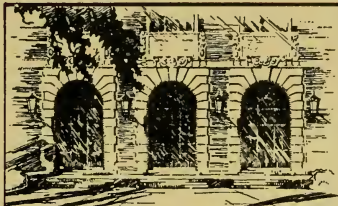


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LIGHT AND DARKNESS.

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VOL. III.



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LIGHT AND DARKNESS;

OR,

MYSTERIES OF LIFE.

BY

MRS. CATHERINE CROWE,

AUTHOR OF

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## THE MONK'S STORY.

(CONTINUED.)

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### CHAPTER II.

“ I WAS a child,” said he, “ of eight years old when the event occurred in which my unhappy malady originated. My father had died, leaving my mother in tolerable circumstances and with two children, myself and a sister of marriageable years. This sister, as I have since understood, had become attached to an Italian stranger of very questionable character who had appeared in the

town we inhabited, under the character of an itinerant artist. My father had discovered the connexion, and had forbidden him the house; but when he died, the stranger's influence prevailed over my mother's authority, and one morning Adèle was missing. As the Italian disappeared at the same time, no doubt was entertained that they had gone off together, and a few weeks confirmed these apprehensions. They came back, declaring themselves married, and petitioning my mother's forgiveness and assistance. She granted them both; but finding her so easy to deal with, Ripa, the Italian, began to make such frequent demands upon her purse, and indulged in such violence when his drafts were not responded to, that she found it necessary to forbid him the house. I believe he had some talent, but he was idle and dissipated, and the habit of living upon us had so far augmented these vices, that he could no longer bring himself to work. The consequence



was, that he soon fell into distress, and, finding my mother, whose resolution was sustained by her brother, inexorable, he had recourse to more desperate means of supplying his necessities. Many evil reports were circulated about him, and, at length, so much suspicion was excited, that, to my mother's great relief, they quitted the place, and several months elapsed without any tidings of their proceedings reaching her.

“For my part, with the usual volatility of childhood, I had totally ceased to think either of Ripa or of my sister, of whom I had formerly been exceedingly fond, and I was wholly occupied with the prospect of going to school, a prospect which, as I had no companions of my own age at home, delighted me. My mother, on the contrary, suffered considerably from the idea of the impending separation ; and the last night I was to sleep under her roof, she took me to lie in her bed.

“ ‘ I cannot part with you to-night, my child !’ said she, as she kissed me, and led me to her chamber. ‘ You don’t know what parting is yet, Dominique. You think only of the playfellows you are going to ; you know not what you are about to lose !’

“ Little I dreamt of all I was going to lose, —nor she either.

“ I suppose I fell asleep directly, for I have no recollection of my mother’s coming to bed, nor of anything else, till I was awakened by the pressure of a heavy hand on my breast, and, by the faint light of a lantern which stood on a table, I discovered my brother-in-law, Ripa, the Italian, hanging over me. But it was not at me he was looking, but at my mother, who, fast asleep, was lying on the other side of the bed. An instinctive terror kept me silent and motionless ; and presently, having ascertained the position in which his victim was lying, he raised a large knife he held in his hand, and struck it repeatedly into

her breast. At the third blow, my horror and anguish overcame my fears, and I uttered a cry which seems first to have revealed to him my presence; or perhaps he did not know it was me, but was only startled by the sudden noise, for, as his purpose was undoubtedly robbery, I do not see why he should not have despatched so insignificant an obstacle, and fulfilled his intentions. However this may be, he took fright and fled, first to the window,—for he seemed to have lost all presence of mind,—but finding no egress there, he turned and retreated by the door.

“I was afraid he would return, and, almost dead with terror and grief, I lay still the rest of the night, without courage to rise, or to call the servant who slept in the kitchen. When she entered the room in the morning, she found my mother dead, and myself bathed in her blood. Ripa was pursued and taken, my testimony was fatal to him, and my poor sister died of a broken heart a few

months after he had expiated his crime on the scaffold.

“ A long and fearful malady was the consequence to me of this dreadful event, and I have ever since been subject to these dreams !”

“ What dreams ?” I asked.

“ ‘ Such as I had last night,’ he answered ; ‘ wherein I feel myself constrained to act over again the frightful scene I witnessed.’ ”

“ ‘ And pray,’ I inquired, ‘ do you select any particular person as your victim in those dreams ?’

“ ‘ Always.’

“ ‘ And what does this selection depend upon ? Is it enmity ?’

“ ‘ No,’ returned Dominique ; ‘ it is a peculiar influence that I cannot explain. Perhaps,’ added he, after some hesitation, ‘ you may have observed my eyes frequently fixed on you of late ?’ I remembered that I had observed this ; and he then told me that

whoever he looked at in that manner was the person he dreamt of.' ”

“Such,” said Charlie Lisle, “was the Prior’s account of this strange personage. I confess, when I had heard his explanation, I began to feel particularly queer, for I was already satisfied that Fra Dominique and Brother Lazarus were one and the same person ; and I perceived that I was in considerable danger of being the selected victim of his next dream ; and so I told Père Jolivet.

“Never fear,” said he ; “we lock him up every night, and have done so ever since my adventure. Added to which, he is now very unwell ; he was taken with a fit yesterday, and we have been obliged to bleed him.’

“ ‘ But he is digging there below,’ said I.

“ ‘ Yes,’ replied the Prior ; ‘ he has a notion he is going to die, and entreated permission to prepare his grave. It is, however, a mere fancy I daresay. He had the same notion during the indisposition that



succeeded the dream I have just related. I forgot to tell you, however, though you seem to have penetrated the secret, that this Fra Dominique changed his name to Lazarus when he accompanied me here, which he was allowed to do at his own urgent entreaty ; why, I cannot tell, but ever after that conversation, he seemed to have imbibed a strong attachment to me ; perhaps because I exhibited none of the distrust or aversion towards him which some persons might have been apt to entertain under the same circumstances.'

“ A week after this I was informed that Brother Lazarus was dead,” continued Lisle ; “ and I confess I did not much regret his decease. I thought a man subject to such dangerous dreams was better out of the world than in it ; more especially as by all account he had no enjoyment in life. On the day I quitted the monastery, I saw from my window one of the brothers completing the already partly-made grave, and learnt that

he was to be buried that evening; and as I descended the stairs, I passed some monks who were carrying his coffin to his cell. 'Rest his soul!' said I, as I buckled on my spurs; and having heartily thanked the good prior for his hospitality, I mounted my horse and rode away."

Here Charlie Lisle rang the bell and asked for a glass of water.

"Is that all?" inquired Lady Araminta.

"Not quite," said Charlie; "the sequel is to come. My visit to the monastery of Pierre Châtel had occurred in the month of June. During the ensuing months I travelled over a considerable part of the south of France; and at length I crossed the Pyrenees, intending to proceed as far as Madrid, and winter there. Amongst the lions I had been recommended to visit was a monastery of Franciscans in the neighbourhood of Burgos, and I turned somewhat out of my road for the purpose of inspecting some

curious manuscripts which the monks were reputed to possess. It was in the month of October, and a bright moonlight night, when I rang the bell, and requested to see the Padre Pachorra, to whom I had letters of introduction. I found him a dark, grave, sombre-looking man, not very unlike my old friend Brother Lazarus; and although he received me civilly enough, there was something in his demeanour that affected my spirits. The whole air of the convent, too, was melancholy; convents, like other establishments, taking their tone very much from the character of their superiors.

“As the monks had already supped when I arrived, I was served with some refreshment in the parlour; and the whole internal arrangements here being exceedingly strict, I immediately afterwards retired to my chamber, firmly resolved to take my departure the next day. I am not in the habit of going to bed early, and when I do, I never can sleep.

By the time my usual sleeping hour is arrived, I have generally got so restless and nervous from lying awake, that slumber is banished altogether. Consequently, whenever I am under circumstances that oblige me to retire early to my room, I make a practice of reading till I find my eyelids heavy. But the dormitory assigned me in this Franciscan convent was so chilly, and the lamp gave so little light, that either remaining out of bed or reading in it was out of the question; so I yielded to necessity, and stretched myself on Padre Pachorra's hard couch; and a very hard one it was, I assure you. I was very cold too. There were not coverings enough on the bed to keep in my animal heat; and although I spread my own clothes over me also, still I lay shivering in a very uncomfortable manner, and, I am afraid, uttering sundry harsh remarks on the Padre's niggardly hospitality.

“In this agreeable occupation, as you may

suppose, the flight of time was somewhat of the slowest. I do not know how many hours I had been there, but I had begun to think it never would be morning, when I heard something stirring in the gallery outside my door. The silence of a convent at night is the silence of the grave. Too far removed from the busy world without for external sounds to penetrate the thick walls, whilst within no slamming door, nor wandering foot, nor sacrilegious voice breaks in upon the stillness, the slightest noise strikes upon the ear with a fearful distinctness. I had no shutters to my window, so that I was aware it was still pitch-dark without, though, within, the feeble light of my lamp enabled me to see a little about me. I knew that the inmates of monasteries not only rise before daylight, but also that they perform midnight masses, and so forth; but then I had always observed that on these occasions they were summoned by a bell. Now, there



was no bell; on the contrary, all was still as death, except the cautious foot which seemed to be approaching my room. ‘What on earth can it be?’ thought I, sitting up in bed with an indescribable feeling of apprehension. At that moment a hand was laid upon the latch of my door. I cannot tell why, but instinctively I jumped out of bed—the door opened, and in walked what appeared to me to be Brother Lazarus, exactly as the Prior of Pierre Châtel had described him to me on the occasion of his nocturnal visit to his chamber. His eyes were open, but glazed, as of one dead; his face was of a ghastly paleness; he had nothing on but the grey tunic in which he slept; and in his hand he held a knife, such an one as was used by the monks to cut their large loaves with.

“You may conceive my amazement,” continued Charlie Lisle, whilst amongst his auditors every eye was firmly riveted. “I rubbed my eyes, and asked myself if I were

dreaming. Too surely I was awake—I had never even slumbered for an instant. Was I mad? I did not think I was; but certainly that was no proof to the contrary; and I almost began to doubt that Brother Lazarus was dead and buried on the other side of the Pyrenees. The Prior of Pierre Châtel had told me he was dead, and I had heard several others of the brotherhood alluding to his decease. I had seen his grave made ready, and I had passed his coffin as I descended to the hall; yet here he was in Spain, again rehearsing the frightful scene that Jolivet had described to me! Whilst all this was fleeting through my mind, I was standing *en chemise* betwixt the bed and the wall, on which side I had happened to leap out. In the meantime the apparition advanced with bare feet, and with the greatest caution, towards the other side of the bed; and as there were of course no curtains, I had a full view of his diabolical features, which appeared contracted

with rage and malignity. As Jolivet had described to me, he first felt the bed, as if to ascertain if I were there; and I confess I was frightened out of my senses lest he should discover that I was not, and possibly detect me where I was. What could I have done, unarmed, and in my shirt, against this preternatural-looking monster? And to wake him—provided always it was really Brother Lazarus, and not his double, a point about which I felt exceedingly uncertain—I had learnt from Jolivet was extremely perilous. However, he did not discover that the bed was empty—his dream no doubt supplying a visionary victim for the occasion—and raising his arm, he plunged the knife into the mattress with a fierce determination that convinced me I should have had very little chance of surviving the blow had I been where he imagined me. Again and again he struck, I looking on with a horror that words could but feebly paint; and then he

suddenly started — the uplifted arm was arrested—the pursuer was at hand: he first rushed to the window, and opened it, but being only a small lattice, there was no egress there, so he turned to the door, making his escape that way; and I could hear his foot distinctly flying along the gallery till he reached his own cell. By this time I was perfectly satisfied that it was no spirit I had seen, but the veritable Brother Lazarus, or Dominique, or whatever his name was—for he might have half a dozen *aliases* for aught I knew—though how he had contrived to come to life again, if he were dead, or by what means, or for what purpose, he could have persuaded the monks of Pierre Châtel of his decease, if the fact were not so, I could not conceive. There was no fastening to my door, and the first question that occurred to me was, whether this diabolical dream of his was ever repeated twice in one night. I had often heard that the magic

number of *three* is apt to prevail on these occasions ; and if so, he might come back again. I confess I was horridly afraid that he would. In the meantime I found myself shivering with cold, and was, perforce, obliged to creep into the bed, where indeed I was not much warmer. Sleep was of course out of the question. I lay listening anxiously, expecting either the stealthy foot of Brother Lazarus, or the glad sound of the matin bell, that would summon the monks from their cells, and wondering which I should hear first. Fortunately for my nerves it was the latter ; and with alacrity I jumped out of bed, dressed myself, and descended to the chapel.

“ When I reached it, the monks were on their knees, and their cowls being over their heads, I could not, as I ran my eye over them, distinguish my friend the somnambulist ; but when they rose to their feet, his

tall gaunt figure and high shoulders were easily discernible, and I had identified him before I saw his face. As they passed out of the chapel, I drew near and saluted him, observing that I believed I had had the pleasure of seeing him before at Pierre Châtel; but he only shook his head, as if in token of denial; and as I could obtain no other answer to my further attempts at conversation, I left him, and proceeded to pay my respects to the prior. Of course I felt it my duty to mention my adventure of the previous night, for Brother Lazarus might on some occasion chance to act out his dream more effectually than he had had the opportunity of doing with me and Père Jolivet.

“‘I am extremely sorry indeed,’ said Padre Pachorra, when he had heard my story; ‘they must have omitted to lock him into his cell last night. I must speak about it,

for the consequences might have been very serious.'

“ ‘Very serious to me certainly,’ said I. ‘But how is it I see this man here alive? When I quitted Pierre Châtel I was told he was dead, and I saw the preparations for his burial.’

“ ‘They believed him dead,’ returned the prior; ‘but he was only in a trance; and after he was screwed down in his coffin, just as they were about to lower it into the grave, they felt something was moving within. They opened it, and Fra Dominique was found alive. It appeared, from his own account, that he had been suffering extremely from his dreadful dream, on occasion of the visit of some young stranger—an Englishman, I think.’

“ ‘Myself, I have no doubt,’ said I.

“ ‘Probably,’ returned the prior; ‘and this was either the cause, or the consequence



of his illness, for it is difficult to decide which.'

" 'But how came he here?' I inquired.

" 'It was in this monastery he commenced his vocation,' answered the padre. 'He was only at Pierre Châtel by indulgence, and after this accident they did not wish to retain him.'

" 'I do not wonder at that, I am sure,' said I. "But why did he deny having been there? When I spoke of it to him just now, he only shook his head.'

" 'He did not mean to deny it, I daresay,' said the prior; "but he never speaks. Fra Dominique has taken a vow of eternal silence.' "

Here Charles Lisle brought his story to a conclusion. "How extremely shocking!" exclaimed Lady Araminta; whilst the whole company agreed that he had made out an



excellent excuse for wishing to sleep with his door locked, and that he had very satisfactorily entitled himself to the promised exchange.



# I.

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## THE POISONERS.

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### CHAPTER I.

WE have heard and read a great deal lately of Madame de Brinvilliers and the poisoners of the seventeenth century; but there have been some similar cases in the nineteenth, quite as extraordinary, though much less known; and amongst the most remarkable are those of Frau Gottfried, Madame Ursinus, and Margareta Zwanziger.

It is true, that at the former period, owing to the facilities furnished by La Voisin, there was a panic abroad that has never since been revived. No man in France, who had had a quarrel with his wife, or who had seen her smile with unusual tenderness on her lover, could go home very comfortably to his dinner, whilst he was aware that there existed a professional agent in Paris, who, for a moderate fee, would drop poison into his soup, with as much certainty and as little remorse as his cook dropped salt; and, doubtless, many a woman who was neither sufficiently bold nor sufficiently depraved to have administered the mortal draughts herself, was seduced into crime by this fatal facility. There was not, for example, a more contented couple in Paris than Monsieur and Madame Brunet, till Monsieur B., unfortunately captivated by the eloquent music of Philibert's flute, took it into his head that no remuneration could

be adequate to such merit but the hand of his own daughter, accompanied by a handsome dowry. Philibert did not care much for the young lady, whose attractions seem not to have been of the highest order; but her fortune was too large to be rejected; so he commenced a regular course of love, whilst the enamoured Monsieur Brunet, carried away by his enthusiasm, never ceased singing the praises of his future son-in-law. As such an alliance was in direct opposition to the aristocratic prejudices of that age, Madame Brunet did not like the match, till the extraordinary commendations of the husband opened the wife's eyes to the merits of Monsieur Philibert, and induced her to pay a visit to La Voisin, for the innocent purpose of ascertaining how soon the worthy Monsieur Brunet might be expected to exchange the troubles of this world for the rewards of a better. La Voisin said nothing that could alarm the most delicate mind—she only

smiled significantly ; and in a few weeks Madame Brunet was a buxom widow of forty, who found no difficulty in persuading the flute-player that she was a much more desirable wife than her pale, sickly daughter, who was easily disposed of in a cloister.

Philibert married the mother, and they lived together very happily for several years, and might possibly have done so till their deaths, had not Madame Brunet's name been unfortunately found on La Voisin's books. She was arrested, tried, and hanged. Even Philibert was suspected, and his friends advised him to fly ; but, relying on his good conscience, he refused ; and, after an investigation, was fully acquitted of any participation in, or knowledge of, the crime.

The executions of Madame de Brinvilliers and La Voisin took place in 1676 ; but the rage for husband-killing did not die with them, although the modes adopted for putting these obnoxious individuals out of

the world became more varied. So rife was the propensity, however, that when interest was made with Louis XIV. to save the life of the beautiful Madame Tiquet, in 1699, the Archbishop of Paris interfered; representing that if she were saved, no husband would be safe—such was the universal opinion of those who had the best means of judging—the professors of the polite world in Paris.

With respect to Angelique Carlier, who married Monsieur Tiquet, there was not, even in these strange times, a case that caused a more extraordinary sensation. Her beauty and accomplishments were so remarkable, that she is pronounced in the records of the period in which she lived, to have been “a masterpiece of nature;” but one quality, at least, she must have wanted, and that is common sense; for she appears to have been induced to marry Monsieur

Tiquet by the present of a bouquet of diamonds, worth fifteen thousand francs.

She was very fond of pleasure, and she conceived that a man who could afford to make such a magnificent *don d'amour*, must necessarily be very rich. But this was not the case: like Madame Lafarge, Madame Tiquet was disappointed. For a few years, however, the husband contrived to keep up appearances, and to conceal from his young wife the real state of his affairs; but when she discovered the truth, and found that even the diamond bouquet had yet to be paid for, her previous indifference was quickly converted into aversion. She insisted on a separation *de biens*, as it is called in France; and he avenged himself by obtaining from the court an order for her confinement, on the plea that she was carrying on a criminal intimacy with the Chevalier de Mongeorge; but when he summoned her to his presence,



and exhibited the order in triumph, she snatched it from his hand ; and, in defiance of the royal seal it bore, flung it into the fire. This was a declaration of war on both sides ; and from that moment she determined to release herself from the bonds that became daily more insupportable ; whilst he confirmed her resolution by forbidding Mongeorge the house, and keeping the keys of the gates himself, when he found that the porter would not shut them against his wife's inamorato.

These tyrannical proceedings, as they were considered, seem to have procured her very general sympathy amongst the ladies ; for, on the very night the attack on his life was made, the Countess de Semonville, who was spending the evening with Madame Tiquet, sat till a late hour, in hopes that he would come home and go to bed, in order that she might have the satisfaction of forcing him to get up again to let her out.

She was obliged to go away, however, without enjoying this gratification; and by-and-by, when he did come, he was shot by an unseen hand near his own door. He would have been killed on the spot, were it not, as the doctors affirmed, that his heart had so contracted on the sudden alarm, that it had not filled its usual space, and the ball had just missed it. He was carried into the house, and on being asked by the police what enemy he could point to as most likely to have sought his life, he answered that he had no enemy but his wife. An investigation was set on foot, of which she was fully aware; but she asserted her innocence, and refused to fly. On the contrary, she visited and received her friends, apparently with a mind quite disengaged; and when the Countess d'Aunoy observed to her that Monsieur Tiquet could not be sure who was the assassin, she answered, that if he *were* sure, he would take care not to tell it.

“ It is me they want to kill,” said she.

She received numerous warnings and offers of assistance, all of which she rejected; and when at length she was arrested, nine days after the attempted murder, she displayed a haughty composure, that, combined with the insufficient evidence they had, might have puzzled the authorities, had not a certain *laquais de place*, called Auguste Catelain, voluntarily come forward, and confessed, that, three years before, he, Moura, the porter, and several others, had been engaged by Madame Tiquet to murder her husband. The plot failed at that time; but with this indication, there was little difficulty in bringing home the crime to Madame Tiquet and Moura, who were both condemned to die.

Monsieur Tiquet, scarcely recovered from his wounds, proceeded to Versailles, and, with his son and daughter, threw himself at the feet of Louis XIV., to beg for her life; which being, at the instance of the

Archbishop, refused, he proceeded to request that he might be appointed heir to her property—a petition which seems to have afforded much diversion to the lively Parisians ; and the King himself, in granting it, observed, that the second petition had effaced the merit of the first.

