, that is, in so far as they can be considered in independence of the body, and through an intentional subordination of this same body, the aim of this present essay will be to bring into a clearer light the remarkable contributions made by the body to the workings of the soul, and the great and real influence of the animal system of sensations upon the spiritual. But this is as like the philosophy of Epicurus as the holding of virtue to be the *summum bonum* is stoicism.

Before we seek to discover those higher moral ends which the animal nature assists us in attaining to, we must establish their physical necessity, and come to an agreement as to some fundamental conceptions.

PHYSICAL CONNECTION.

THE ANIMAL NATURE STRENGTHENS THE ACTION OF
THE SPIRIT.§ 2. — *Organism of the Operations of the Soul —
of its Maintenance and Support — of Generation.*

All those conditions which we accept as requisite to the perfection of man in the moral and material world may be included in one fundamental sentence: The perfection of man consists in his ability to exercise his powers in the observation of the plan of the world; and since between the measure of the power and the end toward which it works there must exist the completest harmony, perfection will consist in the highest possible activity of his powers, and, at the same time, in their mutual subordination. But the action of the human soul is — from a necessity which I do not understand — bound fast to the action of matter. The changes in the world of matter must be modified and, so to speak, refined by a peculiar class of secondary powers — I mean the senses — before they can produce in me any corresponding ideas; while, on the other hand, a fresh set of organic powers, the agents of voluntary movements, must come into play between the inner spirit and the outward world in order to make the changes of the former tell upon the latter; thus must the operations of thinking and sensation alike correspond to certain movements of the internal sensorium. All this goes to make up the organism of the soul's activities.

But matter is spoil stolen from the eternal change, and wears itself away, even as it works; in its movement its very element is driven from its grooves, chased away and lost. Because now, on the contrary, that simple essence, the soul, possesses in itself permanence

and stability, and in its essence neither gains nor loses aught, — matter cannot keep step with the activity of the spirit, and there would thus soon be an end of the organism of spiritual life, and therewith of all action of the soul. To prevent which there must be added to the first system of organic powers a second one, which shall make good the losses sustained, and sustain the decay by a chain of new creations ready to take the place of those that have gone. This is the organism of maintenance.

Still further. After a short period of activity, when the equal balance of loss and reparation is once removed, man quits the stage of life, and the law of mortality depopulates the earth. There is not room enough for the multitude of sentient beings, whom eternal love and wisdom seemed to have called to a happy existence, to live side by side within the narrow boundaries of our world, and the life of one generation shuts out the life of another. Therefore was it necessary that new men should appear, to take the place of those who had departed, and that life should be kept up in unbroken succession. But of *creation* there is no longer any trace; what now becomes new becomes so only by development. The development of man must come to pass through man, if it is to bear a proportion to the original number, if man is to be cultivated into man. On this account a new system of organic powers was added to the two that had preceded it, which had for its object to quicken and to develop the seed of humanity. This is the organism of generation.

These three organisms, brought into the most thorough connection, local and real, go to form the human body.

§ 3. — *The Body.*

The organic powers of the human body naturally divide themselves into two principal classes. The first class embraces those which no known laws and phenomena of the physical world enable us to comprehend; and to these belong the sensibility of the nerves and the irritability of the muscles. Inasmuch as it has hitherto been impossible to penetrate the economy of the invisible, men have sought to interpret this unknown mechanism through that with which they were already familiar, and have considered the nerves as a canal conducting an excessively fine, volatile, and active fluid, which in rapidity of motion and fineness was held to excel ether and the electric spark. This fluid was held to be the principle and author of our sensibility and power of motion, and hence received the name of the spirit of life. Further, the irritability of the muscles was held to consist in a certain effort to contract themselves on the touch of some external provocation. These two principles go to form the specific character of animal organism.

The second class of powers embraces those which we can account for by the universally known laws of physics. Among these I reckon the mechanism of motion, and the chemistry of the human body, the source of vegetable life. Vegetation, then, and animal mechanism, thoroughly mingled, form the proper physical life of the human body.

§ 4. — *Animal Life.*

This is not yet all. Since loss or misfortune, when it occurs, falls more or less within the will-power of the spirit, the spirit must be able to make some compensation for it. Further, since the body is subjected to all the consequences of this connection, and in the

circle of circumstances is exposed to countless hostile forces, it must be within the power of the soul to protect the body against these harmful influences, and to bring it into such relations with the physical world as shall tend most to its preservation. The soul must therefore be conscious of the present evil or good state of its organs; from a bad state it must draw dissatisfaction, from a good state satisfaction, so that it may either retain or remove the condition, seek it or fly from it. Here then we have the organism at once and closely linked to the sensational capacity, and the soul drawn into the service of the body. We have now something more than vegetation, something more than a dead model and the mechanism of nerves and muscles. Now we have animal life.¹

A healthy condition of our animal life is, as we know, most important for the healthy condition of our spiritual life; and we dare never ignore the animal life so long as we are not quit of it. It must therefore possess a firm foundation, not easily moved; that is, the soul must be fitted and prepared for the actions of our bodily life by an irresistible power. Were then the sensations of our animal loss or well-being to become spiritual perceptions, and had they to be created by thought, how often would the soul be

¹But we have something more than the animal life of the animal (beast). A beast lives an animal life in order that it may experience pleasant sensations. It experiences pleasant sensations that it may preserve the animal life. It lives now, therefore, in order that it may live again to-morrow. It is happy now that it may be happy to-morrow. But it is a simple, an uncertain happiness, which depends upon the action of the organism, it is a slave to luck and blind chance; because it consists in sensation only. Man, too, lives an animal life, — is sensible of its pleasures and suffers its pains. But why? He feels and suffers that he may preserve his animal life. He preserves his animal life that he may longer have the power to live a spiritual one. Here, then, the means differ from the end; there, end and means seem to coincide. This is one of the lines of separation between man and the animal.

obscured by the overwhelming blaze of passion ; how often stifled by laziness and stupidity ; how often overlooked in the absorptions and distractions of business ! Further, would not, in this case, the most perfect knowledge of his economy be demanded of the animal man — would not the child need to be a master in a branch of knowledge in which, after fifty years of investigation, Harvey, Boerhaave, and Haller were only beginners ? The soul could thus have positively no *idea* of the condition she was called upon to alter. How shall she become acquainted with it ? How shall she begin to act at all ?

§ 5. — *Animal Sensations.*

So far we have met with such sensations only as they take their rise in an antecedent operation of the understanding ; but we have now to deal with sensations in which the understanding bears no part. These sensations, if they are not exactly the expression of the present state of our organs, mark it out specifically, or, better, accompany it. These sensations have quickly and forcibly to determine the will to aversion or desire ; but, on the other hand, they are ever to float on the surface of the soul, and never to extend to the province of the reason. The part, accordingly, played by thought, in the case of a mental perception, is here taken up by that modification in the animal parts of us which either threatens the destruction of the sensation or ensures its duration : that is, an eternal law of wisdom has combined with that condition of the machine which confirms its welfare, a pleasant emotion of the soul ; and, on the other hand, with that condition which undermines it and threatens ruin, an unpleasant emotion is connected ; and this in such a manner that the sensation itself has not the faintest resemblance to the state of the organs of which it is

the mark. Animal sensations have, on this showing, a double origin: (1) in the present state of the machine; (2) in the capacity or faculty (of sensation).

We are now able to understand how it is that the animal sensations have the power to drive the soul with an irresistible tyranny in the direction of passionate action, and not seldom gain the upper hand in a struggle with those sensations which are most purely intellectual. For these last the soul has produced by means of thought, and therefore they can by thought be solved or even destroyed. Abstraction and philosophy have this power over the passions, over opinions—in short, over all the situations of life; but the animal sensations are forced upon the soul by a blind necessity, by a stern mechanical law. The understanding, which did not create them, likewise cannot dissolve them and make them as if they were not, though by giving an opposite direction to our attention it can do much to weaken their power and obscure their pretensions. The most stubborn stoic, lying in the agony of the stone, will never be able to boast that he did not feel its pain; but, lost in the consideration of the end of his existence, he will be able to divide his whole power of sensation and perception, and the preponderating pleasure of a great achievement, which can subordinate even pain to the general welfare, will be victorious over the present discomfort. It was neither absence of, nor annihilation of sensation that enabled Mucius, while he was roasting his hand in the fire, to gaze upon the foe with the Roman look of proud repose, but the thought of great Rome in admiration of his deed. This it was that ruled in his soul, and kept it grandly self-possessed, so that the terrible provocation of the animal pain was too slight to disturb the equal balance of his nature. But not on this account was the pain the Roman suffered less than it would have been in the case of the most

effeminate voluptuary. True enough, the man who is accustomed to pass his days in a state of confused ideas will be less capable of manly action, in the critical moment of sensuous pain, than he who lives persistently among ideas distinct and clear; but, for all that, neither the loftiest virtue, nor the profoundest philosophy, nor even divine religion, can save a man from the result of a necessary law, though religion can bless her servants even at the stake, and make them happy as the pile gives way.

The wisest purpose is served by the power which the animal sensations possess over the perceptive faculty of the soul. The spirit once initiated in the mysteries of a higher pleasure would look with disdain upon the motions of its companion, and would pay no heed to the poor necessities of physical life, were it not that the animal feeling compelled it to do so. The mathematician, soaring in the region of the infinite, and dreaming away reality in a world of abstractions, is roused by the pang of hunger from his intellectual slumber; the natural philosopher, dismembering the solar system, accompanying through immeasurable space the wanderings of the planets, is restored by the prick of a needle to his mother earth; the philosopher who unfolds the nature of the Deity, and fancies himself to have broken through the fetters of mortality, returns to himself and every-day life when the bleak north wind whistles through his crazy hut, and teaches him that he stands midway between the beast and the angel.

Against an excess of the animal sensations the severest mental exertion in the end possesses no influence; as they continue to grow stronger, reason closes her ears, and the fettered soul moves but to subserve the purposes of the bodily organisation. To satisfy hunger or to quench thirst man will do deeds at which humanity will shudder:

against his will he turns traitor or murderer — even cannibal :

“ Tiger ! in the bosom of thy mother wilt thou set thy teeth ? ”

— so violent is the influence of the animal sensation over the mind. Such watchful care has the Creator shown for the preservation of the machine that the pillars on which it rests are the firmest, and experience has taught us that it is rather the over-abundance than the want of animal sensations that has carried destruction with it.

The animal sensations therefore may be said to further the welfare of the animal nature, just as the moral and intellectual perceptions promote spiritual progress or perfection. The system of animal sensations and motions, then, comprises the conception of the animal nature. This is the ground on which all the activities of the soul depend, and the conformation of this fabric determines the duration of the spiritual activity itself, and the degree of ease with which it works. Here, then, we find ourselves in possession of the first member of the connection between the two natures.

§ 6. — *Objections against the Connection of the Two Natures, drawn from Ideas of Morality.*

There is no doubt that thus much will be conceded ; but the next remark will be : “ Here ends, too, any determining influence the body may possess ; beyond this point the body is but the soul’s inert companion, with whom she must sustain a constant battle, attendance on whose necessities robs her of all leisure, whose attacks and interruptions break the thread of the most intricate speculation, and drive the spirit from the clearest and plainest conceptions into a chaotic com-

plexity of the senses, whose pleasures remove the greatest part of our fellow creatures far from their high original, and reduce them to the level of the beasts, which, in a word, entangles them in a slavery from which death only can deliver them. Is it not senseless and unjust," our complainer might go on to say, "to mix up a being, simple, necessary, that has its subsistence in itself, with another being that moves in an eternal whirl, exposed to every chance and change, and becomes the victim of every external necessity?" On cooler afterthought we shall perhaps see a great beauty take its rise out of this apparent confusion and want of plan.

PHILOSOPHICAL CONNECTION.

ANIMAL IMPULSES AWAKEN AND DEVELOP THE IMPULSES OF THE SOUL.

§ 7. — *The Method.*

The surest way, perhaps, to throw some light upon this matter is the following: Let us detach from man all idea of what can be called organisation, — that is, let the body be separated from the spirit, without, however, depriving the latter of the power to attain to representations of, and to produce actions in, the corporeal world; and let us then inquire how the spirit would set to work, would develop its powers, what steps it would take toward its perfection: the result of this investigation must be founded upon facts. The actual culture of the individual man is thus surveyed, while we at the same time obtain a view of the development of the whole race. In the first place, then, we have this abstract case: the power of representation and will are present, a sphere of action is present, and a free way opened from the soul to the world, from

the world to the soul. The question then is, How will the spirit act ?

§ 8. — *The Soul viewed as out of Connection with the Body.*

We can form no conception without the antecedent will to form it; no will, unless by experience of a better condition thereby induced, without [some] sensation; no sensation without an antecedent idea (for along with the body we excluded bodily sensations), therefore no idea without an idea.

Let us consider now the case of a child; that is, according to our hypothesis, a spirit conscious in itself of the power to form ideas, but which for the first time is about to exercise this power. What will determine him to think, unless it be the pleasant sensation thereby arising, and what can have procured for him the experience of this pleasurable sensation? We have just seen that this, again, could be nothing but thinking, and he is now for the first time to think. Further, what shall invite him to a consideration of the [external] world? Nothing but the experience of its perfection in so far as it satisfies his instinct of activity, and as this satisfaction affords him pleasure. What, then, can determine him to an exercise of his powers? Nothing but the experience of their existence; and all these experiences are now to be made for the first time. He must therefore have been active from all eternity, — which is contrary to the case as stated, — or he will to all eternity be inactive, just as the machine without a touch from without remains idle and motionless.

§ 9. — *The Soul viewed in Connection with the Body.*

Now let the animal be added to the spirit. Weave these two natures so closely together as they really are

closely woven, and cause an unknown something, born of the economy of the animal body, to be assailed by the power of sensation, — let the soul be placed in the condition of physical pain. *That* was the first touch, the first ray to light up the night of slumbering powers, a touch as from a golden finger upon nature's lute. Now is *sensation* there, and *sensation* only was it that before we missed. This kind of sensation seems to have been made on purpose to remove all these difficulties. In the first case none could be produced because we were not allowed to presuppose an idea; here a modification of the bodily organs becomes a substitute for the ideas that were lacking, and thus does animal sensation come to the help of the spirit's inward mechanism, if I may so call it, and puts the same in motion. The will is active, and the action of a single power is sufficient to set all the rest to work. The following operations are self-developed and do not belong to this chapter.

§ 10. — *Out of the History of the Individual.*

Let us follow now the growth of the soul in the individual man in relation to what I am trying to demonstrate, and let us observe how all his spiritual capacities grow out of motive powers of sense.

a. The child. Still quite animal; or, rather, more and at the same time less than animal — human animal (for that being which at some time shall be called man can at no time have been only animal). More wretched than an animal, because he has not even instinct — the animal-mother may with less danger leave her young than the mother abandon her child. Pain may force from him a cry, but will never direct him to the source from which it comes. The milk may give him pleasure, but he does not seek it. He is altogether passive.

“His thinking rises only to sensation. His knowledge is but pain, hunger — and what binds these together.”

b. The boy. Here we have already reflection, but only in so far as it bears upon the satisfaction of the animal impulse. “He learns to value,” says Garve,¹ “the things of others, and his actions in respect of others, first of all through the fact of their affording him [sensuous] pleasure.”

A love of work, the love to his parents, to friends, yea, even love to God, must go along the pathway of physical sense [Sinnlichkeit] to reach his soul. “That only is the sun,” as Garve elsewhere observes, “which in itself enlightens and warms: all other objects are dark and cold; but they too can be warmed and illumined when they enter into such a connection with the same as to become partakers of its rays.”² The good things of the spirit possess a value with the boy only by transference — they are the spiritual means to an animal end.

c. Youth and man. The frequent repetition of this process of induction at last brings about a readiness, and the transference begins to discover a beauty in what at first was regarded simply as a means. The youth begins to linger in the process without knowing why. Without observing it, he is often attracted to think about this means. Now is the time when the beams of spiritual beauty in itself begin to fall upon his open soul; the feeling of exercising his powers delights him, and infuses an inclination to the object which, up to this time, was a means only: the first end is forgotten. His enlightened mind and the richer store of his ideas at last reveal to him the whole worth of spiritual pleasures — the means has become the highest end.

¹ Observations on Ferguson’s “Moral Philosophy,” p. 319.

² Observations on Ferguson’s “Moral Philosophy,” p. 393.

Such is the teaching more or less of the history of each individual man — whose means of education have been fairly good; and wisdom could hardly choose a better road along which to lead mankind. Is not the mass of the people even to this day in leading-strings? — much like our boy. And has not the prophet from Medina left us an example of striking plainness how to bridle the rude nature of the Saracens?

On this subject nothing more excellent can be said than what Garve remarked in his translation of Ferguson's "Moral Philosophy," in the chapter upon the Natural Impulses, and has developed as follows: "The impulse of self-preservation and the attraction of sensual pleasure first bring both man and beast to the point of action: he first comes to value the things of others and his own actions in reference to them according as they procure him pleasure. In proportion as the number of things under whose influence he comes increases do his desires cover a wider circle; as the road by which he reaches the objects of his wishes lengthens, so do his desires become more artificial. Here we come to the first line of separation between man and the mere animal, and herein we may even discover a difference between one species of animal and another. With few animals does the act of feeding follow immediately upon the sensation of hunger; the heat of the chase, or the industry of collection must come first. But in the case of no animal does the satisfaction of this want follow so late upon the preparations made in reference thereto as in the case of man; with no animal does the endeavour wind through so long a chain of means and intentions before it arrives at the last link. How far removed from this end, though in reality they have no other, are the labours of the artisan or the ploughman. But even this is not all. When the means of human subsistence have become richer and more various through the

institutions of society; when man begins to discover that without a full expenditure of time and labour a surplus remains to him; when at the same time by the communication of ideas he becomes more enlightened; then he begins to find a last end for all his actions in himself; he then remarks that, even when his hunger is thoroughly satisfied, a good supply of raiment, a roof above him, and a sufficiency of furniture within doors, there still remains something over and above for him to do. He goes a step further, he becomes conscious that in those very actions by which he has procured for himself food and comfort—in so far as they have their origin in certain powers of a spirit, and in so far as they exercise these powers—there lies a higher good than in the external ends which thereby are attained. From this moment on he works, indeed,—in company with the rest of the human race, and along with the whole animal kingdom,—to keep himself alive, and to provide for himself and his friends the necessaries of physical existence; for what else could he do? What other sphere of action could he create for himself, if he were to leave this? But he knows now that nature has not so much awakened in him these various impulses and desires for the purpose of affording so many particular pleasures,—but, and far more, places before him the attraction of those pleasures and advantages, in order that these impulses may be put in motion,—and with this end, that to a thinking being there may be given matter for thought, to a sensitive spirit matter for sensations, to the benevolent means of beneficence, and to the active opportunity for work. Thus does everything, living or lifeless, assume to him a new form. All the facts and changes of life were formerly estimated by him only in so far as they caused him pleasure or pain: *now*, in so far as they offer occasion for expression of his desire of perfection. In the first case, events are now good,

now bad; in the latter, all are equally good. For there is no chance or accident which does not give scope for the exercise of some virtue, or for the employment of a special faculty. At first he loved his fellows because he believed that they could be of use to him; he loves them now far more — because he looks upon benevolence as the condition of the perfect mind.”

§ 11. — *From the History of Humanity.*

Yet once more, a glance at the universal history of the whole human race — from its cradle to the maturity of full-grown man — and the truth of what has been said up to this point will stand forth in clearest relief.

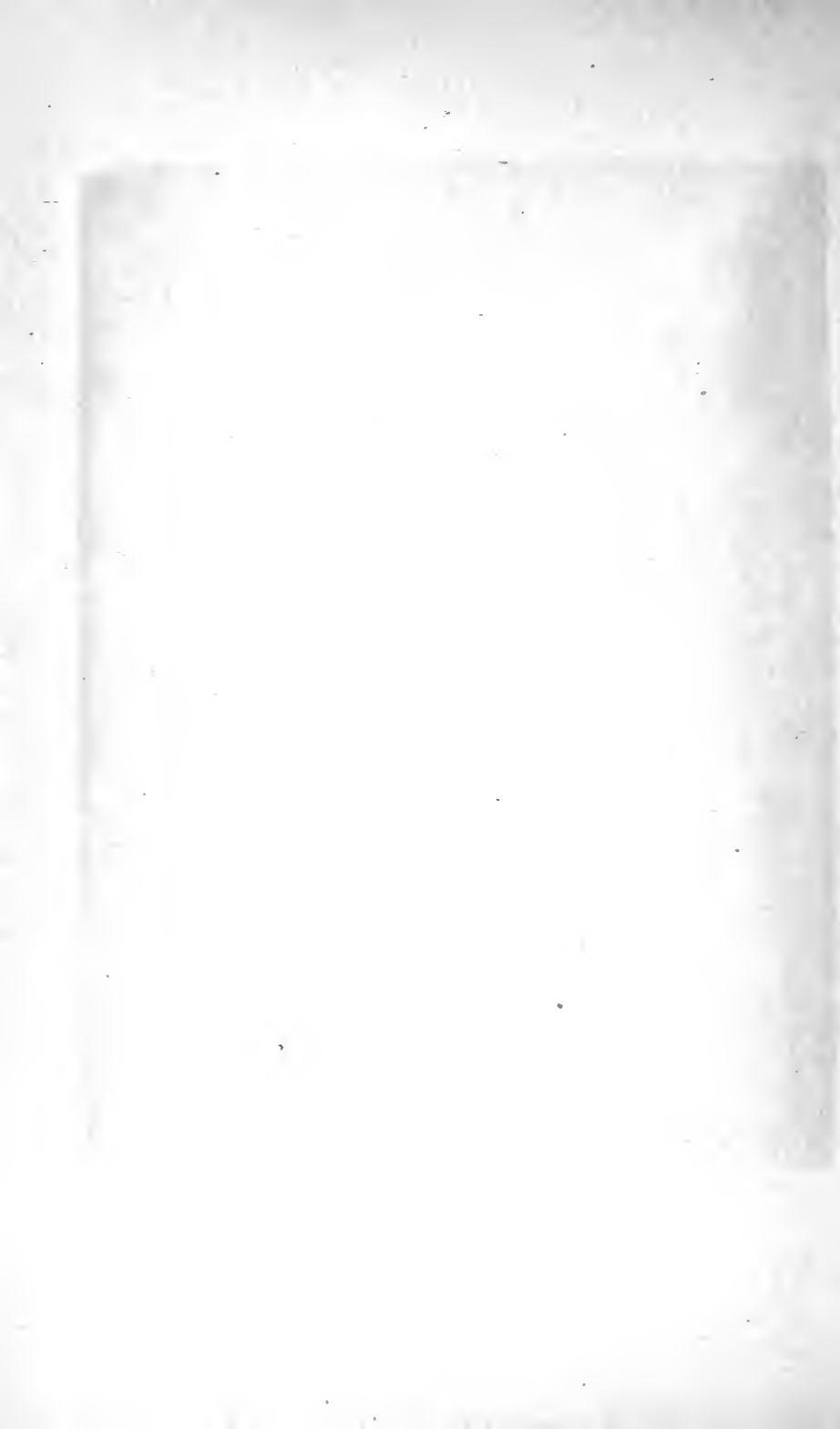
Hunger and nakedness first made of man a hunter, a fisher, a cowherd, a husbandman, and a builder. Sensual pleasure founded families, and the defencelessness of single men was the origin of the tribe. Here already may the first roots of the social duties be discovered. The soil would soon become too poor for the increasing multitude of men; hunger would drive them to other climates and countries that would discover their wealth to the necessity that forced men to seek it; in the process they would learn many improvements in the cultivation of the soil, and perhaps some means to escape the hurtful influence of many things they would necessarily encounter. These separate experiences passed from grandfather to grandson, and their number was always on the increase. Man learned to use the powers of nature against herself; these powers were brought into new relations and the first invention was made. Here we have the first roots of the simple and healing arts — always, we admit, art and invention for the behoof of the *animal*, but still an exercise of power, an addition to knowledge; and at the very fire in whose embers the savage roasted



"Hunger and nakedness first made man a hunter"

Photogravure from the painting by P. Jamin





his fish, Boerhaave afterward made his inquiries into the composition of bodies; through the very knife which this wild man used to cut up his game, Lionet invented what led to his discovery of the nerves of insects; with the very circle wherewith at first hoofs were measured, Newton measures heaven and earth. Thus did the body force the mind to pay attention to the phenomena around it; thus was the world made interesting and important, through being made indispensable. The inward activity of their nature, and the barrenness of their native soil, combined in teaching our forefathers to form bolder plans, and invented for them a house wherein, under conduct of the stars, they could safely move upon rivers and seas, and sail toward regions new:

“*Fluctibus ignotis insultavere carinæ.*”
(“Their keels danced upon waves unknown.”)

Here again they met with new productions of nature, new dangers, new needs that called for new exertions. The collision of animal instincts drives hordes against hordes, forges a sword out of the raw metal, begets adventurers, heroes, and despots. Towns are fortified, states are founded: with the states arise civic duties and rights, arts, figures, codes of law, subtle priests — and gods.

And now, when necessities have degenerated into luxury, what a boundless field is opened to our eyes! Now are the veins of the earth burrowed through, the foot of man is planted on the bottom of the sea, commerce and travel flourish:

“*Latet sub classibus æquor.*”
(“The sea is hid beneath the fleets.”)

The West wonders at the East, the East at the West; the productions of foreign countries accustom them-

selves to grow under other skies, and the art of gardening shows the products of three-quarters of the world in one garden. Artists learn her works from nature, music soothes the savage breast, beauty and harmony ennoble taste and manners, and art leads the way to science and virtue. "Man," says Schlözer,¹ "this mighty demigod, clears rocks from his path, digs out lakes, and drives his plough where once the sail was seen. By canals he separates quarters of the globe and provinces from one another; leads one stream to another and discharges them upon a sandy desert, changed thereby into smiling meadow; three-quarters of the globe he plunders and transplants them into a fourth. Even climate, air, and weather acknowledge his sway. While he roots out forests and drains the swamp, the heavens grow clear above his head, moisture and mist are lost, winter becomes milder and shorter, because rivers are no longer frozen over." And the mind of man is refined with the refining of his clime.

The state occupies the citizen in the necessities and comforts of life. Industry gives the state security and rest from without; from within, granting to thinker and artist that fruitful leisure through which the age of Augustus came to be called the Golden Age. The arts now take a more daring and untrammelled flight, science wins a light pure and dry, natural history and physical science shatter superstition, history extends a mirror of the times that were, and philosophy laughs at the follies of mankind. But when luxury grows into effeminacy and excess, when the bones begin to ache, and the pestilence to spread, and the air becomes infected, man hastens in his distress from one realm of nature to another, that he may at least find means for lessening his pains. Then he finds the divine plant of China; from the bowels of the earth he digs out the

¹ See Schlözer's "Plan of his Universal History," § 6.

mightily working mercury, and from the poppy of the East learns to distil its precious juice. The most hidden corners of nature are investigated; chemistry separates material objects into their ultimate elements, and creates worlds of her own; alchemists enrich the province of physical science; the microscopic glance of a Schwammerdam surprises nature in her most secret operations. Man goes still further; necessity or curiosity transcends the boundaries set by superstition: he seizes the knife, takes courage, and the masterpiece of nature is discovered, even man. Thus did it behoove the least, the poorest, to help us to reach the highest; disease and death must lend their aid to man in teaching him *Γνώθι σεαυτόν* ("Know thyself!"). The plague produced and formed our Hippocrates, our Sydenhams, as war is the mother of generals; and we owe to the most devastating disease that ever visited humanity an entire reformation of our medical system.

Our intention was to show the influence upon the perfecting of the soul through the temperate enjoyment of the pleasures held out by the senses; and how marvellously has the matter changed, even while under our hands! We found that even excess and abuse in this direction have furthered the real demands of humanity; the deflections from the primitive end of nature — merchants, conquerors, and luxury — have, undoubtedly, tended to hasten a progress which had otherwise been more regular, but very slow. Let us compare the old world with the new! In the first, desire was simple, its satisfaction easy; but how mistaken, how painful was the judgment passed on nature and her laws! Now, the road is made more difficult by a thousand windings, but how full the light that has been shed upon all our conceptions!

We may, then, repeat: Man needed to be an animal before he knew that he was a spirit; he needed to

crawl in the dust before he ventured on a Newtonian flight through the universe. The body, therefore, is the first spur to action; sense the first step on the ladder to perfection.

ANIMAL SENSATIONS ACCOMPANY MENTAL SENSATIONS.

§ 12. — *Law.*

The understanding of man is extremely limited, and, therefore, all sensations resulting from its action must of necessity be also limited. In order, therefore, to give these sensations greater impulse, and with redoubled force to attract the will to good and restrain it from evil, both natures, the spiritual and the animal, are so intimately connected with each other that their modifications, being mutually interchanged, impart strength to one another. Hence arises a fundamental law of mixed natures, which, being reduced to its primary divisions, runs thus: the activities of the body correspond to the activities of the mind; that is, any overstraining of a mental activity is necessarily followed by an overstraining of certain bodily actions, — just as the equilibrium, or harmonious action, of the mental powers is associated with that of the bodily powers in perfect accord. Further: mental indolence induces indolence in the bodily actions; mental inaction causes them to cease altogether. Thus, as perfection is ever accompanied by pleasure, imperfection by the absence of pleasure, this law may be thus expressed: Mental pleasure is invariably attended by animal pleasure, mental pain by animal pain.¹

¹ *Complacency* and *displacency* perhaps more aptly express the meaning of *Lust* and *Unlust*, which we translate by *pleasure* and *pain*.

§ 13. — *Mental Pleasure furthers the Welfare of the Human Frame.*

Thus, a sensation which embraces within its range the whole spiritual being agitates in the same measure the whole framework of the organic body, — heart, veins and blood, muscles and nerves, all, from those mighty nerves that give to the heart its living impulse of motion down to the tiny and unimportant nerves by which hairs are attached to the skin, share equally its influence. Everything tends to a more violent motion. If the sensation be an agreeable one, all these parts will acquire a higher degree of harmonious activity; the heart's beat will be free, lively, uniform, the blood will flow unchecked, gently or with fiery speed, according as the affection is of a gentle or violent description; digestion, secretion, and excretion will follow their natural course; the excitable membranes will pliantly play in a gentle vapour-bath, and excitability as well as sensitiveness will increase. Therefore the condition of the greatest momentary mental pleasure is at the same time the condition of the greatest bodily well-being.

As many as there may be of these partial activities (and is not every beat of the pulse the result perhaps of thousands?) so many will be the obscure sensations crowding upon the soul, each one of which indicates perfection. Out of this confused complexity arises entire sensation of the animal harmonies, that is, the highest possible combined sensation of animal pleasure, which ranges itself, as it were, alongside of the original intellectual or moral sensation, which this addition infinitely increases. Thus is every agreeable affection the source of countless bodily pleasures.

This is most evidently confirmed by the examples of sick persons who have been cured by joy. Let one whom a terrible homesickness has wasted to a skeleton

be brought back to his native land, and the bloom of health will soon be his again; or let us enter a prison in which miserable men have for ten or twenty years inhabited filthy dungeons and possess at last barely strength to move, — and let us tell them suddenly they are free; the single word of freedom will endow their limbs with the strength of youth, and cause dead eyes to sparkle with life. Sailors, whom thirst and famine have made their prey during a long voyage, are half cured by the steersman's cry of "Land!" and he would certainly greatly err who ascribed the whole result to a prospect of fresh food. The sight of a dear one, whom the sufferer has long desired to see, sustains the life that was about to go, and imparts strength and health. It is a fact, that joy can quicken the nervous system more effectually than all the cordials of the apothecary, and can do wonders in the case of inveterate internal disorders denied to the action of rhubarb and even mercury. Who then does not perceive that the constitution of the soul which knows how to derive pleasure from every event and can dissipate every ache in the perfection of the universe, must be the most beneficial to the whole organism? And this constitution of the soul is — virtue.

§ 14. — *Mental Pain undermines the Welfare of the Whole Organisms.*

In the very same way, the opposite result is brought about by a disagreeable affection of the mind. The ideas which rule so intensely the angry or terrified man may, as rightly as Plato called the passions a fever of the soul, be regarded as convulsions of the organ of thought. These convulsions quickly extend through the nervous system, and so disturb the vital powers that they lose their perfection, and all organic actions lose their equilibrium. The heart beats violently and

irregularly ; the blood is so confined to the lungs that the failing pulse has barely enough to sustain it. The internal chemical processes are at cross-purposes ; beneficent juices lose their way and work harm in other provinces, while what is malignant may attack the very core of our organism. In a word, the condition of the greatest mental distress becomes the condition of the greatest bodily sickness.