Since, according to the law of that period, Madame Tiquet's property was liable to confiscation, we cannot altogether see the justice of the stricture. Monsieur Tiquet was in embarrassed circumstances ; and, after the injury he had received, was fairly entitled to such a compensation.

The Chevalier de Mongeorge, and her own family also, made every effort to obtain the commutation of her sentence ; but with equal ill success. On being asked whether the former was privy to her guilty intent, she said, “ Not for the world would I have dared to hint such a thing to him. I should have lost him for ever, if I had !”

The publication and execution of the sentence were appointed to take place on the same day; and when she was conducted to the chamber of torture, ignorant of what awaited her, she inquired "If her affair would soon be decided?"

"Soon enough," replied the jailer.

And here a strange scene ensued. The judge who had read her sentence, which was to the effect that she should lose her head on the scaffold, after first undergoing the rack, in order to force her to a confession and the betrayal of her accomplices, had formerly been her lover. Howbeit, he had his duty to perform, and bidding her place herself on her knees before him, he fulfilled it. Proceeding afterwards, as was then the custom, to pronounce an exhortation, wherein he contrasted, in the most pathetic terms, her former with her present condition—"She who was once the idol of the world around her, blest with beauty, youth, talents, rank, and affluence;

now a criminal on her way to the scaffold!" —he entreated her to spend in repentance the short time that remained to her, and by an ample confession, to relieve him from the pain of seeing her placed on the rack.

But he was mistaken if he thought to move that iron heart. Cold, motionless, with an unshaken voice, and without even changing colour, she answered him—"You are right. The past and the present are strangely different ; for then you were at *my* feet, now I am at *yours* ! But I have done with such recollections. So far from fearing, I desire the moment that is to terminate my wretched life, and release me from my misfortunes. I hope to meet my death with as much firmness as I have listened to its announcement ; and be assured that neither fear nor pain shall induce me to confess myself guilty of a crime which I have never committed."

The rack, however, soon forced her to

break this resolution ; she confessed her own guilt, and that of Moura, but, as we have said above, exonerated Mongeorge.

Never, before or since, did any execution in Paris, unless it were that of the Royal Family of France, excite so extraordinary an interest. Persons even of rank and distinction rushed from all quarters into the city ; and every window on the way she was to pass, and in the Place de Grève, were let at high prices, and crowded with spectators.

She declared herself penitent to her confessor, begged pardon of Moura, who sat in the same carriage with her ; sent her tender remembrances to her children, and a prayer to her husband, that he would cherish them, and forgive her.

She died with an unshaken courage and self-possession that enchanted the Parisians. Mounting the scaffold with a light step, contemplating the multitude with unmoved composure, and baring her fair neck with as



much alacrity as if it were to welcome a carcanet of jewels rather than an axe.

The executioner was so amazed and confounded by the wondrous beauty of the head he was about to sever, that he was rendered incapable of his office, and put her to much needless pain. Even after death, the features remained unchanged; and although she was in her forty-second year at the period of her execution, many people affirmed that she was more beautiful in death than she had been in life.

Her husband buried her with much honour; the Chevalier de Mongeorge, who, quite inconsolable, had wandered about the park at Versailles during the sad ceremony, quitted France, and travelled for several months; the Parisian ladies sighed over the fair victim, smiled with contempt at the name of Monsieur Tiquet, and pitying the faithful lover, "wished that Heaven had made them such a man!"



Such were the morals of France in 1699, yet a century later, when Donna Maria de Mendieta contrived the death of her husband under somewhat similar circumstances, in Madrid, the crime was pronounced to be without a parallel; and the horror and amazement the event awakened in Spain, was in proportion to its strangeness. Her lover, Don Santiago San Juan, did the deed at her instigation, when the unfortunate victim, who appears to have been both an amiable man and an indulgent husband, was lying sick in bed; whilst she made a diversion in another part of the house, for the purpose of drawing off the attention of her servants. Santiago escaped, whilst she was arrested on suspicion, and thrown into prison.

That she had not committed the murder with her own hand was certain; to that fact her whole household could testify; and at the time it occurred Santiago was supposed to be absent from Madrid. He had some weeks

before taken leave of Mendieta and his wife, and was believed by everybody but her to be gone. He had, however, passed the interval in moving from one hotel to another, under feigned names, waiting for the signal she had promised to send him.

He was suspected, but no trace could be found, till she herself involuntarily betrayed him, by a letter she wrote from the prison, addressed to "Don Thaddeo Santisa, Madrid."

It was at that period the custom in Spain, on the arrival of the post, to hang out a list of all letters, the addresses of which were not sufficiently explicit. Santiago saw the letter, and, by asking for it, threw himself into the coils that were spread for him.

They were both condemned to die by the Garotta—that is, to be strangled by a cord; and the execution drew spectators from all parts of Spain. They left directions that a great many masses should be said for the

repose of their souls ; and it was observed that Donna Maria ate and slept well till the last—indeed, so well, that her counsel ventured to make use of the circumstance in her defence, maintaining that such good appetite and peaceful rest were certain signs of innocence. But the full confession of both criminals disproved the assertion, and justified the law.

About the same period, a case of husband-killing occurred in Hamburgh, which is almost unique in its details.

One morning, in the month of February, 1786, two labourers found, on the road between Hamburgh and Lubeck, a large package, wrapped in matting, which they imagined must have fallen from some of the carriers' carts, which are in the habit of passing that way. They lifted it up, and conveyed it to the nearest house, where, whether from curiosity or suspicion does not appear, it was opened, and in it, to the amaze-

ment and horror of the bystanders, was found a human body, without head, arms, or hands.

As the authorities, on being informed of the circumstance, refused to interfere, and as nobody could be found who would open their doors to so frightful a guest, although the labourers for some time bore their hideous burthen from house to house to seek a resting-place for it, the first finders thought it better to carry it back, and leave it where they had discovered it.

This event occurred on Friday, the 24th, and on the evening of the same day, as the post-waggon, from Lubeck, was passing the spot, the attention of the postilions was attracted by the horses shying at a bundle lying on the road, which, on examination, proved to contain two hands and a human head, wrapped in a handkerchief, and a little way further they came upon the body which the labourers had left there.

The affair now became public ; the authorities stepped forward ; announcements of the fact were inserted in the public journals, and investigations set on foot for the discovery of the murderer.

The body appeared to be that of a man about fifty years of age, in good health ; and, from the articles of dress he wore, in a respectable condition of life. The sack which contained it was marked P. R. W., and the shirt, which was of rather fine linen, bore the letters J. M. H. Enclosing the body, within the sack, was a well-stuffed pillow.

The first link found in the chain of evidence was, that on the same 24th of February, about ten o'clock in the morning, the labourers had observed a carriage, drawn by four black horses, with a coachman and postilion, standing in front of the New Inn, at a spot called the Fleishgaffel ; whether anybody was within it they could not say. It started on the Lubeck road whilst they were near, the

horses going at such a considerable pace, that when it reached the Hogenberg, where the road is steep, they lost sight of it. It was exactly at that spot they afterwards found the body. Later in the day, they observed the same carriage pass through Lutzen, on the way back to Hamburgh.

When the news reached the latter city, a suspicion arose, partly founded on the letters P. R. W. observed on the sack, that the murdered person was a certain tobacco merchant, called Wächtler, who, according to his wife's report, had left home for a journey, on Wednesday, the 22nd. It was remarked, however, that nobody whatever had either seen him depart, or was aware of his intention to do so; and it was well known that the husband and wife had frequent disagreements.

The suspicions were considerably augmented when, on the 29th, a person called Hennigs, who let out horses and carriages by the job, came forward to say that he had been

applied to by Frau Wächtler, whose neighbour he was, and with whom he was well acquainted, to convey her as far as Lubeck, where she expected to meet her husband. She was extremely urgent with him to set out on Thursday evening ; but he refused to travel by night, on account of the time of year, and they had agreed to start at an early hour on Friday. She was so impatient to depart, that even before that hour arrived, she had sent a messenger to hasten him. As she had mentioned that she should have rather a cumbersome package to carry with her, he had recommended that she should allow him to fetch it and arrange it on the carriage beforehand ; but she said it was not necessary ; she would see to that herself. Even in the morning he had not seen the package, for it was carried out whilst he was up stairs taking a cup of coffee, by her invitation.

When they reached the Hogenberg, Frau Wächtler called to him to stop, and saying she



felt poorly, she requested him and the driver to walk forwards a little way, taking the child who accompanied her with them. They did so; but in a few minutes rejoined the carriage, and found the lady apparently quite recovered, and already preparing to lead the horses forwards.

When they had proceeded a little further, the same thing recurred; she complained again of illness, and requested Hennigs to return to Hamburgh, as she found herself unable to go forward. He complied, having first proceeded as far as Schöneberg, for the purpose of baiting his horses. They had reached Hamburgh on the same evening. He had no suspicion of anything wrong at the time, but on hearing that a body had been found exactly on the spot where the lady had descended from the carriage, he had thought it his duty to come forward.

Upon this disclosure, persons acquainted with Wächtler were ordered to visit Lubeck,



for the purpose of identifying the remains. Their report confirmed the worst surmises ; the murdered person was, beyond a doubt, the tobacco merchant !

It seems strange, that on such presumptive evidence as this, Frau Wächtler should not have been arrested ; however, she was not. They only placed a guard before her house, to prevent her communicating with persons from without ; whilst crowds of excited and curious people assembled before her door, gratuitously performing the same office.

A variety of circumstances now came to light that strongly tended to inculcate her. As the house was very small, it seemed almost impossible that Wächtler could have left it, as she asserted, at three o'clock in the morning, unheard by the servants ; nor could she assign any reasonable motive for his going at all. He had taken neither trunk nor portmanteau ; and his boots, knee-

buckles, straps, and a black kerchief, he wore round his throat, were left behind. Early in the morning of the 22nd, she had sent for a laundress, called Newmann, and given her a blood-stained bed to wash, with strict injunctions to bring it back clean on the following Saturday. Newmann said that she found Frau Wächtler "sitting on her husband's bed, as white as a corpse." And when the laundress left her, she shut herself up in the chamber, having first ordered a large pitcher of water to be brought to the door; which pitcher was afterwards found empty.

An idea prevailed at first that the servants had been privy to, if not concerned in, the murder; but investigation proved this suspicion to be groundless. Their report of the matter, as far as they knew, tended also to exonerate a young hair-dresser, for whom Frau Wächtler seems to have entertained an undue partiality; and who was a subject of

frequent altercation betwixt this unfortunate couple.

The servants deposed that on the evening previous to the murder, a dispute on this subject had arisen, in which the husband threatened to be revenged on the object of his jealousy; and that he had gone to his room, brandishing the kitchen hatchet, which he declared was to be the instrument of his vengeance; and that Frau Wächtler had desired them to hide it under the child's bed, that it might be out of her husband's way, as she feared for her life.

About half-past two, Frau Wächtler awoke the servants, and ordered coffee to be immediately prepared for her husband, who was about to start on a journey. The cook went below to get it ready; but she desired the waiting-maid to stay beside her; and when it was brought up they drank it together, the wife sitting the while on the side of her husband's bed, and looking very pale. She said

she had been disturbed and had no sleep, on account of her husband's early departure. The bed-clothes were drawn up, and the servants supposed their master to be lying there asleep; but, after some time, as he did not stir, they inquired for him, and were told that he had just stepped to a neighbour's to see to the packing of some wares he intended to take away with him, and would be back immediately. She asserted in her own defence that he did return while the servants were below; however they did not see him; and it appears clearly, that whilst she was sitting on the side of the bed drinking coffee with her maid, and talking, as they said, of indifferent matters, the murdered man was lying under the bed-clothes—a scene altogether worthy of a French melo-drama.

It was after this that she sent for the laundress, and then shut herself up for some hours. When the servants were again admitted to her room, she appeared to have

been washing linen ; the water was red, and there were some stains of blood upon the floor. One of these seemed to point to a neighbouring room, and the cook, whose curiosity was somewhat aroused, went there. She saw three sacks standing together ; two contained foul linen, but in the middle one she thought she felt a human head. Horror-struck, she hastily quitted the room, but she could not resist the feeling that urged her to return, and now she was sure of it ; she felt not only the head, but the knees, and calves of the legs.

Overcome with terror, she rushed out of the room, and went below to the kitchen, where her mistress presently came, and forbade anybody to enter that particular chamber, “ as there were some trifles there that she did not wish disturbed.” When she was gone, the cook however crept up stairs again ; but now the door was fastened. The woman said in her evidence that it occurred

to her that it must be her master; but on the other hand she had thought it impossible that her mistress could have contrived and executed such a deed alone.

At five o'clock in the afternoon it was customary to light a fire in the now mysterious chamber; and when that hour arrived the cook inquired if she might enter it for that purpose. Her mistress bade her go, and she now found it open; but where the sack had stood she saw a large piece of wood that belonged to Wächtler; the floor was wet, and appeared to have been lately washed.

During the whole of the day Frau Wächtler pretended to be expecting her husband's return; and seeing the hair-dresser pass beneath the window, she called him in, told him Wächtler would be back presently, and talked to him for half an hour without betraying the slightest confusion. In the evening she gave up all expectations of seeing her husband that day. She said he had doubt-

less gone to Lubeck, and she desired the waiting-maid to bid her mother come and pass the night with her—a significant circumstance. However long her husband had been absent, she had never made such a request before. Her guilty conscience feared the night.

On the following day, which was Thursday, she made arrangements with Hennigs about the journey, and invited Scheely, the young hair-dresser, to accompany her, which he declined. She also employed a porter to pack up a variety of wares, which she said she was going to carry to her husband. In the middle of the night the old woman, who still slept with her, expressed some apprehension with respect to the safety of Herr Wächtler. Not that she suspected he had been murdered; but she represented to the lady that she should not have allowed him to leave home after so serious a disagreement as they had on Tuesday evening; “who could



tell but he might make away with himself?" But Frau Wächtler bade her fear nothing; she knew him better!

When the carriage arrived on Friday morning, she invited Hennigs and the postilion to come up stairs to drink coffee; at the same time bidding the servant to remain above with the children. During this interval it was, that with the porter's assistance, the mysterious sack, now sewed in matting, was carried below, and placed in the carriage, "leaning against the opposite door." Then, all being ready, she took her youngest daughter by the hand; they stepped in, Hennigs mounted the box, and they drove away.

There was one more witness against her—this very daughter, a child of seven years old. She was accustomed to sleep with her father; and she related that on the night in question, just as the clock was striking two, her mother had lifted her out of the father's



bed, and had placed her in the other with her brothers. The suddenness of the action seems thoroughly to have awakened the child, for although she was bade go to sleep again directly, she found it impossible to do so; and as she lay feigning sleep to satisfy her mother, she observed her leave the room, and presently return with a hatchet, with which she struck the father; "Father stirred a little; and there was blood upon the sheet. Then mother sat down on father's bed and drew the clothes up over him, and I went to sleep."

At a second examination, this little girl said that the young hair-dresser had been present, and assisted at the murder; and that she had also witnessed the dismembering of the body. The barber's *alibi*, however, was clearly proved, although the other particulars of her relation were correct; for Frau Wächtler made a full confession before she died; which, strange to say, was not till

three years after the murder, so long did the trial continue in spite of her evident guilt. In the course of it, she accused a dyer called Kühn of having committed the crime, at her instigation. Kühn had no great difficulty in proving his innocence; but he said that although he had not done it himself, and indeed had no acquaintance with Frau Wächtler, that he nevertheless knew very well who had done it; it was a person called Jauché, a manufacturer of varnish. Yet, was Jauché as innocent as his accuser; the grounds of whose impeachment were, that a voice from heaven had informed him of Jauché's guilt, whilst he was in prison; and that though very poor before, Jauché had exhibited symptoms of affluence since the tobacco merchant's death.

Frau Wächtler was executed on the 14th of November, 1788, after having been several times submitted to the torture; a custom which we are rather surprised to find exist-

ing at Hamburgh at so late a period. Though pain extorted various contradictory confessions from her, she only avowed the truth on the day of her death; and then upon conditions that it should not be disclosed whilst she was alive. She said that she had committed the murder herself without any assistance; and that the act had been prompted by revenge against her husband for having affronted her in the presence of others.

How this extraordinary and wretched woman died, the records do not inform us; but during the course of the proceedings, she frequently boasted of her invincible character; and indeed, except the fear that caused her to send for the old woman to sleep with her, and which on some following nights prevailed so far, as to make her request her maids not only to bring their bed into her chamber, but to watch by her whilst she slept, she seems scarcely to have exhi-

bited any characteristic of humanity. She deliberately murdered and dismembered her husband, in the presence of her children, the eldest of whom was eleven years of age, and who might or might not be asleep—one of them, as it was proved, was awake: she drank coffee with half a dozen people, her maids, Shultz, Grüner, the schoolmaster, &c., seated on the bed, where lay her victim, covered by the bed-clothes. She conversed cheerfully on the journey to Lubeck, in spite of her fearful travelling companion, and ate heartily, where they stopped to bait, of provisions which had been placed in the carriage, under the mysterious package!

How her physical strength sufficed to make such arrangements and contrivances for concealment, in the course of the fatal morning after the murder, without any assistance, was so great a matter of wonder at the time, that it was the main cause of the protracted trial. The authorities could

not, for a long time, be convinced that she had neither aiders nor abettors.

But to return to the poisoners of the present century.

Madame Ursinus was a woman of rank, the widow of a man who held a distinguished office under government; and who, from her own personal endowments, as well as her fortune and condition, lived beloved, admired, and respected, in the first circles of Berlin. Her manners were peculiarly fascinating and endearing, her reputation was unblemished, and her universal charity and benevolence caused her to be as much beloved by the poor, as she was respected by the rich.

Her husband, the Privy Councillor Ursinus, had died in the year 1800; and the usual period of mourning and retirement having expired, the lady had opened her door again to her friends, and was in the habit of seeing a great deal of company. On the

5th of March, 1803, there was an assembly at her house, and she was sitting at the whist-table, when one of her footmen entered with evident signs of terror in his countenance, saying that several officers of police were in the ante-chamber, and desired to speak with her. Madame Ursinus rose from her seat, without betraying the smallest agitation; gracefully apologized to her friends for the interruption, and quitted the room, with the remark, that it must be some mistake; and she would just speak to the officers, and return immediately.

But she came not: the brilliant company sat still, with their cards in their hands; several minutes elapsed—a quarter of an hour—still no Madame Ursinus. They looked at each other—what could it mean? Presently, a liveried servant, with his face pale as ashes, appeared at the door, and a whisper ran round the room that Madame Ursinus had been arrested, for administering

poison to one of her servants, and had been carried to prison. If a volcano had suddenly arisen, and spouted flames in the middle of the city, it could not have created greater amazement. The excitement was indescribable.

The earliest particulars that reached the public were as follows :

One of her servants, called Benjamin Klein, who apparently acted as butler, had complained, some time in the month of February, of being unwell; and Madame Ursinus had recommended him to take some broth, which she herself administered. Instead of being the better for it, he found himself worse; and on the 28th, she gave him some raisins, which were to act as an emetic. He became, in fact, very sick, and suffered such extreme pain, that he thought he must vomit more before he should be relieved. She then gave him some rice-milk; and finally, on the 3rd of March, some plums; but these last,



instead of eating, he carried to an apothecary, who found them stuffed with arsenic. The man grew worse and worse; and the physicians declared his sufferings were the effect of poison; upon this, Madame Ursinus was arrested.

These rumours were soon followed by others. It was remembered that a certain Dutch officer, named Ragay, to whom Madame Ursinus had been much attached, had died of a strange and lingering disease; that the Privy Councillor, her husband, had been seized with a violent vomiting in the night, during which time no one had attended him but herself, and that he had died on the following morning, shortly after the arrival of his medical attendants: and, thirdly, that a maiden aunt of the lady's had died in a somewhat like manner, in the year 1801. It was asserted that she had poisoned them all, and the bodies of the two latter were disinterred and examined. With respect to the



husband, nothing could be made out; but the presumption that she had poisoned the aunt was very strong, both from the state of the intestines, and the clearly established fact that she had arsenic in her possession whilst she was with the deceased in her last illness. As for Ragay, the doctors who had attended him, said that he had died of consumption. Certain it was, however, that for years she had been in the habit of carrying a provision of poison about her. She declared, on her trial, that she kept it with the intention of destroying her own life; and that she had poisoned Klein, in order to have an opportunity of observing the effects of arsenic, and ascertaining the requisite dose; but nobody had ever seen any symptoms of her entertaining such a design.

The servant Klein did not die, but after much suffering recovered, and lived for twenty-eight years on a pension assigned to him out of the property of his mistress.

In reference to this, people used to point him out to strangers as “the man who lived by poison.” Neither, however much appearances were against her, could Madame Ursinus be convicted of the two first crimes laid to her charge ; but she was found guilty of poisoning her aunt, and for that and the attempt on the life of Klein, she was sentenced to perpetual imprisonment. She was confined in the fortress of Glatz, where she was allowed a well-furnished room, with a great many conveniences, and a female companion to cheer her solitude. She was also visited by a vast number of strangers, whom she very willingly received ; and if they were influential persons she never failed to solicit their interference in her favour. She wore satins and fine linen ; and seems, in consideration of her rank and connexions, to have been treated with a degree of indulgence she little deserved. She lived in this confinement for thirty years ; and then,

being seventy years of age, she received some further mitigation of her penalty ; being permitted to live freely within certain precincts of the city. Here she received company, and was visited, not only by foreigners, but by her own country people ; and it is related that a lady, at one of her evening parties, having evinced some uneasiness at seeing grains of a white substance sprinkled over a salad she was about to eat, Madame Ursinus said, sarcastically : “ Don’t be afraid ; it’s not arsenic.”

Indeed, on the very day she was set free, she invited a party to take coffee with her ; and the next morning it was currently reported that every one of the company had been poisoned. Very ill they were ; but the cause of their indisposition proved to be the waggery of some thoughtless person, who, for the purpose of giving them a fright, had contrived to mix some drugs with the coffee.

Madame Ursinus lived to a great age, and at length died in the year 1836, in the odour of sanctity. Five carriages, full of friends and acquaintances, followed the hearse that bore her to her last home; the churchyard could not contain the crowds that assembled to witness the interment; twelve poor orphans sang hymns of gratitude over her grave; and friendly hands strewed the earth that covered her with flowers. Yet Madame Ursinus died without having ever confessed her crimes, nor, as far as could be judged by appearances, ever repented of them; neither was the motive for their commission ever clearly made out.

The story we next turn to relates to a person in a different rank of life.

In the year 1809, there resided in a part of Prussia, called the Oberland, a respectable middle-aged female, who supported herself by knitting. She was a widow, who had evidently seen and suffered much. Her

department was particularly quiet, and her manner pleasing and friendly. The fear of God and the love of her neighbour appeared to be the ruling principles of her life; and she was looked upon as a worthy, excellent person; who however, in spite of her industry, found some difficulty in keeping herself above want. She went by the name of Nannette Schönleben. She was a native of Nuremberg, and her maiden name was Steinacker. After the vicissitudes of a varied life, she had settled down to this obscure and humble mode of existence; but it was understood, that if an opportunity offered of improving her condition, she would be glad to avail herself of it. Her excellent reputation soon procured her such a situation as she desired.

In the month of March, 1808, a person of the name of Glaser, who resided at Kasendorf engaged her in the capacity of housekeeper, at the recommendation of his own son, who

had some small dealings with her, and had formed a very favourable opinion of her character. Her conduct soon procured her not only the approbation but the confidence of her master ; and the use she made of her influence was one that obtained her universal commendation. Glaser, a man of fifty years of age, had for several years been living apart from his wife. It was said that there was no fault on the part of the lady to justify this separation ; and in spite of the injury it was likely to do herself, Nannette undertook to bring about a reconciliation. She wrote letters to the wife ; she engaged the friends on both sides to aid her in this pious work ; and even, though a Protestant herself, sent money to a Roman Catholic priest, with a request that he would say a mass for the success of her enterprise.

It did succeed ; Frau Glaser allowed herself to be persuaded—the husband declared himself prepared to receive her with open

arms ; and the lady, who was at a distance, started for Kasendorf ; but, as it appears, with a heavy heart and strange presentiments. In a letter, afterwards produced, which she wrote to her relations at the time, she said, “ I cannot describe what I feel ; there is a struggle within my heart that I am unable to account for ! can it be a forewarning of evil ? ”

The husband went some distance on the road to meet the wife ; and Nannette prepared a fête for their reception, which was not very consistent with the circumstances of the case. The whole village assembled to welcome them ; the house was decorated with garlands ; the bed of this second bridal was strewn with flowers, and the following couplet was appended to the hangings :—

“ The widow’s hand  
Has wove the band.”

These ill-judged and indelicate arrange-



ments appear to have excited no displeasure amongst the parties concerned.

Glaser seemed disposed to treat his wife with great kindness, and the lady was becoming quite reconciled to the re-union, when, unfortunately, she was taken ill and died on the 26th of August; exactly four weeks after her arrival at Kasendorf.

Shortly after this unfortunate event, Nannette transferred herself to the service of a gentleman called Grohmann, who resided at Sanspareil. Glaser gave her the best of characters. Grohmann was a fine young man, only twenty-eight years of age; but he suffered from frequent fits of gout; and the devotion with which Nannette nursed him on these occasions, was truly admirable.

In spite of her tender care, however, the young man thought he would rather be nursed by a wife, and he accordingly made advances to a lady who accepted his proposals; and everything being arranged, the



marriage was about to be solemnized, when Grohmann was taken suddenly ill. Nannette never quitted the bedside during the progress of his sufferings, which were fearful; but he died, and she was inconsolable. Her tears and cries rent the hearts of all beholders. She was, however, under the necessity of seeking another situation; and the manner in which she had conducted herself in the two former places recommended her so strongly, that a lady of the name of Gebhard, who was about to be confined, thought herself particularly fortunate in obtaining her services. Accordingly, Nannette attended her during her indisposition, and the child was happily born; but on the third day things took an ill turn; the lady was seized with vomitings, and, after enduring much pain, she died. The infant was committed to the care of Nannette, who nursed it with the greatest tenderness.

Some people were certainly silly enough

to advise Mr. Gebhard not to keep in his service so unlucky a person. Doubtless, she was an excellent woman, a clever servant ; but misfortune seemed to follow her footsteps. Mr. Gebhard, however, had no belief in such fatalities, and, for several months, she remained in this house, at the head of his establishment ; and although certainly, there *were* very frequent indispositions amongst the servants, and even amongst the visitors who frequented the house, no suspicions were awakened ; and Nannette remained high in the esteem and confidence of her employer, till on the 1st of September, 1809, a large party having assembled at Mr. Gebhard's, to play at bowls, the whole company were taken ill after drinking some beer which Nannette had brought from the cellar.

Strange thoughts now seemed to have found their way into the minds of the sufferers. Nobody, however, ventured to denounce Nannette ; they only urged Mr.

Gebhard to part with her, she was so unlucky! To oblige them, he consented to do so; but he gave her excellent testimonials, and behaved to her in the most liberal manner.

Nannette did not conceal that she was very much pained by this dismissal, and expressed extreme grief at leaving her beloved little charge; but she showed no temper. She was diligent, active, and obliging to the last moment—nay, even sportive; for it being remarked that she took the trouble of filling the salt-cellars with her own hands just before she departed, she said she did it “to bring luck to those she left behind.” So kind was her master, that when the coach which was to carry her away came to the door, he invited her to take a cup of chocolate with him before she went. She took a tender leave of the child, and gave it some milk and biscuit, lamenting how much he would miss his kind nurse. This done

she bade adieu to her fellow-servants, and drove away.

She had not, however, been gone a quarter of an hour, when the whole family, at least the child, and several persons who had partaken of the chocolate, were seized with violent pains and vomitings; whereupon the servants declared their suspicions of Nannette. Many circumstances were recalled that rendered it scarcely possible to doubt her guilt; but so much difficulty had Gebhard in altering his opinion of her, that though on examination a quantity of arsenic was found in the salt barrel, he allowed a month to pass before he took any measures for her apprehension.

In the meantime, quite at her ease, and with a degree of confidence that long impunity can alone account for, Nannette Schönleben pursued her journey. On the road she wrote a letter to Mr. Gebhard, expressing her conviction that the infant

would be so unhappy without her, that he would be under the necessity of recalling her; and she remained for some days within such a distance as would have rendered her return easy. However, no summons reaching her, it became necessary to look for a residence elsewhere; but she now found that wherever she was known, people objected to receive her under their roof.

At length, being driven from house to house, she resolved to seek refuge with her own daughter, who was married, and inhabited a small house in Franconia. When she reached the spot she found her son-in-law gaily dressed, surrounded by a party of his friends; but, alas! there was no part in their rejoicings for her. Her daughter was in jail, and the husband, who had divorced her, was about to marry again.

It was not till October, 1809, that Mr. Gebhard made up his mind to have Nannette apprehended. It was then found that she

was the widow of a notary, whose name was Zwanziger, but that she had very good reasons for dropping this appellation and assuming another. She, of course, professed to be the most innocent creature in the world ; but the bodies of the persons she had murdered were disinterred, and presented ample evidence of her guilt. Innumerable circumstances were also recalled, showing that she had repeatedly administered poison in greater or less quantities to the servants and visitors of her previous employers.

Her trial commenced on the 16th April, 1810. She at first denied everything ; but when she learned that poison had been found in the stomachs of her victims, she confessed to have twice administered arsenic to the deceased Frau Glaser. She had no sooner made this avowal, than she dropped to the earth as if she were shot ; and fell into such violent convulsions that they were obliged to remove her from the court.

In the interval that elapsed between her trial and execution, she wrote a sketch of her own biography, from which we learn that she was at this period about fifty years of age. She declared that she had been handsome in her youth, but no remains of beauty could be traced in her meagre, cadaverous features, the expression of which, in spite of the constrained smile that sat ever upon her lips, appears to have been odious and repelling, a circumstance which renders her successful deceptions the more extraordinary.

She was born at Nuremberg, where her father kept an inn, with the inauspicious sign of the Black Cross. Her parents died when she was very young, and she had been twice married. Her early life had been busy and cheerful. Zwanziger seems to have been both a poor and an austere man. It was as she said, "still im hause;" no stir,—no bustle; and "she feared her husband as the child fears the rod." In order to dissipate her melan-



choly, she had recourse to books. "My first book," she writes, "was 'The Sorrows of Werter.' The impression it made on me was so great, that for some time I could do nothing but weep. Had I had a pistol, I should certainly have shot myself. I next read 'Pamela,' and 'Emilia Galotte.'"

The fruits of these studies seem to have been a diseased sentimentality, that soon extinguished any germs of real feeling that nature had implanted in her, together with a great desire to render herself an object of interest, and to rise out of the humble situation in which fortune had placed her. At the age of twenty-one, she inherited some property that her parents had bequeathed her. On this accession of wealth, her husband seems for a time to have flung aside his moroseness. At all events, he helped her to spend the money in balls and carousals; and when they came to the end of it, their former mode of life was resumed. He lived in the



wine-houses, and she alone ; but as he constantly pressed her for supplies, which she had not the means of furnishing, she seems to have found a mode of raising funds as discreditable to herself, as dishonourable to him.

Fortune, however, once more smiled upon this well-matched pair. Zwanziger obtained a prize in the lottery ; and again the house resounded with the song and the dance. When this supply was exhausted, the lady eloped with an officer, but returned at the request of her husband. He, however, applied for a divorce, and obtained it, but it was no sooner published, than they were re-married ; and she declared that after this they had lived very happily together, “ she having remarked that Zwanziger had noble sentiments, and an affectionate heart !”

The notary died suddenly in 1796, and it is by no means clear that she did not help him out of the world before his time. From

that period her fortune gradually declined, till she became a servant. She lived with a variety of people in different capacities, and, amongst the rest, as nursery-maid in some English families.

At this degradation her pride seems to have been dreadfully wounded. She “laughed and cried in one breath ; and, when her employers issued their orders, she smiled, and left their presence respectfully, but made a point of neglecting their commands.” Naturally, she had soon no commands to obey.

She had next recourse to one of her former lovers. He received her for a time ; but as he soon became cold and neglectful, she resolved to open a vein in her arm and die. In this project, however, she failed, at least as far as regards the dying. She only lost a cupful of blood ; and the unfeeling man, instead of exhibiting any alarm, “turned away and laughed when she showed it him.”

Determined to convince him of her sincerity, she next proceeded to the river to drown herself. "She took her maid-servant with her, and a volume of poems, which she read by the way. When she arrived at the fatal line :

‘ My life’s so sad that I must end it,’

she precipitated herself into the water. Two fishermen, however, who happened to be at hand, dragged her out again, and she received no damage but the wetting of her clothes. As soon as they were sufficiently dry, she sent them by the maid to her hard-hearted lover, as a convincing proof of her inexorable determination to quit a world in which she was so little appreciated. He returned them by the bearer, with a small sum of money, and a strong recommendation to quit the place without delay ; and the farther she went, the better he should be pleased.”

To the want of compassion exhibited by

this person she principally attributed her embittered and revengeful spirit. In short, it would seem as if a devil had entered into her! "When I opened the vein in my arm," she writes, "he laughed. And when I reminded him that I was not the first woman that had killed herself on his account, he laughed too! Henceforth, whenever I did anybody a mischief, I said to myself, nobody shows me mercy, and I will show none to others."

After this she entered into various services at Vienna and other places. Her last situation was in the family of a Mr. Von S——; but as the work was fatiguing and the wages low, she resolved to quit it; "but her guardian angel whispered to her not to go without insuring herself some compensation. On the same day, as one of the children was playing with his mother's jewels, he offered her a ring. It seemed as if a voice within her bade her accept it." She took the hint

and departed. But this treacherous spirit having also prompted her to possess herself of the contents of an escrutoire, she was advertised, by name, in the public journals; and her son-in-law happening to see the paragraph, turned her out of doors. Upon this she wrote to reproach Mr. Von S. for his want of delicacy in thus exposing her; and then changing her name to Schönleben, she established herself in a small town called Neumarkt, as an instructor of young females in needle-work, &c. For some time she conducted herself prudently, and might have prospered had she not admitted the visits of an antiquated military debauchee, whom she hoped to inveigle into marriage, and thus to recover her position in life, and to hear herself called "Your Excellency," before she died!

Her project failed; and having lost both her lover and her newly-acquired reputation, she was obliged again to set out upon her

travels. Then it was she settled in the Oberland, where we first introduced her; and by her quiet demeanour, piety, and humility, contrived to establish herself once more in the good opinion of her neighbours. But whilst her outward bearing was that of a saint, her heart was full of hatred and revenge; and she longed to retaliate upon mankind the misery she fancied they had inflicted upon her.

She seems to have had two projects—vengeance and her own reintegration. For twenty years she had been driven about the world, subject to all sorts of insults and indignities. She was now fifty years of age; but she did not despair of repairing her fortunes by marriage. The servile condition was hateful to her. To be once more a lady, and command others as she had been commanded, was her hope and her object. But now difficult an enterprise! What road was open to her? She wanted power—and after

seeking in all directions for the weapon that was to acquire it, she fixed upon poison as the means of her worldly advancement and the instrument of her hoarded vengeance.

It was with this view that she brought about the reconciliation between Glaser and his wife. The victim's path was strewn with flowers—garlands wreathed the bed of this second bridal, and pæans welcomed her to her husband's home; but the mortal poison was already in her cup.

By her assiduous attention during his fits of sickness, she hoped to win the heart of her next master, Grohman; but when she found he was about to marry another, she compensated herself for her disappointment by the gratification of her revenge.

With the same object she poisoned Gebhard's wife; she gave arsenic to the child when she quitted him, in the hope that his consequent uneasiness and cries would occasion her recall; and for the innumerable



other persons to whom she administered smaller doses, slight offences, and her unmitigable hatred to mankind, were the impelling motives.

By her own confession, it is evident that she revelled in the sense of power she enjoyed from the possession of this secret and murderous weapon. From the gratification it afforded her, she grew actually to love it for its own sake. When, in prison, a parcel of arsenic was placed before her, her eyes glistened with the passionate desire to possess it; and when she was about to be executed, she avowed that her death would be a happy event for mankind, as she was sure she never could have renounced the pleasure of using it.

She took a great liking to the advocate that defended her; and exhibited her regard by requesting that, if it were permitted, she might be allowed to visit him from the other world, in order to give him demonstrative evidence of a future life.



She died without repentance ; and took leave of the sheriff and executioner on the scaffold with as courteous a bow as if she were retiring from a morning visit.

We shall close our accounts of these female enormities with the case of Gesche Margareta Gottfried, which we must, however, reserve for our next chapter.

## CHAPTER II.

IN the year 1825, a gentleman, named Rumpff, established himself in a house in Bremen, which belonged to and was also inhabited by a widow lady named Gottfried. She was by universal consent a charming woman ; her manners were fascinating, and her person, which in her youth was said to have been extremely beautiful, was still very attractive and agreeable.

She was, however, unfortunate. Two husbands, her father, her mother, her

brother, and several children had all died within a very short period of time. She had actually had the pain of herself ordering thirteen coffins of the undertaker who lived opposite to her—and these for her nearest and dearest friends. She had, it is true, had the consolation of nursing them all during their last sicknesses—a duty which she had discharged with the most exemplary assiduity and tenderness. Every body pitied her; religion was her refuge, and a pious resignation to the inscrutable decrees of Providence alone supported her under these multiplied calamities. Her case, in short, excited so much commiseration, that she was publicly prayed for in church by a minister of high reputation and signal piety.

She was not only received in good society, but although originally born and wedded in the burgher class, her company was courted by persons of high rank and consideration. She had had many suitors; had been twice

married, and was now forty years of age; still she was by no means without claimants for her hand. Her personal *agrémens*, elegantly furnished house, and easy fortune, rendered her a desirable match; and the parents of the enamoured youths wished nothing better than to have Madame Gottfried for a daughter-in-law. But she declined their proposals. On his death-bed she had promised her dear Gottfried, of blessed memory, never to give that hand to another; and she intended to keep her word.

Still, with all these extraordinary advantages and recommendations, her ill-fortune was undeniable; every body connected with her died. Some people looked upon her as a sort of Job, a monument of suffering and patience; one whom the Lord had selected to chastise for the good of her soul, and to furnish a lesson of resignation and submission to mankind. She herself took this view of the case; whilst others secretly hinted that

they had heard there was something poisonous in her breath, which was fatal to those who inhaled it.

It was not without many expostulations from his friends, that Mr. Rumpff established himself in the house of this amiable but ill-starred lady. He, however, was no believer in stars, good or ill; and had no idea of resigning a residence that suited him, on such absurd grounds; and for some little time he certainly felt he had every reason to congratulate himself on his decision. The most gratifying relations established themselves betwixt his family and the friendly widow, who seemed to have nothing in the world to do but to make herself agreeable to them. Her kindness to the young people was quite remarkable; but, unfortunately, at the end of eight weeks, this general joy was interrupted, by the death of Madame Rumpff, who was seized with a vomiting shortly after

her confinement, which carried her off in a few hours.

Nothing could exceed the attentions of Madame Gottfried; she never quitted the bedside of the dying woman, whose best consolation, in her last moments, was, that she left behind her so kind a friend to protect her orphans and comfort her bereaved husband. The hopes and wishes of the departed mother were, in this respect, fulfilled to the letter. Madame Gottfried managed the house, overlooked the servants, cherished the children, and, by her pious exhortations, allayed the anguish of the father. In the family she always went by the appellation of aunt Gottfried.

But ill-fortune still clung to her. The maid, and the nurse who had been engaged to take care of the child, became extremely ill; and the latter finally quitted the house, declaring that she saw clearly that she never

should be well whilst she remained in it.

Presently, Mr. Rumpff's journeymen and apprentices began to vomit; and some months after his wife's death he was himself seized with a similar indisposition. A healthy and strong-minded man, he exerted himself to struggle against the malady; and even fancied that the boys who worked in his manufactory, but ate their meals in the house, were merely diverting themselves by aping him, when he heard them straining and vomiting too.

But resistance was vain; he could keep nothing on his stomach; every thing he ate caused him the most excruciating agonies, and his formerly blooming health declined from day to day. Neither the remedies he had recourse to himself, nor those of the physician, were of the least avail. He grew worse and worse; he lost the use of his fingers and toes; his body was as weak as



an infant's; and his mind seemed to be threatened with a similar degree of imbecility. He racked his imagination to discover the cause of these extraordinary inflictions, and, like a man seeking for some hidden treasure, he ransacked every corner of his house from top to bottom. He never thought of poison; but he fancied there must be some decaying substance about the house, that exhaled a vapour fatal to the health of all who inhabited it. He had the boards lifted, and the walls examined; but in vain; nothing could be discovered.

At length the strong mind so far gave way, as to admit a doubt, whether there might not indeed be some unknown and invisible influences—some spirits of ill, that pursued mankind to their destruction; wasting their bodies and withering their minds. But here again aunt Gottfried came to his aid; she watched over him like a mother; bade him trust in God; and when he de-



scribed to her his sleepless nights of anguish, she earnestly wished him such sweet rest as blessed her own pillow.

This state of things had continued for upwards of a year, and nobody believed Mr. Rumpff would be long an inhabitant of this world, when, having ordered a pig to be killed for the use of his family, the butcher sent him a small choice bit of the animal to taste, by way of specimen. As the pork was not only very good, but sat more easily on his stomach than anything he had lately taken, he deposited the remains of it in a closet, for his next day's luncheon. He was rather surprised, however, on going to take it from the cupboard, to find it was not as he had left it. He had placed the rind underneath, but it had since been turned; and, on looking more closely, he was startled by perceiving some grains of a white powder sprinkled over it; the more so, that he immediately remembered to have remarked the

same appearance on a salad, and on some broth which had been lately served to him.