The soul is informed of the threatened ruin of the organs that should have been her good and willing servants by a thousand obscure sensations, and is filled with an entire sensation of pain, associating itself to the primary mental suffering, and giving to this a sharper sting.

§ 15. — *Examples.*

Deep chronic pains of the soul, especially if accompanied by a strong exertion of thought — among which I would give a prominent place to that lingering anger which men call indignation — gnaw the very foundations of physical life, and dry up the sap that nourishes it. Sufferers of this kind have a worn and pale appearance, and the inward grief betrays itself by the hollow, sunken eyes. “Let me,” says Cæsar, “have men about me that are fat :”

“Sleek-headed men, and such as sleep o’ nights ;
Yond’ Cassius has a lean and hungry look ;
He thinks too much — such men are dangerous.”

Fear, trouble, distress of conscience, despair, are little less powerful in their effects than the most violent fevers. Richard, when in deepest anxiety, finds his former cheerfulness is gone, and thinks to bring it back with a glass of wine. But it is not mental sorrow only that has banished comfort, it is a sensation of discomfort, proceeding from the very root of his physical

organism, the very same sensation that announces a malignant fever. The Moor, heavily burdened with crimes, and once crafty enough in absolving all the sensations of humanity — by his skeleton-process — into nothing, now rises from a dreadful dream, pale and breathless, with a cold sweat upon his brow. All the images of a future judgment which he had perhaps believed in as a boy, and blotted out from his remembrance as a man, assail his dream-bewildered brain. The sensations are far too confused for the slower march of reason to overtake and unravel them. Reason is still struggling with fancy, the spirit with the horrors of the corporeal frame.¹

“Moor. — No! I am not shaking. It was but a dream. The dead are not beginning to rise. Who says I tremble and turn pale? I am quite well, quite well.

Bed. — You are pale as death: your voice is frightened and hesitating.

Moor. — I am feverish. I will be bled to-morrow. Say only, when the priest comes, that I have fever.

Bed. — But you are very ill.

Moor. — Yes, truly; that is all. And sickness disturbs the brain and breeds strange mad dreams. Dreams mean nothing. Fie on womanish cowardice! Dreams mean nothing. I have just had a pleasant dream. [He falls down in a faint.]”

Here we have the whole image of the dream suddenly forcing itself upon a man, and setting in motion the entire system of obscure ideas, stirring up from the foundation the organ of thought. From all these causes arises an intense sensation of pain in its utmost concentration, which shatters the soul from its depth, and lames *per consensum* the whole structure of the nerves.

The cold horror that seizes on the man who is about to commit some crime, or who has just committed one, is nothing else than the horror which agitates the

¹ “Life of Moor,” tragedy of Krake. Act. v. sc. 1.

feverish man, and which is felt on taking nauseous medicines. The nightly tossings of those who are troubled by remorse, always accompanied by a high pulse, are veritable fevers, induced by the connection between the physical organism with the soul; and Lady Macbeth, walking in her sleep, is an instance of brain delirium. Even the imitation of a passion makes the actor for the moment ill; and after Garrick had played Lear or Othello he spent some hours in convulsions on his bed. Even the illusion of the spectator, through sympathy with acted passion, has brought on shivering, gout, and fits of fainting.

Is not he, then, who is plagued with an evil temper, and draws gall and bitterness from every situation in life; is not the vicious man, who lives in a chronic state of hatred and malevolence; is not the envious man, who finds torture in every excellence of his neighbour, — are not these, all of them, the greatest foes to their own health? Has vice not enough of the horrible in it, when it destroys not only happiness but health?

§ 16. — *Exceptions.*

But a pleasant affection has sometimes been a fatal one, and an unpleasant one has sometimes worked a marvellous cure. Both facts rest upon experience: should they remove the limits of the law we have expounded?

Joy is fatal when it rises into ecstasy: nature cannot support the strain which in one moment is thrown upon the whole nervous system. The motion of the brain is no longer harmony, but convulsion, an extremely sudden and momentary force which soon changes into the ruin of the organism, since it has transgressed the boundary line of health (for into the very idea of health there enters and is essentially interwoven the idea of a certain moderation of all natural

motions). The joy as well as the grief of finite beings is limited, and dare not pass beyond a certain point without ruin.

As far as the second part is concerned, we have many examples of cure, through a moderate fit of anger, of inveterate dyspepsia; and through fright — as in the case of a fire — of rheumatic pains and lameness apparently incurable. But even dysentery has sometimes resolved an internal stoppage, and the itch has been a cure for melancholy madness and insanity: is the itch, for this, less a disease? — is dysentery therefore health?

§ 17. — *Indolence of Mind brings about greater Indolence in the Organic Movements.*

As, according to the testimony of Herr von Haller, activity of mind during the day tends to quicken the pulse toward evening, will not indolence of mind make it more sluggish, and absolute inactivity completely stop it? For, although the circulation of the blood does not seem to be so very dependent on the mind, is it altogether unreasonable to suppose that the heart, which, in any case, borrows from the brain the larger portion of its strength, must necessarily, *when the soul ceases to maintain the action of the brain*, suffer thereby a great loss of power? A condition of phlegm is accompanied by a sluggish pulse, the blood is thin and watery, and the circulation defective in the abdomen. The idiots, whom Muzell has described for us,¹ breathed slowly and with difficulty, had no inclination to eat and drink, nor to the natural functions; the pulse was slow, all bodily movements slumberous and indicative of weariness. The mental numbness which is the result of terror or wonder is sometimes accompanied by a general suspension of all natural physical

¹ Muzell's "Medical and Surgical Considerations."

activity. Was the mind the origin of this condition, or was it the body which brought about this torpid state of mind? But these considerations lead to subtleties and intricate questions, and, besides, must not be discussed in this place.

§ 18. — *Second Law.*

All that has been said of the transference of the mental sensations to the animal holds true of the transference of animal affections to the mental. Bodily sickness — for the most part the natural result of intemperance — brings its punishment in the form of bodily pain; but the mind also cannot escape a radical attack, in order that a twofold pain may more powerfully impress upon it the necessity of restraint in the desires. In like manner the feeling of bodily health is accompanied by a more lively consciousness of mental improvement, and man is thus the more spurred on to maintain his body in good condition. We arrive thus at a second law of mixed natures — that, with the free action of the bodily organism, the sensations and ideas gain a freer flow; and learn that, with a corrupted organism, corruption of the thinking faculty and of the sensations inevitably follows. Or, more shortly, that the general sensation of a harmonious animal life is the fountain of mental pleasure, and that animal pain and sickness is the fountain of mental pain.

In these different respects, or from their consideration, soul and body may not unaptly be compared with two stringed instruments tuned by the same hand, and placed alongside of one another. When a string of one of them is touched and a certain tone goes forth, the corresponding string of the other will sound of itself and give the same tone, only somewhat weaker. And, using this comparison, we may say that the string of gladness in the body wakes the glad string in the soul,

and the sad string the string of sadness. This is that wonderful and noteworthy sympathy which unites the heterogeneous principles in man so as to form one being. Man is not soul and body — but the most inward and essential blending of the two.

§ 19. — *Moods of Mind result from Moods of Body.*

Hence the heaviness, the incapacity of thought, the discontented temper, which are the consequence of excess in physical indulgence; hence the wonderful effects of wine upon those who always drink in moderation. "When you have drunk wine," says Brother Martin, "you see everything double, you think doubly easily, you are doubly ready for any undertaking, and twice as quickly bring it to a conclusion." Hence the comfort and good-humour experienced in fine weather, proceeding partly from association of ideas, but mostly from the increased feeling of bodily health that goes along with it, extending over all the functions of our organism. Then it is that people use such expressions as, "I *feel* that I am well," and at such a season they are more disposed toward all manner of mental labour, and have a heart more open to the humaner feelings, and more prompt to the practice of moral duties. The same may be seen in the national character of different peoples. Those who dwell in gloomy regions mourn along with the dismal scenery; in wild and stormy zones man grows wild; where his lot is cast in friendly climates he laughs with the sky that is bright above him. Only under the clear heaven of Greece lived a Homer, a Plato, a Phidias; there were born the Muses and the Graces, while the Lapland mists can hardly bring forth men, and never a genius. While our Germany was yet a wild forest or morass, the German was a hunter as wild as the beast whose skin he slung about his shoulders. As soon as industry had changed the

aspect of his country began the epoch of moral progress. I will not maintain that character takes its rise in climate only, but it is certain that toward the civilisation of a people one main means is the improvement of their skies.

The disorders of the body may disorder the whole range of our moral perceptions, and prepare the way for an outburst of the most evil passions. A man whose constitution is ruined by a course of dissipation is more easily led to extremes than one who has kept his body as it should be kept. This is, indeed, the horrible plan of those who destroy our youths, and that father of robbers must have known man well, who said, "We must destroy both body and soul." Catiline was a profligate before he became a conspirator, and Doria greatly erred when he thought he had no cause to fear a voluptuary like Fiesco. On the whole, it is very often remarked that an evil spirit dwells in a sick body.

In diseases this sympathy is still more striking. All severe illnesses, especially those of malignant nature and arising from the economy of the abdominal regions, announce themselves, more or less, by a strange revolution in the character. Even while the disease is still silently stealing through the hidden corners of our mechanism, and undermining the strength of nerve, the mind begins to anticipate by dark forebodings the fall of her companion. This is a main element in that condition which a great physician described in a masterly manner under the name of "Horrores." Hence their moroseness of disposition, which none can account for, their wavering fancies and inclinations, their disgust at what used to give them pleasure. The amiable man grows quarrelsome, the merry man cross, and he who used to lose himself, and gladly, in the bustle of the world, flies the face of man and retires into a gloomy melancholy. But underneath this treacherous repose

the enemy is making ready for a deadly onslaught. The universal disturbance of the entire mechanism, when the disease once breaks forth, is the most speaking proof of the wonderful dependence of the soul on the body. The feeling, springing from a thousand painful sensations, of the utter ruin of the organism, brings about a frightful mental confusion. The most horrible ideas and fancies rise from their graves. The villain whom nothing could move yields under the dominant power of mere animal terror. Winchester, in dying, yells in the anguish of despair. The soul is under a terrible necessity, it would seem, of snatching at whatever will drag it deeper into darkness, and rejects with obstinate madness every ray of comfort. The string, the tone of pain is in the ascendant, and just as the spiritual misery rose in the bodily disorder, so now it turns and renders the disorder more universal and more intense.

§ 20. — *Limitations of the Foregoing.*

But there are daily examples of sufferers who courageously lift themselves above bodily ills: of dying men who, amidst the distressful struggles of the frame, ask, "Where is thy sting, O death?" Should not wisdom, one might urge, avail to combat the blind terrors of the organic nature? Nay, much more than wisdom, should religion have so little power to protect her friends against the assaults springing from the dust? Or, what is the same thing, does it not depend upon the preceding condition of the soul, as to how she accepts the alterations of the processes of life?

Now, this is an irrefragable truth. Philosophy, and still more a mind courageous and elevated by religion, are capable of completely weakening the influence of the animal sensations which assault the soul of one in pain, and able, as it were, to withdraw it from all

coherence with the material. The thought of God, which is interwoven with death, as with all the universe, the harmony of past life, the anticipation of an ever-happy future, spread a bright light over all its ideas; while night is drawn round the soul of him who departs in folly and in unbelief. If even involuntary pangs force themselves upon the Christian and wise man (for is he less a human being?), yet will he resolve the sensations of his dissolving frame into happiness:

“The soul, secured in her existence, smiles
At the drawn dagger and defies its point.
The stars shall fade away, the sun himself
Grow dim with age, and nature sink in years;
But thou shalt flourish in immortal youth,
Unhurt amidst the war of elements,
The wreck of matter, and the crash of worlds.”

It is precisely this unwonted cheerfulness on the part of those who are mortally sick which has often a physical reason at the basis, and which has the most express significance for the practical physician. It is often found in conjunction with the most fatal symptoms of Hippocrates, and without being attributable to any bygone crisis. Such a cheerfulness is of bad import. The nerves, which during the height of the fever have been most sharply assailed, have now lost sensation; the inflamed members, it is well known, cease to smart as soon as they are destroyed; but it would be a hapless thought to rejoice that the time of burning pain were past and gone. Stimulus fails before the dead nerves, and a deathly indolence belies future healing. The soul finds herself under the illusion of a pleasant sensation, because she is free from a long-enduring painful one. She is free from pain, not because the tone of her instrument is restored, but because she no more experiences the dis-

cord. Sympathy ceases as soon as the connection is lost.

§ 21. — *Further Aspects of the Connection.*

If I might now begin to go deeper — if I might speak of delirium, of slumber, of stupor, of epilepsy and catalepsy, and such like, wherein the free and rational spirit is subjected to the despotism of the body — if I might enlarge especially on the wide field of hysteria and hypochondria — if it were allowed me to speak of temperaments, idiosyncrasies, and constitutions, which for physicians and philosophers are an abyss — in one word, should I attempt to demonstrate truth of the foregoing from the bed of sickness, which is ever a chief school of psychology — my matter would be extended to an endless length. We have, it seems to me, enough to prove that the animal nature is throughout mingled with the spiritual, and that this combination is perfection.

PHYSICAL PHENOMENA EXPRESS THE EMOTIONS OF THE MIND.

§ 22. — *Physiognomy of Sensations.*

It is just this close correspondence between the two natures which is the basis of the whole science of physiognomy. By means of this nervous connection (which, as we have seen, lies at the bottom of the communication of feelings) the most secret movements of the soul are revealed on the exterior of the body, and passion penetrates even through the veil of the hypocrite. Each passion has its specific expressions, its peculiar dialect, so to speak, by which one knows it. And, indeed, it is an admirable law of Supreme Wisdom, that every passion which is noble and generous beautifies

the body, while those that are mean and hateful distort it into animal forms. The more the mind departs from the likeness of the Deity, the nearer does the outward form seem to approach the animal, and always that animal which has a kindred proclivity. Thus, the mild expression of the philanthropist attracts the needy, whom the insolent look of the angry man repels. This is an indispensable guide in social life. It is astonishing what an accordance bodily appearance has with the passions; heroism and fearlessness pour life and strength through the veins and muscles, the eyes sparkle, the breast heaves, all the limbs arm themselves alike for combat — the man has the appearance of a war-horse. Fright and fear extinguish the fire in the eyes, the limbs sink powerless and heavy, the marrow in the bones seems frozen, the blood falls back on the heart like a stone, a general weakness cripples the powers of life.

A great, bold, lofty thought compels us to stand on tiptoe, to hold up the head, to expand the mouth and nose. The feeling of eternity, the outlook on a wide open horizon, the sea, etc., make us stretch out our arms — *we* would merge ourselves into the eternal: with the mountains, we would grow toward the heavens, rush thither on storms and waves: yawning abysses throw us down in giddiness. In like manner, hate is expressed in the body by a repelling force; while, on the contrary, in every pressure of the hand, in every embrace, our body will merge into that of our friend, in the same manner as the souls are in harmonious combination. Pride makes the body erect as the soul rises; pettiness bends the head, the limbs hang down; servile fear is expressed in the cringing walk; the thought of pain distorts our face, if pleasurable aspects spread a grace over the whole body; anger, on the other hand, will break through every strong opposing cord, and need will almost overcome the impossible.

I would now ask through what mechanism it happens that exactly these movements result from these feelings, that just these organs are affected by these passions? Might I not just as well want to know why a certain wounding of the ligament should stiffen the lower jaw?

If the passion which sympathetically awakened these movements of the frame be often renewed, if this sensation of soul become habitual, then these movements of the body will become so also. If this matured passion be of a lasting character, then these constitutional features of the frame become deeply engraved; they become, if I may borrow the pathologist's word, "deuteropathic," and are at last organic. Thus, at last, the firm perennial physiognomy of man is formed, so that it is almost easier afterward to change the soul than the form. In this sense, one may also say, without being a "Stahlian," that the soul forms the body; and perhaps the earliest years of youth decide the features of a man for life, as they certainly are the foundation of his moral character. An inert and weak soul, which never overflows in passions, has no physiognomy at all; and want of expression is the leading characteristic of the countenance of the imbecile. The original features which nature gave him continue unaltered; the face is smooth, for no soul has played upon it; the eyebrows retain a perfect arch, for no wild passion has distorted them; the whole form retains its roundness, for the fat reposes in its cells; the face is regular, perhaps even beautiful, but I pity the soul of it!

A physiognomy of (perfect) organic parts, *e. g.*, as to the form and size of the nose, eyes, mouth, ears, etc., the colour of the hair, the height of the neck, and such like, may perhaps possibly be found, but certainly not very easily, however much Lavater should continue to rave about it through ten quarto volumes. He who

would reduce to order the capricious play of nature, and classify the forms which she has punished like a stepmother, or endowed as a mother, would venture more than Linnæus, and should be very careful lest he become one with the original presented to him, through its monstrous sportive variety.

Yet one more kind of sympathy deserves to be noticed, since it is of great importance in physiology. I mean the sympathy of certain sensations for the organs from which they sprang. A certain cramp in the stomach causes a feeling of disgust; the reproduction of this sensation brings back the cramp. How is this?

§ 23. — *The Remains of the Animal Nature is also a Source of Perfection.*

Although the animal part of man preserves for him the many great advantages of which we have already spoken, still, one may say that, in another aspect, it remains always despicable; viz., the soul thus depends, slave-like, on the activity of its tools; the periodical relaxation of these prescribes to the soul an inactive pause and annihilation at periods. I mean sleep, which, one cannot deny, robs us at least of the third part of our life. Further, our mind is completely dependent on the laws of the body, so that the cessation of the latter puts a sudden stop to the continuance of thoughts, even though we be on the straight, open path toward truth. If the reason have ever so little fixed upon an idea, when the lazy matter refuses to carry it out, the strings of the thinking organs grow weary, if they have been but slightly strained; the body fails us where we need it most. What astonishing steps, one may infer, would man make in the use of his powers if he could continue to think in a state of unbroken intensity! How he

would unravel every idea to its final elements; how he would trace every appearance to its most hidden sources, if he could keep them uninterruptedly before his mind! But, alas! it is not thus. Why is it not so?

§ 24. — *Necessity for Relaxation.*

The following will lead us on the track of truth:

1. Pleasant sensation was necessary to lead man to perfection, and he can only be perfect when he feels comfortable.

2. The nature of a mortal being makes unpleasant feeling unavoidable. Evil does not shut man out from the best world, and the worldly-wise find their perfection therein.

3. Thus pain and pleasure are necessary. It seems harder, but it is no less true.

4. Every pain, as every pleasure, grows according to its nature, and would continue to do so.

5. Every pain and every pleasure of a mixed being tend to their own dissolution.

§ 25. — *Explanation.*

It is a well-known law of the connection between ideas that every sensation, of whatever kind, immediately seizes another of its kind, and enlarges itself through this addition. The larger and more manifold it becomes, so much the more does it awaken similar sensations in all directions through the organs of thought, until, by degrees, it becomes universally predominant, and occupies the whole soul. Consequently, every sensation grows through itself; every present condition of the feeling power contains the root of a feeling to follow, similar, but more intense. This is evident. Now, every mental sensation is, as we know,

allied to a similar animal one; in other words, each one is connected with more or less movement of the nerves, which take a direction according to the measure of their strength and extension. Thus, as mental sensations grow, must the movements in the nervous system increase also. This is no less clear. Now, pathology teaches us that a nerve never suffers alone: and to say, "Here is a superfluity of strength," is as much as to say, "There is want of strength." Thus, every nervous movement grows through itself. Now, we have remarked that the movements of the nervous system react upon the mind, and strengthen the mental sensations; ¹ *vice versa*, the strengthened sensations of the mind increase and strengthen the motions of the nerves. Thus we have a circle, in which sensation must always increase, and nervous movements every moment become more powerful and universal.

Now, we know that the movements of the bodily frame which cause the feeling of pain run counter to the harmony by which it would exist in well-being; that is, that they are diseased. But disease cannot grow unceasingly, therefore they end in the total destruction of the frame. In relation to pain, it is thus proved that it aims at the death of the subject.

But the motions of the nerves under pleasant sensations being so harmonious to the continuance of the machinery that the condition of mind which constitutes pleasure is that of the greatest bodily well-being, should not rather, then, pleasant sensation prolong the bloom of the body eternally? This inference is too

¹ "Why, how one weeps

When one's too weary!

Tears, tears! *why* we weep,

'Tis worth inquiry: — that we've shamed a life,

Or lost a love, or missed a world, perhaps?

By no means. Simply, that we've walked too far,

Or talked too much, or felt the wind in the east," etc.

— *Aurora Leigh*.

hasty. In a certain stage of moderation, these nervous motions are wholesome, and really a sign of health. But if they outgrow this stage, they may be the highest activity, the highest momentary perfection; but, thus, they are excess of health, no longer health itself.

We only call that condition of the natural motions health in which the root of similar ones for the future lies, viz., those which confirm the perfection of succeeding motions; thus, the destiny of continuance is essentially contained in the idea of health. Thus, for example, the body of the most debilitated profligate attains to its greatest harmony at the moment of excess; but it is only momentarily, and a so much deeper abatement shows sufficiently that overstraining was not health. Therefore one may justly accept that an overstrained vigour of physical action hastens death as much as the greatest disorder or the worst illness. Both pain and pleasure draw us toward an unavoidable death, unless something be present which limits their advance.

§ 26. — *Excellence of this Abatement.*

It is just this (the limit to their growth) which the abatement of the animal nature causes. It must be no other than this limitation of our fragile frame (that appeared to have lent to our opponents so strong a proof against its perfection) which ameliorates all the evil consequences that the mechanism otherwise makes unavoidable. It is exactly this sinking, this lassitude of the organs, over which tinkers complain so much, that prevents our own strength destroying us in a short time; that does not permit our positions to be always increasing toward our destruction. This limitation shows each passion the period of its growth, its height and decline (if indeed the passion does not die out in a total relaxation of the body), which leaves the excited

spirits time to resume their harmony, and the organs to recover. Hence, the highest pitch of rapture, of fear, and of anger, are the same as weariness, weakness, or fainting. But sleep vouchsafes more, for, as Shakespeare says :

“ Sleep, that knits up the ravelled sleeve of care,
The death of each days’s life, sore labour’s bath,
Balm of hurt minds, great Nature’s sweet restorer.”
—*Macbeth*.

During sleep, the vital forces restore themselves to that healthy balance which the continuance of our being so much requires; all the cramped ideas and feelings, the overstrained actions which have troubled us through the day, are solved in the entire relaxation of the sensorium; the harmony of the motions of the mind are resumed, and the newly awakened man greets the coming day more calmly.

In relation to the arrangement of the whole, also, we cannot sufficiently admire the worth and importance of this limitation. The arrangement necessarily causes many, who should be no less happy, to be sacrificed to the general order and to bear the lot of oppression. Likewise, many, whom we perhaps unjustly envy, must expend their mental and bodily strength in restless exertion, so that the repose of the whole be preserved. The same with sick persons, the same with unreasoning animals. Sleep seals the eye of care, takes from the prince and statesman the heavy weight of governing; pours new force into the veins of the sick man, and rest into his harassed soul; the day-labourer no longer hears the voice of the oppressor, and the ill-used beast escapes from the tyranny of man. Sleep buries all cares and troubles, balances everything, equips every one with new-born powers to bear the joys and sorrows of the next day.

§ 27 —. *Severing of the Connection.*

At length arrived at the point in the circle where the mind has fulfilled the aim of its being, an internal, unaccountable mechanism has, at the same time, made the body incapable of being any longer its instrument. All care for the well-being of the bodily state seems to reach but to this epoch. It appears to me that, in the formation of our physical nature, wisdom has shown such parsimony, that notwithstanding constant compensations, decline must always keep in the ascendancy, so that freedom misuses the mechanism, and death is germinated in life as out of its seed. Matter dissolves again into its last elements, which travel through the kingdom of nature in other forms and relations, to serve other purposes. The mind continues to practise its thinking powers in other circles, and to observe the universe from other sides.

We may truly say that it has not by any means exhausted this actual sphere, that it might have left this sphere itself more perfect; but do we know that this sphere is lost to it? We lay many a book aside which we do not understand, but perhaps in a few years we shall understand it better.

The Ghost-Seer ; or, Apparitionist

The Ghost-Seer ; or, Apparitionist

FROM THE PAPERS OF COUNT O——

I AM about to relate an adventure which to many will appear incredible, but of which I was in great part an eye-witness. The few who are acquainted with a certain political event will, if indeed these pages should happen to find them alive, receive a welcome solution thereof. And, even to the rest of my readers, it will be, perhaps, important as a contribution to the history of the deception and aberrations of the human intellect. The boldness of the schemes which malice is able to contemplate and to carry out must excite astonishment, as must also the means of which it can avail itself to accomplish its aims. Clear, unvarnished truth shall guide my pen ; for, when these pages come before the public, I shall be no more, and shall therefore never learn their fate.

On my return to Courland in the year 17—, about the time of the Carnival, I visited the Prince of —— at Venice. We had been acquainted in the —— service, and we here renewed an intimacy which, by the restoration of peace, had been interrupted. As I wished to see the curiosities of this city, and as the prince was waiting only for the arrival of remittances to return to his native country, he easily prevailed on me to tarry till his departure. We agreed not to separate during the time of our residence at Venice, and the prince

was kind enough to accommodate me at his lodgings at the Moor Hotel.

As the prince wished to enjoy himself, and his small revenues did not permit him to maintain the dignity of his rank, he lived at Venice in the strictest *incognito*. Two noblemen, in whom he had entire confidence, and a few faithful servants, composed all his retinue. He shunned expenditure, more however from inclination than economy. He avoided all kinds of dissipation, and up to the age of thirty-five years had resisted the numerous allurements of this voluptuous city. To the charms of the fair sex he was wholly indifferent. A settled gravity and an enthusiastic melancholy were the prominent features of his character. His affections were tranquil, but obstinate to excess. He formed his attachments with caution and timidity, but when once formed they were cordial and permanent. In the midst of a tumultuous crowd he walked in solitude. Wrapped in his own visionary ideas, he was often a stranger to the world about him; and, sensible of his own deficiency in the knowledge of mankind, he scarcely ever ventured an opinion of his own, and was apt to pay an unwarrantable deference to the judgment of others. Though far from being weak, no man was more liable to be governed; but, when conviction had once entered his mind, he became firm and decisive, equally courageous to combat an acknowledged prejudice or to die for a new one.

As he was the third prince of his house, he had no likely prospect of succeeding to the sovereignty. His ambition had never been awakened; his passions had taken another direction. Contented to find himself independent of the will of others, he never enforced his own as a law; his utmost wishes did not soar beyond the peaceful quietude of a private life, free from care. He read much, but without discrimination. As his education had been neglected, and as he had early

entered the career of arms, his understanding had never been fully matured. Hence the knowledge he afterward acquired served but to increase the chaos of his ideas, because it was built on an unstable foundation.

He was a Protestant, as all his family had been, by birth, but not by investigation, which he had never attempted, although at one period of his life he had been an enthusiast in its cause. He had never, so far as came to my knowledge, been a freemason.

One evening we were, as usual, walking by ourselves, well masked, in the square of St. Mark. It was growing late, and the crowd was dispersing, when the prince observed a mask which followed us everywhere. This mask was an Armenian, and walked alone. We quickened our steps, and endeavoured to baffle him by repeatedly altering our course. It was in vain, the mask was always close behind us. "You have had no intrigue here, I hope," said the prince at last, "the husbands of Venice are dangerous." "I do not know a single lady in the place," was my answer. "Let us sit down here, and speak German," said he; "I fancy we are mistaken for some other persons." We sat down upon a stone bench, and expected the mask would have passed by. He came directly up to us, and took his seat by the side of the prince. The latter took out his watch, and, rising at the same time, addressed me thus in a loud voice in French: "It is past nine. Come, we forget that we are waited for at the Louvre." This speech he only invented in order to deceive the mask as to our route. "Nine!" repeated the latter in the same language, in a slow and expressive voice, "Congratulate yourself, my prince" (calling him by his real name); "he died at nine." In saying this, he rose and went away.

We looked at each other in amazement. "Who is dead?" said the prince at length, after a long silence. "Let us follow him," replied I, "and demand an expla-

nation." We searched every corner of the place; the mask was nowhere to be found. We returned to our hotel disappointed. The prince spoke not a word to me the whole way; he walked apart by himself, and appeared to be greatly agitated, which he afterward confessed to me was the case. Having reached home, he began at length to speak: "Is it not laughable," said he, "that a madman should have the power thus to disturb a man's tranquillity by two or three words?" We wished each other a good-night; and, as soon as I was in my own apartment, I noted down in my pocket-book the day and the hour when this adventure happened. It was on a Thursday.

The next evening the prince said to me, "Suppose we go to the square of St. Mark, and seek for our mysterious Armenian. I long to see this comedy unravelled." I consented. We walked in the square till eleven. The Armenian was nowhere to be seen. We repeated our walk the four following evenings, and each time with the same bad success.

On the sixth evening, as we went out of the hotel, it occurred to me, whether designedly or otherwise I cannot recollect, to tell the servants where we might be found in case we should be inquired for. The prince remarked my precaution, and approved of it with a smile. We found the square of St. Mark very much crowded. Scarcely had we advanced thirty steps when I perceived the Armenian, who was pressing rapidly through the crowd, and seemed to be in search of some one. We were just approaching him, when Baron F——, one of the prince's retinue, came up to us quite breathless, and delivered to the prince a letter. "It is sealed with black," said he, "and we supposed from this that it might contain matters of importance." I was struck as with a thunderbolt. The prince went near a torch, and began to read. "My cousin is dead!" exclaimed he. "When?" inquired I, anxiously, inter-

rupting him. He looked again into the letter. "Last Thursday night at nine."

We had not recovered from our surprise when the Armenian stood before us. "You are known here, my prince!" said he. "Hasten to your hotel. You will find there the deputies from the Senate. Do not hesitate to accept the honour they intend to offer you. Baron F—— forgot to tell you that your remittances are arrived." He disappeared among the crowd.

We hastened to our hotel, and found everything as the Armenian had told us. Three noblemen of the republic were waiting to pay their respects to the prince, and to escort him in state to the Assembly, where the first nobility of the city were ready to receive him. He had hardly time enough to give me a hint to sit up for him till his return.

About eleven o'clock at night he returned. On entering the room he appeared grave and thoughtful. Having dismissed the servants, he took me by the hand, and said, in the words of Hamlet, "Count——,

"There are more things in heav'n and earth,
Than are dreamt of in your philosophy."

"Gracious prince!" replied I, "you seem to forget that you are retiring to your pillow greatly enriched in prospect." The deceased was the hereditary prince.

"Do not remind me of it," said the prince; "for should I even have acquired a crown I am now too much engaged to occupy myself with such a trifle. If that Armenian has not merely guessed by chance——"

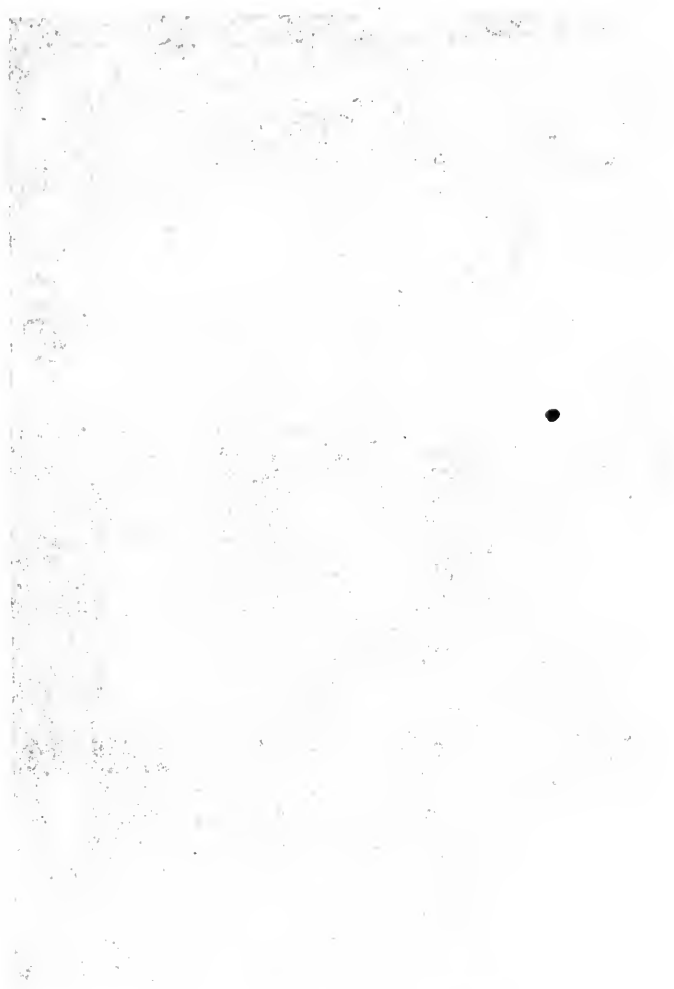
"How can that be, my prince?" interrupted I.

"Then will I resign to you all my hopes of royalty in exchange for a monk's cowl."

I have mentioned this purposely to show how far every ambitious idea was then distant from his thoughts.

The following evening we went earlier than usual

to the square of St. Mark. A sudden shower of rain obliged us to take shelter in a coffee-house, where we found a party engaged at cards. The prince took his place behind the chair of a Spaniard to observe the game. I went into an adjacent chamber to read the newspapers. A short time afterward I heard a noise in the card-room. Previously to the entrance of the prince the Spaniard had been constantly losing, but since then he had won upon every card. The fortune of the game was reversed in a striking manner, and the bank was in danger of being challenged by the pointeur, whom this lucky change of fortune had rendered more adventurous. A Venetian, who kept the bank, told the prince in a very rude manner that his presence interrupted the fortune of the game, and desired him to quit the table. The latter looked coldly at him, remained in his place, and preserved the same countenance, when the Venetian repeated his insulting demand in French. He thought the prince understood neither French nor Italian; and, addressing himself with a contemptuous laugh to the company, said, "Pray, gentlemen, tell me how I must make myself understood to this fool." At the same time he rose and prepared to seize the prince by the arm. His patience forsook the latter; he grasped the Venetian with a strong hand, and threw him violently on the ground. The company rose up in confusion. Hearing the noise, I hastily entered the room, and unguardedly called the prince by his name. "Take care," said I, imprudently; "we are in Venice." The name of the prince caused a general silence, which ended in a whispering which appeared to me to have a dangerous tendency. All the Italians present divided into parties, and kept aloof. One after the other left the room, so that we soon found ourselves alone with the Spaniard and a few Frenchmen. "You are lost, prince," said they, "if you do not leave the city immediately. The



... The prince took his
... of a Spaniard to observe the
... adjacent chamber to ward the
... afterward I heard a noise
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... addressing himself
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... dangerous
... into skirts,
... the room so
... Spaniard

“ The prisoner replied, ‘ Yes.’ ”

Photogravure after the painting by Werner.





Venetian whom you have handled so roughly is rich enough to hire a *bravo*. It costs him but fifty zechins to be revenged by your death." The Spaniard offered, for the security of the prince, to go for the guards, and even to accompany us home himself. The Frenchmen proposed to do the same. We were still deliberating what to do when the doors suddenly opened, and some officers of the Inquisition entered the room. They produced an order of government, which charged us both to follow them immediately. They conducted us under a strong escort to the canal, where a gondola was waiting for us, in which we were ordered to embark. We were blindfolded before we landed. They led us up a large stone staircase, and through a long, winding passage, over vaults, as I judged from the echoes that resounded under our feet. At length we came to another staircase, and, having descended a flight of steps, we entered a hall, where the bandage was removed from our eyes. We found ourselves in a circle of venerable old men, all dressed in black; the hall was hung round with black and dimly lighted. A dead silence reigned in the assembly, which inspired us with a feeling of awe. One of the old men, who appeared to be the principal Inquisitor, approached the prince with a solemn countenance, and said, pointing to the Venetian, who was led forward :

"Do you recognise this man as the same who offended you at the coffee-house?"

"I do," answered the prince.

Then addressing the prisoner: "Is this the same person whom you meant to have assassinated to-night?"

The prisoner replied, "Yes."

In the same instant the circle opened, and we saw with horror the head of the Venetian severed from his body.

"Are you content with this satisfaction?" said the Inquisitor. The prince had fainted in the arms of his

attendants. "Go," added the Inquisitor, turning to me, with a terrible voice, "Go; and in future judge less hastily of the administration of justice in Venice."

Who the unknown friend was who had thus saved us from inevitable death, by interposing in our behalf the active arm of justice, we could not conjecture. Filled with terror we reached our hotel. It was past midnight. The chamberlain, Z——, was waiting anxiously for us at the door.

"How fortunate it was that you sent us a message," said he to the prince, as he lighted us up the staircase. "The news which Baron F—— soon after brought us respecting you from the square of St. Mark would otherwise have given us the greatest uneasiness."

"I sent you a message!" said the prince. "When? I know nothing of it."

"This evening, after eight, you sent us word that we must not be alarmed if you should come home later to-night than usual."

The prince looked at me. "Perhaps you have taken this precaution without mentioning it to me."

I knew nothing of it.

"It must be so, however," replied the chamberlain, "since here is your repeating-watch, which you sent me as a mark of authenticity."

The prince put his hand to his watch-pocket. It was empty, and he recognised the watch which the chamberlain held as his own.

"Who brought it?" said he, in amazement.

"An unknown mask, in an Armenian dress, who disappeared immediately."

We stood looking at each other. "What do you think of this?" said the prince at last, after a long silence. "I have a secret guardian here in Venice."

The frightful transaction of this night threw the prince into a fever, which confined him to his room for a week. During this time our hotel was crowded

with Venetians and strangers, who visited the prince from a deference to his newly discovered rank. They vied with each other in offers of service, and it was not a little entertaining to observe that the last visitor seldom failed to hint some suspicion derogatory to the character of the preceding one. Billets-doux and nostrums poured in upon us from all quarters. Every one endeavoured to recommend himself in his own way. Our adventure with the Inquisition was no more mentioned. The court of —— wishing the prince to delay his departure from Venice for some time, orders were sent to several bankers to pay him considerable sums of money. He was thus, against his will, compelled to protract his residence in Italy ; and at his request I also resolved to postpone my departure for some time longer.

As soon as the prince had recovered strength enough to quit his chamber he was advised by his physician to take an airing in a gondola upon the Brenta, for the benefit of the air, to which, as the weather was serene, he readily consented. Just as the prince was about to step into the boat he missed the key of a little chest in which some very valuable papers were enclosed. We immediately turned back to search for it. He very distinctly remembered that he had locked the chest the day before, and he had never left the room in the interval. As our endeavours to find it proved ineffectual, we were obliged to relinquish the search in order to avoid being too late. The prince, whose soul was above suspicion, gave up the key as lost, and desired that it might not be mentioned any more.

Our little voyage was exceedingly delightful. A picturesque country, which at every winding of the river seemed to increase in richness and beauty ; the serenity of the sky, which formed a May day in the middle of February ; the charming gardens and elegant country-seats which adorned the banks of the Brenta ; the majestic city of Venice behind us, with its lofty

spires, and a forest of masts, rising as it were out of the waves ; all this afforded us one of the most splendid prospects in the world. We wholly abandoned ourselves to the enchantment of Nature's luxuriant scenery ; our minds shared the hilarity of the day ; even the prince himself lost his wonted gravity, and vied with us in merry jests and diversions. On landing about two Italian miles from the city, we heard the sound of sprightly music ; it came from a small village at a little distance from the Brenta, where there was at that time a fair. The place was crowded with company of every description. A troop of young girls and boys, dressed in theatrical habits, welcomed us in a pantomimical dance. The invention was novel ; animation and grace attended their every movement. Before the dance was quite concluded the principal actress, who represented a queen, stopped suddenly, as if arrested by an invisible arm. Herself and those around her were motionless. The music ceased. The assembly was silent. Not a breath was to be heard, and the queen stood with her eyes fixed on the ground in deep abstraction. On a sudden she started from her reverie with the fury of one inspired, and looked wildly around her. "A king is among us," she exclaimed, taking her crown from her head, and laying it at the feet of the prince. Every one present cast their eyes upon him, and doubted for some time whether there was any meaning in this farce ; so much were they deceived by the impressive seriousness of the actress. This silence was at length broken by a general clapping of hands, as a mark of approbation. I looked at the prince. I noticed that he appeared not a little disconcerted, and endeavoured to escape the inquisitive glances of the spectators. He threw money to the players, and hastened to extricate himself from the crowd.

We had advanced but a few steps when a venerable barefooted friar, pressing through the crowd, placed

himself in the prince's path. "My lord," said he, "give the Holy Virgin part of your gold. You will want her prayers." He uttered these words in a tone of voice which startled us extremely, and then disappeared in the throng.

In the meantime our company had increased. An English lord, whom the prince had seen before at Nice, some merchants of Leghorn, a German prebendary, a French abbé with some ladies, and a Russian officer, attached themselves to our party. The physiognomy of the latter had something so uncommon as to attract our particular attention. Never in my life did I see such various features and so little expression; so much attractive benevolence and such forbidding coldness in the same face. Each passion seemed by turns to have exercised its ravages on it, and to have successively abandoned it. Nothing remained but the calm, piercing look of a person deeply skilled in the knowledge of mankind; but it was a look that abashed every one on whom it was directed. This extraordinary man followed us at a distance, and seemed apparently to take but little interest in what was passing.

We came to a booth where there was a lottery. The ladies bought shares. We followed their example, and the prince himself purchased a ticket. He won a snuff-box. As he opened it I saw him turn pale and start back. It contained his lost key.

"How is this?" said he to me, as we were left for a moment alone. "A superior power attends me, omniscience surrounds me. An invisible being, whom I cannot escape, watches over my steps. I must seek for the Armenian, and obtain an explanation from him."

The sun was setting when we arrived at the pleasure-house, where a supper had been prepared for us. The prince's name had augmented our company to

sixteen. Besides the above-mentioned persons there was a virtuoso from Rome, several Swiss gentlemen, and an adventurer from Palermo in regimentals, who gave himself out for a captain. We resolved to spend the evening where we were, and to return home by torchlight. The conversation at table was lively. The prince could not forbear relating his adventure of the key, which excited general astonishment. A warm dispute on the subject presently took place. Most of the company positively maintained that the pretended occult sciences were nothing better than juggling tricks. The French abbé, who had drank rather too much wine, challenged the whole tribe of ghosts, the English lord uttered blasphemies, and the musician made a cross to exorcise the devil. Some few of the company, amongst whom was the prince, contended that opinions respecting such matters ought to be kept to oneself. In the meantime the Russian officer discoursed with the ladies, and did not seem to pay attention to any part of conversation. In the heat of the dispute no one observed that the Sicilian had left the room. In less than half an hour he returned wrapped in a cloak, and placed himself behind the chair of the Frenchman. "A few moments ago," said he, "you had the temerity to challenge the whole tribe of ghosts. Would you wish to make a trial with one of them?"

"I will," answered the abbé, "if you will take upon yourself to introduce one."

"That I am ready to do," replied the Sicilian, turning to us, "as soon as these ladies and gentlemen have left us."

"Why only then?" exclaimed the Englishman. "A courageous ghost will surely not be afraid of a cheerful company."

"I would not answer for the consequences," said the Sicilian.

"For heaven's sake, no!" cried the ladies, starting affrighted from their chairs.

"Call your ghost," said the abbé, in a tone of defiance, "but warn him beforehand that there are sharp-pointed weapons here." At the same time he asked one of the company for a sword.

"If you preserve the same intention in his presence," answered the Sicilian, coolly, "you may then act as you please." He then turned toward the prince: "Your Highness," said he, "asserts that your key has been in the hands of a stranger; can you conjecture in whose?"

"No."

"Have you no suspicion?"

"It certainly occurred to me that —"

"Should you know the person if you saw him?"

"Undoubtedly."

The Sicilian, throwing back his cloak, took out a looking-glass and held it before the prince. "Is this the man?"

The prince drew back with affright.

"Whom have you seen?" I inquired.

"The Armenian."

The Sicilian concealed his looking-glass under his cloak.

"Is it the person whom you thought of?" demanded the whole company.

"The same."

A sudden change manifested itself on every face; no more laughter was to be heard. All eyes were fixed with curiosity on the Sicilian.

"Monsieur l'abbé! The matter grows serious," said the Englishman. "I advise you to think of beating a retreat."

"The fellow is in league with the devil," exclaimed the Frenchman, and rushed out of the house. The ladies ran shrieking from the room. The virtuoso

followed them. The German prebendary was snoring in a chair. The Russian officer continued sitting in his place as before, perfectly indifferent to what was passing.

"Perhaps your intention was only to raise a laugh at the expense of that boaster," said the prince, after they were gone, "or would you indeed fulfil your promise to us?"

"It is true," replied the Sicilian; "I was but jesting with the abbé. I took him at his word, because I knew very well that the coward would not suffer me to proceed to extremities. The matter itself is, however, too serious to serve merely as a jest."

"You grant, then, that it is in your power?"

The sorcerer maintained a long silence, and kept his look fixed steadily on the prince, as if to examine him.

"It is!" answered he at last.

The prince's curiosity was now raised to the highest pitch. A fondness for the marvellous had ever been his prevailing weakness. His improved understanding and a proper course of reading had for some time dissipated every idea of this kind; but the appearance of the Armenian had revived them. He stepped aside with the Sicilian, and I heard them in very earnest conversation.

"You see in me," said the prince, "a man who burns with impatience to be convinced on this momentous subject. I would embrace as a benefactor, I would cherish as my best friend him who could dissipate my doubts and remove the veil from my eyes. Would you render me this important service?"

"What is your request?" inquired the Sicilian, hesitating.

"For the present I only beg some proof of your art. Let me see an apparition."

"To what will this lead?"

“After a more intimate acquaintance with me you may be able to judge whether I deserve further instruction.”

“I have the greatest esteem for your highness, gracious prince. A secret power in your countenance, of which you yourself are as yet ignorant, drew me at first sight irresistibly toward you. You are more powerful than you are yourself aware. You may command me to the utmost extent of my power, but —”

“Then let me see an apparition.”

“But I must first be certain that you do not require it from mere curiosity. Though the invisible powers are in some degree at my command, it is on the sacred condition that I do not abuse my authority.”

“My intentions are most pure. I want truth.”

They left their places, and removed to a distant window, where I could no longer hear them. The English lord, who had likewise overheard this conversation, took me aside. “Your prince has a noble mind. I am sorry for him. I will pledge my salvation that he has to do with a rascal.”

“Everything depends on the manner in which the sorcerer will extricate himself from this business.”

“Listen to me. The poor devil is now pretending to be scrupulous. He will not show his tricks unless he hears the sound of gold. There are nine of us. Let us make a collection. That will spoil his scheme, and perhaps open the eyes of the prince.”

“I am content.” The Englishman threw six guineas upon a plate, and went round gathering subscriptions. Each of us contributed some louis-d’ors. The Russian officer was particularly pleased with our proposal; he laid a bank-note of one hundred zechins on the plate, a piece of extravagance which startled the Englishman. We brought the collection to the prince. “Be so kind,” said the English lord, “as to entreat this gentle-

man in our names to let us see a specimen of his art, and to accept of this small token of our gratitude." The prince added a ring of value, and offered the whole to the Sicilian. He hesitated a few moments. "Gentlemen," answered he, "I am humbled by this generosity, but I yield to your request. Your wishes shall be gratified." At the same time he rang the bell. "As for this money," continued he, "to which I have no right myself, permit me to send it to the next monastery to be applied to pious uses. I shall only keep this ring as a precious memorial of the worthiest of princes."

Here the landlord entered; and the Sicilian handed him over the money. "He is a rascal notwithstanding," whispered the Englishman to me. "He refuses the money because at present his designs are chiefly on the prince."

"Whom do you wish to see?" asked the sorcerer.

The prince considered for a moment. "We may as well have a great man at once," said the Englishman. "Ask for Pope Ganganelli. It can make no difference to this gentleman."

The Sicilian bit his lips. "I dare not call one of the Lord's anointed."

"That is a pity!" replied the English lord; "perhaps we might have heard from him what disorder he died of."

"The Marquis de Lanoy," began the prince, "was a French brigadier in the late war, and my most intimate friend. Having received a mortal wound in the battle of Hastinbeck, he was carried to my tent, where he soon after died in my arms. In his last agony he made a sign for me to approach. 'Prince,' said he to me, 'I shall never again behold my native land. I must, therefore, acquaint you with a secret known to none but myself. In a convent on the frontiers of Flanders lives a —' He expired. Death

cut short the thread of his discourse. I wish to see my friend to hear the remainder."

"You ask much," exclaimed the Englishman, with an oath. "I proclaim you the greatest sorcerer on earth if you can solve this problem," continued he, turning to the Sicilian. We admired the wise choice of the prince, and unanimously gave our approval to the proposition. In the meantime the sorcerer paced up and down the room with hasty steps, apparently struggling with himself.

"This was all that the dying marquis communicated to you?"

"It is all."

"Did you make no further inquiries about the matter in his native country?"

"I did, but they all proved fruitless."

"Had the Marquis de Lanoy led an irreproachable life? I dare not call up every shade indiscriminately."

"He died repenting the excesses of his youth."

"Do you carry with you any token of his?"

"I do." (The prince had really a snuff-box with the marquis's portrait enamelled in miniature on the lid, which he had placed upon the table near his plate during the time of supper.)

"I do not want to know what it is. If you will leave me you shall see the deceased."

He requested us to wait in the other pavilion until he should call us. At the same time he caused all the furniture to be removed from the room, the windows to be taken out, and the shutters to be bolted. He ordered the innkeeper, with whom he appeared to be intimately connected, to bring a vessel with burning coals, and carefully to extinguish every fire in the house. Previous to our leaving the room he obliged us separately to pledge our honour that we would maintain an everlasting silence respecting everything we should see and hear. All the doors of the

pavilion we were in were bolted behind us when we left it.

It was past eleven, and a dead silence reigned throughout the whole house. As we were retiring from the saloon the Russian officer asked me whether we had loaded pistols. "For what purpose?" asked I. "They may possibly be of some use," replied he. "Wait a moment. I will provide some." He went away. The Baron F—— and I opened a window opposite the pavilion we had left. We fancied we heard two persons whispering to each other, and a noise like that of a ladder applied to one of the windows. This was, however, a mere conjecture, and I did not dare affirm it as a fact. The Russian officer came back with a brace of pistols, after having been absent about half an hour. We saw him load them with powder and ball. It was almost two o'clock in the morning when the sorcerer came and announced that all was prepared. Before we entered the room he desired us to take off our shoes, and to appear in our shirts, stockings, and undergarments. He bolted the doors after us as before.

We found in the middle of the room a large, black circle, drawn with charcoal, the space within which was capable of containing us all very easily. The planks of the chamber floor next to the wall were taken up all round the room, so that we stood as it were upon an island. An altar covered with black cloth was placed in the centre upon a carpet of red satin. A Chaldee Bible was laid open, together with a skull; and a silver crucifix was fastened upon the altar. Instead of candles some spirits of wine were burning in a silver vessel. A thick smoke of frankincense darkened the room and almost extinguished the lights. The sorcerer was undressed like ourselves, but barefooted; about his bare neck he wore an amulet,¹

¹ Amulet is a charm or preservative against mischief, witchcraft, or diseases. Amulets were made of stone, metal, simples,

suspended by a chain of human hair ; round his middle was a white apron marked with cabalistic characters and symbolical figures. He desired us to join hands and to observe profound silence ; above all he ordered us not to ask the apparition any question. He desired the Englishman and myself, whom he seemed to distrust the most, constantly to hold two naked swords crossways an inch above his head as long as the conjuration should last. We formed a half-moon round him ; the Russian officer placed himself close to the English lord, and was the nearest to the altar. The sorcerer stood upon the satin carpet with his face turned to the east. He sprinkled holy water in the direction of the four cardinal points of the compass, and bowed three times before the Bible. The formula of the conjuration, of which we did not understand a word, lasted for the space of seven or eight minutes, at the end of which he made a sign to those who stood close behind to seize him firmly by the hair. Amid the most violent convulsions he called the deceased three times by his name, and the third time he stretched forth his hand toward the crucifix.

On a sudden we all felt at the same instant a stroke as of a flash of lightning, so powerful that it obliged us to quit each other's hands ; a terrible thunder shook the house ; the locks jarred ; the doors creaked ; the cover of the silver box fell down and extinguished

animals, and everything which fancy or caprice suggested ; and sometimes they consisted of words, characters, and sentences ranged in a particular order and engraved upon wood, and worn about the neck or some other part of the body. At other times they were neither written nor engraved, but prepared with many superstitious ceremonies, great regard being usually paid to the influence of the stars. The Arabians have given to this species of amulets the name of talismans. All nations have been fond of amulets. The Jews were extremely superstitious in the use of them to drive away diseases ; and even amongst the Christians of the early times amulets were made of the wood of the cross or ribbons, with a text of Scripture written on them, as preservatives against diseases.

the light; and on the opposite wall over the chimney-piece appeared a human figure in a bloody shirt, with the paleness of death on its countenance.

"Who calls me?" said a hollow, hardly intelligible voice.

"Thy friend," answered the sorcerer, "who respects thy memory, and prays for thy soul." He named the prince.

The answers of the apparition were always given at very long intervals.

"What does he want with me?" continued the voice.

"He wants to hear the remainder of the confession which thou hadst begun to impart to him in thy dying hour, but did not finish."

"In a convent on the frontiers of Flanders lives a—"

The house again trembled; a dreadful thunder rolled; a flash of lightning illuminated the room; the doors flew open, and another human figure, bloody and pale as the first, but more terrible, appeared on the threshold. The spirit in the box began to burn again by itself, and the hall was light as before.

"Who is amongst us?" exclaimed the sorcerer, terrified, casting a look of horror on the assemblage; "I did not want thee." The figure advanced with noiseless and majestic steps directly up to the altar, stood on the satin carpet over against us, and touched the crucifix. The first apparition was seen no more.

"Who calls me?" demanded the second apparition.

The sorcerer began to tremble. Terror and amazement kept us motionless for some time. I seized a pistol. The sorcerer snatched it out of my hand, and fired it at the apparition. The ball rolled slowly upon the altar, and the figure emerged unaltered from the smoke. The sorcerer fell senseless on the ground.

"What is this?" exclaimed the Englishman, in aston-

ishment, aiming a blow at the ghost with a sword. The figure touched his arm, and the weapon fell to the ground. The perspiration stood on my brow with horror. Baron F—— afterward confessed to me that he had prayed silently.

During all this time the prince stood fearless and tranquil, his eyes riveted on the second apparition. "Yes, I know thee," said he at length, with emotion; "thou art Lanoy; thou art my friend. Whence comest thou?"

"Eternity is mute. Ask me concerning my past life."

"Who is it that lives in the convent which thou mentionedst to me in thy last moments?"

"My daughter."

"How? Hast thou been a father?"

"Woe is me that I was not."

"Art thou not happy, Lanoy?"

"God has judged."

"Can I render thee any further service in this world?"

"None but to think of thyself."

"How must I do that?"

"Thou wilt learn at Rome."

The thunder again rolled; a black cloud of smoke filled the room; when it had dispersed the figure was no longer visible. I forced open one of the window shutters. It was daylight.

The sorcerer now recovered from his swoon. "Where are we?" asked he, seeing the daylight.

The Russian officer stood close beside him, and looked over his shoulder. "Juggler," said he to him, with a terrible countenance, "thou shalt summon no more ghosts."

The Sicilian turned round, looked steadfastly in his face, uttered a loud shriek, and threw himself at his feet.

We looked all at once at the pretended Russian. The prince instantly recognised the features of the Armenian, and the words he was about to utter expired on his tongue. We were all as it were petrified with fear and amazement. Silent and motionless, our eyes were fixed on this mysterious being, who beheld us with a calm but penetrating look of grandeur and superiority. A minute elapsed in this awful silence; another succeeded; not a breath was to be heard.

A violent battering against the door roused us at last from this stupor. The door fell in pieces into the room, and several officers of justice, with a guard, rushed in. "Here they are, all together," said the leader to his followers. Then addressing himself to us, "In the name of the government," continued he, "I arrest you." We had no time to recollect ourselves; in a few moments we were surrounded. The Russian officer, whom I shall again call the Armenian, took the chief officer aside, and, as far as I in my confusion could notice, I observed him whisper a few words to the latter, and show him a written paper. The officer, bowing respectfully, immediately quitted him, turned to us, and taking off his hat, said: "Gentlemen, I humbly beg your pardon for having confounded you with this impostor. I shall not inquire who you are, as this gentleman assures me you are men of honour." At the same time he gave his companions a sign to leave us at liberty. He ordered the Sicilian to be bound and strictly guarded. "The fellow is ripe for punishment," added he; "we have been searching for him these seven months."

The wretched sorcerer was really an object of pity. The terror caused by the second apparition, and by this unexpected arrest, had together overpowered his senses. Helpless as a child, he suffered himself to be bound without resistance. His eyes were wide open and immovable; his face was pale as death; his lips quiv-

ered convulsively, but he was unable to utter a sound. Every moment we expected he would fall into a fit. The prince was moved by the situation in which he saw him. He undertook to procure his discharge from the leader of the police, to whom he discovered his rank. "Do you know, gracious prince," said the officer, "for whom your highness is so generously interceding? The juggling tricks by which he endeavoured to deceive you are the least of his crimes. We have secured his accomplices; they depose terrible facts against him. He may think himself fortunate if he is only punished with the galleys."

In the meantime we saw the innkeeper and his family led bound through the yard. "This man, too?" said the prince; "and what is his crime?"

"He was his comrade and accomplice," answered the officer. "He assisted him in his deceptions and robberies, and shared the booty with him. Your highness shall be convinced of it presently. Search the house," continued he, turning to his followers, "and bring me immediate notice of what you find."

The prince looked around for the Armenian, but he had disappeared. In the confusion occasioned by the arrival of the watch he had found means to steal away unperceived. The prince was inconsolable; he declared he would send all his servants, and would himself go in search of this mysterious man; and he wished me to go with him. I hastened to the window; the house was surrounded by a great number of idlers, whom the account of this event had attracted to the spot. It was impossible to get through the crowd. I represented this to the prince. "If," said I, "it is the Armenian's intention to conceal himself from us, he is doubtless better acquainted with the intricacies of the place than we, and all our inquiries would prove fruitless. Let us rather remain here a little longer, gracious prince," added I. "This officer, to whom, if I observed right,

he discovered himself, may perhaps give us some information respecting him."

We now for the first time recollected that we were still undressed. We hastened to the other pavilion and put on our clothes as quickly as possible. When we returned they had finished searching the house.

On removing the altar and some of the boards of the floor a spacious vault was discovered. It was high enough, for a man might sit upright in it with ease, and was separated from the cellar by a door and a narrow staircase. In this vault they found an electrical machine, a clock, and a little silver bell, which, as well as the electrical machine, was in communication with the altar and the crucifix that was fastened upon it. A hole had been made in the window-shutter opposite the chimney, which opened and shut with a slide. In this hole, as we learnt afterward, was fixed a magic lantern, from which the figure of the ghost had been reflected on the opposite wall, over the chimney. From the garret and the cellar they brought several drums, to which large leaden bullets were fastened by strings; these had probably been used to imitate the roaring of thunder which we had heard.

On searching the Sicilian's clothes they found, in a case, different powders, genuine mercury in vials and boxes, phosphorus in a glass bottle, and a ring, which we immediately knew to be magnetic, because it adhered to a steel button that by accident had been placed near it. In his coat-pockets were found a rosary, a Jew's beard, a dagger, and a brace of pocket-pistols. "Let us see whether they are loaded," said one of the watch, and fired up the chimney.

"Jesus Maria!" cried a hollow voice, which we knew to be that of the first apparition, and at the same instant a bleeding person came tumbling down the chimney. "What! not yet laid, poor ghost!" cried the Englishman, while we started back in affright.

“Home to thy grave. Thou hast appeared what thou wert not ; now thou wilt become what thou didst but seem.”

“Jesus Maria! I am wounded,” repeated the man in the chimney. The ball had fractured his right leg. Care was immediately taken to have the wound dressed.

“But who art thou?” said the English lord ; “and what evil spirit brought thee here?”

“I am a poor mendicant friar,” answered the wounded man ; “a strange gentleman gave me a zechin to —”

“Repeat a speech. And why didst thou not withdraw as soon as thy task was finished?”

“I was waiting for a signal which we had agreed on to continue my speech ; but as this signal was not given, I was endeavouring to get away, when I found the ladder had been removed —”

“And what was the formula he taught thee?”

The wounded man fainted away ; nothing more could be got from him. In the meantime the prince turned toward the principal officer of the watch, giving him at the same time some pieces of gold. “You have rescued us,” said he, “from the hands of an impostor, and done us justice without even knowing who we were ; would you increase our gratitude by telling us the name of the stranger who, by speaking only a few words, was able to procure us our liberty?”

“Whom do you mean?” inquired the party addressed, with an air which plainly showed that the question was useless.

“The gentleman in a Russian uniform, who took you aside, showed you a written paper, and whispered a few words, in consequence of which you immediately set us free.”

“Do not you know the gentleman? Was he not one of your company?”

"No," answered the prince; "and I have very important reasons for wishing to be more intimately acquainted with him."

"I know very little of him myself. Even his name is unknown to me, and I saw him to-day for the first time in my life."

"How? And was he in so short a time, and by using only a few words, able to convince you both of our innocence and his own?"

"Undoubtedly, with a single word."

"And this was? I confess I wish to know it."

"This stranger, my prince," said the officer, weighing the zechins in his hand,—"you have been too generous for me to make a secret of it any longer,—this stranger is an officer of the Inquisition."

"Of the Inquisition? This man?"

"He is, indeed, gracious prince. I was convinced of it by the paper which he showed to me."

"This man, did you say? That cannot be."

"I will tell your highness more. It was upon his information that I have been sent here to arrest the sorcerer."

We looked at each other in the utmost astonishment.

"Now we know," said the English lord at length, "why the poor devil of a sorcerer started in such a terror when he looked more closely into his face. He knew him to be a spy, and that is why he uttered that shriek, and fell down before him."

"No!" interrupted the prince. "This man is whatever he wishes to be, and whatever the moment requires him to be. No mortal ever knew what he really was. Did you not see the knees of the Sicilian sink under him, when he said, with that terrible voice: 'Thou shalt summon no more ghosts?' There is something inexplicable in this matter. No person can persuade me that one man should be thus alarmed at the sight of another."

“The sorcerer himself will probably explain it the best,” said the English lord, “if that gentleman,” pointing to the officer, “will afford us an opportunity of speaking with his prisoner.”

The officer consented to it, and, having agreed with the Englishman to visit the Sicilian in the morning, we returned to Venice.¹

Lord Seymour (this was the name of the Englishman) called upon us very early in the forenoon, and was soon after followed by a confidential person whom the officer had entrusted with the care of conducting us to the prison. I forgot to mention that one of the prince's domestics, a native of Bremen, who had served him many years with the strictest fidelity, and had entirely gained his confidence, had been missing for several days. Whether he had met with any accident, whether he had been kidnapped, or had voluntarily absented himself, was a secret to every one. The last supposition was extremely improbable, as his conduct had always been quiet and regular, and nobody had ever found fault with him. All that his companions could recollect was that he had been for some time very melancholy, and that, whenever he had a moment's leisure, he used to visit a certain monastery in the Giudecca, where he had formed an acquaintance with some monks. This induced us to suppose that he might have fallen into the hands of the priests and had been persuaded to turn Catholic; and as the prince

¹The Count O——, whose narrative I have thus far literally copied, describes minutely the various effects of this adventure upon the mind of the prince and of his companions, and recounts a variety of tales of apparitions which this event gave occasion to introduce. I shall omit giving them to the reader, on the supposition that he is as curious as myself to know the conclusion of the adventure, and its effect on the conduct of the prince. I shall only add that the prince got no sleep the remainder of the night, and that he waited with impatience for the moment which was to disclose this incomprehensible mystery.—*Note of the German Editor.*

was very tolerant, or rather indifferent about matters of this kind, and the few inquiries he caused to be made proved unsuccessful, he gave up the search. He, however, regretted the loss of this man, who had constantly attended him in his campaigns, had always been faithfully attached to him, and whom it was therefore difficult to replace in a foreign country. The very same day the prince's banker, whom he had commissioned to provide him with another servant, was announced at the moment we were going out. He presented to the prince a middle-aged man, well-dressed, and of good appearance, who had been for a long time secretary to a procurator, spoke French and a little German, and was besides furnished with the best recommendations. The prince was pleased with the man's physiognomy; and as he declared that he would be satisfied with such wages as his service should be found to merit, the prince engaged him immediately.