On the former occasions, he had applied to his good housekeeper, aunt Gottfried, to know what it was ; and she had declared it to be grease. But now, for the first time, a dreadful suspicion possessed him ; could it be poison ? He said nothing ; but secretly sent for his physician ; a chemical investigation soon revealed the mystery—the white powder was arsenic.

The discovery was made on the 5th of March ; on the 6th, after a cursory examination, Madame Gottfried was arrested. She was found in bed, and said she was ill ; but they carried her away to prison, nevertheless.

The tidings of this most unexpected catastrophe soon spread over the city, and the dismay of its inhabitants was past all expression. A lady so beloved, so respected ! So amiable, so friendly, so pious ! Then came

dark suspicions relative to the past—the strange mortality, the singular similarity of the symptoms that had attended the last illnesses of all who had died in that house. People scarcely dared whisper their thoughts—but the reality far exceeded their imaginations, and the proceedings against Madame Gottfried disclosed a tissue of horrors, which, all circumstances considered, seems to surpass those of any case on record. Her crimes, combined with her successful hypocrisy, and powers of fascination, were so terrific, that in the orderly and pious city of Bremen, to this day, strange rumours and superstitions survive amongst the people, connected with the history of “Aunt Gottfried.” They believe that she tickled her children to death, in order to make a poisonous broth of their flesh; that there was a vault under the house, unknown to all but herself, where she prepared her poisons, and performed all sorts of devilish deeds; that she had the evil eye, and

had slain innumerable children by merely looking at them ; and they were, moreover, thoroughly convinced that she was born a murderess from her mother's womb, and inherited from her parent two books, which contained instructions for all sorts of demoniacal practices.

It is not to be wondered at that the ignorant should have sought in the supernatural an explanation of a phenomenon which confounded the experience of the most enlightened.

On being conducted to the city prison, Madame Gottfried denied all knowledge of the crime she was accused of ; but a secret here came to light that astonished the beholders little less than the previous disclosures. Before being conducted to the cell in which she was to be confined, she was, according to established regulations, placed in the hands of the female attendants to be examined ; and then, to their amazement, it was discovered

that the lovely and admired Madame Gottfried was nothing but a hideous skeleton. Her fine complexion was artificial—her graceful *embonpoint* was made up of thirteen pairs of corsets, which she wore one over the other; in short, everything was false about her; and when stripped of her factitious attractions, she stood before the amazed spectators an object no less frightful from her physical deformities than from her moral obliquity.

The effects of this exposure upon her own mind was curious; her powers of deception failed her; the astonishment and indignation she had assumed vanished: she attempted no further denials, but avowed her guilt at once, not in all its fearful details,—it took two years to do that. She gave the narrative of her crimes piecemeal, as they recurred to her memory; for she had committed so many, that one had effaced the other from her mind. Even at the last, she admitted that she was

by no means certain of having mentioned everybody to whom she had administered poison.

She was the daughter of a lady's tailor, or man-milliner, called Timm—a man of the most industrious and orderly habits, an assiduous reader of the Scriptures, and regular attendant at church. She and a brother, who entered the world at the same moment as herself, were born on the 6th of May, 1785. The young man was wild, and joined the army of Napoleon; but Gesche was a model of perfection. Her person was delicate—almost ethereal, her countenance open and attractive, with a smile of benignity ever on her lips, her movements were graceful, her manner bewitching, her demeanour modest, and her conduct unexceptionable. She was held up as a pattern to the young, and Father Timm, as he was called, was considered blest in the possession of such a daughter.

One thing, however, seems pretty clear,

namely, that although the parents led unexceptionable lives, and were what is commonly called *highly respectable people*, and though the daughter received what is ordinarily considered a virtuous education, the whole was the result of mere worldly motives. There was no foundation of principle,—no sense of the beauty of virtue, nor delight in its practice for its own sake. The only object recognized was to gain the approbation and good-will of mankind; and when Gesche Timm found she could attain that end as well by the simulation as by the reality of virtue, she chose the former as the easier of the two.

Her first initiation into crime seems to have been by the way of petty thefts, which she practised on her parents, and of which she allowed her brother, whose frequent misdemeanors laid him more open to suspicion, to bear the blame. Five years of impunity at length emboldened her to purloin a con-



siderable sum belonging to a lady who lodged in the house. Father Timm, as usual, fell upon his son; but the mother, who appears by this time to have got an inkling of the truth, bade him hold his hand, and she would presently tell him who was the thief. Accordingly she went out, and, returning in about half-an-hour, said she had been to a wise woman, who had shown her the face of the real delinquent in a mirror. Whilst she spoke, she fixed her eyes significantly on the "angel of a daughter," who, finding she was discovered, had the prudence to discontinue her practices. The affair, however, was hushed up, and Gesche's character remained as fair in the eyes of the world as before.

At twelve years of age, her school education being completed, she was retained at home to do the house-work and help her father. She also kept his books; and made herself so useful by her diligence and her readiness as an accountant, that he was more



than ever delighted with her, and was induced to commit his affairs more and more to her management ; an advantage of which she did not fail to avail herself after her own peculiar fashion : meantime, she was cheerful, obedient, pious, and charitable. She was her parent's almoner, and was taught to believe that the prayers and blessings of the poor were the sure passport to Heaven—a persuasion that influenced her whole subsequent life ; for whilst she administered poison with one hand, she administered charity with the other, secure in the belief that the good she did would efface the evil. She had tears, too, ready upon all occasions ; she wept when her father prayed and sang his morning hymn ; and she wept when her victims, writhing in anguish, called on God to pity them and release them from their pains.

Yet, was she a woman of no violent passions. She was neither avaricious, luxurious, nor even sensual ; although later in life

her lapses from chastity might have given colour to the suspicion. She was cold, calm, and self-possessing. Her ruling passion was vanity, and an inordinate desire to be admired and respected in the small and humble sphere that surrounded her.

Her amusements were dancing, in which her parents allowed her to take lessons, and acting plays wherein she greatly distinguished herself. As she was the prettiest, and also the cleverest amongst the young people, the best parts were assigned to her, as well as the most ornamental attire the theatrical wardrobe could produce; so that each representation became to her a triumph, and was anticipated with the most eager delight. However, the truth was, that Gesche's whole life was acting; and there have been very few such consummate comedians seen, either on the boards, or the larger stage of the world. For forty-three years she maintained her part to such perfection,

that no suspicion had ever entered into men's minds that she had any other character than the one she appeared in.

In order to augment her attractions and powers of pleasing, she was desirous of learning music ; but Father Timm not only thought this expense beyond his means, but considered so refined an accomplishment ill adapted to a girl who had to do the work of a house-servant, and daily appear before the door with a broom in her hand. He, however, proposed that she should learn French, and she made an apparent progress that delighted her master ; but like everything else about her, it was only apparent. She had considerable aptness, but no application. Study wearied her, so she employed an acquaintance to prepare her lessons for her, desiring him to be careful to leave an error or two, to avoid suspicion. The little she picked up of the language, however, helped

her to play her part in life, when she had risen into another grade of society.

Gesche, or Gesina, as she now called herself, had rejected several offers of marriage, when being one evening at the theatre with her friend Marie Heckendorf, she was persecuted by the too obtrusive attentions of a stranger, who appeared by his air to be a person of some distinction. A young neighbour of the Timm's family, whose name was Miltenburg, stepped forward to protect her, and see her home; and from that occasion an intimacy sprung up between them which terminated in marriage.

Though the son of a man in exceedingly good circumstances, and in point of condition a very advantageous match for Gesina, young Miltenburg's reputation was not quite *intacte*. He had been drawn in at an early age to marry a woman of very indifferent character, who had introduced him into a good deal of

dissipation and loose company. The wife was dead, but the vices she had encouraged had not died with her. The young man's health, as well as his morals and his father's fortune, were injured by the life he led ; and in spite of her humble station, old Miltenburg was delighted to accept so virtuous and exemplary a daughter-in-law as Gesina. He testified his approval by a handsome settlement ; and whilst the young lady and her parents exulted in this unexpected stroke of fortune, the world in general lamented that so lovely and incomparable a creature should be thrown away on an exhausted debauchee.

The marriage ceremony was performed in Mr. Miltenburg's picture-gallery. Over Gesina's head hung a fine Madonna and Child by one of the old masters ; on one side of it, Jesus distributing the bread and wine ; on the other, a head of St. Peter :—it was exactly on that spot that she afterwards poisoned her mother.

The young bride had no regard for her husband ; but the circumstances of the marriage gratified her vanity and self-love to the utmost. She brought peace into a house where there had been nothing but strife and contention. Her virtues shone the brighter from the dark ground of her predecessor's vices. She was exalted into a goddess ; father and son worshipped her, and power and dominion were given to her over the whole household. Her husband made her superb presents, and sought by all manner of pleasures and indulgences to make her amends for those imperfections which he was conscious his dissolute life had entailed upon him, and which incapacitated him from winning the affections of a young bride.

In the present case, however, it is extremely problematical whether there were any affections to win ; but her vanity soon found a suitor, if not her heart. A young wine-merchant, of the name of Gottfried, whom

she met at a ball, took her fancy, and an intimacy sprang up between them, which seems to have met with no opposition on the part of the husband. A second lover, named Karnov, was equally well received. Previous, however, to these lapses from duty, she had several confinements, the results of which appear to have been an extraordinary degree of leanness; a defect which she remedied by putting on an additional pair of corsets, as occasion required. The seventeen pairs which were found in her wardrobe at her death, were sold in Bremen for so small a sum as two groschen; people being unwilling to have any thing to do with them. It was supposed they were endowed with some magical properties. They had certainly done a great deal of harm to their possessor; for she had materially injured her health, and aggravated the defect she was so anxious to conceal, by compressing her waist with them.



Gottfried appears to have been a good-looking, agreeable, light-hearted, and rather accomplished man. He had a well-selected library, played the guitar, and published two volumes of songs. Her inclination for him seems to have approached more nearly to a passion than any she ever entertained; whilst his assiduities appear to have been chiefly prompted by his flattered vanity, and a desire to enjoy the comforts and pleasures of Miltenburg's house.

These comforts and pleasures, however, were in some jeopardy, from young Miltenburg's improvidence and inattention to his business; and his wife began to question with herself seriously, what was the value of his life; and what was the use of his living at all, with a constitution so ruined as to be incapable of any enjoyment. About this period, namely, in 1813, old Miltenburg, the father, died, as it was afterwards established, from natural causes; but this was



her first introduction to the grim tyrant, and she seems to have been determined to make herself thoroughly familiar with his features at once. She astonished everybody by her constant visits to the chamber of death, and the manner in which she contemplated the features, and pressed the hands of the deceased.

From this time the idea of getting rid of her husband gradually ripened into an uncontrollable desire ; but she was at a loss how to set about it. In the meanwhile, in order to augment the interest felt for herself, and reconcile the world to his loss, she maligned him on all hands ; whilst she supplied herself with money, by robbing both him and other persons who lived under the roof with her, and exercised her extraordinary powers of dissimulation, by averting all suspicion from herself. She was still, in the eyes of the world, the most charming and exemplary of women.

Her resolution to despatch her husband, who, whatever his faults were, was only too kind and indulgent to her, was confirmed by a fortune-teller, whom, about this time, she consulted. The woman told her that everybody belonging to her would die off; and that she would then spend the remainder of her life in prosperity and happiness. She afterwards said that her choice of the means was decided by seeing a play of Kotzebue's, in which some very amiable and interesting hero attains his objects by poisoning everybody who stands in the way of them. She, however, from a remarkable degree of delicacy towards her own conscience, always avoided the use of the offensive words *murder* or *poison*—she had recourse to the dainty paraphrase of “giving a person something.”

She now recollected that her mother used to combat the rats and mice, with which her house was infested, by arsenic; and, under pretence that she wanted it for the same pur-

pose, she asked for some. The mother gave it her, bidding her be very cautious to keep it from the children. After an interval, during which her heart seems to have failed her, she administered the first dose to her husband, at breakfast. When he had finished his repast, the poor man went out, whilst she “ascended the stairs, and looked out of the window after him, wondering whether he would be brought home dead.”

He was not brought home, but returned of his own accord, and took to his bed; where she continued to “give him something,” as occasion required. The sufferings of the unfortunate victim were frightful, and for the last four days she kept out of his room; not, as she admitted, from any conscientious pangs, but from an apprehension that he would suspect her; but she stood at the door, listening to his cries and groans. Unhappily for the many she afterwards conducted through the same path of anguish, to the

grave, she was not suspected. On the contrary, he died, committing his wife and children to the care of Gottfried.

She was very apprehensive that the appearance of the body might have suggested some unpleasant ideas to the mother, who had so lately supplied her with arsenic; and when they were nailing down the coffin, she thought "Miltenburg would surely awake with the knocking!"

But no such unfortunate events interfered with her plans. Her father undertook to settle her affairs, and, when all was arranged, she found herself a rich widow. She had suitors too, and offers of marriage, but her preference for Gottfried, who, before her husband's death, had become an inmate of the house, and still remained so, continued undiminished. He, however, made no proposals; and her parents having openly declared that she should never marry him with their consent, she began to entertain serious thoughts

of removing that obstacle, "by giving them something too."

Remorse of conscience she had never felt ; the only feeling that occasionally clouded her satisfaction in the success of her schemes, was the fear of discovery. As time advanced, and impunity gave her confidence, the apprehension in a great degree subsided. The extraordinary strength of her nerves is evinced by the following circumstance. She related, whilst in confinement, that shortly after the death of Miltenburg, as she was standing, in the dusk of the evening, in her drawing-room, she suddenly saw a bright light hovering at no great distance above the floor. It advanced towards her bed-room door, and then disappeared. This recurred on three successive evenings. On another occasion, she saw a shadowy appearance hovering near her : " Ach ! denke ich, das ist Miltenburg seine Erscheinung !" " Alas !

thought I, that is the ghost of Miltenburg!"

Yet did not this impression stay her murderous hand. During the rest of her life, and especially when in prison, she declared she was visited by the apparitions of those she had poisoned; indeed, it was at last the terror these spectres inspired her with, that won her to confession.

It is a very remarkable fact, that for several years Madame Gottfried had a servant girl, called Beta Cornelius, who was herself one of the most honest, industrious, innocent, and pure-minded creatures that ever existed, living in intimate and close communion with her, who yet continued to believe her an angel of goodness. So exalted, indeed, was the girl's opinion of her mistress, that she became occasionally the unconscious instrument of her crimes; and so great was her respect, that she was silent about whatever she saw;

and whatever she was desired to do, she did without question or suspicion.

In the meantime, Gottfried's proposals were not forthcoming; and, believing him to be withheld by the objections her parents made to the match, on the one hand, and by the consideration of her having a family of children on the other, she thought it was time to remove these obstacles out of his way. She said that her resolution, with respect to her parents, had been fortified by the pious and frequently-expressed wishes of the old people, that neither might long survive the other. She also consulted several other fortune-tellers, who all predicted the mortality that was to ensue amongst her connexions. She made no secret of this prophecy, but, on the contrary, frequently lamented that she knew she was doomed to lose her children and all her relations. She always concluded these communications by pious ejaculations, expressing a most perfect



resignation to the will of Providence. "God's will be done! The ways of the Lord are inscrutable, and we must bow to His decrees," &c.

About this time, Frau Timm, the mother, was seized with an indisposition, which continued for a fortnight, and inspired the daughter with lively hopes that the good woman was going to save her the trouble of helping her out of the world. She did not die, however; and, as this illness occurred just as the old couple were changing their residence, the invalid took shelter in her daughter's house, to get out of the way of the bustle. Here she was lodged in a finely-furnished apartment, which she remarked was much too grand for a humble body like her; but Madame Miltenburg, smiling, bade her fancy herself in childbed, a jest which so took the old lady's fancy, that "she shook her sides with laughter."

Three days after this, Frau Timm, having



requested her daughter to step home, for the purpose of fetching some little article she wanted, Madame Miltenburg discovered, amongst her mother's household goods, a small packet of ratsbane, "which, it appeared to her, Providence had lain in her way." She carried it away with her; and on the ensuing night she could not sleep for the thoughts this acquisition suggested.

However, the mother had a relapse, and again the daughter hoped she would leave the world without her aid; but again she was disappointed; and, becoming impatient, she mixed some arsenic in a glass of lemonade, the favourite beverage of the invalid. Just as she was about to administer it, her own little boy, Heinrich, came into the room with a book he had been reading, and asked his grandmother if it were true "that the hand of the undutiful child would grow out of the grave." Gesina said that the boy's innocent question had cut her to the soul; but it did

not stay her hand. As she presented the fatal draught to the old woman, three swallows flew into the room, and settled on the bed; the mother, smiling, said: "See the three pretty birds!" But the knees of the murderess shook, and her heart beat, for she thought they were the harbingers of death! She declared that such a thing had never happened before or since; that no swallows built about the house, or frequented the neighbourhood.

The poison did its work; the dying woman took the sacrament, and bade a tender adieu to her husband and daughter, committing her absent son to the care of the latter. She bade the old man rejoin her quickly in heaven; and he, pressing her hand affectionately, answered: "That in two months he would follow her."

Gesina related that, whilst she was mixing the poison for her mother, she was seized with such a violent fit of laughter, that she

was almost frightened at herself; but she comforted herself with the idea that "her mother would soon so laugh in heaven." By the body, she felt neither pity nor remorse; she was, on the contrary, cheerful, and fortified in the resolution to remove all obstacles out of the way of her desires. Accordingly, on the day of the interment, which was the 10th of May, she gave her youngest girl, Johanna, some arsenic on a bit of the funeral cake. The child fell ill immediately. Mr. Gottfried quieted it with some wine and water, and put it to bed. An hour afterwards, when the mother looked into the cradle, the child was dead. A few days had only elapsed when she despatched her eldest daughter, Adeline, in the same manner. The little girl died in her arms; she was a beautiful child; and when she was gone, the mother had a picture, which happened to resemble her, handsomely framed, and hung in her own room, calling it "her beloved Adeline."

The poor old grandfather was greatly affected by the death of the children, and he daily visited the grave where they and his wife were laid ; but his daughter comforted him with her filial attentions. One day, about a fortnight after the death of Johanna, she gave him, when he called on her, a nice basin of soup. He relished it exceedingly ; and told her that her tender care would prolong his life. When he had taken the soup, she accompanied him to his own house, and left him. That night she did not undress, or go to bed, for she knew she should be sent for.

In the morning, about four o'clock, the expected message came. Father Timm was very ill, and wished to see his beloved daughter. She went, and remained with him till he died. Several witnesses, who recalled the circumstances of the old man's death, declared that whilst she attended him, she was not only calm, but cheerful. She

remembered that wine and water had relieved the sufferings of Johanna, and went to fetch some for her father. When she returned, he was sitting on the ground, talking of his blessed wife, whom he said he saw sitting on the bed waiting for him. He died on the 28th of June.

These deaths caused neither suspicion nor surprise. Her little son Henry alone asked her why God took all her children from her. She said this question was a dagger in her heart, for Henry was her favourite child. This did not, however, prevent her poisoning him also in the ensuing month of September. He seems to have been a remarkably interesting boy, and his sufferings were so intense, that, monster as she was, she relented for a moment as she stood by his bedside. She sent for milk, which she believed to be an antidote; but the child died in inexpressible agonies. He also said he saw those waiting for him that had gone

before. "Oh, mother!" cried he, "see Adeline there! She is standing by the stove. How she smiles on me. There is my father too! I shall soon be with them in heaven!" Was there any fiction so tragic as this!

The rapidity with which all these members of her family had descended to the grave, at length began to excite some notice, and her friends recommended a *post-mortem* examination of the last sufferer. The doctor declared the child had died from intorsusception of the bowels; nobody thought of disputing his judgment; and no more was thought of the matter, except that the amiable Madame Miltenburg was the most unfortunate of women.

These events were followed by a very severe illness which attacked herself, and brought her also to the brink of the grave; without, however, producing any moral effect in her character. The only influence it had

on her conduct was, that from this time she endeavoured to set up a balance of good works, that should outweigh her crimes. She not only relieved the poor that applied to her for aid ; but she sought them out in all directions. Amongst other beneficent acts, she presented a sister of her father's with a bit of land that had fallen to her with the rest of the old man's property.

Her next victim was her brother, who returned very inopportunately from the wars, an invalid and a cripple. There were several powerful motives for putting him out of the way. She was ashamed of him in every point of view. He was not a creditable relation for so elegant a person as Madame Miltenburg ; he would be an impediment to her marriage with Gottfried ; and he would doubtless claim a share of the inheritance.

He arrived on the Friday ; and on the Sunday following she poisoned him. He died, raving about his horse and his mistress ;



and crying "Vive l'Empereur!" This was on the 1st of June, 1816, a year after the decease of her former victims.

All obstacles were now removed, and yet Gottfried made no proposals, although she nursed him through a severe sickness, and her attentions to him were unremitting. At length, however, she became in the family-way, and her honour was at stake. Once and again he promised to marry her, and still drew back; whether influenced by aversion, or an indistinct presentiment of evil, does not appear. For her part, passion was satisfied, and love extinct; but she wanted his name, rank and inheritance. She got her friends to interfere, and the backward lover, at length, gave his word. When they had been asked twice in church, however, she reflected that as he married her on compulsion, they never would be happy together; and that it would be advisable "to give him something too;" nay, that it would be better to do it at once.



When he found himself at the point of death, he would assuredly marry her, and she thus secured the name and the fortune, without the burthen attached to them.

She poisoned him with some almond milk and arsenic, on the day the marriage was proclaimed, and the final ceremony was performed whilst he was writhing in agony. Before he died, he exacted from her a promise that she would never take a third husband; and she declined all subsequent proposals on the plea of this promise to her "blessed Gottfried."

Nobody suspected her; who could have supposed that she had poisoned this long-desired husband on her wedding-day?

She was now Madame Gottfried, Countess of Orlamünde, and from the year 1819 to 1823 she made no use of her dreadful secret; but although she had removed husbands, children and parents out of her path, was she happy? No; she was alone and wretched.

This she admitted in her confessions ; and also that after the death of her little Heinrich she had often felt remorse. “ She could not bear to see other people happy with their children ; the sight of the joyous young creatures passing her house as they came from school pierced her to the heart ; she would shut herself up in her room and weep ; and when the clear moon shone over her head she would survey the estate of which she was now the sole possessor, and ask herself how she had earned it ! ”

But these glimpses of humanity were of short duration. It appeared that “ the blessed Gottfried,” as she always called him, had debts ; there were claims on his estate, and as she spent a good deal of money, and dispensed considerable sums in charity, she soon found herself in want of funds. At this period she seems to have formed a *liaison* with a certain Mr. X., a gentleman of family and fortune ; but being an influential

person, the particulars of his intimacy with her never transpired. Certain it is, however, that he lent her large sums of money, but fortunately for himself he made no advances without taking her bond for the debt. This precaution saved his life; she could have poisoned him, but she could not annihilate the papers. He was the only person connected with her who never tasted of her deadly drugs.

Her acquaintance with this gentleman seems to have introduced her to a great many pleasures. He gave her *fêtes* and parties, presented her with opera tickets, and showered on her all manner of gifts and gallantries. To use her own expressions, "she began to live again; she forgot the past, and thought herself the happiest person in the world!" She had a great many suitors for her hand, and she was surrounded by friends who revered her as a suffering angel. She affected to be very religious; the poor

blessed her, and the rich respected her. This was in 1819; and she looked upon these as some of the happiest days of her life.

The next person she helped out of the world was a gentleman of the name of Zimmerman. He wished to marry her, but marriage, as she admitted in her confessions, was by this time out of the question. Her whole life was a lie; there was no truth about her, inside or out. Her body was made up of paint and paddings, and her conduct was a tissue of deceit and hypocrisy. She could risk no close communion, nor intimate inspection; but although she could not marry him she could borrow money of him on the strength of his love. This she did, and as he had not the prudence of Mr. X., she poisoned him to get rid of the debt.

She also gave a few doses to her old friend Maria Heckendorf, who offended her by some untimely advice—not enough to kill the poor woman, but sufficient to deprive her

of the use of her hands and feet, which, as she lived by her labour, was almost as bad.

After the death of Zimmerman she made a visit to Hanover, where she seems to have been received in the highest society, and to have been universally *fêted* and admired. She received especial kindnesses from a family of the name of Klein, who were irresistibly fascinated by the charms of her manner. During her residence there she wrote the most affectionate letters to the suffering Maria Heckendorf, offering to pay the expenses of her illness, and recommending her resignation to the inflictions of Providence.

Her return to Bremen, however, was less agreeable. She there found her creditors troublesome, and she administered poison in greater or less quantities to a variety of people. One of the most lamentable cases

was that of a young woman, a teacher of music, called Anna Myerholtz, who, by her industry, supported a blind father, eighty years of age. She attended the poor creature in her last agonies, and when her eyes were closed in death, she opened her desk and carried away all the little savings she had accumulated for the support of her now desolate parent.

About this time, being in company with a friend at the theatre, who shed tears at the tragedy of Hamlet, she bade her "not weep, for, thank God, it was only a play!"

To attempt to enumerate the number of persons whose health she utterly destroyed, without absolutely killing them, would be tedious. Every offence or annoyance, however insignificant, was requited with a dose of arsenic. Scarcely a person that came near her escaped when there was anything to be got by their deaths, though it were only a

few dollars. Thus she despatched her good friend Johann Mosees, who had lent her money and wanted to marry her; her faithful servant Beta Cornelius, who had laid by a little hoard of fifty dollars; and the worthy Mr. Klein of Hanover, who had also assisted her with a loan to some considerable amount. Indeed she poisoned the whole of Mr. Klein's family, but he alone died.

One motive for the crime which ultimately rid the world of this monster of wickedness, appears to have been despair. She began to apprehend that Mr. Rumpff suspected her. Indeed, at this time, she thought heaven and earth were leagued together to betray her, and it was satisfactory to learn that some of the agonies she had inflicted on others came home to herself at last. If a storm raged in the atmosphere, or a fire in the town—if a river overflowed its banks, or the neighbours quarrelled in the



street, she thought she was the object of it all. She declared herself persecuted by the apparitions of her victims; and strangely enough sought refuge at the graves to which she had sent them.

But all this terror brought no repentance, nor even surcease; she still administered her fatal drug, and took away the lives of two innocent children; one, the foster son, and only consolation of her unhappy friend Maria Heckendorf.

She was arrested for administering poison to Mr. Rumpff, on the 6th of March, 1828. On her trial, it was clearly established that she had sent fifteen persons out of the world—how many she had incapacitated for living in it with comfort, it was impossible to ascertain precisely, but at least as many more.

With respect to her means of procuring, without exciting suspicion, so constant a



supply of arsenic as she used, she bought it in jars in the form of ratsbane. On one occasion, some of this deadly mixture being offered for sale, when she was at Mr. Klein's, she affected not to know what it was; and on being informed, she requested young Mr. Klein to purchase some for her, as she could not think of touching it herself.

Still, admitting her to have been the most consummate hypocrite that ever existed, her long impunity, and the success of her deceptions, seems incomprehensible. Not only did death follow upon her footsteps, but everybody died of the same malady and with similar symptoms. The persevering ill-luck that attended her, showing itself, however, in no shape but the mortality of her connexions, was a fact so remarkable that it had attracted general notice, and must have been known to many persons of discernment and intelligence in various grades of life; still no glimmering

of the truth aroused them to the investigation of so inexplicable a circumstance.

The art, too, with which she caused the withered and hideous skeleton which enclosed the demon within her, to assume the appearance of freshness and *embonpoint*, is almost equally extraordinary; knowing, as we do, how extremely difficult it is to make art look like nature; and how easily we discern the fictitious from the real, whether in hair, teeth, form, or complexion. Had London or Paris been the scene of Madame Gottfried's adventures, instead of the staid city of Bremen, we incline to think so valuable a secret would not have been permitted to die with her. Some enterprising artist would assuredly have purchased it by paying her counsel, and have thus secured his own fortune.

Besides the terrors she suffered from the supernatural visitations of her murdered

friends, Madame Gottfried was tortured by all sorts of horrible imaginings. Aware of the universal abhorrence and execration of which she was the object, she feared that some strange and terrible death would be invented for her—as that she would be bound to the bodies of her victims, and laid alive in the grave with them; or that she would be flung as food to some wild beasts that happened to be exhibiting in the town at the time.

One of her most trying moments was when she was shown her picture, painted as she really was, stript of all her rags and patches, in the prison dress. The only comfort she derived was from the observation that her nose was still handsome.

Madame Gottfried was not led to the scaffold till three years after her apprehension. She wished very much to die before the moment of execution arrived, and attempted

to starve herself, but had not resolution to abstain from food long enough for her purpose. She requested the attendants, in case they found her dead "to bind up her mouth and wipe the death damps from her face, that she might not look so hideous."

She was extremely afflicted when she saw the unbecoming dress she was to wear on the scaffold, and put it on with the greatest reluctance. She died a hypocrite, as she had lived, affecting a piety and repentance she evidently did not feel. When her head fell beneath the sword of the executioner thousands of voices from the assembled multitude hailed the triumph of that earthly judgment which sent her to her great account before her Heavenly Judge.

Her head, preserved in spirits, and her skeleton in a case, are still to be seen in the Museum of Bremen.

It is a fact worth remarking, that the predominant passion of these three women, Ursinus, Zwanziger, and Gottfried, was an inordinate vanity.



## II.

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### AN ADVENTURE AT TERNI.

IN the early part of the month of October of the year 1822, having passed the night at Spoleto, which still looks as if the fatal earthquake of 1703 had shaken all the inhabitants out of it, we proceeded, after breakfast, over the mountains to Terni, visiting by the way the curious remains of an ancient aqueduct, and an arch called the Arch of Hannibal, under which he is said to have passed in triumph after the battle of Thra-



mene. Though we had but fifteen miles to travel, yet, as we had to creep over the Apennines a great part of them, it was towards the middle of the day when we heard our postilions crying "Via! via!" as we drove up to the door of the hotel at Terni. An odd-looking foreign carriage that impeded our way moved forward upon this summons, and we took its place; and, having alighted, were conducted to a room on the first floor.

"Will there be time enough for us to see the falls to-day?" was our first inquiry; for we were anxious to reach Rome on the following evening, and to do this an early start was necessary.

"Certainly," said the host, "provided your excellencies" (excellencies are cheap there) "do not lose time."

"However, the air of the mountains had given us an appetite, and it was agreed that eat we must before we did anything else;

but it was arranged that, whilst we took our repast, a carriage should be prepared, and that we should set out immediately afterwards. In the meanwhile, we took our seats at the window, and looked abroad to see what was to be seen.

“What is that building opposite?” inquired I of the waiter.

“That is the jail,” he replied.

“And whose carriage is this at the door?” said I; for the odd-looking foreign carriage was still there.

“It belongs to the Count and Countess Z——,” answered he; “they are just going off to the falls.”

Effectively, two minutes afterwards we saw the footman advance to open the door, and presently a gentleman and lady stepped out of the house and entered the vehicle. After handing her in, the Count turned round and said something to the host, which gave us

an opportunity of catching a glimpse of his face. It was a young and handsome one, dark, and somewhat sallow ; his figure, too, was good ; and he was well dressed, in a blue coat, dark trousers, and light waistcoat. Whilst he was speaking, the lady bent forwards to observe him, and as she did so, she caught a view of our English phizzes at the window, and looked up at us.

“ Heavens ! what an Italian face that is ! ”  
I exclaimed to my companion.

“ What do you mean ? ” said he.

“ Why, I mean, ” I replied, “ that there is a ready-made romance in it. ”

“ What sort of a romance ? ” inquired he.

“ Why, ” I answered, “ Vandyke is said to have predicted, on seeing a portrait of Lord Strafford, that he was destined to come to a bad end ; and that lady’s face reminds me of the prediction. There’s surely a very strange expression in those features ! ”

“ She is very handsome,” observed my friend.

“ Very,” I replied ; and so she was—dark complexioned, magnificent full black eyes, a finely formed mouth and nose, though these were rather on the large scale, and with that uniformity of colour, often so beautiful in Spanish and Italian women. She was attired in a pale silk of *ventre de biche*, and wore a delicate pink satin bonnet, and a rich white blond veil. Whilst we were making these observations, the gentleman stepped in, the carriage drove away, and our luncheon being shortly announced, we ceased to think more of the Count and Countess Z——.

As soon, however, as we had satisfied the claims of hunger, we remembered the business that was before us, and calling for our carriage, we proceeded to the foot of Mount St. Angelo, where we alighted, in order to

walk up the hill. There stood the foreign carriage; and I rather hoped that, as its owners were still viewing the falls, we might have another opportunity of inspecting the handsome pair. Some children, who are always in waiting to earn a few pence by showing travellers the way, here joined us, and advancing leisurely on account of the heat, we commenced the ascent.

There were gates at different intervals on the road, at each of which some children were stationed, one or two of whom, after letting us through, generally fell into our train. I think we had passed two or three of these, when we saw several people hastening down the mountain towards us, with a speed that implied they were urged by some more than common motive; and as they drew nearer, we distinguished a clamour, mostly of children, all talking as fast as they could at the top of their voices,

and gesticulating with the utmost violence.

“ *Che sia ?*” (What is the matter ?) said I to our little guides.

“ *Non so,*” (We don't know), said they.

They then carried on a dispute amongst themselves, in which some said “yes,” and others “no;” but we could not understand more of their *patois*. At length one of them, pointing at the advancing group, cried out, with characteristic energy, “ *Si, eccolo !*” (Yes, there he is) ; and on looking forwards, I descried in the midst of the party, walking so fast that he seemed either under the influence of the highest excitement, or else trying to outwalk his companions, the owner of the carriage, Count Z——.

He was bareheaded, his waistcoat was unbuttoned, and one side of his coat was torn clean off from the lappel to the waist. His face—but no—Fuseli might have painted it—words cannot describe it ; the deadly hue,

the white lips, the staring eyes, the horrid distortion of the whole feature !

“ *Che sia ? che sia ?* ” I exclaimed eagerly, as we reached the party.

But they all dashed past us, whilst the whole of our train fell into theirs ; and if my companion had not laid violent hands on one urchin, and prevented his secession, we should have been left standing on the hillside by ourselves. After straining our eyes after them for some minutes, guessing and wondering, and perplexing ourselves as to what had happened and where the lady could be, we resolved to hasten forwards with all the speed we could, in the hope of having our curiosity satisfied, and of perhaps meeting the Countess at the farm-house, or cottage, which we understood was to be found at the top of the mountain.

When we got in sight of this dwelling, our little guide ran forwards ; and we presently saw him talking to a woman



who was standing at the door, and who ultimately appeared to be the only living soul left upon the hill. The woman gesticulated, the boy held up his hands, and I once more called out "*Che sia? Dov'è la donna?*" (Where is the lady?) "*Morta?*" (Dead!) was the reply. "Dead!" we reiterated in amazement.

"Dead!" repeated the woman; "murdered—drowned—gone over the falls—by this time, you would not find a remnant of her as big as my hand—she must be dashed into a thousand pieces amongst the rocks! When the gentleman ascended the hill," she continued, in answer to our questions, "he drove the children back, and desired them not to follow him; and when they reached this place, he threw money to those who wanted to conduct him, saying he knew the falls as well as they did, and needed no guide. Most of them returned; but two, either from curiosity, or in the hope of getting more sous,



followed at a little distance, hiding themselves amongst the trees that border the river. They had not been out of sight above a quarter of an hour, when the children came running back, all aghast and out of breath, to say that the gentleman had conducted the lady to a spot very near where the river falls over the precipice; and that there they saw him stoop down, and look into the water. He then appeared to invite the lady to do the same, and seemed to be showing her something in the stream. The children averred that she appeared unwilling, and that he rather forced her to comply: be that as it may, however, no sooner did she stoop, than, going behind her, he gave her a sudden thrust, and pushed her into the river. She snatched at his breast as she fell; but he tore himself from her grasp, leaving one side of his coat in her hand; and in another instant she was over the edge of the precipice, whirling in the torrent, tossing amongst the rocks;

one piercing scream alone was heard to testify that she was conscious of her fearful fate.

“ Ere the children had well finished their tale,” the woman added, “ the gentleman had himself appeared in the state we saw him.”

Whether he was so overcome by remorse as to be unable to attempt giving the colour he had intended to the transaction, or whether he saw by the demeanour of the people that it would be useless, remains uncertain ; but, whatever his motive might be, he merely glanced at them as he passed, clasped his hands as if in great agony, and then hurried down the mountain at the pace we met him, followed by all the inhabitants. There, then, was my romance, even to the dire catastrophe, completed already !

It may be imagined with what strange and awe-struck feelings we proceeded to view the falls. The river that flows across the top of the hill is called the Velino. On each

side there are trees—I think the willow and the ash—which droop over its margin, and cast a deep shade on the water. We walked along the bank till we approached the torrent, and, within a few yards of the precipice, we thought we could discover the very spot where the catastrophe had happened. The soil on the edge of the bank had evidently been newly disturbed; the grass, too, was impressed and trodden—we concluded by the Count's feet, in the moment of the struggle. There was something white on the ground; we picked it up; it was a little scollop of very fine blond—a morsel of the veil I had admired! We were dumb with horror; for everything was so vividly present to our imagination, that we felt as if we had actually witnessed the murder.

Our anxiety to learn what was going on below rather precipitated our movements; so we descended the hill, and getting into our carriage, drove round to the bottom of the

falls, to take the other view of them. A river, called the Nera, flows round the foot of the mountain, into which the cascade tumbles; and as the clouds of white spray, tinged here and there with many a gorgeous hue, tossed in graceful wreaths before us, we more than once fancied that we caught shadowy glimpses of the veil, the drapery, or the pink bonnet of the poor victim. But these were the mere tricks of imagination. All must have been whirled away by the rush of water, and carried far from the spot before we reached it.

When we arrived at the inn and eagerly inquired for the Count, "He is there," replied the waiter, pointing to the heavy-looking building on the opposite side of the way—"there, in the jail." "And what will they do to him?" said I. The man shrugged his shoulders—" *E nobile* (He is a noble); most likely nothing."

On the following morning we proceeded

on our way to Rome, but not without making arrangements for the satisfaction of our curiosity as to the causes which had led to this melancholy catastrophe. What follows is the substance of what we heard.

The late Count Z—— had two sons, Giovanni and Alessandro. The family was both noble and ancient, but, owing to a variety of circumstances, the patrimonial estates, which had once been large, had been gradually reduced, till there was scarcely enough left to educate the two young men and support them in the *dolce far niente* that became their birth and station. In this strait, the old Count looked about for an alliance that might patch up their tattered fortunes; and it was not long before he found what he wanted, in the family of a Count Boboli. Boboli had been an adventurer; in short, no one knew very well what he had been, for his early history was a secret. All that was known was, that he

had appeared in Rome at the time of the French occupation, and that he had found some means or other of recommending himself to Napoleon, to whom he owed his patent of nobility. He had also found the means of accumulating immense wealth, the whole of which was designed for his beautiful daughter and only child, Carlotta. The Count of a hundred ancestors found no difficulty in obtaining the acquaintance of the new-made noble; and as each could bestow what the other wanted, they very soon understood each other, and a compact was formed between them, well calculated to satisfy the ambition of both. It was agreed that the beautiful Carlotta should become the wife of the Count's eldest son, and, in exchange for the noble name of Z——, should carry with her the whole of her father's immense fortune.

The wedding was appointed to take place the day after Giovanni came of age, of which

period he wanted six months ; and this interval it was that was the cause of all the woe. Giovanni no sooner saw his intended bride than he became desperately in love with her ; never was wealth purchased at a less sacrifice ; he felt he would rather a thousand times resign every ducat of the fortune than resign the lady. He devoted the whole of his time to attending her pleasures and following her footsteps ; and the consequence was, that Alessandro, the younger brother, to whom he was much attached, and who was generally by his side, was thrown much into her company. It seemed to have been universally admitted that Alessandro was the handsomest man of the two ; some said also that he was the most agreeable, but on this point the world appears to have differed. Unfortunately, the mind of the beautiful Carlotta entertained no doubts on the subject ; she resigned her affections, heart and soul, to Alessandro. Relying on her influence



over her father, when she found that she could not fulfil the engagement he had made for her without disgust, she threw herself at his feet, and implored him either to bestow her hand on the younger brother, or to break the compact altogether, and permit her to go into a convent. Neither proposal, however, accorded with the old man's ambition; and the only effect her entreaties had, was, that he adopted means to keep the object of her attachment out of her way, trusting that, when she no longer saw him by his brother's side, she would cease to make comparisons disadvantageous to her intended, and would be resigned, if not happy, to become the wife of Giovanni.

But Carlotta was a woman of sterner stuff than her father had reckoned upon. Absence had no effect upon her passion; opposition rather increased than diminished it; and, at length, a few days before that appointed for the wedding, she took an opportunity of dis-



closing the truth to her unhappy lover, and entreated him, by the love he bore her, to resign her hand himself, and to use all his influence to procure that she should be married to his brother. The poor young man, desperately in love as he was, could at first scarcely believe his misfortune—so near the consummation of his dearest hopes—within three days of the longed-for happiness—and the cup was dashed from his lips! As soon, however, as he had sufficiently collected his senses to speak, he told her that, from the moment he had first seen her, he had only lived to make her happy; and that he had looked forward to spending his days in that, to him, most blessed vocation; but that, since he found that this was a felicity not designed for him, he had nothing more to do with life. Finally, he promised that she should be obeyed, and should become the wife of his brother. He then went home, and, after writing a letter to Alessandro, de-

tailing what had led to the catastrophe, he stabbed himself to the heart.