We found the Sicilian in a private prison where, as the officer assured us, he had been lodged for the present, to accommodate the prince, before being removed to the lead roofs, to which there is no access. These lead roofs are the most terrible prisons in Venice. They are situated on the top of the palace of St. Mark, and the miserable criminals suffer so dreadfully from the heat of the leads occasioned by the heat of the burning rays of the sun descending directly upon them that they frequently become delirious. The Sicilian had recovered from his yesterday's terror, and rose respectfully on seeing the prince enter. He had fetters on one hand and on one leg, but was able to walk about the room at liberty. The sentinel at the door withdrew as soon as we had entered.

"I come," said the prince, "to request an explanation of you on two subjects. You owe me the one, and it shall not be to your disadvantage if you grant me the other."

"My part is now acted," replied the Sicilian, "my destiny is in your hands."

"Your sincerity alone can mitigate your punishment."

"Speak, honoured prince, I am ready to answer you. I have nothing now to lose."

"You showed me the face of the Armenian in a looking-glass. How was this effected?"

"What you saw was no looking-glass. A portrait in crayons behind a glass, representing a man in an Armenian dress, deceived you. My quickness, the twilight, and your astonishment favoured the deception. The picture itself must have been found among the other things seized at the inn."

"But how could you read my thoughts so accurately as to hit upon the Armenian?"

"This was not difficult, your highness. You must frequently have mentioned your adventure with the Armenian at table in the presence of your domestics. One of my accomplices accidentally got acquainted with one of your domestics in the Giudecca, and learned from him gradually as much as I wished to know."

"Where is the man?" asked the prince; "I have missed him, and doubtless you know of his desertion."

"I swear to your honour, sir, that I know not a syllable about it. I have never seen him myself, nor had any other concern with him than the one before mentioned."

"Proceed with your story," said the prince.

"By this means, also, I received the first information of your residence and of your adventures at Venice; and I resolved immediately to profit by them. You see, prince, I am sincere. I was apprised of your intended excursion on the Brenta. I prepared for it, and a key that dropped by chance from your pocket afforded me the first opportunity of trying my art upon you."

“How! Have I been mistaken? The adventure of the key was then a trick of yours, and not of the Armenian? You say this key fell from my pocket?”

“You accidentally dropped it in taking out your purse, and I seized an opportunity, when no one noticed me, to cover it with my foot. The person of whom you bought the lottery-ticket acted in concert with me. He caused you to draw it from a box where there was no blank, and the key had been in the snuff-box long before it came into your possession.”

“I understand you. And the monk who stopped me in my way and addressed me in a manner so solemn —”

“Was the same who, as I hear, has been wounded in the chimuey. He is one of my accomplices, and under that disguise has rendered me many important services.”

“But what purpose was this intended to answer?”

“To render you thoughtful; to inspire you with such a train of ideas as should be favourable to the wonders I intended afterward to show you.”

“The pantomimical dance, which ended in a manner so extraordinary, was at least none of your contrivance?”

“I had taught the girl who represented the queen. Her performance was the result of my instructions. I supposed your highness would be not a little astonished to find yourself known in this place, and (I entreat your pardon, prince) your adventure with the Armenian gave me reason to hope that you were already disposed to reject natural interpretations, and to attribute so marvellous an occurrence to supernatural agency.”

“Indeed,” exclaimed the prince, at once angry and amazed, and casting upon me a significant look; “indeed, I did not expect this.”¹

¹ Neither did probably the greater number of my readers. The circumstance of the crown deposited at the feet of the prince, in

“But,” continued he, after a long silence, “how did you produce the figure which appeared on the wall over the chimney?”

“By means of a magic lantern that was fixed in the opposite window-shutter, in which you have undoubtedly observed an opening.”

“But how did it happen that not one of us perceived the lantern?” asked Lord Seymour.

“You remember, my lord, that on your reëntering the room it was darkened by a thick smoke of frankincense. I likewise took the precaution to place the boards which had been taken up from the floor upright against the wall near the window. By these means I prevented the shutter from immediately attracting observation. Moreover, the lantern remained covered by a slide until you had taken your places, and there was no further reason to apprehend that you would institute any examination of the saloon.”

“As I looked out of the window in the other pavil-

a manner so solemn and unexpected, and the former prediction of the Armenian, seem so naturally and obviously to aim at the same object that at the first reading of these memoirs I immediately remembered the deceitful speech of the witches in “Macbeth :”

“Hail to thee, Thane of Glamis !

All hail, Macbeth ! that shall be king hereafter !”

and probably the same thing has occurred to many of my readers.

When a certain conviction has taken hold upon a man’s mind in a solemn and extraordinary manner, it is sure to follow that all subsequent ideas which are in any way capable of being associated with this conviction should attach themselves to, and in some degree seem to be consequent upon it. The Sicilian, who seems to have had no other motive for his whole scheme than to astonish the prince by showing him that his rank was discovered, played, without being himself aware of it, the very game which most furthered the view of the Armenian ; but however much of its interest this adventure will lose if I take away the higher motive which at first seemed to influence these actions, I must by no means infringe upon historical truth, but must relate the facts exactly as they occurred. — *Note of the German Editor.*

ion," said I, "I fancied I heard a noise like that of a person placing a ladder against the side of the house. Was I right?"

"Exactly; it was the ladder upon which my assistants stood to direct the magic-lantern."

"The apparition," continued the prince, "had really a superficial likeness to my deceased friend, and what was particularly striking, his hair, which was of a very light colour, was exactly imitated. Was this mere chance, or how did you come by such a resemblance?"

"Your highness must recollect that you had at table a snuff-box by your plate, with an enamelled portrait of an officer in a — uniform. I asked whether you had anything about you as a memento of your friend, and as your highness answered in the affirmative, I conjectured that it might be the box. I had attentively examined the picture during supper, and being very expert in drawing and not less happy in taking likenesses, I had no difficulty in giving to my shade the superficial resemblance you have perceived, the more so as the marquis's features are very marked."

"But the figure seemed to move?"

"It appeared so, yet it was not the figure that moved but the smoke on which the light was reflected."

"And the man who fell down in the chimney spoke for the apparition?"

"He did."

"But he could not hear your question distinctly."

"There was no occasion for it. Your highness will recollect that I cautioned you all very strictly not to propose any question to the apparition yourselves. My inquiries and his answers were preconcerted between us; and that no mistake might happen, I caused him to speak at long intervals, which he counted by the beating of a watch."

“You ordered the innkeeper carefully to extinguish every fire in the house with water; this was undoubtedly —”

“To save the man in the chimney from the danger of being suffocated; because the chimneys in the house communicate with each other, and I did not think myself very secure from your retinuc.”

“How did it happen,” asked Lord Seymour, “that your ghost appeared neither sooner nor later than you wished him?”

“The ghost was in the room for some time before I called him, but while the room was lighted, the shade was too faint to be perceived. When the formula of the conjuration was finished, I caused the cover of the box, in which the spirit was burning, to drop down, the saloon was darkened, and it was not till then that the figure on the wall could be distinctly seen, although it had been reflected there a considerable time before.”

“When the ghost appeared, we all felt an electric shock. How was that managed?”

“You have discovered the machine under the altar. You have also seen that I was standing upon a silk carpet. I directed you to form a half-moon around me, and to take each other’s hands. When the crisis approached, I gave a sign to one of you to seize me by the hair. The silver crucifix was the conductor, and you felt the electric shock when I touched it with my hand.”

“You ordered Count O—— and myself,” continued Lord Seymour, “to hold two naked swords crossways over your head, during the whole time of the conjuration; for what purpose?”

“For no other than to engage your attention during the operation; because I distrusted you two the most. You remember, that I expressly commanded you to hold the sword one inch above my head; by confin-

ing you exactly to this distance, I prevented you from looking where I did not wish you. I had not then perceived my principal enemy."

"I own," cried Lord Seymour, "you acted with due precaution—but why were we obliged to appear undressed?"

"Merely to give a greater solemnity to the scene, and to excite your imaginations by the strangeness of the proceeding."

"The second apparition prevented your ghost from speaking," said the prince. "What should we have learnt from him?"

"Nearly the same as what you heard afterward. It was not without design that I asked your highness whether you had told me everything that the deceased communicated to you, and whether you had made any further inquiries on this subject in his country. I thought this was necessary, in order to prevent the deposition of the ghost from being contradicted by facts with which you were previously acquainted. Knowing likewise that every man in his youth is liable to error, I inquired whether the life of your friend had been irreproachable, and on your answer I founded that of the ghost."

"Your explanation of this matter is satisfactory," resumed the prince, after a short silence; "but there remains a principal circumstance which I must ask you to clear up."

"If it be in my power, and —"

"No conditions! Justice, in whose hands you now are, might perhaps not interrogate you with so much delicacy. Who was this unknown at whose feet we saw you fall? What do you know of him? How did you get acquainted with him? And in what way was he connected with the appearance of the second apparition?"

"Your highness —"

“On looking at him more attentively, you gave a loud scream, and fell at his feet. What are we to understand by that?”

“This man, your highness —” He stopped, grew visibly perplexed, and with an embarrassed countenance looked around him. “Yes, prince, by all that is sacred, this unknown is a terrible being.”

“What do you know of him? What connection have you with him? Do not hope to conceal the truth from us.”

“I shall take care not to do so, — for who will warrant that he is not among us at this very moment?”

“Where? Who?” exclaimed we all together, half-amused, half-startled, looking about the room. “That is impossible.”

“Oh! to this man, or whatever he may be, things still more incomprehensible are possible.”

“But who is he? Whence comes he? Is he an Armenian or a Russian? Of the characters he assumes, which is his real one?”

“He is nothing of what he appears to be. There are few conditions or countries of which he has not worn the mask. No person knows who he is, whence he comes, or whither he goes. That he has been for a long time in Egypt, as many pretend, and that he has brought from thence, out of a catacomb, his occult sciences, I will neither affirm nor deny. Here we only know him by the name of the Incomprehensible. How old, for instance, do you suppose he is?”

“To judge from his appearance he can scarcely have passed forty.”

“And of what age do you suppose I am?”

“Not far from fifty.”

“Quite right; and I must tell you that I was but a boy of seventeen when my grandfather spoke to me of this marvellous man, whom he had seen at Famagusta;

at which time he appeared nearly of the same age as he does at present."

"This is exaggerated, ridiculous, and incredible."

"By no means. Were I not prevented by these fetters I could produce vouchers whose dignity and respectability should leave you no room for doubt. There are several credible persons who remember having seen him, each, at the same time, in different parts of the globe. No sword can wound, no poison can hurt, no fire can burn him; no vessel in which he embarks can be wrecked. Time itself seems to lose its power over him. Years do not affect his constitution, nor age whiten his hair. Never was he seen to take any food. Never did he approach a woman. No sleep closes his eyes. Of the twenty-four hours in the day there is only one which he cannot command; during which no person ever saw him, and during which he never was employed in any terrestrial occupation."

"And this hour is?"

"The twelfth in the night. When the clock strikes twelve at midnight he ceases to belong to the living. In whatever place he is he must immediately be gone; whatever business he is engaged in he must instantly leave it. The terrible sound of the hour of midnight tears him from the arms of friendship, wrests him from the altar, and would drag him away even in the agonies of death. Whither he then goes, or what he is then engaged in, is a secret to every one. No person ventures to interrogate, still less to follow him. His features, at this dreadful hour, assume a sternness of expression so gloomy and terrifying that no person has courage sufficient to look him in the face, or to speak a word to him. However lively the conversation may have been, a dead silence immediately succeeds it, and all around wait for his return in respectful silence without venturing to quit their seats, or to open the door through which he has passed."

“Does nothing extraordinary appear in his person when he returns?” inquired one of our party.

“Nothing, except that he seems pale and exhausted, like a man who has just suffered a painful operation, or received some disastrous intelligence. Some pretend to have seen drops of blood on his linen, but with what degree of veracity I cannot affirm.”

“Did no person ever attempt to conceal the approach of this hour from him, or endeavour to preoccupy his mind in such a manner as to make him forget it?”

“Once only, it is said, he missed the appointed time. The company was numerous and remained together late in the night. All the clocks and watches were purposely set wrong, and the warmth of conversation carried him away. When the stated hour arrived he suddenly became silent and motionless; his limbs continued in the position in which this instant had arrested them; his eyes were fixed; his pulse ceased to beat. All the means employed to awake him proved fruitless, and this situation endured till the hour had elapsed. He then revived on a sudden without any assistance, opened his eyes, and resumed his speech at the very syllable which he was pronouncing at the moment of interruption. The general consternation discovered to him what had happened, and he declared, with an awful solemnity, that they ought to think themselves happy in having escaped with the fright alone. The same night he quitted for ever the city where this circumstance had occurred. The common opinion is that during this mysterious hour he converses with his genius. Some even suppose him to be one of the departed who is allowed to pass twenty-three hours of the day among the living, and that in the twenty-fourth his soul is obliged to return to the infernal regions to suffer its punishment. Some believe him to be the famous Apollonius of Tyana; and others the disciple of John,

of whom it is said, 'He shall remain until the last judgment.'

"A character so wonderful," replied the prince, "cannot fail to give rise to whimsical conjectures. But all this you profess to know only by hearsay, and yet his behaviour to you and yours to him seemed to indicate a more intimate acquaintance. Is it not founded upon some particular event in which you have yourself been concerned? Conceal nothing from us."

The Sicilian looked at us doubtingly and remained silent.

"If it concerns something," continued the prince, "that you do not wish to be made known, I promise you, in the name of these two gentlemen, the most inviolable secrecy. But speak candidly and without reserve."

"Could I hope," answered the prisoner, after a long silence, "that you would not make use of what I am going to relate as evidence against me, I would tell you a remarkable adventure of this Armenian, of which I myself was witness, and which will leave you no doubt of his supernatural powers. But I beg leave to conceal some of the names."

"Cannot you do it without this condition?"

"No, your highness. There is a family concerned in it whom I have reason to respect."

"Let us hear your story."

"It is about five years ago," began the Sicilian, "that at Naples, where I was practising my art with tolerable success, I became acquainted with a person of the name of Lorenzo del M——, chevalier of the Order of St. Stephen, a young and rich nobleman, of one of the first families in the kingdom, who loaded me with kindnesses, and seemed to have a great esteem for my occult knowledge. He told me that the Marquis del M——nte, his father, was a zealous admirer of the cabala, and would think himself happy in having a

philosopher like myself (for such he was pleased to call me) under his roof. The marquis lived in one of his country-seats on the seashore, about seven miles from Naples. There, almost entirely secluded from the world, he bewailed the loss of a beloved son, of whom he had been deprived by a terrible calamity. The chevalier gave me to understand that he and his family might perhaps have occasion to employ me on a matter of the most grave importance, in the hope of gaining through my secret science some information, to procure which all natural means had been tried in vain. He added, with a very significant look, that he himself might, perhaps at some future period, have reason to look upon me as the restorer of his tranquillity, and of all his earthly happiness. The affair was as follows :

“This Lorenzo was the younger son of the marquis, and for that reason had been destined for the Church ; the family estates were to descend to the eldest. Jeronymo, which was the name of the latter, had spent many years on his travels, and had returned to his country about seven years prior to the event which I am about to relate, in order to celebrate his marriage with the only daughter of the neighbouring Count C—tti. This marriage had been determined on by the parents during the infancy of the children, in order to unite the large fortunes of the two houses. But though this agreement was made by the two families, without consulting the hearts of the parties concerned, the latter had mutually pledged their faith to each other in secret. Jeronymo del M—— and Antonia C—— had been brought up together, and the little restraint imposed on two children, whom their parents were already accustomed to regard as destined for each other, soon produced between them a connection of the tenderest kind ; the congeniality of their tempers cemented this intimacy ; and in later years it ripened

insensibly into love. An absence of four years, far from cooling this passion, had only served to inflame it; and Jeronymo returned to the arms of his intended bride as faithful and as ardent as if they had never been separated.

“The raptures occasioned by his return had not yet subsided, and the preparations for the happy day were advancing with the utmost zeal and activity, when the bridegroom disappeared. He used frequently to pass whole afternoons in a summer-house which commanded a prospect of the sea, and was accustomed to take the diversion of sailing on the water. One day, on an evening spent in this manner, it was observed that he remained absent a much longer time than usual, and his friends began to be very uneasy on his account. Messengers were despatched after him, vessels were sent to sea in quest of him; no person had seen him. None of his servants were missed; he must, therefore, have gone alone. Night came on, and he did not appear. The next morning dawned; the day passed, the evening succeeded; Jeronymo came not. Already they had begun to give themselves up to the most melancholy conjectures when the news arrived that an Algerine pirate had landed the preceding day on that coast, and carried off several of the inhabitants. Two galleys which were ready for sea were immediately manned; the old marquis himself embarked in one of them, to attempt the deliverance of his son at the peril of his own life. On the third morning they perceived the corsair. They had the advantage of the wind; they were just about to overtake the pirate, and had even approached so near that Lorenzo, who was in one of the galleys, fancied that he saw upon the deck of the adversary's ship a signal made by his brother, when a sudden storm separated the vessels. Hardly could the damaged galleys sustain the fury of the tempest. The pirate in the meantime had disappeared,

and the distressed state of the other vessels obliged them to land at Malta. The affliction of the family knew no bounds. The distracted old marquis tore his gray hairs in the utmost violence of grief; and fears were entertained for the life of the young countess. Five years were consumed in fruitless inquiries. Diligent search was all made along the coast of Barbary; immense sums were offered for the ransom of the poor marquis, but no person came forward to claim them. The only probable conjecture which remained for the family to form was, that the same storm which had separated the galleys from the pirate had destroyed the latter, and that the whole ship's company had perished in the waves.

“But, however this supposition might be, it did not by any means amount to a certainty, and could not authorise the family altogether to renounce the hope that the lost Jeronymo might again appear. In case, however, that he was really dead, either the family must become extinct, or the younger son must relinquish the Church, and assume the rights of the elder. As justice, on the one hand, seemed to oppose the latter measure, so, on the other hand, the necessity of preserving the family from annihilation required that the scruple should not be carried too far. In the meantime, through grief and the infirmities of age, the old marquis was fast sinking to his grave; every unsuccessful attempt diminished the hope of finding his lost son; he saw the danger of his family's becoming extinct, which might be obviated by a trifling injustice on his part, in consenting to favour his younger son at the expense of the elder. The consummation of his alliance with the house of Count C—tti required only that a name should be changed, for the object of the two families was equally accomplished, whether Antonia became the wife of Lorenzo or of Jeronymo. The faint probability of the latter's appearing again weighed

but little against the certain and pressing danger of the total extinction of the family, and the old marquis, who felt the approach of death every day more and more, ardently wished at least to die free from this inquietude.

“Lorenzo, however, who was to be principally benefited by this measure, opposed it with the greatest obstinacy. Alike unmoved by the allurements of an immense fortune, and the attractions of the beautiful and accomplished being whom his family were about to deliver into his arms, he refused, on principles the most generous and conscientious, to invade the rights of a brother, who perhaps was still alive, and might some day return to claim his own. ‘Is not the lot of my dear Jeronymo,’ said he, ‘made sufficiently miserable by the horrors of a long captivity, that I should yet add bitterness to his cup of grief by stealing from him all that he holds most dear? With what conscience could I supplicate heaven for his return when his wife is in my arms? With what countenance could I hasten to meet him should he at last be restored to us by some miracle? And even supposing that he is torn from us for ever, how can we better honour his memory than by keeping constantly open the chasm which his death has caused in our circle? Can we better show our respect to him than by sacrificing our dearest hopes upon his tomb, and keeping untouched, as a sacred deposit, what was peculiarly his own?’

“But all the arguments which fraternal delicacy could adduce were insufficient to reconcile the old marquis to the idea of being obliged to witness the extinction of a pedigree which nine centuries had beheld flourishing. All that Lorenzo could obtain was a respite of two years before leading the affianced bride of his brother to the altar. During this period they continued their inquiries with the utmost diligence.

Lorenzo himself made several voyages, and exposed his person to many dangers. No trouble, no expense was spared to recover the lost Jeronymo. These two years, however, like those which preceded them, were in vain."

"And the Countess Antonia?" said the prince. "You tell us nothing of her. Could she so calmly submit to her fate? I cannot suppose it."

"Antonia," answered the Sicilian, "experienced the most violent struggle between duty and inclination, between hate and admiration. The disinterested generosity of a brother's love affected her; she felt herself forced to esteem a person whom she could never love. Her heart was torn by conflicting sentiments. But her repugnance to the chevalier seemed to increase in the same degree as his claims upon her esteem augmented. Lorenzo perceived with heartfelt sorrow the grief that consumed her youth. A tender compassion insensibly assumed the place of that indifference with which, till then, he had been accustomed to regard her; but this treacherous sentiment quickly deceived him, and an ungovernable passion began by degrees to shake the steadiness of his virtue, — a virtue which, till then, had been unequalled.

"He, however, still obeyed the dictates of generosity, though at the expense of his love. By his efforts alone was the unfortunate victim protected against the arbitrary proceedings of the rest of the family. But his endeavours were ineffectual. Every victory he gained over his passion rendered him more worthy of Antonia; and the disinterestedness with which he refused her left her no excuse for resistance.

"This was the state of affairs when the chevalier engaged me to visit him at his father's villa. The earnest recommendation of my patron procured me a reception which exceeded my most sanguine hopes. I must not forget to mention that by some remarkable

operations I had previously rendered my name famous in different lodges of Freemasons, which circumstance may, perhaps, have contributed to strengthen the old marquis's confidence in me, and to heighten his expectations. I beg you will excuse me from describing particularly the lengths I went with him, and the means which I employed; you may judge of them from what I have already confessed to you. Profiting by the mystic books which I found in his very extensive library, I was soon able to converse with him in his own language, and to adorn my system of the invisible world with the most extraordinary inventions. In a short time I could make him believe whatever I pleased, and he would have sworn as readily as upon an article in the canon. Moreover, as he was very devout, and was by nature somewhat credulous, my fables received credence the more readily, and in a short time I had so completely surrounded and hemmed him in with mystery that he cared for nothing that was not supernatural. In short, I became the patron saint of the house. The usual subject of my lectures was the exaltation of human nature, and the intercourse of men with superior beings; the infallible Count Gabbalis¹ was my oracle. The young countess, whose mind since the loss of her lover had been more occupied in the world of spirits than in that of nature, and who had, moreover, a strong shade of melancholy in her composition, caught my hints with a fearful satisfaction. Even the servants contrived to have some business in the room when I was speaking, and seizing now and then one of my expressions, joined the fragments together in their own way.

“Two months were passed in this manner at the

¹ A mystical work of that title, written in French in 1670 by the Abbé de Villars, and translated into English in 1700. Pope is said to have borrowed from it the machinery of his “Rape of the Lock.” — *H. G. B.*

marquis's villa, when the chevalier one morning entered my apartment. A deep sorrow was painted on his countenance, his features were convulsed, he threw himself into a chair, with gestures of despair.

“‘Captain,’ said he, ‘it is all over with me, I must begone; I can remain here no longer.’

“‘What is the matter, chevalier? What ails you?’

“‘Oh! this fatal passion!’ said he, starting frantically from his chair. ‘I have combated it like a man; I can resist it no longer.’

“‘And whose fault is it but yours, my dear chevalier? Are they not all in your favour? Your father, your relations.’

“‘My father, my relations! What are they to me? I want not a forced union, but one of inclination. Have not I a rival? Alas! and what a rival! Perhaps among the dead! Oh! let me go! Let me go to the end of the world,—I must find my brother.’

“‘What! after so many unsuccessful attempts can you still cherish hope?’

“‘Hope!’ replied the chevalier; ‘alas! no. It has long since vanished from my heart, but it has not from hers. Of what consequence are my sentiments? Can I be happy while there remains a gleam of hope in Antonia’s heart? Two words, my friend, would end my torments. But it is in vain. My destiny must continue to be miserable till eternity shall break its long silence, and the grave shall speak in my behalf.’

“‘Is it then a state of certainty that would render you happy?’

“‘Happy! Alas! I doubt whether I can ever again be happy. But uncertainty is of all others the most dreadful pain.’

“After a short interval of silence he suppressed his emotion, and continued, mournfully, ‘If he could but see my torments! Surely a constancy which renders his brother miserable cannot add to his happiness. Can

it be just that the living should suffer so much for the sake of the dead, who can no longer enjoy earthly felicity? If he knew the pangs I suffer,' continued he, hiding his face on my shoulder, while the tears streamed from his eyes, 'yes, perhaps he himself would conduct her to my arms.'

"But is there no possibility of gratifying your wishes?"

"He started. 'What do you say, my friend?'"

"Less important occasions than the present,' said I, 'have disturbed the repose of the dead for the sake of the living. Is not the whole earthly happiness of a man, of a brother —'

"The whole earthly happiness! Ah, my friend, I feel what you say is but too true; my entire felicity.'

"And the tranquillity of a distressed family, are not these sufficient to justify such a measure? Undoubtedly. If any sublunary concern can authorise us to interrupt the peace of the blessed, to make use of a power —'

"For God's sake, my friend,' said he, interrupting me, 'no more of this. Once, I avow it, I had such a thought; I think I mentioned it to you; but I have long since rejected it as horrid and abominable.'

"You will have conjectured already," continued the Sicilian, "to what this conversation led us. I endeavoured to overcome the scruples of the chevalier, and at last succeeded. We resolved to summon the spirit of the deceased Jeronymo. I only stipulated for the delay of a fortnight, in order, as I pretended, to prepare myself in a suitable manner for so solemn an act. The time being expired, and my machinery in readiness, I took advantage of a very gloomy day, when we were all assembled as usual, to obtain the consent of the family, or rather, gradually to lead them to the subject, so that they themselves requested it of me. The most difficult part of the task was to obtain the approbation of Anto-

nia, whose presence was most essential. My endeavours were, however, greatly assisted by the melancholy turn of her mind, and perhaps still more so by a faint hope that Jeronymo might still be living, and therefore would not appear. A want of confidence in the thing itself, or a doubt of my ability, was the only obstacle which I had not to contend with.

“Having obtained the consent of the family, the third day was fixed on for the operation. I prepared them for the solemn transaction by mystical instruction, by fasting, solitude, and prayers, which I ordered to be continued till late in the night. Much use was also made of a certain musical instrument, unknown till that time, and which, in such cases, has often been found very powerful. The effect of these artifices was so much beyond my expectation that the enthusiasm to which on this occasion I was obliged to force myself was infinitely heightened by that of my audience. The anxiously expected hour at last arrived.”

“I guess,” said the prince, “whom you are now going to introduce. But go on, go on.”

“No, your highness. The incantation succeeded according to my wishes.”

“How? Where is the Armenian?”

“Do not fear, your highness. He will appear but too soon. I omit the description of the farce itself, as it would lead me to too great a length. Be it sufficient to say that it answered my utmost expectations. The old marquis, the young countess, her mother, Lorenzo, and a few others of the family, were present. You may imagine that during my long residence in this house I had not wanted opportunities of gathering information respecting everything that concerned the deceased. Several portraits of him enabled me to give the apparition the most striking likeness, and as I suffered the ghost to speak only by signs, the sound of his voice could excite no suspicion.

“The departed Jeronymo appeared in the dress of a Moorish slave, with a deep wound in his neck. You observe that in this respect I was counteracting the general supposition that he had perished in the waves, for I had reason to hope that the unexpectedness of this circumstance would heighten their belief in the apparition itself, while, on the other hand, nothing appeared to me more dangerous than to keep too strictly to what was natural.”

“I think you judged rightly,” said the prince. “In whatever respects apparitions the most probable is the least acceptable. If their communications are easily comprehended we undervalue the channel by which they are obtained. Nay, we even suspect the reality of the miracle if the discoveries which it brings to light are such as might easily have been imagined. Why should we disturb the repose of a spirit if it is to inform us of nothing more than the ordinary powers of the intellect are capable of teaching us? But, on the other hand, if the intelligence which we receive is extraordinary and unexpected, it confirms in some degree the miracle by which it is obtained; for who can doubt an operation to be supernatural when its effect could not be produced by natural means? I interrupt you,” added the prince. “Proceed in your narrative.”

“I asked the ghost whether there was anything in this world which he still considered as his own,” continued the Sicilian, “and whether he had left anything behind that was particularly dear to him? The ghost shook his head three times, and lifted up his hand toward heaven. Previous to his retiring he dropped a ring from his finger, which was found on the floor after he had disappeared. Antonia took it, and, looking at it attentively, she knew it to be the ring she had given her intended husband on their betrothal.”

"The ring!" exclaimed the prince, surprised. "How did you get it?"

"Who? I? It was not the true one, your highness; I got it. It was only a counterfeit."

"A counterfeit!" repeated the prince. "But in order to counterfeit you required the true one. How did you come by it? Surely the deceased never went without it."

"That is true," replied the Sicilian, with symptoms of confusion. "But from a description which was given me of the genuine ring—"

"A description which was given you! By whom?"

"Long before that time. It was a plain gold ring, and had, I believe, the name of the young countess engraved on it. But you made me lose the connection."

"What happened further?" said the prince, with a very dissatisfied countenance.

"The family felt convinced that Jeronymo was no more. From that day forward they publicly announced his death, and went into mourning. The circumstance of the ring left no doubt, even in the mind of Antonia, and added a considerable weight to the addresses of the chevalier.

"In the meantime the violent shock which the young countess had received from the sight of the apparition brought on her a disorder so dangerous that the hopes of Lorenzo were very near being destroyed for ever. On her recovery she insisted upon taking the veil; and it was only at the most serious remonstrances of her confessor, in whom she placed implicit confidence, that she was induced to abandon her project. At length the united solicitations of the family, and of the confessor, forced from her a reluctant consent. The last day of mourning was fixed on for the day of marriage, and the old marquis determined to add to the solemnity of the occasion by making over all his estates to his lawful heir.

“The day arrived, and Lorenzo received his trembling bride at the altar. In the evening a splendid banquet was prepared for the cheerful guests in a hall superbly illuminated, and the most lively and delightful music contributed to increase the general gladness. The happy old marquis wished all the world to participate in his joy. All the entrances of the palace were thrown open, and every one who sympathised in his happiness was joyfully welcomed. In the midst of the throng—”

The Sicilian paused. A trembling expectation suspended our breath.

“In the midst of the throng,” continued the prisoner, “appeared a Franciscan monk, to whom my attention was directed by the person who sat next to me at table. He was standing motionless like a marble pillar. His shape was tall and thin; his face pale and ghastly; his eyes were fixed with a grave and mournful expression on the new-married couple. The joy which beamed on the face of every one present appeared not on his. His countenance never once varied. He seemed like a statue among the living. Such an object, appearing amidst the general joy, struck me more forcibly from its contrast with everything around. It left on my mind so indelible an impression that from it alone I have been enabled (which would otherwise have been impossible) to recollect the features of the Franciscan monk in the Russian officer; for, without doubt, you must have already conceived that the person I have described was no other than your Armenian.

“I frequently attempted to withdraw my eyes from this terrible figure, but they wandered back involuntarily, and found his countenance unaltered. I pointed him out to the person who sat nearest to me on the other side, and he did the same to the person next to him. In a few minutes a general curiosity and aston-

ishment pervaded the whole company. The conversation languished; a general silence succeeded; the monk did not heed it. He continued motionless as before; his grave and mournful looks constantly fixed upon the new-married couple; his appearance struck every one with terror. The young countess alone, who found the transcript of her own sorrow in the face of the stranger, beheld with a melancholy satisfaction the only object that seemed to understand and sympathise in her sufferings. The crowd insensibly diminished. It was past midnight; the music became fainter and more languid; the tapers grew dim, and many of them went out. The conversation, declining by degrees, lost itself at last in secret murmurs, and the faintly illuminated hall was nearly deserted. The monk, in the meantime, continued motionless, with the same grave and mournful look still fixed on the new-married couple. The company at length rose from the table; the guests dispersed; the family assembled in a separate group, and the monk, though uninvited, continued near them. How it happened that no person spoke to him I cannot conceive.

“The female friends now surrounded the trembling bride, who cast a supplicating and distressed look on the venerable stranger; he did not answer it. The gentlemen assembled in the same manner around the bridegroom. A solemn and anxious silence prevailed among them. ‘That we should be so happy here together,’ began at length the old marquis, who alone seemed not to behold the stranger, or at least seemed to behold him without dismay. ‘That we should be so happy here together, and my son Jeronymo cannot be with us!’

“‘Have you invited him, and has he failed to come?’ asked the monk. It was the first time he had spoken. We looked at him in alarm.

“‘Alas! he is gone to a place from whence there is

no return,' answered the old man. 'Reverend father, you misunderstood me. My son Jeronymo is dead.'