The younger brother had now become the elder; heir to the title, and the legitimate claimant of the lady's hand and fortune. But, alas! he was no more disposed to marry Carlotta than she had been to marry Giovanni. Old Boboli, by way of separating him from his daughter, had contrived to get him sent to Paris; and, by his interest there, had managed to place him in some situation about the court, where the young man soon found his heart assailed by the charms of the fair Mademoiselle Coralie de la Rivière, who showed herself not insensible to his admiration, and whom he loved with all the intensity that belonged to his nation and to his peculiarly ardent character.

His brother's letter, therefore, was a *coup de foudre*; the titled fortune had no charms for him without Coralie; and, besides, with that instinct that sometimes seems to guide

our loves and our hates, from the very first interview he had with Carlotta, he had taken an aversion to her. However, he obeyed his father's summons to return immediately to the Abruzzi, where stood, frowning amongst the mountains, the old Castle of Z——, but with a firm determination to refuse the hand of Carlotta, in spite of every means that should be used to influence him. But when people make these resolutions they should take care to keep themselves out of the reach of everybody whose interest it is to induce them to break them. We are all apt to think resolutions much less brittle things than they are, till they have been tried in the furnace. Although Alessandro from the first had boldly declared that nothing should ever persuade him to marry a woman whom he had always hated, and whom he now hated infinitely more, since she had been the cause of his brother's cruel death, his father's pertinacity did not give way one inch ; whilst he

found his aversion by no means diminished, his resolutions gradually gave way before the old man's firmness on the one hand, his mother's tears and entreaties on the other, and his own horror at the idea of his ancient house and all its ancestral honours sinking into utter penury and hopeless obscurity, when it was in his power, by marrying the heiress, to restore it to all its original splendour.

Whether, at this time, any fore-falling shadow of the future had passed before his eyes—whether the idea that he might wed Carlotta, secure the fortune, and then find means to be again a free man, had ever presented itself to his mind—whether he had allowed it to dwell there—whether he had given it welcome—hugged it, cherished it, resolved on it—can now never be known; but, certain it is, that he suddenly changed his mind, avowed himself prepared to obey his father's commands, and ready to lead the

daughter of Boboli to the altar. The period for the wedding was then fixed; but in the meantime he returned to Paris, where he said the duties of his office called him.

When the time arrived that he should have re-appeared, he wrote an excuse, alleging that he was still detained by business; and this he continued to do, week after week, till the period appointed for the wedding was close at hand. At length, on the evening before that fixed for the ceremony, he reached home. He had travelled, he said, with the greatest speed, having only been able to obtain a certain number of days' leave; and added, that the very moment the marriage was solemnized, the bride must be prepared to step into his travelling carriage, and accompany him back to Paris. Carlotta, who, with her father and other members of both families, was waiting for him at the Castle of Z——, made no objection to this arrangement. She must have been aware that he did not marry

her from choice; but the amount of his aversion, or that he had another attachment, she did not appear to have even suspected. She probably imagined that the wealth and importance he was attaining by her means, and the compliment she had paid him by her decided preference, were sufficient to expiate the wrong she had done his brother; and trusted to her beauty and her love to accomplish the rest. Or perhaps, under the influence of an uncontrollable passion, she never paused to think of anything but its gratification, at any cost.

However this may be, they met with calm decorum in the presence of the family, and of the society assembled at the castle; but it was afterwards remembered that, after the first salutation, he had never been seen to address her. On the following morning there was a great deal of business to be transacted, many arrangements to be made, and he was so fully occupied till night, that the young

couple scarcely met till the hour appointed for the solemnization of his marriage, when he and his friends entered at one door, whilst the bride and her party advanced by the other. The company were magnificently attired; the chapel blazed with light, the pillars were twined with wreaths of flowers, the air was redolent with the perfumes of the incense; but the bridegroom stood with averted eyes, and it was observed that when the ceremony was concluded, he did not approach his bride, but turned away and addressed his mother.

The whole party now withdrew to the *salle à manger*, and supped; but ere the repast was well over, Alessandro's servant entered to announce that the carriage was at the door, and all was ready; whereupon the bride and bridegroom rose, and after a hasty farewell to their friends and relatives quitted the room.

“You'll reach Terni to breakfast,” said



Boboli, as he conducted his daughter through the hall.

“Yes—to a late breakfast,” replied Alessandro.

“Let us hear of you from thence,” said Boboli.

“You shall hear of us from Terni,” replied Alessandro.

“Adieu, my dear father!” cried Carlotta, waving her handkerchief as they drove off.

“Adieu, my child! adieu! May the Virgin protect you!” cried Boboli, as he turned and re-entered the castle.

Many of the party asserted afterwards that she had appeared agitated and uneasy during the supper; and some declared that they had observed her watching her young husband's countenance with an eye of terror and perplexity. Her maid, too, affirmed that she was quite certain her lady's heart had failed, and that she had some misgivings that evil



awaited her. "When I gave my lady her shawl and bonnet," she said, "she shook like an olive leaf; and when I asked her if anything was wrong, all she said was—' *Madre di Dio, pietà ! pietà !* ' "

They travelled all night—at least all the remainder of the night, for it was past midnight when they started—only stopping to change horses, and had arrived at Terni to a late breakfast, as Boboli had predicted. Whilst the breakfast was preparing, the young Countess changed her dress; and the maid asserted that she here again betrayed considerable agitation, and that she heard her say to herself, "*Ahi ! mio padre ! ah ! Giovanni !*" The waiter and the host who had attended them, remarked that she ate nothing, swallowing only a little wine; and that the Count himself appeared to have little appetite. No conversation passed between them, till, suddenly, her husband asked her if she was ready. She started at

the sound of his voice, as if it were something unusual to her; but immediately rose from her seat, and said yes. "Come, then," he said, and giving her his arm, he conducted her down stairs. The horses for the falls had been ordered by the servant immediately on their arrival, and were now waiting at the door; and it was at the precise period our story has now reached, that we had looked out of the window, and saw them enter the carriage and drive away.

"What did he say to you," I inquired of the host, "when he turned to speak to you on the steps?"

"He desired me to have horses ready for Spoleto, as they should start the moment they returned from the falls."

"Your waiter says he will escape because he is noble—is that so?"

"*E possibile*," (It is possible) replied the host, shrugging his shoulders.

But he did not escape: the young Count

Alessandro Z—was condemned and executed ; partly, however, through the strong interest that Boboli made against him. Nothing more of the mystery was ever disclosed, except to his confessor. “ He died, and made no sign.”

### III.

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## THE BURGOMASTER AND THE BEGGAR.

IN the southern part of Holland there are two villages, the one called Hoogvliet, the other Spykenis, separated by a broad stream, over which there is established, at that spot, a ferry. On a gloomy autumn afternoon, about fifty years ago, there arrived at Hoogvliet two travellers, an elderly man and a young one, who, having discharged the vehicle in which they had come, walked down to the ferry,

crossed it, and proceeded to the little inn on the opposite side, where the latter inquired for a carriage to convey them on their way. There was, however, no such thing to be had ; and, having expressed his disappointment rather sharply, he proposed to the other that they should enter the house and take some refreshment. This they did, remaining up stairs about half an hour, at the expiration of which time they came down, paid for what they had taken, and then separated—the elderly man going forwards, and the young one recrossing the ferry to Hoogvliet, where, having called at the inn to inquire if he had left a small portmanteau there, and being answered in the negative, he desired if such an one were found, that they should keep it safe till his return, which would be in about a month or six weeks. He then proceeded on his way, no one knew whither. Shortly afterwards there came on a violent storm of thunder, lightning, and rain, such as had not

occurred in that region for several years. The tempest continued little more than three-quarters of an hour, and then all was calm and still as before.

On that same evening, about three hours later, there came down to the ferry, on the Spykenis side, a blind beggar and his dog ; but as the usual hour for travellers was past, the watermen were gone, and when he called " Ferry !" no one immediately answered to his call. He was just about to turn away and seek the men, when he heard a foot hastily approaching, and a voice bade him stay. " I'll run up to the inn," cried the voice, " and bring down the other man, if you will wait five minutes."

Accordingly the beggar, who was weary with his walk, seated himself on the bank, but nearly twenty minutes had elapsed ere the man returned, accompanied by his comrade, and when they did arrive, the latter, who was evidently out of temper at being sum-

moned from his schnapps, was not at all pleased by finding that his enjoyments had been interrupted for nobody of more consequence than a blind beggar. However, having got so far, they handed the traveller into the boat, and were about to put off, when the beggar cried out, "My dog! my dog! Do not go without my dog!" whilst at the same time he whistled to the animal, and bade him follow him. "Come, Pfiffer, come!" cried he; but Pfiffer made no motion to obey. On the contrary, he stood on the bank, barking and growling, and occasionally howling, with his nose up in the air, as if he smelt mischief.

"What's the matter with him?" inquired the second man—he who had been fetched from the inn. "Is he afraid of water?"

"Not that I know," answered the beggar. "He always comes into a boat after me, ready enough. Come, Pfiffer, come."

"Take him up, Peter, and lift him in,"



said the same man. "We shall be kept here all night with the brute."

But the person addressed, although sitting nearest the shore, not being disposed to a closer acquaintance with Pfiffer's teeth, preferred assisting the beggar to that end of the boat, in order that he might lift the dog himself, which he did, concluding the operation with a slight kick for the trouble he had occasioned, and bidding him at the same time lie down and be quiet.

Pfiffer did lie down, but to be quiet seemed out of his power. He was evidently very uneasy, and although sensible of his master's displeasure, he somewhat suppressed the manifestation of his disturbance, he could not forbear relieving himself by a series of low growls and howls.

"I never knew the dog do so before," observed the beggar. "I think the storm must have frightened him."

"Dogs often foresee danger when we know

nothing about it," said the second boatman. "Take care no mischief befalls you on the other side. Do you remember, Peter," added he, "how that gentleman's dog whined and howled, for all the world like this beast, when he was brought down to the boat?"

"And did anything happen to the gentleman?" inquired the beggar.

"When he was half-way over, he jumped overboard and drowned himself," returned the same speaker. "I believe he'd got leads in his pockets, for he never came up again."

"When did this happen?" asked the beggar.

"About this time last year," answered the man. "For my part, I always feel queer like when I see a dog taking on so for nothing at all. My mind misgives me: he knows something that I don't."

In spite of these ill omens, however, they reached the other side in safety. The beggar and his dog were set on shore, and the boat-

men, without waiting for a fare, as it was so late, returned to their schnapps at Spykenis.

This beggar had a daughter residing at Hoogvleit in no very bad circumstances, and it was to visit her that he had crossed the stream. As begging was the only way he could make money, he preferred wandering over the country with his dog to staying at home, but so managed his peregrinations that he generally contrived to see this, his only connexion, once in two or three years. As was his custom, he remained with her a couple of weeks, and then re-crossed the ferry, on which occasion, to his surprise, the dog evinced exactly the same unwillingness to enter the boat, and the same discontent, when he was in it, as on the previous one. The boatman remarked that it was clear Pfiffer was born to be drowned, and had, therefore, a horror to the water; to which the beggar answered, that it was very strange, since he had crossed not only that ferry, but a hun-

dred others, in his time, and the dog with him, and that he had never seen him behave in that way before.

Being set on shore, the blind man walked up to the inn, where he took a glass of schnapps, and then, with Pfiffer, proceeded on his way, having told the host, who knew him, that he would not see him again till that time two years, at the earliest. Not many hours had elapsed, however, before he returned, in company with the blacksmith of the village, whom he had met on the road. The occasion of his return he related as follows :

“ It is about a fortnight,” said he, “ since I passed this way before. It was the day of the great storm, which had, indeed, detained me, and made me later than I intended to be. I came by the Yssel road, and when I got to the top of the little rise, where there is a wood on one side, my dog became very uneasy, barking and howling in an unusual manner. He even slipped his string out of

my hand, and left me. At the same time I heard a low moaning not far from me, and I called out to know if anything was the matter? whereupon a voice answered:

“ ‘It’s nothing of any consequence. My fellow-traveller is taken rather poorly, and we are resting here a little.’

“Immediately afterwards the dog uttered a cry as if somebody had struck him, and returned to me, and I came on, thinking no more of the matter, till I reached the same spot to-day, when the dog’s uneasiness recurred, and he left me as before; and this time I called him in vain; I could not get him to return. Whilst I was standing still, perplexed what to do, I heard some one approach, and, hailing the stranger, I told him what had happened.”

“Yes,” said the blacksmith, taking up the story at this point. “I came up just as he was at a dead lock; so, misgiving there was something wrong, from his account of the

business, I stepped to where I heard the dog whining, and there, just at the edge of the wood, what should I see but a man lying dead !”

“ Dead !” echoed the bystanders.

“ Murdered, I’m afraid !” said the blacksmith, with a portentous shake of the head.

As crime was by no means frequent in that neighbourhood, everybody was shocked and surprised, and great was the excitement in the village. The bailiff was informed of the circumstance, and, accompanied by half the population, including the host of the inn he proceeded to the spot indicated by the blacksmith, and there sure enough lay the body of a man apparently belonging to the respectable classes—his clothes at least indicated as much ; but, except a pocket-handkerchief and some letters, nothing was found about him. The natural conclusion was that he had been robbed ; that he had been mur-

dered was, alas ! too evident. He was a stout, elderly man ; and the host, as soon as he got near enough to see the face, announced that he recognised him as one of the two travellers that had called at his house on the day of the storm.

“One of them,” said he “went back directly to Hoogvliet ; the other set off by this road on foot, because our gig was out, and we couldn’t give him a conveyance till next day ; and this is the man, I am sure. He walked a little lame, and I wondered at his going away on foot, but his companion said he had business which obliged him to go forward. He was a foreigner, too, and spoke in a foreign language to his friend, though the latter, from his tongue, was a Dutchman.”

The body was brought down to the village, and investigations were set on foot to discover the assassin. By the letters found in his pocket, it was ascertained that the name of



the victim was Lucchesini, an Italian, who travelled for a great mercantile house at Leghorn; but with regard to the assassin, it was difficult to arrive at even a suspicion. His fellow-traveller had notoriously recrossed the stream, and gone the other road, and no one had been seen abroad that could be open to implication. There lay also great difficulties in the way, from the circumstance of the principal witness being blind. No one had seen the murderer except the dog; but the beggar avowed that his ears would in this instance answer every purpose; "for," said he, "if I ever hear again the voice that answered me from the wood, I shall recognise it at any distance of years."

In due time, no light being thrown on the affair, the body was interred, a letter written to Leghorn to announce the death of a traveller called Lucchesini, and the beggar permitted to proceed on his way. About three months afterwards the companion of the



murdered man—he who had recrossed the ferry, and gone back in search of his portmanteau—arrived, by the same conveyance as formerly, at Hoogvliet; and, being recognised by the innkeeper, was informed of what had occurred—a piece of intelligence at which he seemed little concerned, “for,” said he, “he was no friend of mine, but a mere accidental acquaintance, picked up on the road.” He made some inquiries into the particulars of the assassination and robbery, and also with regard to the name and condition of the victim, of which it appeared he was ignorant, and then went on his way. In process of time a letter arrived from Leghorn, desiring all papers found on the deceased to be forwarded thither; and there the matter ended, and was ere long forgotten.

Five years had elapsed since the occurrence of these events, when a person calling himself Joachim Binder appeared at Leerdam, and established himself there as a druggist. He

was a man yet in the prime of life, but grave, austere, and unsocial. He spent half his time in chapels and conventicles, associated with none but the most rigorous sectarians, and not only abstained from all profane pleasures himself, but uncompromisingly condemned those who indulged in them. Nobody knew who he was, nor whence he came; but as his conduct was unexceptionable, though he was little liked, he was tolerably well respected, and by the profligate members of the community a good deal feared.

There was one exception, however, with regard to his exclusiveness, which astonished everybody. The neighbourhood of Leerdam is famous for the rearing of horses, and the annual fair there is much frequented by dealers in that animal. Amongst these, and certainly not one of the most exemplary, was a person called Peter Clever, who, whenever he came to the fair, took up his residence at Binder's house; and whilst his host was

dilating behind his counter on the sinfulness of all worldly pleasures, the guest was drinking and roaring in the opposite public-house, which he never quitted till he was scarcely able to walk across the way to his bed. It is true that Binder shook his head gravely at these immoral proceedings, but still he put up with them, though the neighbours thought they observed that the departure of Clever was always a great relief to him, as, indeed, it was natural it should be. It was also remarked that the horse-dealer, when in liquor, spoke with considerable contempt of his friend the druggist, and he had been even heard to say, that, in spite of Binder's prayers and church-goings, he would fare no better in the next world than himself; but if, when he was sober, any one ventured to ask the meaning of these insinuations, he evinced so much displeasure and irritation, that the too curious inquirer was quickly silenced.

Binder had resided upwards of three years

in Leerdam, and, being no longer a novelty, had ceased to excite attention, when some political excitement, in which he took a part, brought him again into notice. He even broke through his customary habits on this occasion, and more than once attended public meetings and dinners, for the purpose of declaring his sentiments and supporting the party he had adopted, which was of course that of the Church. It happened that the recurrence of the annual fair at this period brought Clever to Leerdam, and although he, as usual, lived in Binder's house, it was soon perceived that they differed in opinion with regard to the political question then under discussion. The dispute, indeed, occasionally ran rather high between them, till at length one night it amounted actually to a quarrel. Fierce words passed, in the course of which some insinuations were thrown out by the horse-dealer, that visibly shook the soul of his friend, who, livid from suppressed rage,

with clenched teeth and fiery eyes, sat glaring at him like a tiger; whilst Clever, unmercifully pursuing his triumph, carried the company with him, and completed the discomfiture of the druggist, who presently rose and sulkily left the room.

It was now nearly midnight, and at one o'clock the party broke up, by which time Clever was a good deal intoxicated. Two of the company walked with him to the end of the street, and then, their homes lying in different directions, they separated, and he proceeded towards Binder's house alone. But he never reached it. Less than half an hour had elapsed when he was discovered by some revellers of the night, stretched on the pavement, not far from Binder's house, with a fractured skull. He was not quite dead, and had just time to designate his host as his assassin before he expired.

The body of the horse-dealer being disposed of in the police-office, and the autho-

rities made acquainted with the circumstances, they proceeded immediately in search of Binder. On reaching his door they rang and knocked for some time in vain, and they were beginning to conclude he had already made away, when an upstairs window opened, and, putting out his head, he cried, as addressing Clever : “ What are you standing there ringing and knocking for, when the door’s open? Why don’t you come in and go to bed ?” whereupon he angrily closed the window and disappeared ; and they, lifting the latch, found that what he had said was true. There is no doubt that this circumstance created a certain reaction in his favour, and some of those who had before been proposing to break open the door and seize him, now slackened their movements and fell behind, somewhat shaken in their convictions. However, preceded by the constable, they advanced to the door of Binder’s chamber, which they found locked.

“Get along, man, will you, and go to bed!” cried he.

“Open the door,” said the constable.

“I won’t open the door to a drunken rascal like you!” cried the other. “Go to bed, I say, and I’ll talk to you to-morrow.”

Upon this they proceeded to explain that it was not Clever, but the constable, that demanded admittance, on hearing which, he was heard to jump out of bed, and hastily opening the door, he inquired what they wanted.

“Your friend Clever is dead,” said they. “He has just been found in the street, with a fractured skull.”

“No more than he deserves, the drunken rascal!” returned Binder. “I always expected he would come to some such end. Fell down, I suppose.”

“No; murdered,” answered the constable; “knocked on the head with a stone.”



“ God bless me !” exclaimed Binder, “ who can have done that ?”

“ He says you did it,” answered the constable.

“ I do it !” said Binder, in a tone of careless contempt. “ Why, I left him drinking and came home to bed two hours ago. At least, I have been to sleep some time. What o’clock is it ?”

“ Two o’clock,” answered the constable.

“ Well, it was exactly twelve when I reached my own door,” returned the druggist. “ However, I’ll put on my clothes and go with you. Just step up stairs, and wake the servant, will you, and tell her I am going out.”

Upon this, the constable and one or two of the party ascended to the maid’s room, where they found her so fast asleep that it required some exertion to wake her.

“ What do you want ?” cried the girl,



sitting up in evident alarm at seeing three or four men standing by her bedside.

“ We came to tell you that your master is going out.”

“ Going out !” she said, looking puzzled and confused. “ What’s he going out for in the middle of the night ? He hasn’t been long home.”

“ Did you hear him come home ?”

“ Hear him ? Yes, to be sure I did. Didn’t I let him in ?”

“ You let him, did you ? At what o’clock ?”

“ It struck twelve just as he rang at the bell,” said she.

“ Why did you sit up for him ?”

“ Because I always sit up for him, to be sure, to give him his hot water. But what’s the matter ? What is he going out for ?”

When they told her what the matter was, she seemed more surprised than shocked at the death of Clever. “ He was such a drink-

ing, quarrelsome fellow," she said, "there was no wonder he had got knocked on the head." But when they told her that her master was accused of the murder, she appeared both indignant and incredulous, saying, she "would as soon believe she had done it herself."