" 'Perhaps he only fears to appear in this company,' replied the monk. 'Who knows how your son Jeronymo may be situated? Let him now hear the voice which he heard the last. Desire your son Lorenzo to call him.'

" 'What means he?' whispered the company to one another. Lorenzo changed colour. I will not deny that my own hair began to stand on end.

"In the meantime the monk approached a side-board; he took a glass of wine and carried to his lips. 'To the memory of our dear Jeronymo!' said he. 'Let every one who loved the deceased follow my example.'

" 'Be you who you may, reverend father,' exclaimed the old marquis, 'you have pronounced a name dear to us all, and you are heartily welcome here;' then turning to us, he offered us full glasses. 'Come, my friends!' continued he, 'let us not be surpassed by a stranger. The memory of my son Jeronymo!'

"Never, I believe, was any toast less heartily received.

" 'There is one glass still unemptied,' said the marquis. 'Why does my son Lorenzo refuse to drink this friendly toast?'

"Lorenzo, trembling, received the glass from the hands of the monk; tremblingly he put it to his lips. 'To my dearly beloved brother Jeronymo!' he stammered out, and replaced the glass with a shudder.

" 'That was my murderer's voice!' exclaimed a terrible figure, which appeared suddenly in the midst of us, covered with blood, and disfigured with horrible wounds.

"Do not ask me the rest," added the Sicilian, with every symptom of horror in his countenance. "I lost my senses the moment I looked at this apparition. The same happened to every one present. When we recovered the monk and the ghost had disappeared; Lo-

renzo was writhing in the agonies of death. He was carried to bed in the most dreadful convulsions. No person attended him but his confessor and the sorrowful old marquis, in whose presence he expired. The marquis died a few weeks after him. Lorenzo's secret is locked in the bosom of the priest who received his last confession; no person ever learnt what it was.

"Soon after this event a well was cleaned in the farmyard of the marquis's villa. It had been disused for many years, and was almost closed up by shrubs and old trees. On digging among the rubbish a human skeleton was found. The house where this happened is now no more; the family del M—nte is extinct, and Antonia's tomb may be seen in a convent not far from Salerno.

"You see," continued the Sicilian, seeing us all stand silent and thoughtful, "you see how my acquaintance with this Russian officer, Armenian, or Franciscan friar originated. Judge now whether I had not good cause to tremble at the sight of a being who has twice placed himself in my way in a manner so terrible."

"I beg you will answer me one question more," said the prince, rising from his seat. "Have you been always sincere in your account of everything relating to the chevalier?"

"To the best of my knowledge I have," replied the Sicilian.

"You really believed him to be an honest man?"

"I did; by heaven! I did," answered he again.

"Even at the time he gave you the ring?"

"How! He gave me no ring. I did not say that he gave me the ring."

"Very well!" said the prince, pulling the bell, and preparing to depart. "And you believe" (going back to the prisoner) "that the ghost of the Marquis de Lanoy, which the Russian officer introduced after your apparition, was a true and real ghost?"

“ I cannot think otherwise.”

“ Let us go !” said the prince, addressing himself to us. The gaoler came in. “ We have done,” said the prince to him. “ You, sir,” turning to the prisoner, “ you shall hear further from me.”

“ I am tempted to ask your highness the last question you proposed to the sorcerer,” said I to the prince, when we were alone. “ Do you believe the second ghost to have been a real and true one ?”

“ I believe it ! No, not now, most assuredly.”

“ Not now ? Then you did once believe it ?”

“ I confess I was tempted for a moment to believe it something more than the contrivance of a juggler.”

“ And I could wish to see the man who under similar circumstances would not have had the same impression. But what reasons have you for retracting your opinion ? What the prisoner has related of the Armenian ought to increase rather than diminish your belief in his supernatural powers.”

“ What this wretch has related of him,” said the prince, interrupting me very gravely. “ I hope,” continued he, “ you have now no doubt but that we have had to do with a villain.”

“ No ; but must his evidence on that account — ”

“ The evidence of a villain, even supposing I had no other reason for doubt, can have no weight against common sense and established truth. Does a man who has already deceived me several times, and whose trade it is to deceive, does he deserve to be heard in a cause in which the unsupported testimony of even the most sincere adherent to truth could not be received ? Ought we to believe a man who perhaps never once spoke truth for its own sake ? Does such a man deserve credit, when he appears as evidence against human reason and the eternal laws of nature ? Would it not be as absurd as to admit the accusation of a

person notoriously infamous against unblemished and irreproachable innocence?"

"But what motives could he have for giving so great a character to a man whom he has so many reasons to hate?"

"I am not to conclude that he can have no motives for doing this because I am unable to comprehend them. Do I know who has bribed him to deceive me? I confess I cannot penetrate the whole contexture of his plan; but he has certainly done a material injury to the cause he advocates by proving himself to be at least an impostor, and perhaps something worse."

"The circumstance of the ring, I allow, appears somewhat suspicious."

"It is more than suspicious," answered the prince; "it is decisive. He received this ring from the murderer, and at the moment he received it he must have been certain that it was from the murderer. Who but the assassin could have taken from the finger of the deceased a ring which he undoubtedly never took off himself? Throughout the whole of his narration the Sicilian has laboured to persuade us that while he was endeavouring to deceive Lorenzo, Lorenzo was in reality deceiving him. Would he have had recourse to this subterfuge if he had not been sensible how much he should lose in our estimation by confessing himself an accomplice with the assassin? The whole story is visibly nothing but a series of impostures, invented merely to connect the few truths he has thought proper to give us. Ought I then to hesitate in disbelieving the eleventh assertion of a person who has already deceived me ten times, rather than admit a violation of the fundamental laws of nature, which I have ever found in the most perfect harmony?"

"I have nothing to reply to all this, but the apparition we saw yesterday is to me not the less incomprehensible."

“It is also incomprehensible to me, although I have been tempted to believe that I have found a key to it.”

“How so?” asked I.

“Do not you recollect that the second apparition, as soon as he entered, walking directly up to the altar, took the crucifix in his hand, and placed himself upon the carpet?”

“It appeared so to me.”

“And this crucifix, according to the Sicilian’s confession, was a conductor. You see that the apparition hastened to make himself electrical. Thus the blow which Lord Seymour struck him with a sword was of course ineffectual; the electric stroke disabled his arm.”

“This is true with respect to the sword. But the pistol fired by the Sicilian, the ball of which we heard roll slowly upon the altar?”

“Are you convinced that this was the same ball which was fired from the pistol?” replied the prince. “Not to mention that the puppet, or the man who represented the ghost, may have been so well accoutred as to be invulnerable by sword or bullet; but consider who it was that loaded the pistols.”

“True,” said I, and a sudden light broke upon my mind; “the Russian officer had loaded them, but it was in our presence. How could he have deceived us?”

“Why should he not have deceived us? Did you suspect him sufficiently to observe him? Did you examine the ball before it was put into the pistol? May it not have been one of quicksilver or clay? Did you take notice whether the Russian officer really put it into the barrel, or dropped it into his other hand? But supposing that he actually loaded the pistols, what is to convince you that he really took the loaded ones into the room where the ghost appeared, and did not change them for another pair, which he might have

done the more easily as nobody ever thought of noticing him, and we were besides occupied in undressing? And could not the figure, at the moment when we were prevented from seeing it by the smoke of the pistol, have dropped another ball, with which it had been beforehand provided, on the altar? Which of these conjectures is impossible?"

"You are right. But that striking resemblance to your deceased friend! I have often seen him with you, and I immediately recognised him in the apparition."

"I did the same, and I must confess the illusion was complete. But if the juggler from a few stolen glances at my snuff-box was able to give to his apparition a resemblance, what was to prevent the Russian officer, who had used the box during the whole time of supper, who had had liberty to observe the picture unnoticed, and to whom I had discovered in confidence whom it represented, what was to prevent him from doing the same? Add to this what has been before observed by the Sicilian, that the prominent features of the marquis were so striking as to be easily imitated; what is there so inexplicable in this second ghost?"

"But the words he uttered? The information he gave you about your friend?"

"What!" said the prince, "Did not the Sicilian assure us, that from the little which he had learnt from me he had composed a similar story? Does not this prove that the invention was obvious and natural? Besides, the answers of the ghost, like those of an oracle, were so obscure that he was in no danger of being detected in a falsehood. If the man who personated the ghost possessed sagacity and presence of mind, and knew ever so little of the affair on which he was consulted, to what length might not he have carried the deception?"

"Pray consider, your highness, how much prepara-

tion such a complicated artifice would have required from the Armenian; how much time it takes to paint a face with sufficient exactness; how much time would have been requisite to instruct the pretended ghost, so as to guard him against gross errors; what a degree of minute attention to regulate every minor attendant or adventitious circumstance, which must be answered in some manner, lest they should prove detrimental! And remember that the Russian officer was absent but half an hour. Was that short space of time sufficient to make even such arrangements as were most indispensable? Surely, my prince, not even a dramatic writer, who has the least desire to preserve the three terrible unities of Aristotle, durst venture to load the interval between one act and another with such a variety of action, or to presume upon such a facility of belief in his audience."

"What! You think it absolutely impossible that every necessary preparation should have been made in the space of half an hour?"

"Indeed, I look upon it as almost impossible."

"I do not understand this expression. Does it militate against the physical laws of time and space, or of matter and motion, that a man so ingenious and so expert as this Armenian must undoubtedly be, assisted by agents whose dexterity and acuteness are probably not inferior to his own; favoured by the time of night, and watched by no one, provided with such means and instruments as a man of this profession is never without — is it impossible that such a man, favoured by such circumstances, should be able to effect so much in so short a time? Is it ridiculous or absurd to suppose, that by a very small number of words or signs he can convey to his assistants very extensive commissions, and direct very complex operations? Nothing ought to be admitted that is contrary to the established laws of nature, unless it is something

with which these laws are absolutely incompatible. Would you rather give credit to a miracle than admit an improbability? Would you solve a difficulty rather by overturning the powers of nature than by believing an artful and uncommon combination of them?"

"Though the fact will not justify a conclusion such as you have condemned, you must, however, grant that it is far beyond our conception."

"I am almost tempted to dispute even this," said the prince, with a quiet smile. "What would you say, my dear count, if it should be proved, for instance, that the operations of the Armenian were prepared and carried on, not only during the half-hour that he was absent from us, not only in haste and incidentally, but during the whole evening and the whole night? You recollect that the Sicilian employed nearly three hours in preparation."

"The Sicilian? Yes, my prince."

"And how will you convince me that this juggler had not as much concern in the second apparition as in the first?"

"How so, your highness?"

"That he was not the principal assistant of the Armenian? In a word, how will you convince me that they did not coöperate?"

"It would be a difficult task to prove that," exclaimed I, with no little surprise.

"Not so difficult, my dear count, as you imagine. What! Could it have happened by mere chance that these two men should form a design so extraordinary and so complicated upon the same person, at the same time, and in the same place? Could mere chance have produced such an exact harmony between their operations, that one of them should play so exactly the game of the other? Suppose for a moment that the Armenian intended to heighten the effect of his deception, by introducing it after a less refined one —

that he created a Hector to make himself his Achilles. Suppose that he has done all this to discover what degree of credulity he could expect to find in me, to examine the readiest way to gain my confidence, to familiarise himself with his subject by an attempt that might have miscarried without any prejudice to his plan; in a word, to tune the instrument on which he intended to play. Suppose he did this with the view of exciting my suspicions on one subject in order to divert my attention from another more important to his design. Lastly, suppose he wishes to have some indirect methods of information, which he had himself occasion to practise, imputed to the sorcerer, in order to divert suspicion from the true channel."

"How do you mean?" said I.

"Suppose, for instance, that he may have bribed some of my servants to give him secret intelligence, or, perhaps, even some papers which may serve his purpose. I have missed one of my domestics. What reason have I to think that the Armenian is not concerned in his leaving me? Such a connection, however, if it existed, may be accidentally discovered; a letter may be intercepted; a servant, who is in the secret, may betray his trust. Now all the consequence of the Armenian is destroyed if I detect the source of his omniscience. He therefore introduces this sorcerer, who must be supposed to have some design upon me. He takes care to give me early notice of him and his intentions, so that whatever I may hereafter discover my suspicions must necessarily rest upon the Sicilian. This is the puppet with which he amuses me, whilst he himself, unobserved and unsuspected, is entangling me in invisible snares."

"We will allow this. But is it consistent with the Armenian's plan that he himself should destroy the illusion which he has created, and disclose the mysteries of his science to the eyes of the uninitiated?"

“What mysteries does he disclose? None, surely, which he intends to practise on me. He therefore loses nothing by the discovery. But, on the other hand, what an advantage will he gain, if this pretended victory over juggling and deception should render me secure and unsuspecting; if he succeeds in diverting my attention from the right quarter, and in fixing my wavering suspicions on an object the most remote from the real one! He could naturally expect that, sooner or later, either from my own doubts, or at the suggestion of another, I should be tempted to seek a key to his mysterious wonders, in the mere art of a juggler; how could he better provide against such an inquiry than by contrasting his prodigies with juggling tricks? By confining the latter within artificial limits, and by delivering, as it were, into my hands a scale by which to appreciate them, he naturally exalts and perplexes my ideas of the former. How many suspicions he precludes by this single contrivance! How many methods of accounting for his miracles, which afterward have occurred to me, does he refute beforehand!”

“But in exposing such a finished deception he has acted very much against his own interest, both by quickening the penetration of those whom he meant to impose upon, and by staggering their belief in miracles in general. Your highness’s self is the best proof of the insufficiency of his plan, if indeed he ever had one.”

“Perhaps he has been mistaken in respect to myself,” said the prince; “but his conclusions have nevertheless been well founded. Could he foresee that I should exactly notice the very circumstance which threatens to become the key to the whole artifice? Was it in his plan that the creature he employed should render himself thus vulnerable? Are we certain that the Sicilian has not far exceeded his commission? He has undoubtedly done so with respect to

the ring, and yet it is chiefly this single circumstance which determined my distrust in him. How easily may a plan, whose contexture is most artful and refined, be spoiled in the execution by an awkward instrument. It certainly was not the Armenian's intention that the sorcerer should trumpet his fame to us in the style of a mountebank, that he should endeavour to impose upon us such fables as are too gross to bear the least reflection. For instance, with what countenance could this impostor affirm that the miraculous being he spoke of must renounce all commerce with mankind at twelve in the night? Did we not see him among us at that very hour?"

"That is true," cried I. "He must have forgotten it."

"It often happens, to people of this description, that they overact their parts; and, by aiming at too much, mar the effects which well managed deception is calculated to produce."

"I cannot, however, yet prevail on myself to look upon the whole as a mere preconcerted scheme. What! the Sicilian's terror, his convulsive fits, his swoon, the deplorable situation in which we saw him, and which was even such as to move our pity, were all these nothing more than a studied part? I allow that a skilful performer may carry imitation to a very high pitch, but he certainly has no power over the organs of life."

"As for that, my friend," replied the prince, "I have seen Richard III. performed by Garrick. But were we at that moment sufficiently cool to be capable of observing dispassionately? Could we judge of the emotion of the Sicilian when we were almost overcome by our own? Besides, the decisive crisis even of a deception is so momentous to the deceiver himself that excessive anxiety may produce in him symptoms as violent as those which surprise excites in the deceived. Add to this the unexpected entrance of the watch."

“I am glad you remind me of that, prince. Would the Armenian have ventured to discover such a dangerous scheme to the eye of justice; to expose the fidelity of his creature to so severe a test? And for what purpose?”

“Leave that matter to him; he is no doubt acquainted with the people he employs. Do we know what secret crimes may have secured him the silence of this man? You have been informed of the office he holds in Venice; what difficulty will he find in saving a man of whom he himself is the only accuser?”

[This suggestion of the prince was but too well justified by the event. For, some days after, on inquiring after the prisoner, we were told that he had escaped, and had not since been heard of.]

“You ask what could be his motives for delivering this man into the hands of justice?” continued the prince. “By what other method, except this violent one, could he have wrested from the Sicilian such an infamous and improbable confession, which, however, was so material to the success of his plan? Who but a man whose case is desperate, and who has nothing to lose, would consent to give so humiliating an account of himself? Under what other circumstances could we have believed such a confession?”

“I grant all this, my prince. That the two apparitions were mere contrivances of art; that the Sicilian has imposed upon us a tale which the Armenian, his master, had previously taught him; that the efforts of both have been directed to the same end, and, from this mutual intelligence, all the wonderful incidents which have astonished us in this adventure may be easily explained. But the prophecy in the square of St. Mark, that first miracle, which, as it were, opened the door to all the rest, still remains unexplained; and of what use is the key to all his other wonders if we despair of resolving this single one?”

“Rather invert the proposition, my dear count,” answered the prince, “and say what do all these wonders prove if I can demonstrate that a single one among them is a juggling trick? The prediction, I own, is totally beyond my conception. If it stood alone; if the Armenian had closed the scene with it, instead of beginning it, I confess I do not know how far I might have been carried. But in the base alloy with which it is mixed it is certainly rather suspicious. Time may explain, or not explain it; but believe me, my friend!” added the prince, taking my hand, with a grave countenance, “a man who can command supernatural powers has no occasion to employ the arts of a juggler; he despises them.”

“Thus,” says Count O——, “ended a conversation which I have related word for word, because it shows the difficulties which were to be overcome before the prince could be effectually imposed upon; and I hope it may free his memory from the imputation of having blindly and inconsiderately thrown himself into a snare, which was spread for his destruction by the most unexampled and diabolical wickedness. Not all,” continues Count O——, “who, at the moment I am writing, smile contemptuously at the prince’s credulity, and, in the fancied superiority of their own yet untempted understanding, unconditionally condemn him; not all of these, I apprehend, would have stood his first trial so courageously. If afterward, notwithstanding this providential warning, we witness his downfall; if we see that the black design against which, at the very outset, he was thus cautioned, is finally successful, we shall be less inclined to ridicule his weakness than to be astonished at the infamous ingenuity of a plot which could seduce an understanding so fully prepared. Considerations of worldly interest can have no influence upon my testimony; he, who alone would be thankful

for it, is now no more. His dreadful destiny is accomplished; his soul has long since been purified before the throne of truth, where mine will likewise have appeared before these passages meet the eyes of the world. Pardon the involuntary tears which now flow at the remembrance of my dearest friend. But for the sake of justice I must write this. His was a noble character, and would have adorned a throne which, seduced by the most atrocious artifice, he attempted to ascend by the commission of crime."

BOOK II.

"Not long after these events," continues Count O——, in his narrative, "I began to observe an extraordinary alteration in the disposition of the prince, which was partly the immediate consequence of the last event and partly produced by the concurrence of many adventitious circumstances. Hitherto he had avoided every severe trial of his faith, and contented himself with purifying the rude and abstract notions of religion, in which he had been educated, by those more rational ideas upon this subject which forced themselves upon his attention, or comparing the many discordant opinions with each other, without inquiring into the foundations of his faith. Religious subjects, he has many times confessed to me, always appeared to him like an enchanted castle, into which one does not set one's foot without horror, and that they act therefore much the wiser part who pass it in respectful silence, without exposing themselves to the danger of being bewildered in its labyrinths. A servile and bigoted education was the source of this dread; this had impressed frightful images upon his tender brain, which, during the remainder of his life, he was never able wholly to obliterate. Religious melancholy was an hereditary disorder in his family. The education

which he and his brothers had received was calculated to produce it; and the men to whose care they were entrusted, selected with this object, were also either enthusiasts or hypocrites.

“To stifle all the sprightliness of the boy, by a gloomy restraint of his mental faculties, was the only method of securing to themselves the highest approbation of his royal parents. The whole of our prince’s childhood wore a dark and gloomy aspect; mirth was banished even from his amusements. All his ideas of religion were accompanied by some frightful image; and the representations of terror and severity were those which first took hold of his lively imagination, and which the longest retained their empire over it. His God was an object of terror, a being whose occupation is to chastise; and the adoration he paid him was either slavish fear, or a blind submission which stifled all his energies. In all his youthful propensities, which a vigorous growth and a fine constitution naturally excited to break out with the greater violence, religion stood in his way; it opposed everything upon which his young heart was bent; he learned to consider it not as a friend, but as the scourge of his passions; so that a silent indignation was gradually kindled against it in his heart, which, together with a bigoted faith and a blind fear, produced an incongruous mixture of feelings, and an abhorrence of a ruler before whom he trembled.

“It is no wonder, therefore, that he took the first opportunity of escaping from so galling a yoke — but he fled from it as a bond-slave who, escaping from his rigorous master, drags along with him a sense of his servitude, even in the midst of freedom; for, as he did not renounce the faith of his earlier years from a deliberate conviction, and did not wait till the maturity and improvement of his reasoning had weaned him from it, but escaped from it like a fugitive, upon

whose person the rights of his master are still in force, so was he obliged, even after his widest separation, to return to it at last. He had escaped with his chain, and for that reason must necessarily become the prey of any one who should discover it, and know how to make use of the discovery. That such a one presented himself, the sequel of this history will prove; most likely the reader has already surmised it.

“The confessions of the Sicilian left a deeper impression upon his mind than they ought, considering the circumstances; and the small victory which his reason had thence gained over this weak imposture remarkably increased his reliance upon his own powers. The facility with which he had been able to unravel this deception appeared to have surprised him. Truth and error were not yet so accurately distinguished from each other in his mind but that he often mistook the arguments which were in favour of the one for those in favour of the other. Thence it arose that the same blow which destroyed his faith in wonders made the whole edifice of it totter. In this instance, he fell into the same error as an inexperienced man who has been deceived in love or friendship, because he happened to make a bad choice, and who denies the existence of these sensations, because he takes the occasional exceptions for distinguishing features. The unmasking of a deception made even truth suspicious to him, because he had unfortunately discovered truth by false reasoning.

“This imaginary triumph pleased him in proportion to the magnitude of the oppression from which it seemed to deliver him. From this instant there arose in his mind a scepticism which did not spare even the most sacred objects.

“Many circumstances concurred to encourage, and still more to confirm, him in this turn of mind. He now quitted the retirement in which he had hitherto

lived, and gave way to a more dissipated mode of life. His rank was discovered; attentions which he was obliged to return, etiquettes for which he was indebted to his rank, drew him imperceptibly within the vortex of the great world. His rank, as well as his personal attractions, opened to him the circles of all the *beaux esprits* in Venice, and he soon found himself on terms of intimacy with the most enlightened persons in the republic, men of learning as well as politicians. This obliged him to enlarge the monotonous and limited circle to which his understanding had hitherto been confined. He began to perceive the poverty and feebleness of his ideas, and to feel the want of more elevated impressions. The old-fashioned turn of his understanding, in spite of the many advantages with which it was accompanied, formed an unpleasing contrast with the current ideas of society; his ignorance of the commonest things frequently exposed him to ridicule, than which he dreaded nothing more. The unfortunate prejudice which attached to his native country appeared to him a challenge to overcome it in his own person. Besides this, there was a peculiarity in his character; he was offended with every attention that he thought was paid him on account of his rank rather than his personal qualities. He felt this humiliation principally in the company of persons who shone by their abilities, and triumphed, as it were, over their birth by their merit. To perceive himself distinguished as a prince, in such a society, was always a deep humiliation to him, because he unfortunately fancied himself excluded by his rank from all competition. These circumstances convinced him of the necessity of cultivating his mind, in order to raise it to a level with the thinking part of the world, from which he had hitherto been so separated; and for that purpose he chose the most modern books, and applied himself to them with all the ardour with which he was accus-

tomed to pursue every object to which he devoted himself. But the unskilful hand that directed his choice always prompted him to select such as were little calculated to improve either his heart or his reason; besides that, he was influenced by a propensity which rendered everything irresistible which was incomprehensible. He had neither attention nor memory for anything that was not of that character, and both his reason and his heart remained untouched, while he was filling the vacuities of his brain with confused ideas. The dazzling style of some writers captivated his imagination, while the subtlety of others ensnared his reason. Together, they easily took possession of a mind which became the prey of whatever was obtruded upon it with a certain degree of dogmatism. A course of reading, which had been continued with ardour for more than a year, had scarcely enriched him with one benevolent idea, but had filled his head with doubts, which, as a natural consequence with such a character, had almost found an unfortunate road to his heart. In a word, he had entered this labyrinth as a credulous enthusiast, had left it as a sceptic, and at length became a perfect free-thinker.

“Among the circles into which he had been introduced there was a private society called the Bucentauro, which, under the mask of a noble and rational liberality of sentiment, encouraged the most unbridled licentiousness of manners and opinion. As it enumerated many of the clergy among its members, and could even boast of some cardinals at its head, the prince was the more easily induced to join it. He thought that certain dangerous truths, which reason discovers, could be nowhere better preserved than in the hands of such persons, whose rank compelled them to moderation, and who had the advantage of hearing and examining the other side of the question. The prince did not recollect that licentiousness of senti-

ment and manners takes so much the stronger hold among persons of this rank, inasmuch as they for that reason feel one curb less ; and this was the case with the Bucentauro, most of whose members, through an execrable philosophy, and manners worthy of such a guide, were not only a disgrace to their own rank, but even to human nature itself. The society had its secret degrees ; and I will believe, for the credit of the prince, that they never thought him worthy of admission into the inmost sanctuary. Every one who entered this society was obliged, at least so long as he continued to be a member of it, to lay aside all distinctions arising from rank, nation, or religion, in short, every general mark or distinction whatever, and to submit himself to the condition of universal equality. To be elected a member was indeed a difficult matter, as superiority of understanding alone paved the way to it. The society boasted of the highest *ton* and the most cultivated taste, and such indeed was its fame throughout all Venice. This, as well as the appearance of equality which predominated in it, attracted the prince irresistibly. Sensible conversations, set off by the most admirable humour, instructive amusements, and the flower of the learned and political world, which were all attracted to this point as to their common centre, concealed from him for a long time the danger of this connection. As he by degrees discovered through its mask the spirit of the institution, as they grew tired of being any longer on their guard before him, to recede was dangerous, and false shame and anxiety for his safety obliged him to conceal the displeasure he felt. But he already began, merely from familiarity with men of this class and their sentiments, though they did not excite him to imitation, to lose the pure and charming simplicity of his character, and the delicacy of his moral feelings. His understanding, supported by real knowledge, could

not without foreign assistance solve the fallacious sophisms with which he had been here ensnared ; and this fatal poison had already destroyed all, or nearly all, the basis on which his morality rested. He surrendered the natural and indispensable safeguards of his happiness for sophisms which deserted him at the critical moment, and he was consequently left to the operation of any specious argument which came in his way.

“ Perhaps the hand of a friend might yet have been in time to extricate him from this abyss ; but, besides that I did not become acquainted with the real character of the Bucentauro till long after the evil had taken place, an urgent circumstance called me away from Venice just at the beginning of this period. Lord Seymour, too, a valuable acquaintance of the prince, whose cool understanding was proof against every species of deception, and who would have infallibly been a secure support to him, left us at this time in order to return to his native country. Those in whose hands I left the prince were indeed worthy men, but inexperienced, excessively narrow in their religious opinions, deficient in their perception of the evil, and wanting in credit with the prince. They had nothing to oppose to his captious sophisms except the maxims of a blind and uninquiring faith, which either irritated him or excited his ridicule. He saw through them too easily, and his superior reason soon silenced those weak defenders of the good cause, as will be clearly evinced from an instance which I shall introduce in the sequel. Those who, subsequent to this, possessed themselves of his confidence, were much more interested in plunging him deeper into error. When I returned to Venice in the following year, how great a change had already taken place in everything !

“ The influence of this new philosophy soon showed itself in the prince’s conduct. The more openly he pur-

sued pleasure, and acquired new friends, the more did he lose in the estimation of his old ones. He pleased me less and less every day; we saw each other more seldom, and indeed he was seldom accessible. He had launched out into the torrent of the great world. His threshold was eternally thronged when he was at home. Amusements, banquets, and galas followed each other in rapid succession. He was the idol whom every one courted, the great attraction of every circle. In proportion as he, in his secluded life, had fancied living in society to be difficult, did he to his astonishment find it easy. Everything met his wishes. Whatever he uttered was admirable, and when he remained silent it was like committing a robbery upon the company. They understood the art of drawing his thoughts insensibly from his soul, and then with a little delicate management to surprise him with them. This happiness, which accompanied him everywhere, and this universal success, raised him indeed too much in his own ideas, because it gave him too much confidence and too much reliance upon himself.

“The heightened opinion which he thus acquired of his own worth made him credit the excessive and almost idolatrous adoration that was paid to his understanding; which, but for this increased self-complacency, must have necessarily recalled him from his aberrations. For the present, however, this universal voice was only a confirmation of what his complacent vanity whispered in his ear; a tribute which he felt entitled to by right. He would have infallibly disengaged himself from this snare had they allowed him to take breath; had they granted him a moment of uninterrupted leisure to compare his real merit with the picture that was exhibited to him in this seducing mirror; but his existence was a continued state of intoxication, a whirl of excitement. The higher he had been elevated the more difficulty had he to sup-

port himself in his elevation. This incessant exertion slowly undermined him; rest had forsaken even his slumbers. His weakness had been discovered, and the passion kindled in his breast turned to good account.

“His worthy attendants soon found to their cost that their lord had become a wit. That anxious sensibility, those glorious truths which his heart once embraced with the greatest enthusiasm, now began to be the objects of his ridicule. He revenged himself on the great truths of religion for the oppression which he had so long suffered from misconception. But, since from too true a voice his heart combated the intoxication of his head, there was more of acrimony than of humour in his jests. His disposition began to alter, and caprice to exhibit itself. The most beautiful ornament of his character, his modesty, vanished; parasites had poisoned his excellent heart. That tender delicacy of address which frequently made his attendants forget that he was their lord, now gave place to a decisive and despotic tone, which made the more sensible impression because it was not founded upon distinction of rank, for the want of which they could have consoled themselves, but upon an arrogant estimation of his own superior merit. When at home he was attacked by reflections that seldom made their appearance in the bustle of company; his own people scarcely ever saw him otherwise than gloomy, peevish, and unhappy, whilst elsewhere a forced vivacity made him the soul of every circle. With the sincerest sorrow did we behold him treading this dangerous path, but in the vortex in which he was involved the feeble voice of friendship was no longer heard, and he was too much intoxicated to understand it.

“Just at the beginning of this epoch an affair of the greatest consequence required my presence in the court of my sovereign, which I dared not postpone even for the dearest interests of friendship. An in-

visible hand, the agency of which I did not discover till long afterward, had contrived to derange my affairs, and to spread reports concerning me which I was obliged to contradict by my presence. The parting from the prince was painful to me, but did not affect him. The ties which united us had been severed for some time, but his fate had awakened all my anxiety. I, on that account, prevailed on Baron von F—— to inform me by letter of every event, which he has done in the most conscientious manner. As I was for a considerable time no longer an eye-witness of these events, it will be allowable for me to introduce the Baron von F—— in my stead, and to fill up the gap in my narrative by the contents of his letters. Notwithstanding that the representation of my friend F—— is not always what I should have given, I would not alter any of his expressions, so that the reader will be enabled to discover the truth with very little trouble.”

LETTER I.

BARON VON F—— TO COUNT VON O——.

May 17.

I thank you, my most honoured friend, for the permission you have given me to continue in your absence that confidential intercourse with you which during your stay here formed my great pleasure. You must be aware that there is no one here with whom I can venture to open my heart on certain private matters. Whatever you may urge to the contrary, I detest the people here. Since the prince has become one of them, and since we have lost your society, I feel solitary in the midst of this populous city. Z—— takes it less to heart, and the fair ones of Venice manage to make him forget the mortifications he is compelled to share with me at home. And why should he make

himself unhappy? He desires nothing more in the prince than a master, whom he could also find elsewhere. But I!—you know how deep an interest I feel in our prince's weal and woe, and how much cause I have for doing so; I have now lived with him sixteen years, and seem to exist only for his sake. As a boy of nine years old I first entered his service, and since that time we have never been separated. I have grown up under his eye—a long intercourse has insensibly attached me more and more to him—I have borne a part in all his adventures, great and small. Until this last unhappy year I had been accustomed to look upon him in the light of a friend, or of an elder brother—I have basked in his smile as in the sunshine of a summer's day—no cloud hung over my happiness!—and all this must now go to ruin in this unlucky Venice!

Since your departure several changes have taken place in our establishment. The Prince of —d— arrived here last week, with a numerous and brilliant retinue, and has caused a new and tumultuous life in our circle. As he is so nearly related to our prince, and as they are moreover at present upon pretty good terms, they will be very little apart during his sojourn, which I hear is to last until after the feast of the Ascension. A good beginning has already been made; for the last ten days our prince has hardly had time to breathe. The Prince of —d— has all along been living in a very expensive way, which was excusable in him, as he will soon take his departure; but the worst of the business is that he has inoculated our prince with his extravagance, because he could not well withdraw himself from his company, and, in the peculiar relation which exists between the two houses, thought it incumbent upon himself to assert the dignity of his own. We shall, moreover, depart from Venice in a few weeks, which will relieve the prince from the necessity

of continuing for any length of time this extraordinary expenditure.

The Prince of —d—, it is reported, is here on business of the ——— Order, in which he imagines that he plays an important part. That he has taken advantage of all the acquaintances of our prince you may readily imagine. He has been introduced with distinguished honour into the society of the Bucentauro, as he is pleased to consider himself a wit, and a man of great genius, and allows himself to be styled in his correspondences, which he keeps up throughout all parts of the world, the "*prince philosophique*." I do not know whether you have ever had the pleasure of meeting him. He displays a promising exterior, piercing eyes, a countenance full of expression, much show of reading, much acquired naturalness (if I may be allowed the expression), joined to a princely condescension toward the human race, a large amount of confidence in himself, and an eloquence which talks down all opposition. Who could refuse to pay homage to such splendid qualities in a "royal highness?" But to what advantage the quiet and sterling worth of our prince will appear, when contrasted with these dazzling accomplishments, the event must show.

In the arrangement of our establishment, various and important changes have taken place. We have rented a new and magnificent house opposite the new Procuracy, because the lodging at the Moor Hotel became too confined for the prince. Our suite has been augmented by twelve persons, pages, Moors, guards, etc. During your stay here you complained of unnecessary expense — you should see us now!

Our internal arrangements remain the same as of old, except that the prince, no longer held in check by your presence, is, if possible, more reserved and distant toward us than ever; we see very little of him, except while dressing or undressing him. Under the pretext

that we speak the French language very badly, and the Italian not at all, he has found means to exclude us from most of his entertainments, which to me personally is not a very great grievance; but I believe I know the true reason of it — he is ashamed of us; and this hurts me, for we have not deserved it of him.

As you wish to know all our minor affairs, I must tell you, that of all his attendants, the prince almost exclusively employs Biondello, whom he took into his service, as you will recollect, on the disappearance of his huntsman, and who, in his new mode of life, has become quite indispensable to him. This man knows Venice thoroughly, and turns everything to some account. It is as though he had a thousand eyes, and could set a thousand hands in motion at once. This he accomplishes, as he says, by the help of the gondoliers. To the prince he renders himself very useful by making him acquainted with all the strange faces that present themselves at his assemblies, and the private information he gives his highness has always proved to be correct. Besides this, he speaks and writes both Italian and French excellently, and has in consequence already risen to be the prince's secretary. I must, however, relate to you an instance of fidelity in him which is rarely found among people of his station. The other day a merchant of good standing from Rimini requested an audience of the prince. The object of his visit was an extraordinary complaint concerning Biondello. The procurator, his former master, who must have been rather an odd fellow, had lived in irreconcilable enmity with his relations; this enmity he wished if possible to continue even after his death. Biondello possessed his entire confidence, and was the repository of all his secrets; while on his death-bed he obliged him to swear that he would keep them inviolably, and would never disclose them for the benefit of his relations; a handsome legacy was to be the reward

of his silence. When the deceased procurator's will was opened and his papers inspected, many blanks and irregularities were found to which Biondello alone could furnish a key. He persisted in denying that he knew anything about it, gave up his very handsome legacy to the heirs, and kept his secrets to himself. Large offers were made to him by the relations, but all in vain; at length, in order to escape from their importunities and their threats of legally prosecuting him he entered the service of the prince. The merchant, who was the chief heir, now applied to the prince, and made larger offers than before if Biondello would alter his determination. But even the persuasions of the prince were fruitless. He admitted that secrets of consequence had really been confided to him; he did not deny that the deceased had perhaps carried his enmity toward his relations too far; but, added he, he was my dear master and benefactor, and died with a firm belief in my integrity. I was the only friend he had left in the world, and will therefore never prove myself unworthy of his confidence. At the same time he hinted that the avowals they wished him to make would not tend to the honour of the deceased. Was not that acting nobly and delicately? You may easily imagine that the prince did not renew his endeavours to shake so praiseworthy a determination. The extraordinary fidelity which he has shown toward his deceased master has procured him the unlimited confidence of his present one!

Farewell, my dear friend. How I sigh for the quiet life we led when first you came amongst us, for the stillness of which your society so agreeably indemnified us. I fear my happy days in Venice are over, and shall be glad if the same remark does not also apply to the prince. The element in which he now lives is not calculated to render him permanently happy, or my sixteen years' experience has deceived me.

LETTER II.

BARON VON F—— TO COUNT VON O——.

June 4.

I should never have thought our stay at Venice would have been productive of any good consequences. It has been the means of saving a man's life, and I am reconciled to it.

Some few evenings ago the prince was being carried home late at night from the Bucentauro; two domestics, of whom Biondello was one, accompanied him. By some accident it happened that the sedan, which had been hired in haste, broke down, and the prince was obliged to proceed the remainder of the way on foot. Biondello walked in front; their course lay through several dark retired streets, and, as daybreak was at hand, the lamps were either burning dimly or had gone out altogether. They had proceeded about a quarter of an hour when Biondello discovered that he had lost his way. The similarity of the bridges had deceived him, and, instead of crossing that of St. Mark, they found themselves in Sestière di Castello. It was in a by-street, and not a soul was stirring; they were obliged to turn back in order to gain a main street by which to set themselves right. They had proceeded but a few paces when they heard cries of "murder" in a neighbouring street. With his usual determined courage, the prince, unarmed as he was, snatched a stick from one of his attendants, and rushed forward in the direction whence the sound came. Three ruffianly looking fellows were just about to assassinate a man, who with his companion was feebly defending himself; the prince appeared just in time to arrest the fatal blow. The voices of the prince and his followers alarmed the murderers, who did not expect any interruption in so lonely a place; after inflicting a few slight wounds

with their daggers, they abandoned their victim and took to their heels. Exhausted with the unequal combat, the wounded man sunk half fainting into the arms of the prince; his companion informed my master that the man whose life he had saved was the Marquis Civitella, a nephew of the Cardinal A—i. As the marquis's wounds bled freely, Biondello acted as a surgeon to the best of his ability, and the prince took care to have him conveyed to the palace of his uncle, which was near at hand, and whither he himself accompanied him. This done, he left the house without revealing his name.

This, however, was discovered by a servant who had recognised Biondello. Already on the following morning the cardinal, an old acquaintance from the Bucen-tauro, waited upon the prince. The interview lasted an hour; the cardinal was much moved; tears stood in his eyes when they parted; the prince, too, was affected. The same evening a visit was paid to the sick man, of whose case the surgeon gives a very favourable report; the mantle in which he was wrapped had rendered the thrusts unsteady, and weakened their force. Since this event not a day has passed without the prince's paying a visit at the cardinal's, or receiving one from him, and a close intimacy has begun to exist between him and the cardinal's family.

The cardinal is a venerable man of sixty, with a majestic aspect, but full of gaiety and good health. He is said to be the richest prelate throughout all the dominions of the republic. He is reported to manage his immense fortune in a very liberal manner, and, although prudently economical, to despise none of the joys of this life. This nephew, who is his sole heir, is not always on the best of terms with his uncle. For, although the cardinal is anything but an enemy to youthful pleasures, the conduct of the nephew must exhaust the utmost tolerance. His loose principles

and dissipated manner of living, aided unhappily by all the attractions which can make vice tempting and excite sensuality, have rendered him the terror of all fathers and the bane of all husbands; this last attack also was said to have been caused by an intrigue he had begun with the wife of the —— ambassador, without speaking of other serious broils from which the power and the money of the cardinal could scarcely extricate him. But for this the cardinal would be the happiest man in Italy, for he possesses everything that can make life agreeable; but by this one domestic misfortune all the gifts of fortune are annulled, and the enjoyment of his wealth is embittered to the cardinal by the continual fear of finding nobody to inherit it.

The whole of this information I have obtained from Biondello. The prince has found in this man a real treasure. Every day he becomes more indispensable, and we are continually discovering in him some new talent. Some days ago the prince felt feverish and could not sleep; the night-lamp was extinguished, and all his ringing failed to arouse the valet de chambre, who had gone to sleep out of the house with an opera-dancer. At length the prince determined to rise himself, and to rouse one of his people. He had not proceeded far when a strain of delicious melody met his ear. Like one enchanted, he followed the sound, and found Biondello in his room playing upon the flute, with his fellow servants assembled around him. The prince could hardly believe his senses, and commanded him to proceed. With a surprising degree of facility he began to vary a touching adagio air with some fine extempore variations, which he executed with all the taste of a virtuoso. The prince, who, as you know, is a judge of music, says that he might play with confidence in the finest choir in Italy.

“I must dismiss this man,” said he to me next morning, “for I am unable to reward him according to his

merits." Biondello, who had overheard these words, came forward: "If you dismiss me, gracious prince," said he, "you deprive me of my best reward."

"You are born to something better than to serve," answered my master. "I must not stand in the way of your fortune."

"Do not press upon me any better fortune, gracious sir, than that which I have chosen for myself."

"To neglect talent like yours — No! I can never permit it."

"Then permit me, gracious sir, sometimes to exercise it in your presence."

Preparations were immediately made for carrying this proposition into effect. Biondello had a room assigned to him next the apartment of the prince, so that he can lull him to sleep with his strains, and wake him in the same manner. The prince wished to double his salary, but Biondello declined, requesting that this intended boon should be retained in his master's hands as a capital of which he might some day wish to avail himself. The prince expects that he will soon come to ask a favour at his hands; and whatever it may be it is granted beforehand. Farewell, dearest friend. I am waiting with impatience for tidings from K—n.

LETTER III.

BARON VON F—— TO COUNT VON O——.

June 4.

The Marquis of Civitella, who is now entirely recovered from his wounds, was last week introduced to the prince by his uncle, the cardinal, and since then he has followed him like his shadow. Biondello cannot have told me the truth respecting this marquis, or at any rate his account must be greatly exaggerated. His mien is highly engaging, and his manners irresistible.

bly winning. It is impossible to be out of humour with him; the first sight of him has disarmed me. Imagine a man of the most enchanting figure, with corresponding grace and dignity, a countenance full of thought and genius, an expression frank and inviting; a persuasive tone of voice, the most flowing eloquence, and a glow of youthful beauty, joined to all the advantages of a most liberal education. He has none of that contemptuous pride, none of that solemn starchiness, which we disliked so much in all the other nobles. His whole being is redolent of youthful joyousness, benevolence, and warmth of feeling. His excesses must have been much exaggerated; I never saw a more perfect picture of health. If he is really so wholly abandoned as Biondello represents him he is a syren whom none can resist.

Toward me he behaved with much frankness. He confessed with the most pleasing sincerity that he was by no means on the best of terms with his uncle, the cardinal, and that it was his own fault. But he was seriously resolved to amend his life, and the merit would be entirely the prince's. At the same time he hoped through his instrumentality to be reconciled to his uncle, as the prince's influence with the cardinal was unbounded. The only thing he had wanted till now was a friend and a guide, and he trusted he should find both in the person of the prince.

The prince has now assumed the authority of a preceptor toward him, and treats him with all the watchfulness and strictness of a Mentor. But this intimacy also gives the marquis a certain degree of influence, of which he well knows how to avail himself. He hardly stirs from his side; he is present at all parties where the prince is one of the guests; for the Bucentauro alone he is fortunately as yet too young. Wherever he appears in public with the prince he manages to draw him away from the rest of the company by the

pleasing manner in which he engages him in conversation and arrests his attention. Nobody, they say, has yet been able to reclaim him, and the prince will deserve to be immortalised in an epic should he accomplish such an Herculean task. I am much afraid, however, that the tables may be turned, and the guide be led away by the pupil, of which, in fact, there seems to be every prospect.

The Prince of —d— has taken his departure, much to the satisfaction of us all, my master not excepted. What I predicted, my dear O——, has come to pass. Two characters so widely opposed must inevitably clash together, and cannot maintain a good understanding for any length of time. The Prince of —d— had not been long in Venice before a terrible schism took place in the intellectual world, which threatened to deprive our prince of one-half of his admirers. Wherever he went he was crossed by this rival, who possessed exactly the requisite amount of small cunning to avail himself of every little advantage he gained. As he besides never scrupled to make use of any petty manœuvres to increase his consequence, he in a short time drew all the weak-minded of the community on his side, and shone at the head of a company of parasites worthy of such a leader.¹ The wiser course would certainly have been not to enter into competition at all with an adversary of this description, and a few months back this is the part which the prince would have taken. But now he has launched too far into the stream easily to regain the shore. These trifles have, perhaps by the circumstances in which he is placed, acquired a certain degree

¹The harsh judgment which Baron F—— (both here and in some passages of his first letter) pronounces upon this talented prince will be found exaggerated by every one who has the good fortune to be acquainted with him, and must be attributed to the prejudiced views of the young observer. — *Note of the Count von O——.*

of importance in his eyes, and had he even despised them his pride would not have allowed him to retire at a moment when his yielding would have been looked upon less as a voluntary act than as a confession of inferiority. Added to this, an unlucky revival of forgotten satirical speeches had taken place, and the spirit of rivalry which took possession of his followers had affected the prince himself. In order, therefore, to maintain that position in society which public opinion had now assigned him, he deemed it advisable to seize every possible opportunity of display, and of increasing the number of his admirers; but this could only be effected by the most princely expenditure; he was therefore eternally giving feasts, entertainments, and expensive concerts, making costly presents, and playing high. As this strange madness, moreover, had also infected the prince's retinue, who are generally much more punctilious in respect to what they deem "the honour of the family" than their masters, the prince was obliged to assist the zeal of his followers by his liberality. Here, then, is a whole catalogue of ills, all irremediable consequences of a sufficiently excusable weakness to which the prince in an unguarded moment gave way.

We have, it is true, got rid of our rival, but the harm he has done will not so soon be remedied. The finances of the prince are exhausted; all that he had saved by the wise economy of years is spent; and he must hasten from Venice if he would escape plunging into debt, which till now he has most scrupulously avoided. It is decisively settled that we leave as soon as fresh remittances arrive.

I should not have minded all this splendour if the prince had but reaped the least real satisfaction from it. But he was never less happy than at present. He feels that he is not what he formerly was; he seeks to regain his self-respect; he is dissatisfied with him-

self, and launches into fresh dissipation in order to drown the recollection of the last. One new acquaintance follows another, and each involves him more deeply. I know not where this will end. We must away — there is no other chance of safety — we must away from Venice.

But, my dear friend, I have not yet received a single line from you. How am I to interpret this long and obstinate silence?

LETTER IV.

BARON VON F—— TO COUNT VON O——.

June 12.

I thank you, my dear friend, for the token of your remembrance which young B—hl brought me. But what is it you say about letters I ought to have received? I have received no letter from you; not a single one. What a circuitous route must they have taken. In future, dear O——, when you honour me with an epistle, despatch it *viâ* Trent, under cover to the prince, my master.

We have at length been compelled, my dear friend, to resort to a measure which till now we had so happily avoided. Our remittances have failed to arrive — failed, for the first time, in this pressing emergency, and we have been obliged to have recourse to a usurer, as the prince is willing to pay handsomely to keep the affair secret. The worst of this disagreeable occurrence is, that it retards our departure. On this affair the prince and I have had an explanation. The whole transaction had been arranged by Biondello, and the son of Israel was there before I had any suspicion of the fact. It grieved me to the heart to see the prince reduced to such an extremity, and revived all my recollections of the past, and fears for the

future; and I suppose I may have looked rather sorrowful and gloomy when the usurer left the room. The prince, whom the foregoing scene had left in not the happiest frame of mind, was pacing angrily up and down the room; the rouleaus of gold were still lying on the table; I stood at the window, counting the panes of glass in the procurator's house opposite. There was a long pause. At length the prince broke silence. "F——!" he began, "I cannot bear to see dismal faces about me."

I remained silent.

"Why do you not answer me? Do I not perceive that your heart is almost bursting to vent some of its vexation? I insist on your speaking, otherwise you will begin to fancy that you are keeping some terribly momentous secret."

"If I am gloomy, gracious sir," replied I, "it is only because I do not see you cheerful."

"I know," continued he, "that you have been dissatisfied with me for some time past — that you disapprove of every step I take — that — what does Count O—— say in his letters?"

"Count O—— has not written to me."

"Not written? Why do you deny it? You keep up a confidential correspondence together, you and the count; I am quite aware of that. Come, you may confess it, for I have no wish to pry into your secrets."

"Count O——," replied I, "has not yet answered any of the three letters which I have written to him."

"I have done wrong," continued he; "don't you think so?" (taking up one of the rouleaus) "I should not have done this?"

"I see that it was necessary."

"I ought not to have reduced myself to such a necessity?"

I did not answer.

“Oh, of course! I ought never to have indulged my wishes, but have grown gray in the same dull manner in which I was brought up! Because I once venture a step beyond the drear monotony of my past life, and look around me to see whether there be not some new source of enjoyment in store for me — because I —”

“If it was but a trial, gracious sir, I have no more to say; for the experience you have gained would not be dearly bought at three times the price it has cost. It grieves me, I confess, to think that the opinion of the world should be concerned in determining the question — how are you to choose your own happiness.”

“It is well for you that you can afford to despise the world’s opinion,” replied he; “I am its creature, I must be its slave. What are we princes but opinion? With us it is everything. Public opinion is our nurse and preceptor in infancy, our oracle and idol in riper years, our staff in old age. Take from us what we derive from the opinion of the world, and the poorest of the humblest class is in a better position than we, for his fate has taught him a lesson of philosophy which enables him to bear it. But a prince who laughs at the world’s opinion destroys himself, like the priest who denies the existence of a God.”

“And yet, gracious prince —”

“I see what you would say; I can break through the circle which my birth has drawn around me. But can I also eradicate from my memory all the false impressions which education and early habit have implanted, and which a hundred thousand fools have been continually labouring to impress more and more firmly? Everybody naturally wishes to be what he is in perfection; in short, the whole aim of a prince’s existence is to appear happy. If we cannot be happy after your fashion, is that any reason why we should

discard all other means of happiness, and not be happy at all? If we cannot drink of joy pure from the fountainhead, can there be any reason why we should not beguile ourselves with artificial pleasure — nay, even be content to accept a sorry substitute from the very hand that robs us of the higher boon?”

“You were wont to look for this compensation in your own heart.”

“But if I no longer find it there? Oh, how came we to fall on this subject? Why did you revive these recollections in me? I had recourse to this tumult of the senses in order to stifle an inward voice which embitters my whole life; in order to lull to rest this inquisitive reason, which, like a sharp sickle, moves to and fro in my brain, at each new research lopping off another branch of my happiness.”

“My dearest prince —” He had risen, and was pacing up and down the room in unusual agitation.¹

“When everything gives way before me and behind me; when the past lies in the distance in dreary monotony, like a city of the dead; when the future offers me naught; when I see my whole being enclosed within the narrow circle of the present, who can blame me if I clasp this niggardly present of time in my arms with fiery eagerness, as though it were a friend whom I was embracing for the last time? Oh, I have learnt to value the present moment. The

¹ I have endeavoured, dearest O——, to relate to you this remarkable conversation exactly as it occurred; but this I found impossible, although I sat down to write it the evening of the day it took place. In order to assist my memory I was obliged to transpose the observation of the prince, and thus this compound of a conversation and a philosophical lecture, which is in some respects better and in others worse than the source from which I took it, arose; but I assure you that I have rather omitted some of the prince's words than ascribed to him any of my own; all that is mine is the arrangement, and a few observations, whose ownership you will easily recognise by their stupidity. — *Note of the Baron von F——.*

present moment is our mother; let us love it as such."

"Gracious sir, you were wont to believe in a more lasting good."

"Do but make the enchantment last and fervently will I embrace it. But what pleasure can it give to me to render beings happy who to-morrow will have passed away like myself? Is not everything passing away around me? Each one bustles and pushes his neighbour aside hastily to catch a few drops from the fountain of life, and then departs thirsting. At this very moment, while I am rejoicing in my strength, some being is waiting to start into life at my dissolution. Show me one being who will endure, and I will become a virtuous man."

"But what, then, has become of those benevolent sentiments which used to be the joy and the rule of your life? To sow seeds for the future, to assist in carrying out the designs of a high and eternal Providence —"

"Future! Eternal Providence! If you take away from man all that he derives from his own heart, all that he associates with the idea of a godhead, and all that belongs to the law of nature, what, then, do you leave to him?"

"What has already happened to me, and what may still follow, I look upon as two black, impenetrable curtains hanging over the two extremities of human life, and which no mortal has ever yet drawn aside. Many hundred generations have stood before the second of these curtains, casting the light of their torches upon its folds, speculating and guessing as to what it may conceal. Many have beheld themselves, in the magnified image of their passions, reflected upon the curtain which hides futurity from their gaze, and have turned away shuddering from their own shadows. Poets, philosophers, and statesmen have painted their fancies on the curtain in brighter or more sombre

colours, according as their own prospects were bright or gloomy. Many a juggler has also taken advantage of the universal curiosity, and by well-managed deceptions led astray the excited imagination. A deep silence reigns behind this curtain; no one who passes beyond it answers any questions; all the reply is an empty echo, like the sound yielded by a vault. Sooner or later all must go behind this curtain, and they approach it with fear and trembling, in doubt who may be waiting there behind to receive them; *quid sit id, quod tantum morituri vident*. There have been infidels who asserted that this curtain only deluded mankind, and that we saw nothing behind it, because there was nothing there to see; but, to convince them, they were quickly sent behind it themselves."

"It was indeed a rash conclusion," said I, "if they had no better ground for it than that they saw nothing themselves."

"You see, my dear friend, I am modest enough not to wish to look behind this curtain, and the wisest course will doubtless be to abstain from all curiosity. But while I draw this impassable circle around me, and confine myself within the bounds of present existence, this small point of time, which I was in danger of neglecting in useless researches, becomes the more important to me. What you call the chief end and aim of my existence concerns me no longer. I cannot escape my destiny; I cannot promote its consummation; but I know, and firmly believe, that I am here to accomplish some end, and that I do accomplish it. But the means which nature has chosen to fulfil my destiny are so much the more sacred to me; to me it is everything; my morality, my happiness. All the rest I shall never learn. I am like a messenger who carries a sealed letter to its place of destination. What the letter contains is indifferent to him; his business is only to earn his fee for carrying it."

“Alas!” said I, “how poor a thing you would leave me!”

“But in what a labyrinth have we lost ourselves!” exclaimed the prince, looking with a smile at the table on which the rouleaus lay. “After all perhaps not far from the mark,” continued he; “you will now no doubt understand my reasons for this new mode of life. I could not so suddenly tear myself away from my fancied wealth, could not so readily separate the props of my morality and happiness from the pleasing dream with which everything within me was so closely bound up. I longed for the frivolity which seems to render the existence of most of those about me endurable to themselves. Everything which precluded reflection was welcome to me. Shall I confess it to you? I wished to lower myself, in order to destroy this source of my griefs, by deadening the power of reflection.”

Here we were interrupted by a visit. In my next I shall have to communicate to you a piece of news, which, from the tenor of a conversation like the one of to-day, you would scarcely have anticipated.

LETTER V.

BARON VON F—— TO COUNT VON O——.

As the time of our departure from Venice is now approaching with rapid steps, this week was to be devoted to seeing everything worthy of notice in pictures and public edifices; a task which, when one intends making a long stay in a place, is always delayed till the last moment.

The “Marriage at Cana,” by Paul Veronese, which is to be seen in a Benedictine convent in the Island of St. George, was in particular mentioned to us in high terms. Do not expect me to give you a description of this extraordinary work of art, which, on the whole, made a

very surprising, but not equally pleasing, impression on me. We should have required as many hours as we had minutes to study a composition of one hundred and twenty figures, upon a ground thirty feet broad. What human eye is capable of grasping so complicated a whole, or at once to enjoy all the beauty which the artist has everywhere lavished upon it! It is, however, to be lamented, that a work of so much merit, which, if exhibited in some public place, would command the admiration of every one, should be destined merely to ornament the refectory of a few monks. The church of the monastery is no less worthy of admiration, being one of the finest in the whole city. Toward evening we went in a gondola to the Giudecca, in order to spend the pleasant hours of evening in its charming garden. Our party, which was not very numerous, soon dispersed in various directions; and Civitella, who had been waiting all day for an opportunity of speaking to me privately, took me aside into an arbour.

“You are a friend to the prince,” he began, “from whom he is accustomed to keep no secrets, as I know from very good authority. As I entered his hotel to-day I met a man coming out whose occupation is well known to me, and when I entered the room the prince’s brow was clouded.” I wished to interrupt him,—“You cannot deny it,” continued he; “I knew the man, I looked at him well. And is it possible that the prince should have a friend in Venice—a friend who owes his life to him, and yet be reduced on an emergency to make use of such creatures?”

“Tell me frankly, baron! Is the prince in difficulties? It is in vain you strive to conceal it from me. What! you refuse to tell me! I can easily learn from one who would sell any secret for gold.”

“My good marquis —”

“Pardon me! I must appear intrusive in order not

to be ungrateful. To the prince I am indebted for life, and what is still more, for a reasonable use of it. Shall I stand idly by and see him take steps which, besides being inconvenient to him, are beneath his dignity? Shall I feel it in my power to assist him, and hesitate for a moment to step forward?"

"The prince," replied I, "is not in difficulties. Some remittances which we expected *viâ* Trent have not yet arrived, most likely either by accident, or because, not feeling certain whether he had not already left Venice, they waited for a communication from him. This has now been done, and until their arrival —"

Civitella shook his head. "Do not mistake my motive," said he; "in this there can be no question as to diminishing the extent of my obligations toward the prince, which all my uncle's wealth would be insufficient to cancel. My object is simply to spare him a few unpleasant moments. My uncle possesses a large fortune which I can command as freely as though it were my own. A fortunate circumstance occurs, which enables me to avail myself of the only means by which I can possibly be of the slightest use to your master. I know," continued he, "how much delicacy the prince possesses, but the feeling is mutual, and it would be noble on his part to afford me this slight gratification, were it only to make me appear to feel less heavily the load of obligation under which I labour."

He continued to urge his request, until I had pledged my word to assist him to the utmost of my ability. I knew the prince's character, and had but small hopes of success. The marquis promised to agree to any conditions the prince might impose, but added, that it would deeply wound him to be regarded in the light of a stranger.

In the heat of our conversation we had strayed far

away from the rest of the company, and were returning, when Z—— came to meet us.

“I am in search of the prince,” he cried; “is he not with you?”

“We were just going to him,” was our reply. “We thought to find him with the rest of the party.”

“The company is all together, but he is nowhere to be found. I cannot imagine how we lost sight of him.”

It now occurred to Civitella that he might have gone to look at the adjoining church, which had a short time before attracted his attention. We immediately went to look for him there. As we approached, we found Biondello waiting in the porch. On coming nearer, we saw the prince emerge hastily from a side door; his countenance was flushed, and he looked anxiously round for Biondello, whom he called. He seemed to be giving him very particular instructions for the execution of some commission, while his eyes continued constantly fixed on the church door, which had remained open. Biondello hastened into the church. The prince, without perceiving us, passed through the crowd, and went back to his party, which he reached before us.

We resolved to sup in an open pavilion of the garden, where the marquis had, without our knowledge, arranged a little concert, which was quite first-rate. There was a young singer, in particular, whose delicious voice and charming figure excited general admiration. Nothing, however, seemed to make an impression on the prince; he spoke little, and gave confused answers to our questions; his eyes were anxiously fixed in the direction whence he expected Biondello; and he seemed much agitated. Civitella asked him what he thought of the church; he was unable to give any description of it. Some beautiful pictures, which rendered the church remarkable, were spoken of; the prince had not

noticed them. We perceived that our questions annoyed him, and therefore discontinued them. Hour after hour rolled on and still Biondello returned not. The prince could no longer conceal his impatience; he rose from the table, and paced alone, with rapid strides, up and down a retired walk. Nobody could imagine what had happened to him. I did not venture to ask him the reason of so remarkable a change in his demeanour; I have for some time past resigned my former place in his confidence. It was, therefore with the utmost impatience that I awaited the return of Biondello to explain this riddle to me.

It was past ten o'clock when he made his appearance. The tidings he brought did not make the prince more communicative. He returned in an ill humour to the company, the gondola was ordered, and we returned home.

During the remainder of that evening I could find no opportunity of speaking to Biondello, and was, therefore, obliged to retire to my pillow with my curiosity unsatisfied. The prince had dismissed us early, but a thousand reflections flitted across my brain, and kept me awake. For a long time I could hear him pacing up and down his room; at length sleep overcame me. Late at midnight I was awakened by a voice, and I felt a hand passed across my face; I opened my eyes, and saw the prince standing at my bedside, with a lamp in his hand. He told me he was unable to sleep, and begged me to keep him company through the night. I was going to dress myself, but he told me to stay where I was, and seated himself at my bedside.

"Something has happened to me to-day," he began, "the impression of which will never be effaced from my soul. I left you, as you know, to see the —— church, respecting which Civitella had raised my curiosity, and which had already attracted my attention. As neither you nor he were at hand, I walked the

short distance alone, and ordered Biondello to wait for me at the door. The church was quite empty; a dim and solemn light surrounded me as I entered from the blazing sultry day without. I stood alone in the spacious building, throughout which there reigned the stillness of the grave. I placed myself in the centre of the church, and gave myself up to the feelings which the sight was calculated to produce; by degrees the grand proportions of this majestic building expanded to my gaze, and I stood wrapt in deep and pleasing contemplation. Above me the evening bell was tolling; its tones died softly away in the aisles, and found an echo in my heart. Some altar-pieces at a distance attracted my attention. I approached to look at them; unconsciously I had wandered through one side of the church, and was now standing at the opposite end. Here a few steps, raised round a pillar, led into a little chapel, containing several small altars, with statues of saints in the niches above them. On entering the chapel on the right I heard a whispering, as though some one near was speaking in a low voice. I turned toward the spot whence the sound proceeded, and saw before me a female form. No! I cannot describe to you the beauty of this form. My first feeling was one of awe, which, however, soon gave place to ravishing surprise."

"But this figure, your highness? Are you certain that it was something living, something real, and not perhaps a picture, or an illusion of your fancy?"

"Hear me further. It was a lady. Surely, till that moment, I have never seen her sex in its full perfection! All around was sombre; the setting sun shone through a single window into the chapel, and its rays rested upon her figure. With inexpressible grace, half kneeling, half lying, she was stretched before an altar; one of the most striking, most lovely, and picturesque objects in all nature. Her dress was of black moreen,

fitting tightly to her slender waist and beautifully formed arms, the skirts spreading around her like a Spanish robe; her long light-coloured hair was divided into two broad plaits, which, apparently from their own weight, had escaped from under her veil, and flowed in charming disorder down her back. One of her hands grasped the crucifix, and her head rested gracefully upon the other. But, where shall I find words to describe to you the angelic beauty of her countenance, in which the charms of a seraph seemed displayed? The setting sun shone full upon her face and its golden beams seemed to surround it as with a glory. Can you recall to your mind the Madonna of our Florentine painter? She was here personified, even to those few deviations from the studied costume which so powerfully, so irresistibly attracted me in the picture."

With regard to the Madonna, of whom the prince spoke, the case is this: Shortly after your departure he made the acquaintance of a Florentine painter, who had been summoned to Venice to paint an altar-piece for some church, the name of which I do not recollect. He had brought with him three paintings, which had been intended for the gallery in the Cornari palace. They consisted of a Madonna, a Heloise, and a Venus, very lightly apparelled. All three were of great beauty; and, although the subjects were quite different, they were so intrinsically equal that it seemed almost impossible to determine which to prefer. The prince alone did not hesitate for a moment. As soon as the pictures were placed before him the Madonna absorbed his whole attention; in the two others he admired the painter's genius; but in this he forgot the artist and his art, his whole soul being absorbed in the contemplation of the work. He was quite moved, and could scarcely tear himself away from it. We could easily see by the artist's countenance that in his heart he coincided with the prince's judgment; he obstinately

refused to separate the pictures, and demanded fifteen hundred zechins for the three. The prince offered him half that sum for the Madonna alone, but in vain. The artist insisted on his first demand, and who knows what might have been the result if a ready purchaser had not stepped forward? Two hours afterward all three pictures were sold, and we never saw them again. It was this Madonna which now recurred to the prince's mind.