By this time a perfect revolution had taken place in the minds of the bystanders, and even the constable began to think he was on a wrong scent. However, his orders were to seize Binder, and Binder being perfectly willing to go, they all set off, as soon as he was dressed, to the police-office, where the first thing the accused did was to ask to see the body of his supposed victim, which, on its being shown to him, he contemplated with the most entire indifference. On some surprise being expressed that he was not more moved at the death of his friend, he denied that he had entertained any friendship for Clever. "How could he entertain a friendship for a man of such a character and

such habits?" he said ; adding, that it was simply old acquaintance, and the having known each other as boys, that was the bond between them. "He did not come more than once a year," said he, "and then I put up with him ; but I was always glad when he was gone."

In spite of the growing conviction that Clever's accusation had been the result of error or revenge, Binder remained in custody, and measures were taken to procure evidence against him, but none could be found. That he had actually gone home at twelve o'clock was satisfactorily proved, not only by the testimony of the girl, but also by that of a neighbour, who had walked home with him from the place where they supped, and only left him when he saw him enter his own door. Not to dilate on the details of the investigation, it is sufficient to mention that the result was the acquittal of Binder, the authorities having arrived at the conclusion

that Clever had been killed in a drunken brawl, which at that season of political excitement and festivity was by no means improbable.

The druggist therefore returned to his shop and resumed his former mode of life. If any change was observable in him, it was that he had grown more pious and less austere; he seemed desirous of avoiding offence, and rather charitably lamented than harshly condemned, as he had formerly done, the peccadilloes of his neighbours. Nevertheless, it is difficult for a man who had been once accused of a murder to recover completely his place in society. Acquitted though he be, a cloud still hangs over him, and this was the case with Binder; his former associates did not withdraw from him wholly, but there was a shyness which no man could forbear seeing and feeling; and it was perhaps owing to this alienation of the world that he bethought himself of taking a wife.

He married a very poor but respectable woman, to whom a secure subsistence was a sufficient temptation to induce her to overlook the shadow that darkened her husband's reputation. They appeared to live well together, had in process of time two children, and, by the decency and decorum of their domestic life, had pretty well obliterated the stain on Binder's character, when he was elected, with the full consent of his fellow-townsmen, to the office of burgomaster—a circumstance which seemed to afford him considerable gratification, whilst the manner in which he discharged his duties gave equal satisfaction to his constituents.

It happened that the town of Leerdam had at that period some dispute with its neighbours regarding the settlement of the poor. The inhabitants feeling themselves oppressed, accused Gorcum of easing themselves at their expense, whilst the Gorcumites retorted the charge; and as Binder had

begun to taste the sweets of popularity, he did not neglect to ensure the favour of his fellow-townsmen by a vigorous defence of their rights in this particular. With this view he made an arrangement, which he strictly enforced, that all poor strangers should be reported to him on their arrival within the township, in order that if they had no ostensible means of living he might have them under his eye.

Now, although this zeal for their interests was very agreeable to the people of Leerdam, it was frequently very much the reverse to the poor travellers, who found themselves seized and dragged before the burgomaster, like criminals; and it was naturally the most decent and well-conducted that took it the worst; but the magistrate, having the citizens on his side, cared little for their complaints, and, in spite of them, persevered unflinchingly in his scheme. Now and then, some person, more than usually refractory,

got twenty-four hours in the house of correction to teach him submission; and one day the constables having laid hands on a decent-looking, old, blind man, who with a dog, grey with age, had made his appearance in the streets, they threatened, in answer to his objurgation, that if he did not go quietly they would shut him up. Of course, this menace did not soothe the poor stranger's temper, and when he arrived at the town-house it was in a considerable state of irritation.

“ I never did any harm,” said he ; “ what am I brought up here for, like a criminal ? I've been in this town many a time, but never was served so before ; what's your authority for treating me as if I was a thief or a murderer ? ”

“ Hush ! it's the burgomaster's orders,” answered the officer ; “ and you are no worse treated than other people.”



“ We accuse you of nothing,” said the burgomaster, “ only—”

“ Eh? Who speaks? Be quiet, Pfiffer!” said the beggar, giving the dog’s string a tug.

“ We accuse you of nothing,” reiterated the burgomaster: “ we only question your right to settle yourself in this town. Where were you born?”

“ Where was I born?” repeated the beggar, visibly agitated, whilst his face flushed crimson; “ where was I born?”

“ Ay; don’t you understand the question?” said the burgomaster, authoritatively. “ Where do you come from?”

“ Where do I come from?” repeated the beggar with a loud voice and excited countenance, whilst he stretched forth his arm and pointed his forefinger to the spot whence Binder’s voice proceeded, “ I come from the hill above Spykenis, on the road to Yssel,

where, on a Thursday night, now thirteen years ago, a traveller, named Lucchesini, was robbed and murdered. I heard the groans of the victim and the voice of the murderer—and that voice is yours! See! the very dog accuses you!”

And certainly the agitation the animal betrayed, seemed to warrant the assertion. But concluding the stranger to be insane or intoxicated, the bystanders were about to seize him, when a sudden noise drew their attention, and on looking round, they perceived that the burgomaster had fallen from the bench to the ground, where he lay as if dead.

“ All that I have said is true,” rejoined the beggar; “ perhaps after so long a time I might have let him alone; but I spoke it out in anger, and, now I have told it, I cannot retract.” He then related all the particulars he knew regarding the death of Lucchesini; and whilst he was detained in order

to give further evidence, the burgomaster was removed to his own house, and there kept under surveillance. The first words he uttered on recovering his senses were these :  
“ The arm of the Lord reacheth afar !”

He never arose from the bed on which he was then laid, and without persuasion or interrogation he confessed the whole of his crimes. He seemed to think himself so visibly struck by the hand of the Almighty, that resistance or subterfuge were vain ; and it is remarkable, that fearful as was the confession he had to make, nobody when they heard it expressed much surprise. The gloss of good opinion he had won reached no further than the surface ; a strange instinct, almost unknown to themselves, lay deep in the hearts of his fellow-citizens, and bade them mistrust him.

“ I was born at the Hague,” said he, “ of decent parents, and early became a clerk in a merchant’s house ; but, being found not trust-

worthy, I was discharged, and went to service. The master with whom I lived was an architect, and with him I travelled to Italy, where remaining two years, I learned to speak the Italian language. Shortly after our return he died, and I was living at Amsterdam, as occasional waiter at an inn, when Lucchesini came to it. He could not speak a word of either German or Dutch, and, as I could speak Italian, he found me extremely useful to him; and after living a week in the house, he proposed my accompanying him in his tour through Germany. I accepted the proposal, and the people of the inn, who knew nothing against me, giving me a good character, we started together.

“ I had no baggage but a knapsack; for the truth is, I had nothing to carry, having been reduced by my own profligacy to the extremity of distress before I took the situation at the inn in which Lucchesini found

me. He had a small portmanteau, in which I knew he carried money, and about which I observed he was always extremely anxious ; notwithstanding which, he one day left it behind, and never discovered his loss till we had crossed a ferry, and reached a village called Spykenis. For my part, I was well aware that we were leaving the portmanteau behind ; but as I had been for some days plotting how to get possession of it myself, I said nothing till we had crossed the ferry, expecting that he would send me back for it ; and so it happened. His first proposal was to wait at Spykenis for my return ; but, finding there was no carriage to be had, he resolved to walk forward, sure, that as he was lame and a bad walker, I could overtake him if I pleased, or at all events rejoin him at Yssel.

“ I accordingly left him to go on alone, whilst I recrossed the ferry without the slightest intention of returning. When I

reached Hoogvliet, seeing a small cart at the door of the inn, it occurred to me that the portmanteau might have been sent after us, and I went in to inquire—a proceeding which afterwards served me extremely well, since it established the fact of my recrossing the ferry and setting off in another direction.

“I soon found the portmanteau, which, having no address on it, the people willingly resigned to me, supposing it to be mine; but now the demon of avarice seized me, and I began to think myself a fool to be contented with part, when I might have the whole; for Lucchesini had not only a well-filled purse in his pocket, but carried about him a gold watch and a handsome silver snuff-box.

“I determined therefore not to rejoin him till he reached Yssel; and as I knew the house he was to put up at, I made my arrangements to arrive there at night after he was

gone to bed, and having possessed myself of his property, to make off at once. With this view, I started on my way back to the ferry, in spite of a violent storm which drenched me to the skin. Indeed the storm rather favoured my scheme than otherwise, as it drove everybody from the road, and I had a better chance of passing unobserved. I drew my hat over my face, and tied a handkerchief across my chin, wishing, if possible, to escape recognition at the ferry; but when I arrived there, I found no boatmen, the tempest having driven them to shelter. There was, however, a small boat with a couple of sailors in it, belonging to a ship that was lying on the other side of the river, and as they were just going across, they offered to take me with them. I accepted, and, being landed at Spykenis, I started on the road to Yssel.

“I had allowed plenty of time for Lucchesini to get the start of me, bad walker as he was; but, unhappily overtaken by the storm,



he had sought shelter and been delayed, so that when I little thought he was so near, I came suddenly upon him. He was sitting by the side of the road, on the borders of a little wood, tying his shoe. Whether he heard my foot I cannot say; probably not; for I was walking on the grass, but he did not look up. The loneliness of the place, his stooping attitude, which gave me such an advantage over him, together with the demon of cupidity that was in me, urged my hand, and I struck him on the head with a heavy stick I carried with me; but what was my dismay to find myself at the same moment seized by a strong arm from behind! ‘Hallo! what are you at there?’ cried a voice, and on looking round I recognised one of the ferrymen who had rowed Lucchesini and myself across the river. He had had a few hours’ leave to visit his mother, who was ill, and was returning through the wood, from which he happened to emerge at that critical moment.”

Not to dwell on painful details, let it suffice to say, that by allowing him to share in the spoils, Binder succeeded in purchasing the silence of the boatman, who, as will be readily understood, was no other than Peter Clever. It was at this juncture that the blind man came up, and whilst Binder answered his inquiry, Peter gave a kick to the too curious dog, which it was clear the animal did not forget when he was desired to get into the boat.

When the guilty pair parted, Binder flattered himself that Clever would not recognise him should they meet at any future period ; but in this hope he was disappointed. As soon as the investigations were terminated, alarmed lest they should be renewed, Clever quitted Spykenis, and, as chance would have it, ere long found himself in a canal boat with his companion in crime, both on their way to Rotterdam. A recognition and a sort of partnership, in which fear on Binder's side

was the only bond, ensued, and lasted for some time, till Clever taking to horse-dealing, the other seized the occasion to break from him, and settle himself in a more reputable mode of life. It was then he came to Leerdam, and appeared as the grave and pious citizen we there found him; nor were the gravity and piety altogether assumed. The blood he had spilt haunted his conscience, and he sought more, perhaps, by austerity and external forms than by inward purification, to reconcile himself to Heaven. But Clever was his evil genius still; disgracing him by his disorderly visits, and terrifying him with threats or sarcasms, according to the humour he was in, till his patience was exhausted, and under the influence of fear and hatred he slew him. It had been his intention on that fatal night to wait his guest in the street, but the circumstance of his neighbour accompanying him, forced him to go home first. When the maid had retired to bed, he went quietly

out, waylaid his victim, accomplished his purpose, and was at home again, and in his chamber, time enough to receive the visit of the constable.

Joachim Binder paid the penalty of his crime, eminently illustrating his own words, *that the arm of the Lord reacheth afar !*

## IV.

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### THE SURGEON'S ADVENTURE.

IN the year 1836, as a young surgeon of Florence, called Alberto Riquetti, was returning at a late hour to his own house, he stumbled over the body of a person who was lying near his door, and crying feebly for help. Ever anxious to succour the distressed, Riquetti, with the assistance of his servant, lifted the stranger into his surgery, where he dressed several very dangerous wounds which he found about his person; and then, as the

night was too far advanced to carry him anywhere else, he put him to bed.

On the following morning he found the patient so ill, that he entertained very little hopes of his recovery ; and as to remove him would have been indisputably fatal, he allowed him to remain where he was. On the second day he was so bad that Riquetti doubted his surviving four-and-twenty hours longer ; and having acquainted him with his situation, he proceeded to inquire his name and station, and sought to ascertain if he had any friends, or relations whom he would desire to see, or to whom, should his death ensue, he would wish the event to be communicated. The man answered that, with respect to his name he was called Gasparo ; but for the rest, he requested that a confessor might be sent for, to whom he would make known whatever was necessary.

This desire was complied with, and what passed between the patient and the priest,

of course remained unknown. But when the holy man came forth from the stranger's chamber, his whole demeanour denoted awe and terror; his cheeks and lips were bloodless; his hands trembled; and ever and anon he lifted them up to heaven, as if praying for the soul of a great sinner. The only words he uttered were, to desire that, when the man he had confessed was dead, he should be immediately informed of the circumstance.

However, Gasparo did not die. He was in the prime of life; and a good constitution, and the constant care of the surgeon, saved him. As soon as he was well enough to walk away, he left his benefactor's house, expressing the most ardent gratitude for Riquetti's kindness, and calling down blessings on his head for the persevering skill and care which had rescued him from the grave; but he went as he came, unknown; no word had he ever dropped that threw the slightest ray of light on his past history or future where-



about, and in the memory of the young surgeon he lived only as *Gasparo, the wounded stranger*.

In the winter of 1839, Alberto Riquetti was seized with an indisposition, for which, as it had been chiefly induced by too much application to his business, a little recreation was pronounced the best remedy. So, with this view he resolved on an excursion to Rome, where he promised himself much pleasure in inspecting the antiquities, more especially the ancient Etruscan tombs, which had lately excited so much interest amongst the learned, and most of which were within a short distance of the city.

For the sake of those who may yet be unacquainted with the history of these curious relics, it may be as well to mention, that the Etrurians were a celebrated people of Italy, anterior to the Romans, and occupying the country west of the Tiber. The extent of territory which they possessed, though not

great, was nevertheless divided into twelve different states, each of which was governed by its respective king, or, as they called him, *lucumon*; and in spite of the diminutive space they occupied on the globe, they were, relatively to their neighbours, a very powerful people, wealthy, luxurious, and refined. The taste and proficiency they had attained in the fine arts, as well as much of their manners, customs, and modes of living, have been placed before us in a very extraordinary manner, by the discovery of the ancient tombs above alluded to, which are, in fact, small chambers hollowed out of the sides of hills, and which appear to have been the resting-places prepared for the mortal remains of the wealthy and the noble. Although the bodies which reposed in these ancient receptacles have long mouldered into dust, and although the Etrurians, with their kingdoms and their principalities, powers, wars, councils, commerce, luxuries, virtues, superstitions and

vices, have long passed from the earth, and some faint records only remain to tell us of their greatness, yet from their tombs they speak to us again; here, in their “very habits as they lived,” they lift up their voices and cry to us, “Behold! thus did we three thousand years ago!”—for the paintings on the walls of these excavations show us this ancient people in almost every condition of life. We see them at their banquets and their diversions, at their marriages and their funerals, engaged in their athletic games, dancing, playing on various instruments, and even on their death-beds. Numerous curious and valuable specimens of their ornaments, vases, and armour, have also been found in these dwellings of the dead, as well as the sarcophagi in which the body had been deposited. The Etrurians were the most powerful and resolute enemies the rising empire of the Romans had to contend with, and were not conquered till after long wars

and much effusion of blood and treasure had exhausted its strength.

Having given this little sketch of one of the most interesting specimens of antiquity in Italy, we will now return to our hero.

It was on a fine morning of the early spring that Alberto Riquetti started on his expedition to the Etruscan tombs, the first visit he proposed being to the necropolis of the ancient city of Veii—a city, by the way, which it cost the Romans many a hard battle to win, and which, after holding out a siege of ten years, was at length taken by their famous general, Camillus, about four hundred years before the Christian era.

Veii, or rather the spot where Veii once stood, is situated about twelve miles from Rome, on one of the roads to Florence. For the first nine or ten miles the way lies along the high road, but, at a village called Fossa, it diverges, and for about two miles more leads across some fields, till it terminates at a

place called the Isola Farnese, where there is an inn at which travellers put up, and where, although the site of Veii is two miles further still, they are obliged to leave their horses and carriages, as beyond this point there is no practicable road.

The Isola Farnese is a quiet little hamlet, situated on a rising ground, surrounded by cliffs, and streams, and picturesque rocks, and murmuring waterfalls, adorned by this pretty inn and an ancient and venerable fortress. The inhabitants, who are all shepherds and vine-dressers, are extremely civil to travellers, and have an air of innocence and rural simplicity that, to a frequenter of cities like Alberto Riquetti, was quite irresistible.

“Here,” thought he, “must the crimes, and vices, and miseries of a great city be unknown, and probably unsuspected. How few of the dwellers in this little Eden have ever extended their travels even as far as

Rome! Their vines and their flocks are enough for them. Above want, and below ambition, their minds must be pure and their lives happy. It is quite a subject for a poet."

The inn-keeper too, was the most civil and obsequious of inn-keepers—quite a pattern of an inn-keeper; and Alberto Riquetti was so charmed and fascinated by all he saw, that he resolved to make the Isola Farnese his head-quarters, and thence extend his excursions to the different objects of curiosity around.

As the first day was to be devoted to the necropolis of Veii, after refreshing himself with a crust of bread and a glass of wine, he asked for a guide, who, being immediately presented to him, he set forth on his expedition, having informed his host that, as he should be occupied all day in sight-seeing, he should not care to have any dinner, but that he wished a good supper to be provided

against his return at night—a request which the worthy Boniface assured him should be strictly attended to. “Indeed,” he said, “he was generally in the habit of acting as cook himself, and he thought he might venture to promise his guest a ragout, the like of which he had never tasted—he was particularly famous for his ragouts; indeed,” added he, “most travellers who eat them find them so good, that they are never inclined to taste another.”

“Except of your making, I suppose?” said Riquetti, smiling.

“Of course—that’s understood,” answered the host.

“A tolerably conceited fellow,” thought our traveller, as he followed his guide in the direction of Veii. The guide seemed to be of the same opinion, for he chuckled and laughed, and appeared greatly diverted with this explosion of the host’s self-love.



“ I suppose you have a good many travellers here ?” said Riquetti.

“ Not in the winter,” answered the man ; “ you are the first we have seen for this long time. You come from Florence ?”

“ Yes, I do,” replied Riquetti. “ How did you know that ?”

“ I happened to hear the postilion that drove you tell the inn-keeper so, and that you were making a tour for your health ?”

“ That’s true, too,” said Riquetti, rather wondering how the postilion, whom he had never seen before, should have learned so much about him.

“ It’s dull travelling alone,” continued the man ; “ particularly when a person’s sick and out of health ; but perhaps you are a bachelor, and have nobody to look much after you ?”

“ I am a bachelor, certainly,” said Riquetti, rather amused at the curiosity the man was exhibiting. “ Unsophisticated nature,” thought he, “ savages, and uncivilized people, are

always inquisitive;" so, without taking offence at the interrogations, he answered as many as the guide chose to put to him.

In the meantime they advanced slowly on the road to Veii, stopping ever and anon to inspect the different points of view, and examine everything that appeared to present a vestige of antiquity; when, in rounding a point of rock, they came suddenly upon a little hovel, before the door of which stood a man scraping and tying up in bundles the sticks which, at another period of the year, are used for training the vines. At the sound of the approaching footsteps the man lifted up his head, and as his eye fell upon the surgeon, he started visibly, and an expression of surprise passed over his countenance. He even parted his lips, as if, upon the impulse of the moment, he was about to speak; but suddenly closing them again, after giving one look at the traveller, he stooped forward, and silently resumed his

previous attitude and occupation ; whilst Riquetti, who had cast but a passing glance at the man, and who attributed his surprise to the suddenness of their appearance, walked on, and thought no more of the matter.

It was drawing towards the afternoon, and our traveller had already spent some hours amongst the tombs, when, on emerging from one of them, he observed the same man, sitting on the ground, near the entrance. He seemed to have wounded his foot, and was stanching the blood with a handkerchief. The guide approached him, and asked him what was the matter.

“ I hurt my foot yesterday,” said he ; “ and being obliged to walk thus far to speak to old Guiseppe, the exercise has set it bleeding again,” saying which he bound the handkerchief round his foot and arose.

As he spoke, there was something in the voice and the play of the features that struck Riquetti as familiar to him ; and that this

approach to recognition was legible in his own face, was evident, for the man instantly frowned, and turned away his head. He, however, seemed inclined to join the party, or at least his way lay in the same direction; for he kept near them, lingering rather behind, as if his lameness impeded his activity. Presently, at a moment when the guide was a few yards in advance, and Riquetti between the two, he felt himself slightly touched upon the back, and on looking round he beheld the vine-dresser with the forefinger of one hand placed upon his lip, as if to enjoin silence, whilst in the other he held a piece of linen stained with blood, which he stretched out towards the traveller, shaking his head the while, and frowning in a manner that Riquetti was at a loss to understand, and which, as the injunction to silence was perfectly intelligible, he forbore to ask. His curiosity, however, being vividly awakened, and indeed his fears somewhat aroused, for

he thought the gestures of the man seemed designed as a warning against some danger that awaited himself, he endeavoured to keep as near him as he could; whilst he kept his eye pretty constantly fixed upon his guide, whom he imagined must be the enemy he was admonished to distrust. "Who is that man with the wounded foot?" he inquired.