"I stood," continued he, "gazing at her in silent admiration. She did not observe me; my arrival did not disturb her, so completely was she absorbed in her devotion. She prayed to her Deity, and I prayed to her — yes, I adored her! All the pictures of saints, all the altars and the burning tapers around me had failed to remind me of what now for the first time burst upon me, that I was in a sacred place. Shall I confess it to you? In that moment I believed firmly in him whose image was clasped in her beautiful hand. I read in her eyes that he answered her prayers. Thanks be to her charming devotion, it had revealed him to me. I wandered with her through all the paradise of prayer.

"She rose, and I recollected myself. I stepped aside confused; but the noise I made in moving discovered me. I thought that the unexpected presence of a man might alarm, that my boldness would offend her; but neither of these feelings were expressed in the look with which she regarded me. Peace, benign peace, was portrayed in her countenance, and a cheerful smile played upon her lips. She was descending from her heaven; and I was the first happy mortal who met her benevolent look. Her mind was still wrapt in her concluding prayer; she had not yet come in contact with earth.

"I now heard something stir in the opposite corner of the chapel. It was an elderly lady, who rose from

a cushion close behind me. Till now I had not observed her. She had been distant only a few steps from me and must have seen my every motion. This confused me. I cast my eyes to the earth, and both the ladies passed by me."

On this last point I thought myself able to console the prince.

"Strange," continued he after a long silence, "that there should be something which one has never known — never missed; and that yet on a sudden one should seem to live and breathe for that alone. Can one single moment so completely metamorphose a human being? It would now be as impossible for me to indulge in the wishes or enjoy the pleasures of yesterday as it would be to return to the toys of my childhood, and all this since I have seen this object which lives and rules in the inmost recesses of my soul. It seems to say that I can love nothing else, and that nothing else in this world can produce an impression on me."

"But consider, gracious prince," said I, "the excitable mood you were in when this apparition surprised you, and how all the circumstances conspired to inflame your imagination. Quitting the dazzling light of day and the busy throng of men, you were suddenly surrounded by twilight and repose. You confess that you had quite given yourself up to those solemn emotions which the majesty of the place was calculated to awaken; the contemplation of fine works of art had rendered you more susceptible to the impressions of beauty in any form. You supposed yourself alone — when you saw a maiden who, I will readily allow, may have been very beautiful, and whose charms were heightened by a favourable illumination of the setting sun, a graceful attitude, and an expression of fervent devotion — what is more natural than that your vivid fancy should look upon such a form as something supernaturally perfect?"

“Can the imagination give what it never received?” replied he. “In the whole range of my fancy there is nothing which I can compare with that image. It is impressed on my mind distinctly and vividly as in the moment when I beheld it. I can think of nothing but that picture; but you might offer me whole worlds for it in vain.”

“My gracious prince, this is love.”

“Must the sensation which makes me happy necessarily have a name? Love! Do not degrade my feeling by giving it a name which is so often misapplied by the weak-minded. Who ever felt before what I do now? Such a being never before existed; how then can the name be admitted before the emotion which it is meant to express? Mine is a novel and peculiar feeling, connected only with this being, and capable of being applied to her alone. Love! From love I am secure!”

“You sent away Biondello, no doubt, to follow in the steps of these strangers, and to make inquiries concerning them. What news did he bring you?”

“Biondello discovered nothing; or, at least, as good as nothing. An aged, respectably dressed man, who looked more like a citizen than a servant, came to conduct them to their gondola. A number of poor people placed themselves in a row, and quitted her, apparently well satisfied. Biondello said he saw one of her hands, which was ornamented with several precious stones. She spoke a few words, which Biondello could not comprehend, to her companion; he says it was Greek. As she had some distance to walk to the canal, the people began to throng together, attracted by the strangeness of her appearance. Nobody knew her — but beauty seems born to rule. All made way for her in a respectful manner. She let fall a black veil, that covered half of her person, over her face, and hastened into the gondola. Along the whole Giudecca Biondello

managed to keep the boat in view, but the crowd prevented his following it farther."

"But surely he took notice of the gondolier so as to be able to recognise him again."

"He has undertaken to find out the gondolier, but he is not one of those with whom he associates. The mendicants, whom he questioned, could give him no further information than that the signora had come to the church for the last few Saturdays, and had each time divided a gold piece among them. It was a Dutch ducat, which Biondello changed for them, and brought to me."

"It appears, then, that she is a Greek — most likely of rank; at any rate, rich and charitable. That is as much as we dare venture to conclude at present, gracious sir; perhaps too much. But a Greek lady in a Catholic church?"

"Why not? She may have changed her religion. But there is certainly some mystery in the affair. Why should she go only once a week? Why always on Saturday, on which day, as Biondello tells me, the church is generally deserted? Next Saturday, at the latest, must decide this question. Till then, dearest friend, you must help me to while away the hours. But it is in vain. They will go their lingering pace, though my soul is burning with expectation!"

"And when this day at length arrives — what, then, gracious prince? What do you purpose doing?"

"What do I purpose doing? I shall see her. I will discover where she lives and who she is. But to what does all this tend? I hear you ask. What I saw made me happy; I therefore now know wherein my happiness consists!"

"And our departure from Venice, which is fixed for next Monday?"

"How could I know that Venice still contained such a treasure for me? You ask me questions of my past

life. I tell you that from this day forward I will begin a new existence."

I thought that now was the opportunity to keep my word to the marquis. I explained to the prince that a protracted stay in Venice was altogether incompatible with the exhausted state of his finances, and that, if he extended his sojourn here beyond the appointed time, he could not reckon on receiving funds from his court. On this occasion, I learned what had hitherto been a secret to me, namely, that the prince had, without the knowledge of his other brothers, received from his sister, the reigning ——— of ———, considerable loans, which she would gladly double if his court left him in the lurch. This sister, who, as you know, is a pious enthusiast, thinks that the large savings which she makes at a very economical court cannot be deposited in better hands than in those of a brother whose wise benevolence she well knows, and whose character she warmly honours. I have, indeed, known for some time that a very close intercourse has been kept up between the two, and that many letters have been exchanged; but, as the prince's own resources have hitherto always been sufficient to cover his expenditure, I had never guessed at this hidden channel. It is clear, therefore, that the prince must have had some expenses which have been and still are unknown to me; but if I can judge of them by his general character, they will certainly not be of such a description as to tend to his disgrace. And yet I thought I understood him thoroughly. After this disclosure, I of course did not hesitate to make known to him the marquis's offer, which, to my no small surprise, he immediately accepted. He gave me the authority to transact the business with the marquis in whatever way I thought most advisable, and then immediately to settle the account with the usurer. To his sister he proposed to write without delay.

It was morning when we separated. However disagreeable this affair is to me for more than one reason, the worst of it is that it seems to threaten a longer residence in Venice. From the prince's passion I rather augur good than evil. It is, perhaps, the most powerful method of withdrawing him from his metaphysical dreams to the concerns and feelings of real life. It will have its crisis, and, like an illness produced by artificial means, will eradicate the natural disorder.

Farewell, my dear friend. I have written down these incidents immediately upon their occurrence. The post starts immediately; you will receive this letter on the same day as my last.

LETTER VI.

BARON F—— TO COUNT O——.

June 20.

This Civitella is certainly one of the most obliging personages in the world. The prince had scarcely left me the other day before I received a note from the marquis enforcing his former offers with renewed earnestness. I instantly forwarded in the prince's name a bond for six thousand zechins; in less than half an hour it was returned, with double the sum required, in notes and gold. The prince at length assented to this increase, but insisted that the bond, which was drawn only for six weeks, should be accepted.

The whole of the present week has been consumed in inquiries after the mysterious Greek. Biondello set all his engines to work, but until now in vain. He certainly discovered the gondolier; but from him he could learn nothing, save that the ladies had disembarked on the island of Murano, where they entered two sedan-chairs which were waiting for them. He

supposed them to be English because they spoke a foreign language, and had paid him in gold. He did not even know their guide, but believed him to be a glass manufacturer from Murano. We were now, at least, certain that we must not look for her in the Giudecca, and that in all probability she lived in the island of Murano; but, unluckily, the description the prince gave of her was not such as to make her recognisable by a third party. The passionate interest with which he had regarded her had hindered him from observing her minutely; for all the minor details, which other people would not have failed to notice, had escaped his observation; from his description one would have sooner expected to find her prototype in the works of Ariosto or Tasso than on a Venetian island. Besides, our inquiries had to be conducted with the utmost caution, in order not to become prejudicial to the lady, or to excite undue attention. As Biondello was the only man besides the prince who had seen her, even through her veil, and could therefore recognise her, he strove to be as much as possible in all the places where she was likely to appear; the life of the poor man, during the whole week, was a continual race through all the streets of Venice. In the Greek church, particularly, every inquiry was made, but always with the same ill-success; and the prince, whose impatience increased with every successive failure, was at last obliged to wait till Saturday, with what patience he might. His restlessness was excessive. Nothing interested him, nothing could fix his attention. He was in constant feverish excitement; he fled from society, but the evil increased in solitude. He had never been so much besieged by visitors as in this week. His approaching departure had been announced, and everybody crowded to see him. It was necessary to occupy the attention of the people in order to lull their suspicions, and to amuse the prince

with the view of diverting his mind from its all-engrossing object. In this emergency Civitella hit upon play; and, for the purposes of driving away most of the visitors, proposed that the stakes should be high. He hoped by awakening in the prince a transient liking for play, from which it would afterward be easy to wean him, to destroy the romantic bent of his passion. "The cards," said Civitella, "have saved me from many a folly which I had intended to commit, and repaired many which I had already perpetrated. At the faro table I have often recovered my tranquillity of mind, of which a pair of bright eyes had robbed me, and women never had more power over me than when I had not money enough to play."

I will not enter into a discussion as to how far Civitella was right; but the remedy we had hit upon soon began to be worse than the disease it was intended to cure. The prince, who could only make the game at all interesting to himself by staking extremely high, soon overstepped all bounds. He was quite out of his element. Everything he did seemed to be done in a passion; all his actions betrayed the uneasiness of his mind. You know his general indifference to money: he seemed now to have become totally insensible to its value. Gold flowed through his hands like water. As he played without the slightest caution he lost almost invariably. He lost immense sums, for he staked like a desperate gamester. Dearest O——, with an aching heart I write it, in four days he had lost above twelve thousand zechins.

Do not reproach me. I blame myself sufficiently. But how could I prevent it? Could I do more than warn him? I did all that was in my power, and cannot find myself guilty. Civitella, too, lost not a little; I won about six hundred zechins. The unprecedented ill-luck of the prince excited general attention, and therefore he would not leave off playing. Civitella, who is always ready to

oblige him, immediately advanced him the required sum. The deficit is made up, but the prince owes the marquis twenty-four thousand zechins. Oh, how I long for the savings of his pious sister. Are all sovereigns so, my dear friend? The prince behaves as though he had done the marquis a great honour, and he, at any rate, plays his part well.

Civitella sought to quiet me by saying that this recklessness, this extraordinary ill-luck, would be most effectual in bringing the prince to his senses. The money, he said, was of no consequence. He himself would not feel the loss in the least, and would be happy to serve the prince, at any moment, with three times the amount. The cardinal also assured me that his nephew's intentions were honest, and that he should be ready to assist him in carrying them out.

The most unfortunate thing was that these tremendous sacrifices did not even effect their object. One would have thought that the prince would at least feel some interest in his play. But such was not the case. His thoughts were wandering far away, and the passion which we wished to stifle by his ill-luck in play seemed, on the contrary, only to gather strength. When, for instance, a decisive stroke was about to be played, and every one's eyes were fixed, full of expectation, on the board, his were searching for Biondello, in order to catch the news he might have brought him, from the expression of his countenance. Biondello brought no tidings, and his master's losses continued.

The gains, however, fell into very needy hands. A few "your excellencies," whom scandal reports to be in the habit of carrying home their frugal dinner from the market in their senatorial caps, entered our house as beggars, and left it with well-lined purses. Civitella pointed them out to me. "Look," said he, "how many poor devils make their fortunes by one great

man taking a whim into his head. This is what I like to see. It is princely and royal. A great man must, even by his failings, make some one happy, like a river which by its overflowing fertilises the neighbouring fields."

Civitella has a noble and generous way of thinking, but the prince owes him twenty-four thousand zechins.

At length the long-wished-for Saturday arrived, and my master insisted upon going, directly after dinner, to the —— church. He stationed himself in the chapel where he had first seen the unknown, but in such a way as not to be immediately observed. Biondello had orders to keep watch at the church door, and to enter into conversation with the attendant of the ladies. I had taken upon myself to enter, like a chance passenger, into the same gondola with them on their return, in order to follow their track if the other schemes should fail. At the spot where the gondolier said he had landed them the last time two sedans were stationed; the chamberlain, Z——, was ordered to follow in a separate gondola in order to trace the retreat of the unknown, if all else should fail. The prince wished to give himself wholly up to the pleasure of seeing her, and, if possible, try to make her acquaintance in the church. Civitella was to keep out of the way altogether, as his reputation among the women of Venice was so bad that his presence could not have failed to excite the suspicions of the lady. You see, dear count, it was not through any want of precaution on our part that the fair unknown escaped us.

Never, perhaps, was there offered up in any church such ardent prayers for success, and never were hopes so cruelly disappointed. The prince waited till after sunset, starting in expectation at every sound which approached the chapel, and at every creaking of the church door. Seven full hours passed, and no Greek

lady. I need not describe his state of mind. You know what hope deferred is, hope which one has nourished unceasingly for seven days and nights.

LETTER VII.

BARON VON F—— TO COUNT VON O——.

July.

The mysterious unknown of the prince reminded Marquis Civitella of a romantic incident which happened to himself a short time since, and, to divert the prince, he offered to relate it. I will give it you in his own words; but the lively spirit which he infuses into all he tells will be lost in my narration.

(Here follows the subjoined fragment, which appeared in the eighth part of the *Thalia*, and was originally intended for the second volume of the "Ghost-Seer." It found a place here after Schiller had given up the idea of completing the "Ghost-Seer."

"In the spring of last year," began Civitella, "I had the misfortune to embroil myself with the Spanish ambassador, a gentleman who, in his seventieth year, had been guilty of the folly of wishing to marry a Roman girl of eighteen. His vengeance pursued me, and my friends advised me to secure my safety by a timely flight, and to keep out of the way until the hand of nature, or an adjustment of differences, had secured me from the wrath of this formidable enemy. As I felt it too severe a punishment to quit Venice altogether, I took up my abode in a distant quarter of the town, where I lived in a lonely house, under a feigned name, keeping myself concealed by day, and devoting the night to the society of my friends and of pleasure.

"My windows looked upon a garden, the west side of which was bounded by the walls of a convent,

while toward the east it jutted out into the Laguna in the form of a little peninsula. The garden was charmingly situated, but little frequented. It was my custom every morning, after my friends had left me, to spend a few moments at the window before retiring to rest, to see the sun rise over the Adriatic, and then to bid him good night. If you, my dear prince, have not yet enjoyed this pleasure, I recommend exactly this station, the only eligible one perhaps in all Venice to enjoy so splendid a prospect in perfection. A purple twilight hangs over the deep, and a golden mist on the Laguna announces the sun's approach. The heavens and the sea are wrapped in expectant silence. In two seconds the orb of day appears, casting a flood of fiery light on the waves. It is an enchanting sight.

"One morning, when I was, according to custom, enjoying the beauty of this prospect, I suddenly discovered that I was not the only spectator of the scene. I fancied I heard voices in the garden, and turning to the quarter whence the sound proceeded, I perceived a gondola steering for the land. In a few moments I saw figures walking at a slow pace up the avenue. They were a man and a woman, accompanied by a little negro. The female was clothed in white, and had a brilliant on her finger. It was not light enough to perceive more.

"My curiosity was raised. Doubtless a rendezvous of a pair of lovers — but in such a place, and at so unusual an hour! It was scarcely three o'clock, and everything was still veiled in dusky twilight. The incident seemed to me novel and proper for a romance, and I waited to see the end.

"I soon lost sight of them among the foliage of the garden, and some time elapsed before they again emerged to view. Meanwhile a delightful song was heard. It proceeded from the gondolier, who was in

this manner shortening the time, and was answered by a comrade a short way off. They sang stanzas from Tasso; time and place were in unison, and the melody sounded sweetly in the profound silence around.

“Day in the meantime had dawned, and objects were discerned more plainly. I sought my people, whom I found walking hand in hand up a broad walk, often standing still, but always with their backs turned toward me, and proceeding further from my residence. Their noble, easy carriage convinced me at once that they were people of rank, and the splendid figure of the lady made me augur as much of her beauty. They appeared to converse but little; the lady, however, more than her companion. In the spectacle of the rising sun, which now burst out in all its splendour, they seemed to take not the slightest interest.

“While I was employed in adjusting my glass, in order to bring them into view as closely as possible, they suddenly disappeared down a side path, and some time elapsed before I regained sight of them. The sun had now fully risen; they were approaching straight toward me, with their eyes fixed upon where I stood. What a heavenly form did I behold! Was it illusion, or the magic effect of the beautiful light? I thought I beheld a supernatural being, for my eyes quailed before the angelic brightness of her look. So much loveliness combined with so much dignity!—so much mind, and so much blooming youth! It is in vain I attempt to describe it. I had never seen true beauty till that moment.

“In the heat of conversation they lingered near me, and I had full opportunity to contemplate her. Scarcely, however, had I cast my eyes upon her companion, but even her beauty was not powerful enough to fix my attention. He appeared to be a man still in

the prime of life, rather slight, and of a tall, noble figure. Never have I beheld so much mind, so much noble expression in a human countenance. Though perfectly secured from observation, I was unable to meet the lightning glance that shot from beneath his dark eyebrows. There was a moving expression of sorrow about his eyes, but an expression of benevolence about the mouth which relieved the settled gravity spread over his whole countenance. A certain cast of features, not quite European, together with his dress, which appeared to have been chosen with inimitable good taste from the most varied costumes, gave him a peculiar air, which not a little heightened the impression produced by his appearance. A degree of wildness in his looks warranted the supposition that he was an enthusiast, but his deportment and carriage showed that his character had been formed by mixing in society."

Z——, who you know must always give utterance to what he thinks, could contain himself no longer. "Our Armenian!" cried he. "Our very Armenian, and nobody else."

"What Armenian, if one may ask?" inquired Civitella.

"Has no one told you of the farce?" replied the prince. "But no interruption! I begin to feel interested in your hero. Pray continue your narrative."

"There was something inexplicable in his whole demeanour," continued Civitella. "His eyes were fixed upon his companion with an expression of anxiety and passion, but the moment they met hers he looked down abashed. 'Is the man beside himself?' thought I. I could stand for ages and gaze at nothing else but her.

"The foliage again concealed them from my sight. Long, long did I look for their reappearance, but in vain. At length I caught sight of them from another window.

“They were standing before the basin of a fountain at some distance apart, and both wrapped in deep silence. They had, probably, remained some time in the same position. Her clear and intelligent eyes were resting inquiringly on his, and seemed as if they would imbibe every thought from him as it revealed itself in his countenance. He, as if he wanted courage to look directly into her face, furtively sought its reflection in the watery mirror before him, or gazed steadfastly at the dolphin which bore the water to the basin. Who knows how long this silent scene might have continued could the lady have endured it? With the most bewitching grace the lovely girl advanced toward him, and passing her arm around his neck, raised his hand to her lips. Calmly and unmoved the strange being suffered her caresses, but did not return them.

“This scene moved me strangely. It was the man that chiefly excited my sympathy and interest. Some violent emotion seemed to struggle in his breast; it was as if some irresistible force drew him toward her, while an unseen arm held him back. Silent, but agonising, was the struggle, and beautiful the temptation. ‘No,’ I thought, ‘he attempts too much; he will, he must yield.’

“At this silent intimation the young negro disappeared. I now expected some touching scene — a prayer on bended knees, and a reconciliation sealed with glowing kisses. But no! nothing of the kind occurred. The incomprehensible being took from his pocketbook a sealed packet, and placed it in the hands of the lady. Sadness overcast her face as she looked at it, and a tear bedewed her eye.

“After a short silence they separated. At this moment an elderly lady advanced from one of the side walks, who had remained at a distance, and whom I now first discovered. She and the fair girl slowly advanced along the path, and, while they were earnestly

engaged in conversation, the stranger took the opportunity of remaining behind. With his eyes turned toward her, he stood irresolute, at one instant making a rapid step forward, and in the next retreating. In another moment he had disappeared in the copse.

“The women at length look round, seem uneasy at not finding him, and pause as if to await his coming. He comes not. Anxious glances are cast around, and steps are redoubled. My eyes aid in searching through the garden ; he comes not, he is nowhere to be seen.

“Suddenly I see a plash in the canal, and see a gondola moving from the shore. It is he, and I scarcely can refrain from calling to him. Now the whole thing is clear — it was a parting.

“She appears to have a presentiment of what has happened. With a speed that her companion cannot use she hastens to the shore. Too late! Quick as the arrow in its flight the gondola bounds forward, and soon nothing is visible but a white handkerchief fluttering in the air from afar. Soon after this I saw the fair *incognita* and her companion cross the water.

“When I awoke from a short sleep I could not help smiling at my delusion. My fancy had incorporated these events in my dreams until truth itself seemed a dream. A maiden, fair as an houri, wandering beneath my windows at break of day with her lover — and a lover who did not know how to make a better use of such an hour. Surely these supplied materials for the composition of a picture which might well occupy the fancy of a dreamer! But the dream had been too lovely for me not to desire its renewal again and again ; nay, even the garden had become more charming in my sight since my imagination had peopled it with such attractive forms. Several cheerless days that succeeded this eventful morning drove me from the window, but the first fine evening involuntarily drew me back to my post of observation. Judge

of my surprise when after a short search I caught sight of the white dress of my *incognita* ! Yes, it was she herself. I had not dreamed !

“ Her former companion was with her, and led by the hand a little boy ; but the fair girl herself walked apart, and seemed absorbed in thought. All spots were visited that had been rendered memorable by the presence of her friend. She paused for a long time before the basin, and her fixed gaze seemed to seek on its crystal mirror the reflection of one beloved form.

“ Although her noble beauty had attracted me when I first saw her, the impression produced was even stronger on this occasion, although perhaps at the same time more conducive to gentler emotions. I had now ample opportunity of considering this divine form ; the surprise of the first impression gradually gave place to softer feelings. The glory that seemed to invest her had departed, and I saw before me the loveliest of women, and felt my senses inflamed. In a moment the resolution was formed that she must be mine.

“ While I was deliberating whether I should descend and approach her, or whether before I ventured on such a step it would not be better to obtain information regarding her, a door opened in the convent wall, through which there advanced a Carmelite monk. The sound of his approach roused the lady, and I saw her advance with hurried steps toward him. He drew from his bosom a paper, which she eagerly grasped, while a vivid colour instantaneously suffused her countenance.

“ At this moment I was called from the window by the arrival of my usual evening visitor. I carefully avoided approaching the spot again, as I had no desire to share my conquest with another. For a whole hour I was obliged to endure this painful constraint before I could succeed in freeing myself from my importunate guest, and when I hastened to the window all had disappeared.

“The garden was empty when I entered it; no vessel of any kind was visible in the canal; no trace of people on any side; I neither knew whence she had come nor whither she had gone. While I was looking round me in all directions I observed something white upon the ground. On drawing near I found it was a piece of paper folded in the shape of a note. What could it be but the letter which the Carmelite had brought? ‘Happy discovery!’ I exclaimed; ‘this will reveal the whole secret, and make me master of her fate.’

“The letter was sealed with a sphinx, had no superscription, and was written in ciphers; this, however, did not discourage me, for I have some knowledge of this mode of writing. I copied it hastily, as there was every reason to expect that she would soon miss it and return in search of it. If she should not find it she would regard its loss as an evidence that the garden was resorted to by different persons, and such a discovery might easily deter her from visiting it again. And what worse fortune could attend my hopes?

“That which I had conjectured actually took place, and I had scarcely ended my copy when she reappeared with her former companion, anxiously intent on the search. I attached the note to a tile which I had detached from the roof, and dropped it at a spot which she would pass. Her gracefully expressed joy at finding it rewarded me for my generosity. She examined it in every part with keen, searching glances, as if she were seeking to detect the unhallowed hands that might have touched it; but the contented look with which she hid it in her bosom showed that she was free from all suspicion. She went, and the parting glance she threw on the garden seemed expressive of gratitude to the guardian deities of the spot, who had so faithfully watched over the secret of her heart.

“I now hastened to decipher the letter. After trying several languages, I at length succeeded by the use

of English. Its contents were so remarkable that my memory still retains a perfect recollection of them —”

I am interrupted, and must give you the conclusion on a future occasion.

LETTER VIII.

BARON F—— TO COUNT O——.

August.

In truth, my dearest friend, you do the good Biondello injustice. The suspicion you entertain against him is unfounded, and while I allow you full liberty to condemn all Italians generally, I must maintain that this one at least is an honest man.

You think it singular that a person of such brilliant endowments and such exemplary conduct should debase himself to enter the service of another if he were not actuated by secret motives; and these, you further conclude, must necessarily be of a suspicious character. But where is the novelty of a man of talent and of merit endeavouring to win favour with a prince who has the power of establishing his fortune? Is there anything derogatory in serving the prince? and has not Biondello clearly shown that his devotion is purely personal by confessing that he earnestly desired to make a certain request of the prince? The whole mystery will, therefore, no doubt be revealed when he acquaints him of his wishes. He may certainly be actuated by secret motives, but why may these not be innocent in their nature?

You think it strange that this Biondello should have kept all his great talents concealed, and in no way have attracted attention during the early months of our acquaintance with him, when you were still with us. This I grant; but what opportunity had he then of distinguishing himself? The prince had not yet

called his powers into requisition, and chance, therefore, could alone aid us in discovering his talents.

He very recently gave a proof of his devotion and honesty of purpose which must at once annihilate all your doubts. The prince was watched; measures were being taken to gain information regarding his mode of life, associates, and general habits. I know not with whom this inquisitiveness originated. Let me beg your attention, however, to what I am about to relate:

There is a house in St. George's which Biondello is in the habit of frequenting. He probably finds some peculiar attractions there, but of this I know nothing. It happened a few days ago that he there met assembled together a party of civil and military officers in the service of the government, old acquaintances and jovial comrades of his own. Surprise and pleasure were expressed on all sides at this meeting. Their former good-fellowship was reëstablished; and after each in turn had related his own history up to the present time, Biondello was called upon to give an account of his life; this he did in a few words. He was congratulated on his new position; his companions had heard accounts of the splendid footing on which the Prince of ——'s establishment was maintained; of his liberality, especially to persons who showed discretion in keeping secrets; the prince's connection with the Cardinal A—i was well known; he was said to be addicted to play, etc. Biondello's surprise at this is observed, and jokes are passed upon the mystery which he tries to keep up, although it is well known that he is the emissary of the Prince of ——-. The two lawyers of the party make him sit down between them; their glasses are repeatedly emptied, he is urged to drink, but excuses himself on the grounds of inability to bear wine; at last, however, he yields to their wishes, in order that he may the better pretend intoxication.

“Yes!” cried one of the lawyers, “Biondello understands his business, but he has not yet learned all the tricks of the trade; he is but a novice.”

“What have I still to learn?” asked Biondello.

“You understand the art of keeping a secret,” remarked the other; “but you have still to learn that of parting with it to advantage.”

“Am I likely to find a purchaser for any that I may have to dispose of?” asked Biondello.

On this the other guests withdrew from the apartment, and left him alone with his two neighbours, who continued the conversation in the same strain. The substance of the whole was, however, briefly as follows: Biondello was to procure them certain information regarding the intercourse of the prince with the cardinal and his nephew, acquaint them with the source from whence the prince derived his money, and to intercept all letters written to Count O——. Biondello put them off to a future occasion, but he was unsuccessful in his attempts to draw from them the name of the person by whom they were employed. From the splendid nature of the proposals made to him it was evident, however, that they emanated from some influential and extremely wealthy party.

Last night he related the whole occurrence to the prince, whose first impulse was without further ceremony to secure the manœuvrers at once, but to this Biondello strongly objected. He urged that he would be obliged to set them at liberty again, and that, in this case, he should endanger not only his credit among this class of men, but even his life. All these men were connected together, and bound by one common interest, each one making the cause of the others his own; in fact, he would rather make enemies of the senate of Venice than be regarded by these men as a traitor — and, besides, he could no longer be useful to the prince if he lost the confidence of this class of people.

We have pondered and conjectured much as to the source of all this. Who is there in Venice that can care to know what money my master receives or pays out, what passes between Cardinal A—i and himself, and what I write to you? Can it be some scheme of the Prince of —d—, or is the Armenian again on the alert?

LETTER IX.

BARON F—— TO COUNT O——.

August.

The prince is revelling in love and bliss. He has recovered his fair Greek. I must relate to you how this happened.

A traveller, who had crossed from Chiozza, gave the prince so animated an account of the beauty of this place, which is charmingly situated on the shores of the gulf, that he became very anxious to see it. Yesterday was fixed upon for the excursion; and, in order to avoid all restraint and display, no one was to accompany him but Z—— and myself, together with Biondello, as my master wished to remain unknown. We found a vessel ready to start, and engaged our passage at once. The company was very mixed, but not numerous, and the passage was made without the occurrence of any circumstance worthy of notice.

Chiozza is built, like Venice, on a foundation of wooden piles, and is said to contain about forty thousand inhabitants. There are but few of the higher classes resident there, but one meets sailors and fishermen at every step. Whoever appears in a peruke, or a cloak, is regarded as an aristocrat — a rich man; the cap and overcoat are here the insignia of the poor. The situation is certainly very lovely, but it will not bear a comparison with Venice.

We did not remain long, for the captain, who had more passengers for the return voyage, was obliged to be in Venice at an early hour, and there was nothing at Chiozza to make the prince desirous of remaining. All the passengers were on board when we reached the vessel. As we had found it so difficult to place ourselves on a social footing with the company on the outward passage, we determined on this occasion to secure a cabin to ourselves. The prince inquired who the newcomers were, and was informed that they were a Dominican and some ladies, who were returning to Venice. My master evincing no curiosity to see them, we immediately betook ourselves to our cabin.

The Greek was the subject of our conversation throughout the whole passage, as she had been during our former transit. The prince dwelt with ardour on her appearance in the church; and whilst numerous plans were in turn devised and rejected, hours passed like a moment of time, and we were already in sight of Venice. Some of the passengers now disembarked, the Dominican amongst the number. The captain went to the ladies, who, as we now first learned, had been separated from us by only a thin wooden partition, and asked them where they wished to land. The island of Murano was named in reply to his inquiry, and the house indicated — “The island of Murano!” exclaimed the prince, who seemed suddenly struck by a startling presentiment. Before I could reply to his exclamation, Biondello rushed into the cabin. “Do you know,” asked he, eagerly, “who is on board with us?” The prince started to his feet, as Biondello continued, “She is here! she herself! I have just spoken to her companion!”

The prince hurried out. He felt as if he could not breathe in our narrow cabin, and, I believe, at that moment as if the whole world would have been too

narrow for him. A thousand conflicting feelings struggled for the mastery in his heart; his knees trembled, and his countenance was alternately flushed and pallid. I sympathised and participated in his emotion, but I cannot by words convey to your mind any idea of the state in which he was.

When we stopped at Murano, the prince sprang on shore. She advanced from her cabin. I read in the face of the prince that it was indeed the Greek. One glance was sufficient to dispel all doubt on that point. A more lovely creature I have never seen. Even the prince's glowing descriptions fell far short of the reality. A radiant blush suffused her face when she saw my master. She must have heard all we said, and could not fail to know that she herself had been the subject of our conversation. She exchanged a significant glance with her companion, which seemed to say, "That is he;" and then cast her eyes to the ground with diffident confusion. On placing her foot on the narrow plank, which had been thrown from the vessel to the shore, she seemed anxiously to hesitate, less, as it seemed to me, from the fear of falling than from her inability to cross the board without assistance, which was proffered her by the outstretched arm of the prince. Necessity overcame her reluctance, and, accepting the aid of his hand, she stepped on shore. Excessive mental agitation had rendered the prince uncourteous, and he wholly forgot to offer his services to the other lady — but what was there that he would not have forgotten at this moment? My attention in atoning for the remissness of the prince prevented my hearing the commencement of a conversation which had begun between him and the young Greek, while I had been helping the other lady on shore.

He was still holding her hand in his, probably from absence of mind, and without being conscious of the fact.



The picture shows the tower in planing
The picture shows the tower in planing





"This is not the first time, signora, that — that" — he stopped short, unable to finish the sentence.

"I think I remember —" she faltered.

"We met in the church of —" said he, quickly.

"Yes, it was in the church of —" she rejoined.

"And could I have supposed that this day would have brought me —"

Here she gently withdrew her hand from his — he was evidently embarrassed; but Biondello, who had in the meantime been speaking to the servant, now came to his aid.

"Signor," said he, "the ladies had ordered sedans to be in readiness for them; they have not yet come, for we are here before the expected time. But there is a garden close by in which you may remain until the crowd has dispersed."

The proposal was accepted; you may conceive with what alacrity on the part of the prince! We remained in the garden till late in the evening; and, fortunately, Z—— and myself so effectually succeeded in occupying the attention of the elder lady that the prince was enabled, undisturbed, to carry on his conversation with the fair Greek. You will easily believe that he made good use of his time, when I tell you that he obtained permission to visit her. At the very moment that I am now writing he is with her; on his return I shall be able to give you further particulars regarding her.

When we got home yesterday we found that the long expected remittances had arrived from our court; but at the same time the prince received a letter which excited his indignation to the highest pitch. He has been recalled, and that in a tone and manner to which he is wholly unaccustomed. He immediately wrote a reply in a similar spirit, and intends remaining. The remittances are only just sufficient to pay the interest on the capital which he owes. We are looking with impatience for a reply from his sister.

LETTER X.

BARON F—— TO COUNT O——.

September.

The prince has fallen out with his court, and all resources have consequently been cut off from home.

The term of six weeks, at the end of which my master was to pay the marquis, has already elapsed several days; but still no remittances have been forwarded, either from his cousin, of whom he had earnestly requested an additional allowance in advance, or from his sister. You may readily suppose that Civitella has not reminded him of his debt; the prince's memory is, however, all the more faithful. Yesterday morning at length brought an answer from the seat of government.

We had shortly before concluded a new arrangement with the master of our hotel, and the prince had publicly announced his intention to remain here some time longer. Without uttering a word my master put the letter into my hand. His eyes sparkled, and I could read the contents in his face.

Can you believe it, dear O——; all my master's proceedings here are known at —— and have been most calumniously misrepresented by an abominable tissue of lies? "Information has been received," says the letter, amongst other things, "to the effect that the prince has for some time past belied his former character, and adopted a mode of conduct totally at variance with his former exemplary manner of acting and thinking." "It is known," the writer says, "that he has addicted himself with the greatest excess to women and play; that he is overwhelmed with debts; puts his confidence in visionaries and charlatans, who pretend to have power over spirits; maintains suspicious relations with Roman Catholic prelates, and keeps up a

degree of state which exceeds both his rank and his means. Nay, it is even said that he is about to bring this highly offensive conduct to a climax by apostasy to the Church of Rome! and in order to clear himself from this last charge he is required to return immediately. A banker at Venice, to whom he must make known the true amount of his debts, has received instructions to satisfy his creditors *immediately after his departure*; for, under existing circumstances, it does not appear expedient to remit the money directly into his hands."

What accusations, and what a mode of preferring them! I read the letter again and again, in the hope of discovering some expression that admitted of a milder construction, but in vain; it was wholly incomprehensible.

Z—— now reminded me of the secret inquiries which has been made some time before of Biondello. The true nature of the inquiries and circumstances all coincided. He had falsely ascribed them to the Armenian; but now the source from whence they came was very evident. Apostasy! But who can have any interest in calumniating my master so scandalously? I should fear it was some machination of the Prince of —d—, who is determined on driving him from Venice.

In the meantime the prince remained absorbed in thought, with his eyes fixed on the ground. His continued silence alarmed me. I threw myself at his feet. "For God's sake, your highness," I cried, "moderate your feelings — you will — nay, you shall have satisfaction. Leave the whole affair to me. Let *me* be your emissary. It is beneath your dignity to reply to such accusations; but you will not, I know, refuse me the privilege of doing so for you. The name of your calumniator must be given up, and ——'s eyes must be opened."

At this moment we were interrupted by the entrance of Civitella, who inquired with surprise into the cause of our agitation. Z—— and I did not answer; but the prince, who had long ceased to make any distinction between him and us, and who, besides, was too much excited to listen to the dictates of prudence, desired me to communicate the contents of the letter to him. On my hesitating to obey him, he snatched the letter from my hand and gave it to the marquis.

“I am in your debt, marquis,” said he, as Civitella gave him back the letter, after perusing it, with evident astonishment, “but do not let that circumstance occasion you any uneasiness; grant me but a respite of twenty days, and you shall be fully satisfied.”

“Do I deserve this at your hands, gracious prince?” exclaimed Civitella, with extreme emotion.

“You have refrained from pressing me, and I gratefully appreciate your delicacy. In twenty days, as I before said, you shall be fully satisfied.”

“But how is this?” asked Civitella, with agitation and surprise. “What means all this? I cannot comprehend it.”

We explained to him all that we knew, and his indignation was unbounded. The prince, he asserted, must insist upon full satisfaction; the insult was unparalleled. In the meanwhile he implored him to make unlimited use of his fortune and his credit.

When the marquis left us the prince still continued silent. He paced the apartment with quick and determined steps, as if some strange and unusual emotion were agitating his frame. At length he paused, muttering between his teeth, “Congratulate yourself; he died at ten o’clock.”

We looked at him in terror.

“Congratulate yourself,” he repeated. “Did he not say that I should congratulate myself? What could he have meant?”

“What has reminded you of those words?” I asked; “and what have they to do with the present business?”

“I did not then understand what the man meant, but now I do. Oh, it is intolerable to be subject to a master.”

“Gracious prince!”

“Who can make us feel our dependence. Ha! it must be sweet, indeed.”

He again paused. His looks alarmed me, for I had never before seen him thus agitated.

“Whether a man be poorest of the poor,” he continued, “or the next heir to the throne, it is all one and the same thing. There is but one difference between men — to obey or to command.”

He again glanced over the letter.

“You know the man,” he continued, “who has dared to write these words to me. Would you salute him in the street if fate had not made him your master? By Heaven, there is something great in a crown.”

He went on in this strain, giving expression to many things which I dare not trust to paper. On this occasion the prince confided a circumstance to me which alike surprised and terrified me, and which may be followed by the most alarming consequences. We have hitherto been entirely deceived regarding the family relations of the court of ———.

He answered the letter on the spot, notwithstanding my earnest entreaty that he should postpone doing so; and the strain in which he wrote leaves no ground to hope for a favourable settlement of those differences.

You are no doubt impatient, dear O——, to hear something definite with respect to the Greek; but in truth I have very little to tell you. From the prince I can learn nothing, as he has been admitted into her confidence, and is, I believe, bound to secrecy. The

fact has, however, transpired that she is not a Greek, as we supposed, but a German of the highest descent. From a certain report that has reached me it would appear that her mother is of the most exalted rank, and that she is the fruit of an unfortunate amour which was once talked of all over Europe. A course of secret persecution to which she had been exposed, in consequence of her origin, compelled her to seek protection in Venice, and to adopt that concealment which had rendered it impossible for the prince to discover her retreat. The respect with which the prince speaks of her, and a certain deferential deportment which he maintains toward her, appear to corroborate the truth of this report.

He is devoted to her with a fearful intensity of passion which increases day by day. In the earliest stage of their acquaintance but few interviews were granted; but after the first week the separations were of shorter duration, and now there is scarce a day on which the prince is not with her. Whole evenings pass without our even seeing him, and when he is not with her she appears to form the sole object of his thoughts. His whole being seems metamorphosed. He goes about as if wrapped in a dream, and nothing that formerly interested him has now power to arrest his attention even for a moment.

How will this end, my dear friend? I tremble for the future. The rupture with his court has placed my master in a state of humiliating dependence on one sole person — the Marquis Civitella. This man is now master of our secrets — of our whole fate. Will he always conduct himself as nobly as he does now? Are his good intentions to be relied upon; and is it expedient to confide so much weight and power to one person — even were he the best of men? The prince's sister has again been written to — the result of this fresh appeal you shall learn in my next letter.

• COUNT O—— IN CONTINUATION.

This letter never reached me. Three months passed without my receiving any tidings from Venice,—an interruption to our correspondence which the sequel but too clearly explained. All my friend's letters to me had been kept back and suppressed. My emotion may be conceived when, in the December of the same year, the following letter reached me by mere accident (as it afterward appeared), owing to the sudden illness of Biondello, into whose hands it had been committed :

“ You do not write ; you do not answer me. Come, I entreat you, come on the wings of friendship ! Our hopes are fled ! Read the enclosed,—all our hopes are at an end !

“ The wounds of the marquis are reported mortal ! The cardinal vows vengeance, and his bravos are in pursuit of the prince. My master — oh ! my unhappy master ! Has it come to this ! Wretched, horrible fate ! We are compelled to hide ourselves, like malefactors, from assassins and creditors.

“ I am writing to you from the convent of ——, where the prince has found an asylum. At this moment he is resting on his hard couch by my side, and is sleeping — but, alas ! it is only the sleep of deadly exhaustion, that will but give him new strength for new trials. During the ten days that she was ill no sleep closed his eyes. I was present when the body was opened. Traces of poison were detected. To-day she is to be buried.

“ Alas ! dearest O——, my heart is rent. I have lived through scenes that can never be effaced from my memory. I stood beside her death-bed. She departed like a saint, and her last strength was spent in trying with persuasive eloquence to lead her lover into the path that she was treading in her way to

heaven. Our firmness was completely gone — the prince alone maintained his fortitude, and although he suffered a triple agony of death with her, he yet retained strength of mind sufficient to refuse the last prayer of the pious enthusiast.”

This letter contained the following enclosure :

TO THE PRINCE OF ———, FROM HIS SISTER.

“The one sole redeeming Church which has made so glorious a conquest of the Prince of ——— will surely not refuse to supply him with means to pursue the mode of life to which she owes this conquest. I have tears and prayers for one that has gone astray, but nothing further to bestow on one so worthless!

“HENRIETTE ———.”

I instantly threw myself into a carriage — travelled night and day, and in the third week I was in Venice. My speed availed nothing. I had come to bring comfort and help to an unhappy one, but I found a happy one who needed not my weak aid. F—— was ill when I arrived, and unable to see me, but the following note was brought to me from him :

“Return, dearest O——, to whence you came. The prince no longer needs you or me. His debts have been paid ; the cardinal is reconciled to him, and the marquis has recovered. Do you remember the Armenian who perplexed us so much last year? In his arms you will find the prince, who five days since attended mass for the first time.”

Notwithstanding all this I earnestly sought an interview with the prince, but was refused. By the bedside of my friend I learned the particulars of this strange story.

The Sport of Destiny

The Sport of Destiny

A FRAGMENT OF A TRUE HISTORY

ALOYSIUS VON G—— was the son of a citizen of distinction, in the service of ——, and the germs of his fertile genius had been early developed by a liberal education. While yet very young, but already well grounded in the principles of knowledge, he entered the military service of his sovereign, to whom he soon made himself known as a young man of great merit and still greater promise. G—— was now in the full glow of youth; so also was the prince. G—— was ardent and enterprising; the prince, of a similar disposition, loved such characters. Endued with brilliant wit and a rich fund of information, G—— possessed the art of ingratiating himself with all around him; he enlivened every circle in which he moved by his felicitous humour, and infused life and spirit into every subject that came before him. The prince had discernment enough to appreciate in another those virtues which he himself possessed in an eminent degree. Everything which G—— undertook, even to his very sports, had an air of grandeur; no difficulties could daunt him, no failures vanquish his perseverance. The value of these qualities was increased by an attractive person, the perfect image of blooming health and herculean strength, and heightened by the eloquent expression natural to an active mind; to these was added a certain native and unaffected dignity, chas-

tened and subdued by a noble modesty. If the prince was charmed with the intellectual attractions of his young companion, his fascinating exterior irresistibly captivated his senses. Similarity of age, of tastes, and of character soon produced an intimacy between them, which possessed all the strength of friendship and all the warmth and fervour of the most passionate love. G—— rose with rapidity from one promotion to another; but whatever the extent of favours conferred, they still seemed in the estimation of the prince to fall short of his deserts. His fortune advanced with gigantic strides, for the author of his greatness was his devoted admirer and his warmest friend. Not yet twenty-two years of age, he already saw himself placed on an eminence hitherto attained only by the most fortunate at the close of their career. But his active spirit was incapable of reposing long in the lap of indolent vanity, or of contenting itself with the glittering pomp of an elevated office, to perform the behests of which he was conscious of possessing both the requisite courage and the abilities. Whilst the prince was engaged in rounds of pleasure, his young favourite buried himself among archives and books, and devoted himself with laborious assiduity to affairs of state, in which he at length became so expert that every matter of importance passed through his hands. From the companion of his pleasures he soon became first councillor and minister, and finally the ruler of his sovereign. In a short time there was no road to the prince's favour but through him. He disposed of all offices and dignities; all rewards were received from his hands.

G—— had attained this vast influence at too early an age, and had risen by too rapid strides to enjoy his power with moderation. The eminence on which he beheld himself made his ambition dizzy, and no sooner was the final object of his wishes attained than

his modesty forsook him. The respectful deference shown him by the first nobles of the land, by all who, in birth, fortune, and reputation, so far surpassed him, and which was even paid to him, youth as he was, by the oldest senators, intoxicated his pride, while his unlimited power served to develop a certain harshness which had been latent in his character, and which, throughout all the vicissitudes of his fortune, remained. There was no service, however considerable or toilsome, which his friends might not safely ask at his hands; but his enemies might well tremble! for, in proportion as he was extravagant in rewards, so was he implacable in revenge. He made less use of his influence to enrich himself than to render happy a number of beings, who should pay homage to him as the author of their prosperity; but caprice alone, and not justice, dictated the choice of his subjects. By a haughty, imperious demeanour he alienated the hearts even of those whom he had most benefited; while at the same time he converted his rivals and secret enviers into deadly enemies.

Amongst those who watched all his movements with jealousy and envy, and who were silently preparing instruments¹ for his destruction, was Joseph Martinengo, a Piedmontese count belonging to the prince's suite, whom G—— himself had formerly promoted, as an inoffensive creature, devoted to his interests, for the purpose of supplying his own place in attending upon the pleasures of the prince—an office which he began to find irksome, and which he willingly exchanged for more useful employment. Viewing this man merely as the work of his own hands, whom he might at any period consign to his former insignificance, he felt assured of the fidelity of his creature from motives of fear no less than of gratitude. He fell thus into the error committed by Richelieu, when he made over to Louis XII., as a sort of plaything, the young Le Grand.

Without Richelieu's sagacity, however, to repair his error, he had to deal with a far more wily enemy than fell to the lot of the French minister. Instead of boasting of his good fortune, or allowing his benefactor to feel that he could now dispense with his patronage, Martinengo was, on the contrary, the more cautious to maintain a show of dependence, and with studied humility affected to attach himself more and more closely to the author of his prosperity. Meanwhile, he did not omit to avail himself, to its fullest extent, of the opportunities afforded him by his office, of being continually about the prince's person, to make himself daily more useful, and eventually indispensable to him. In a short time he had fathomed the prince's sentiments thoroughly, had discovered all the avenues to his confidence, and imperceptibly stolen himself into his favour. All those arts which a noble pride, and a natural elevation of character, had taught the minister to disdain, were brought into play by the Italian, who scrupled not to avail himself of the most despicable means for attaining his object. Well aware that man never stands so much in need of a guide and assistant as in the paths of vice, and that nothing gives a stronger title to bold familiarity than a participation in secret indiscretions, he took measures for exciting passions in the prince which had hitherto lain dormant, and then obtruded himself upon him as a confidant and an accomplice. He plunged him especially into those excesses which least of all endure witnesses, and imperceptibly accustomed the prince to make him the depository of secrets to which no third person was admitted. Upon the degradation of the prince's character he now began to found his infamous schemes of aggrandisement, and, as he had made secrecy a means of success, he had obtained entire possession of his master's heart before G—— even allowed himself to suspect that he shared it with another.

It may appear singular that so important a change should escape the minister's notice; but G—— was too well assured of his own worth ever to think of a man like Martinengo in the light of a competitor; while the latter was far too wily, and too much on his guard, to commit the least error which might tend to rouse his enemy from his fatal security. That which has caused thousands of his predecessors to stumble on the slippery path of royal favour was also the cause of G——'s fall, immoderate self-confidence. The secret intimacy between his creature, Martinengo, and his royal master gave him no uneasiness; he readily resigned a privilege which he despised and which had never been the object of his ambition. It was only because it smoothed his way to power that he had ever valued the prince's friendship, and he inconsiderately threw down the ladder by which he had risen as soon as he had attained the wished-for eminence.

Martinengo was not the man to rest satisfied with so subordinate a part. At each step which he advanced in the prince's favour his hopes rose higher, and his ambition began to grasp at a more substantial gratification. The deceitful humility which he had hitherto found it necessary to maintain toward his benefactor became daily more irksome to him, in proportion as the growth of his reputation awakened his pride. On the other hand the minister's deportment toward him by no means improved with his marked progress in the prince's favour, but was often too visibly directed to rebuke his growing pride by reminding him of his humble origin. This forced and unnatural position having become quite insupportable, he at length formed the determination of putting an end to it by the destruction of his rival. Under an impenetrable veil of dissimulation he brought his plan to maturity. He dared not venture as yet to come into open conflict with his rival; for, although the

first glow of the minister's favour was at an end, it had commenced too early, and struck root too deeply in the bosom of the prince, to be torn from it abruptly. The slightest circumstance might restore it to all its former vigour; and therefore Martinengo well understood that the blow which he was about to strike must be a mortal one. Whatever ground G—— might have lost in the prince's affections he had gained in his respect. The more the prince withdrew himself from the affairs of state, the less could he dispense with the services of a man who with the most conscientious devotion and fidelity had consulted his master's interests, even at the expense of the country, — and G—— was now as indispensable to him as a minister as he had formerly been dear to him as a friend.

By what means the Italian accomplished his purpose has remained a secret between those on whom the blow fell and those who directed it. It was reported that he laid before the prince the original drafts of a secret and very suspicious correspondence which G—— is said to have carried on with a neighbouring court; but opinions differ as to whether the letters were authentic or spurious. Whatever degree of truth there may have been in the accusation it is but too certain that it fearfully accomplished the end in view. In the eyes of the prince G—— appeared the most ungrateful and vilest of traitors, whose treasonable practices were so thoroughly proved as to warrant the severest measures without further investigation. The whole affair was arranged with the most profound secrecy between Martinengo and his master, so that G—— had not the most distant presentiment of the impending storm. He continued wrapped in this fatal security until the dreadful moment in which he was destined, from being the object of universal homage and envy, to become that of the deepest commiseration.

When the decisive day arrived, G—— appeared, according to custom, upon the parade. He had risen in a few years from the rank of ensign to that of colonel; and even this was only a modest name for that of prime minister, which he virtually filled, and which placed him above the foremost of the land. The parade was the place where his pride was greeted with universal homage, and where he enjoyed for one short hour the dignity for which he endured a whole day of toil and privation. Those of the highest rank approached him with reverential deference, and those who were not assured of his favour with fear and trembling. Even the prince, whenever he visited the parade, saw himself neglected by the side of his vizier, inasmuch as it was far more dangerous to incur the displeasure of the latter than profitable to gain the friendship of the former. This very place, where he was wont to be adored as a god, had been selected for the dreadful theatre of his humiliation.

With a careless step he entered the well-known circle of courtiers, who, as unsuspecting as himself of what was to follow, paid their usual homage, awaiting his commands. After a short interval appeared Martinengo, accompanied by two adjutants, no longer the supple, cringing, smiling courtier, but overbearing and insolent, like a lackey suddenly raised to the rank of a gentleman. With insolence and effrontery he strutted up to the prime minister, and, confronting him with his head covered, demanded his sword in the prince's name. This was handed to him with a look of silent consternation; Martinengo, resting the naked point on the ground, snapped it in two with his foot and threw the fragments at G——'s feet. At this signal the two adjutants seized him; one tore the Order of the Cross from his breast; the other pulled off his epaulets, the facings of his uniform, and even the badge and plume of feathers from his hat. During the whole of the

appalling operation, which was conducted with incredible speed, not a sound nor a respiration was heard from more than five hundred persons who were present; but all, with blanched faces and palpitating hearts, stood in deathlike silence around the victim, who in his strange disarray — a rare spectacle of the melancholy and the ridiculous — underwent a moment of agony which could only be equalled by feelings engendered on the scaffold. Thousands there are who in his situation would have been stretched senseless on the ground by the first shock; but his firm nerves and unflinching spirit sustained him through this bitter trial, and enabled him to drain the cup of bitterness to its dregs.

When this procedure was ended he was conducted through rows of thronging spectators to the extremity of the parade, where a covered carriage was in waiting. He was motioned to ascend, an escort of hussars being ready mounted to attend to him. Meanwhile the report of this event had spread through the whole city; every window was flung open, every street lined with throngs of curious spectators, who pursued the carriage, shouting his name, amid cries of scorn and malicious exultation, or of commiseration more bitter to bear than either. At length he cleared the town, but here a no less fearful trial awaited him. The carriage turned out of the highroad into a narrow, unfrequented path — a path which led to the gibbet, and alongside which, by command of the prince, he was borne at a slow pace. After he had suffered all the torture of anticipated execution, the carriage turned off into the public road. Exposed to the sultry summer heat, without refreshment or human consolation, he passed seven dreadful hours in journeying to the place of destination — a prison fortress. It was nightfall before he arrived; when, bereft of all consciousness, more dead than alive, his giant strength having at length yielded to twelve

hours' fast and consuming thirst, he was dragged from the carriage; and, on, regaining his senses, found himself in a horrible subterraneous vault. The first object that presented itself to his gaze was a horrible dungeon wall, feebly illuminated by a few rays of the moon, which forced their way through narrow crevices to a depth of nineteen fathoms. At his side he found a coarse loaf, a jug of water, and a bundle of straw for his couch. He endured this situation until noon the ensuing day, when an iron wicket in the centre of the tower was opened, and two hands were seen lowering a basket, containing food like that he had found the preceding night. For the first time since the terrible change in his fortunes did pain and suspense extort from him a question or two. Why was he brought hither? What offence had he committed? But he received no answer; the hands disappeared, and the sash was closed. Here, without beholding the face, or hearing the voice of a fellow creature; without the least clue to his terrible destiny; fearful doubts and misgivings overhanging alike the past and the future; cheered by no rays of the sun, and soothed by no refreshing breeze; remote alike from human aid and human compassion,—here, in this frightful abode of misery, he numbered four hundred and ninety long and mournful days, which he counted by the wretched loaves that, day after day, with dreary monotony, were let down into his dungeon. But a discovery which he one day made early in his confinement filled up the measure of his affliction. He recognised the place. It was the same which he himself, in a fit of unworthy vengeance against a deserving officer, who had the misfortune to displease him, had ordered to be constructed only a few months before. With inventive cruelty he had even suggested the means by which the horrors of captivity might be aggravated; and it was but recently that he had made a journey hither in order personally

to inspect the place and hasten its completion. What added the last bitter sting to his punishment was that the same officer for whom he had prepared the dungeon, an aged and meritorious colonel, had just succeeded the late commandant of the fortress, recently deceased, and, from having been the victim of his vengeance, had become the master of his fate. He was thus deprived of the last melancholy solace, the right of compassionating himself, and of accusing destiny, hardly as it might use him, of injustice. To the acuteness of his other suffering was now added a bitter self-contempt, and the pain which to a sensitive mind is the severest — dependence upon the generosity of a foe to whom he had shown none.

But that upright man was too noble-minded to take a mean revenge. It pained him deeply to enforce the severities which his instructions enjoined; but as an old soldier, accustomed to fulfil his orders to the letter with blind fidelity, he could do no more than pity, compassionate. The unhappy man found a more active assistant in the chaplain of the garrison, who, touched by the sufferings of the prisoner, which had just reached his ears, and then only through vague and confused reports, instantly took a firm resolution to do something to alleviate them. This excellent man, whose name I unwillingly suppress, believed he could in no way better fulfil his holy vocation than by bestowing his spiritual support and consolation upon a wretched being deprived of all other hopes of mercy.

As he could not obtain permission from the commandant himself to visit him, he repaired in person to the capital, in order to urge his suit personally with the prince. He fell at his feet and implored mercy for the unhappy man, who, shut out from the consolations of Christianity, a privilege from which even the greatest crime ought not to debar him, was pining in solitude, and perhaps on the brink of despair. With all the

intrepidity and dignity which the conscious discharge of duty inspires, he entreated, nay, demanded, free access to the prisoner, whom he claimed as a penitent for whose soul he was responsible to heaven. The good cause in which he spoke made him eloquent, and time had already somewhat softened the prince's anger. He granted him permission to visit the prisoner, and administer to his spiritual wants.

After a lapse of sixteen months, the first human face which the unhappy G—— beheld was that of his new benefactor. The only friend he had in the world he owed to his misfortunes; all his prosperity had gained him none. The good pastor's visit was like the appearance of an angel — it would be impossible to describe his feelings, but from that day forth his tears flowed more kindly, for he had found one human being who sympathised with and compassionated him.

The pastor was filled with horror on entering the frightful vault. His eyes sought a human form, but beheld, creeping toward him from a corner opposite, which resembled rather the lair of a wild beast than the abode of anything human, a monster, the sight of which made his blood run cold. A ghastly, deathlike skeleton, all the hue of life perished from a face on which grief and despair had traced deep furrows — his beard and nails, from long neglect, grown to a frightful length — his clothes rotten and hanging about him in tatters; and the air he breathed, for want of ventilation and cleansing, foul, fetid, and infectious. In this state he found the favourite of fortune — his iron frame had stood proof against it all! Seized with horror at the sight, the pastor hurried back to the governor, in order to solicit a second indulgence for the poor wretch, without which the first would prove of no avail.

As the governor again excused himself by pleading the imperative nature of his instructions, the pastor nobly resolved on a second journey to the capital,

again to supplicate the prince's mercy. There he protested solemnly that, without violating the sacred character of the sacrament, he could not administer it to the prisoner until some resemblance of the human form was restored to him. This prayer was also granted; and from that day forward the unfortunate man might be said to begin a new existence.

Several long years were spent by him in the fortress, but in a much more supportable condition after the short summer of the new favourite's reign had passed, and others succeeded in his place, who either possessed more humanity or no motive for revenge. At length, after ten years of captivity, the hour of his delivery arrived, but without any judicial investigation or formal acquittal. He was presented with his freedom as a boon of mercy, and was, at the same time, ordered to quit his native country for ever.

Here the oral traditions which I have been able to collect respecting his history begin to fail; and I find myself compelled to pass in silence over a period of about twenty years. During the interval G—— entered anew upon his military career, in a foreign service, which eventually brought him to a pitch of greatness quite equal to that from which he had, in his native country, been so awfully precipitated. At length time, that friend of the unfortunate, who works a slow but inevitable retribution, took into his hands the winding up of this affair. The prince's days of passion were over; humanity gradually resumed its sway over him as his hair whitened with age. At the brink of the grave he felt a yearning toward the friend of his early youth. In order to repay, as far as possible, the gray-headed old man, for the injuries which had been heaped upon the youth, the prince, with friendly expressions, invited the exile to revisit his native land, toward which for some time past G——'s heart had secretly yearned. The meeting was extremely trying,

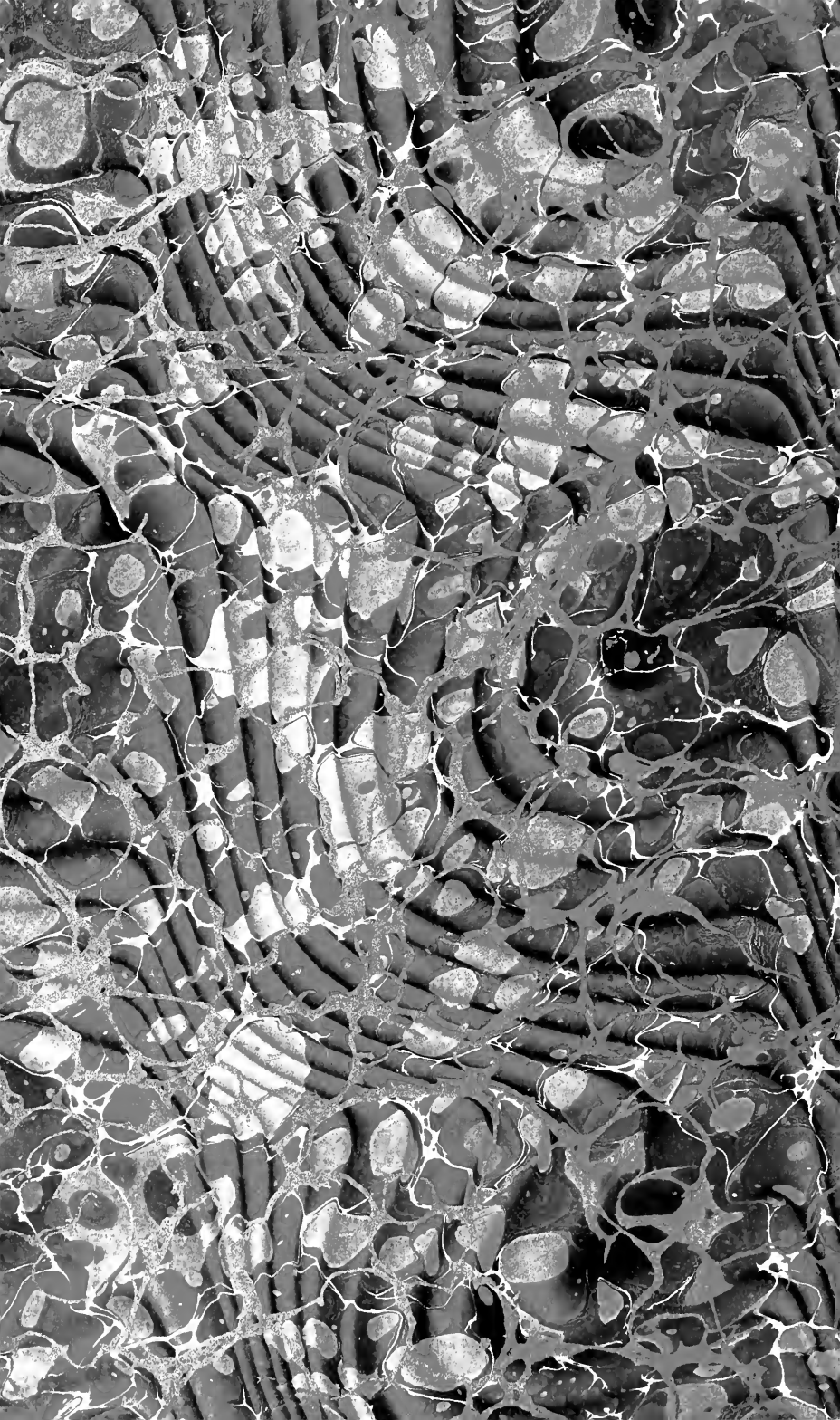
though apparently warm and cordial, as if they had only separated a few days before. The prince looked earnestly at his favourite, as if trying to recall features so well known to him, and yet so strange; he appeared as if numbering the deep furrows which he had himself so cruelly traced there. He looked searchingly in the old man's face for the beloved features of the youth, but found not what he sought. The welcome and the look of mutual confidence were evidently forced on both sides; shame on one side and dread on the other had for ever separated their hearts. A sight which brought back to the prince's soul the full sense of his guilty precipitancy could not be gratifying to him, while G—— felt that he could no longer love the author of his misfortunes. Comforted, nevertheless, and in tranquillity, he looked back upon the past as the remembrance of a fearful dream.

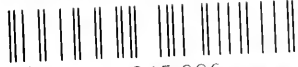
In a short time G—— was reinstated in all his former dignities, and the prince smothered his feelings of secret repugnance by showering upon him the most splendid favours as some indemnification for the past. But could he also restore to him the heart which he had for ever untuned for the enjoyment of life? Could he restore his years of hope? or make even a shadow of reparation to the stricken old man for what he had stolen from him in the days of his youth?

For nineteen years G—— continued to enjoy this clear, unruffled evening of his days. Neither misfortune nor age had been able to quench in him the fire of passion, nor wholly to obscure the genial humour of his character. In his seventieth year he was still in pursuit of the shadow of a happiness which he had actually possessed in his twentieth. He at length died governor of the fortress —— where state prisoners are confined. One would naturally have expected that toward these he would have exercised a humanity, the value of which he had been so thoroughly taught to

appreciate in his own person ; but he treated them with harshness and caprice, and a paroxysm of rage, in which he broke out against one of his prisoners, laid him in his coffin, in his eightieth year.

THE END.





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