"That is Gasparo, the vine-dresser," was the answer.

Riquetti had thought as much, although the appearance of his former guest was very much altered by the restoration of health, and a considerable acquisition of *embonpoint*; but with the conviction that it was Gasparo came also the conviction that the warning had been well intended, and that the danger was real. But it was not easy to know what to do. He was two miles from the inn, in a lonely place, and the evening was drawing on; there was barely light enough to enable them

to see their way back to the Isola Farnese. It is true he saw nobody near him except his guide; but he had himself no weapon, whilst the other might be armed; besides, there might be enemies in ambush that he was not aware of. However, there was nothing to do but to return to the inn as fast as he could, and this he did, taking care to keep the guide in advance of him all the way; and, to his surprise, he arrived there without any alarm, or without perceiving anything in the conduct of his companion that could have excited the slightest suspicion.

“Surely,” thought he, “I must have mistaken Gasparo’s intentions; he must have meant to entreat my silence with respect to himself; and the bloody cloth was for the purpose of recalling my memory to his wounds, and the circumstances under which we formerly met. He is, probably, for some reason or other, afraid of being identified. This must be the true interpretation of his

gestures. It would be absurd to suppose I can have anything to fear amongst this virtuous, unsophisticated people."

Comforted by this conviction, and resolved, in compliance with Gasparo's wishes, to ask no questions about him, Riquetti, having called for his supper, and a bottle of wine, set himself, with a good appetite, to his fare. The first dish consisted of some fresh-water fish, of which he partook sparingly, reserving his appetite for the ragout, of whose merits the landlord had so confidently spoken. The odour it emitted when the cover was lifted appeared to confirm his predictions; the aroma was very savoury indeed.

So the surgeon lifted a spoon, and helped himself to an ample portion of the stew. Then he took up his knife and fork, but, just as he was preparing to put a morsel into his mouth, he suddenly stopt, and, placing his hand on a bottle of wine that stood beside him, he said :



“By the bye, have you any good Bordeaux?”

“I have no Bordeaux,” answered the host, “but I have some good Florence in flasks, if you like that.”

“Bring me some,” said Riquetti. “This ragout of yours deserves a glass of good wine!” And the host left the room.

No sooner had the door closed upon him, than the movements of the surgeon would have extremely puzzled a spectator. Instead of conveying the savoury mess from his plate to his mouth, as might naturally have been expected, he conveyed it with inconceivable speed to his pocket-handkerchief, which, with equal celerity, he deposited in his pocket, so that, by the time the host returned, the plate was empty.

“That is a capital ragout of yours—excellent, indeed!” said he, as he poured out a tumbler of wine, and tossed it off. A suspicious eye might perhaps have observed that

his cheeks and lips were blanched, and that his hand was unsteady ; but the wine brought back the blood to his face, and the host perceived nothing extraordinary. The ragout being removed, some bread and cheese were next produced, of which he slightly partook, and then the table was cleared, and the host retired.

As soon as he was gone, Riquetti, having set a chair against the door, to prevent his being too abruptly disturbed, took out his handkerchief, and very closely examined its contents, after which he restored the whole to his pocket, and began pacing the small room from end to end, with a countenance in which anxiety and apprehension were visibly depicted. He looked at the window, and appeared to be deliberating on the propriety of getting out of it. The thing was practicable enough ; “ but then,” murmured he, “ I could not find my way to Fossa ; I should not know in which direction to turn ;” for, as

we have observed, it was yet but the early season of the year, and it had already been long dark. “Besides,” added he, “who knows whether it would be safe to address myself to any one there, stranger as I am; it might be running from Scylla to Charybdis. Gasparo! Gasparo! where art thou?” These were but thoughts scarcely formed into words, and yet they seemed to be answered, for at that moment his attention was roused by two slight taps on the window. There was nothing before it but a calico curtain; this he drew aside, and then, on the taps being repeated, he gently lifted the sash.

“Go to your bed-room as soon as you can,” said a hurried voice; “put out your light, and when you hear the signal, open your window, and, as quietly as you can, descend a ladder you’ll find ready for you;” and the speaker, whom the light in the room showed to be Gasparo, turned quickly away, adding, “Shut down the window; be silent

and cautious!" "Bravo, Gasparo!" whispered the surgeon to himself, as he obeyed his injunctions by closing the window and replacing the curtain—"Bravo! If you're a villain, you're a grateful one, at all events."

Having removed the chair from the door, and seated himself in an attitude of great ease and nonchalance, he drew a book from his pocket, which he placed before him, and then he rang the bell, and ordered some coffee; "and then," said he to the host, "I shall be glad to have my bed got ready, for I am tired with my day's work, and I mean to be off early in the morning."

The coffee was accordingly brought and drunk, and then Riquetti requested to be shown to his bed-room, which proved to be a small apartment up one pair of stairs. As he expected, there was no fastening to the door of any sort; so, having placed the dressing-table before it, and inspected the place

all round, not forgetting to look under the bed, he took his portmanteau under his arm, put out his light, and, with a beating heart, sat down to await the promised signal.

He did not wait long. In less than half an hour, a few small pebbles, thrown against the window, summoned him to open it. He could not see the ladder, but he felt it, and, stepping out, he carefully descended. As soon as his foot touched the ground, Gasparo, who was there to receive him, took him by the hand, and whispering, "Now, run for your life!" he dragged him forwards; and, leading him up hill and down hill, across fields, over hedges and ditches, and through the water, without ever pausing to take breath or to utter a word, he at length, after some hours' flight, suddenly stopped, and Riquetti perceived that they were on the high road.

"Now," said Gasparo, "you are within half an hour's walk of the city—you are safe

—farewell, and God speed you ! I have paid my debt !”

And with that he turned, and walked hastily away ; and, though Riquetti called after him, and begged him to stay and speak to him for a moment, he never so much as turned his head, but, departing as rapidly as he could, was soon out of sight.

The surgeon looked after him as long as he could see him,—for it was now the dawn of day ; and, when he could see him no longer, having breathed a prayer for his preserver, with a grateful heart he took his way to Rome, where, before ever seeking the rest and refreshment he so much needed, he requested an interview with the chief officer of the police.

“ I have,” he said, “ most important communications to make ; but before I say a word, you must obtain for me a promise, that, whatever discoveries may ensue from

my disclosures, the life of one individual shall be spared. He has saved mine, and I cannot endanger his."

This condition being acceded to by the government, Riquetti proceeded to detail his adventures, and to display the contents of his handkerchief; and the consequence of his communications was, that these innocent, virtuous, obliging, and unsophisticated vine-dressers and shepherds were proved, on investigation, to be leagued banditti, of whom the inn-keeper was the chief. In the month of March, 1839, no fewer than forty of them were brought to Rome and condemned to death or other punishments, according to the amount of crime proved against them. The worthy host, so celebrated for his excellent ragouts, expiated his enormities on the scaffold. Besides the evidence of the surgeon, many circumstances combined to show, that, when short of provisions, he had



been in the habit of supplying the deficiency by compounding his dishes of human flesh. Riquetti's apprehensions had been awakened by observing something on his plate, which his anatomical science enabled him to recognise as part of a human hand, thus furnishing the interpretation to Gasparo's warning gestures, and opened his eyes to the danger of his situation. Numerous travellers seem to have fallen victims to this atrocious conspiracy, but these wretches admitted that they never attacked the English, as the investigations that would have been set on foot by their countrymen, had any of them been missing, would infallibly have led to a discovery of their iniquitous proceedings. It was some satisfaction to the surgeon, that Gasparo was not found amongst the troop; he had not been seen at the Isola Farnese since the night they had fled together.

It appears wonderful that within so late a period, and within twelve or fourteen miles

of a great city, such a villanous combination could have subsisted; in England, such a nest of scoundrels would be exposed and extirpated in a month.

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**THE LYCANTHROPIST.**

WHOEVER has read the "Arabian Nights' Entertainments," will be acquainted with the words ghoul and vampyre. A ghoul was believed to be a being in the human form, who frequented graveyards and cemeteries, where it disinterred, tore to pieces, and devoured the bodies buried there. A vampyre was a dead person, who came out of his grave at night to suck the blood of the living, and whoever was so sucked became a vampyre in his turn

when he died. Both these persuasions have been rejected by the modern scientific world as altogether unworthy of credence or inquiry, although, about a century ago, the exploits of vampyres created such a sensation in Hungary, that they reached the ears of Louis XV., who directed his minister at Vienna to report upon them.

In a newspaper of that period, there appeared a paragraph to the effect that Arnold Paul, a native of Madveiga, being crushed to death by a waggon, and buried, had since become a vampyre, and that he had himself been previously bitten by one. The authorities being informed of the terror his visits were occasioning, and several persons having died with all the symptoms of vampyrism, his grave was solemnly opened, and, although he had been in it forty days, the body was like that of a living man. To cure his roving propensities, a stake was driven into it, whereupon he uttered a cry; after which his head

was cut off, and the body burnt. Four other bodies, which had died from the consequences of his bites, and which were found in the same perfectly healthy condition, were served in a similar manner; and it was hoped that these vigorous measures would extinguish the mischief. But no such thing. The evil continued more or less, and, five years afterwards, was so rife, that the authorities determined to make a thorough clearance of these troublesome individuals. On this occasion a vast number of graves were opened, of persons of all ages and both sexes; and, strange to say, the bodies of all those accused of plaguing the living by their nocturnal visits, were found in the vampyre state—full of blood, and free from every symptom of death.

The documents which record these transactions bear the date of June 7, 1732, and are signed and witnessed by three surgeons and other creditable persons. The facts, in

short, are indubitable, though what interpretation to put upon them remains extremely difficult. One that has been suggested is, that all these supposed vampyres were persons who had fallen into a state of catalepsy or trance, and been buried alive. However this may be, the mystery is sufficiently perplexing; and the more so, that through the whole of Eastern Europe innumerable instances of the same kind of thing have occurred, whilst each language has an especial word to designate it.

That which in the East is called 'ghoulism' has in the West been denominated 'lycanthropy,' or 'wolfomania;' and this phenomenon, as well as vampyrism, has been treated of by numerous ancient authors; and though latterly utterly denied and scouted, was once very generally believed.

There are various shades and degrees of lycanthropy. In some cases the lycanthrope declares that he has the power of transform-

ing himself into a wolf, in which disguise—his tastes corresponding to his form—he delights in feeding on human flesh; and in the public examinations of these unhappy individuals there was no scarcity of witnesses to corroborate their confessions. In other instances there was no transformation, and the lycanthrope appears more closely to resemble a ghoul.

In the year 1603, a case of lycanthropy was brought before the Parliament of Bordeaux. The person accused was a boy of fourteen, called Jean Grenier, who herded cattle. Several witnesses, chiefly young girls, came forward as his accusers, declaring that he had attacked and wounded them in the disguise of a wolf, and would have killed them but for the vigorous defence they made with sticks. Jean Grenier himself avowed the crime, confessing to having killed and eaten several children; and the father of the children confirmed all he said. Jean Grenier,



however, appears to have been little removed from an idiot.

In the fifteenth century, lycanthropy prevailed extensively amongst the Vaudois, and many persons suffered death for it; but as no similar case seems to have been heard of for a long while, lycanthropy and ghoulistism were set down amongst the superstitions of the East, and the follies and fables of the dark ages. A circumstance, however, has just now come to light in France that throws a strange and unexpected light upon this curious subject. The account we are going to give is drawn from a report of the investigation before a council of war, held on the 10th of the present month (July 1849), Colonel Manselon, president. It is remarked that the court was extremely crowded, and that many ladies were present.

The facts of this mysterious affair, as they came to light in the examinations, are as follow: For some months past the cemeteries

in and around Paris have been the scenes of a frightful profanation, the authors of which had succeeded in eluding all the vigilance that was exerted to detect them. At one time the guardians or keepers of these places of burial were themselves suspected; at others, the odium was thrown on the surviving relations of the dead.

The cemetery of Père la Chaise was the first field of these horrible operations. It appears that for a considerable time the guardians had observed a mysterious figure flitting about by night amongst the tombs, on whom they never could lay their hands. As they approached, he disappeared like a phantom; and even the dogs that were let loose, and urged to seize him, stopped short, and ceased to bark, as if they were transfixed by a charm. When morning broke, the ravages of this strange visitant were but too visible—graves had been opened, coffins forced, and the remains of the dead, fright-

fully torn and mutilated, lay scattered upon the earth. Could the surgeons be the guilty parties? No. A member of the profession being brought to the spot, declared that no scientific knife had been there; but certain parts of the human body might be required for anatomical studies, and the gravediggers might have violated the tombs to obtain money by the sale of them. . . . The watch was doubled; but to no purpose. A young soldier was one night seized in a tomb, but he declared he had gone there to meet his sweetheart, and had fallen asleep; and as he evinced no trepidation, they let him go.

At length these profanations ceased in Père la Chaise, but it was not long before they were renewed in another quarter. A suburban cemetery was the new theatre of operations. A little girl aged seven years, and much loved by her parents, died. With their own hands they laid her in her coffin, attired in the frock she delighted to wear on fête days,

and with her favourite playthings beside her ; and accompanied by numerous relatives and friends, they saw her laid in the earth. On the following morning it was discovered that the grave had been violated, the body torn from the coffin, frightfully mutilated, and the heart extracted. There was no robbery : the sensation in the neighbourhood was tremendous ; and in the general terror and perplexity, suspicion fell on the broken-hearted father, whose innocence, however, was easily proved. Every means were taken to discover the criminal ; but the only result of the increased surveillance was, that the scene of profanation was removed to the cemetery of Mont Parnasse, where the exhumations were carried to such an extent, that the authorities were at their wits' end.

Considering, by the way, that all these cemeteries are surrounded by walls, and have iron gates, which are kept closed, it certainly seems very strange that any ghoul or vampyre

of solid flesh and blood should have been able to pursue his vocation so long undiscovered. However, so it was ; and it was not till they bethought themselves of laying a snare for this mysterious visitor that he was detected. Having remarked a spot where the wall, though nine feet high, appeared to have been frequently scaled, an old officer contrived a sort of *infernal machine*, with a wire attached to it, which he so arranged that it should explode if any one attempted to enter the cemetery at that point. This done, and a watch being set, they thought themselves now secure of their purpose. Accordingly, at midnight an explosion roused the guardians, who perceived a man already in the cemetery ; but before they could seize him, he had leapt the wall with an agility that confounded them ; and although they fired their pieces after him, he succeeded in making his escape. But his footsteps were marked with blood that had flowed from his wounds,

and several scraps of military attire were picked up on the spot. Nevertheless, they seem to have been still uncertain where to seek the offender, till one of the grave-diggers of Mont Parnasse, whilst preparing the last resting-place of two criminals about to be executed, chanced to overhear some sappers of the 74th regiment remarking that one of their sergeants had returned on the preceding night cruelly wounded, nobody knew how, and had been conveyed to Val de Grace, which is a military hospital. A little inquiry now soon cleared up the mystery; and it was ascertained that Sergeant Bertrand was the author of all these profanations, and of many others of the same description previous to his arrival in Paris.

Supported on crutches, wrapped in a grey cloak, pale and feeble, Bertrand was now brought forward for examination; nor was

there anything in the countenance or appearance of this young man indicative of the fearful monomania of which he is the victim ; for the whole tenor of his confession proves that in no other light is his horrible propensity to be considered.

In the first place, he freely acknowledged himself the author of these violations of the dead both in Paris and elsewhere.

“What object did you propose to yourself in committing these acts?” inquired the president.

“I cannot tell,” replied Bertrand : “it was a horrible impulse. I was driven to it against my own will : nothing could stop or deter me. I cannot describe or understand myself what my sensations were in tearing and rending these bodies.”

*President.* And what did you do after one of these visits to a cemetery ?

*Bertrand.* I withdrew, trembling con-



vulsively, feeling a great desire for repose. I fell asleep, no matter where, and slept for several hours ; but during this sleep I *heard everything that passed around me!* I have sometimes exhumed from ten to fifteen bodies in a night. I dug them up with my hands, which were often torn and bleeding with the labour I underwent ; but I minded nothing, so that I could get at them. The guardians fired at me one night and wounded me, but that did not prevent my returning the next. This desire seized me generally about once a fortnight.”

He added, that he had had no access of this propensity since he was in the hospital, but that he would not be sure it might not return when his wounds were healed. Still he hoped not. “I think I am cured,” said he. “I had never seen any one die ; in the hospital I have seen several of my comrades

expire by my side. I believe I am cured, for now I fear the dead.”

The surgeons who attended him were then examined, and one of them read a sort of memoir he had received from Bertrand, which contained the history of his malady as far as his memory served him.

From these notes, it appears that there had been something singular and abnormal about him from the time he was seven or eight years old. It was not so much in acts, as in his love of solitude and his profound melancholy that the aberration was exhibited ; and it was not till two years ago that his frightful peculiarity fully developed itself. Passing a cemetery one day, where the grave-diggers were covering a body that had just been interred, he entered to observe them. A violent shower of rain interrupted their labours, which they left unfinished. “At this sight,” says Bertrand, “horrible

desires seized me : my head throbbed, my heart palpitated violently ; I excused myself to my companions, and returned hastily into town. No sooner did I find myself alone, than I procured a spade, and returned to the cemetery. I had just succeeded in exhuming the body, when I saw a peasant watching me at the gate. Whilst he went to inform the authorities of what he had seen, I withdrew, and retiring into a neighbouring wood, I laid myself down, and in spite of the torrents of rain that were falling, I remained there in a state of profound insensibility for several hours."

From this period he appears to have given free course to his inclinations ; but as he generally covered the mutilated remains with earth again, it was some time before his proceedings excited observation. He had many narrow escapes of being taken or killed by the pistols of the guardians ; but his

agility seems to have been almost super-human.

To the living he was gentle and kind, and was especially beloved in his regiment for his frankness and gaiety!

The medical men interrogated unanimously gave it as their opinion, that although in all other respects perfectly sane, Bertrand was not responsible for these acts. He was sentenced to a year's imprisonment, during which time measures will doubtless be taken to complete his cure.

In relating this curious case of the *Vampyre*, as he is called in Paris, where the affair has excited considerable attention, especially in the medical world, I have omitted several painful and disgusting particulars; but I have said enough to prove that, beyond a doubt, there has been some good foundation for the ancient belief in ghouls and lycanthropy; and that the books

of Dr. Weir and others, in which the existence of this malady is contemptuously denied, have been put forth without due investigation of the subject.



## VI.

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### THE PRISONER OF THE CONCIERGERIE.

AT the period of the French Revolution, there resided in Paris a family called Gerfeuil, consisting of a father, mother, and one son, Edward Gerfeuil, who was about fifteen years of age, a pretty, clever, interesting boy, the darling of his parents' heart, and the pride of their eyes. But at the same time that he was a source of unbounded comfort to them, he was also a subject of the deepest anxiety; for, at that season of anarchy and



peril, when no one's life or fortune was secure, they trembled at the thoughts of the future that might await their innocent child. They possessed a comfortable, independent fortune, the whole of which was designed for Edward ; but who should promise that he would ever inherit it ? The slightest imprudence on the part of the father or mother might render them objects of suspicion ; indeed, they might become objects of suspicion without any imprudence at all ; they might be accused by an enemy, they might be compromised by a friend, they might be dragged to the scaffold any day without a moment's warning, or they might be obliged to fly their country with nothing but the clothes they had on their backs. And what was to become of their Edward, bred in affluence, nurtured in delicacy, educated in refinement ? Many and many an anxious hour did these reflections cost Monsieur and Madame Gerfeuil.

“ I sometimes think,” said Monsieur Ger-

feuil one day to his wife, "that it would not be a bad plan to make Edward learn a trade. In these times, when everybody's fortune is so precarious, and when, without any fault of our own, we may be in affluence to-day, and beggars to-morrow, it would be advisable to have something to fall back upon—some resource by which one might earn one's bread, in case of the worst falling out."

"What could he learn?" said Madame Gerfeuil.

"We must consult him about it," answered the father. "For my own part, I should recommend printing, because the education he has received would there turn to some account, and he would find some occupation for his mind as well as his fingers."

When Edward was consulted, he agreed that he should prefer printing to any other occupation; and, as he promised himself a great deal of diversion from appearing in a part so new to him, he made no objection to

the proposal. A working-dress being therefore prepared for him, and a respectable establishment selected by his father, the youth commenced his apprenticeship, attending at the printing-office a certain number of hours every day, and receiving instruction in the various branches of his art.

The plan seemed to answer very well. Edward Gerfeuil was fast acquiring dexterity ; and the father and mother were comforted to think that they had provided such a resource for their son in case of extremity, when a dreadful calamity befel them. A pamphlet supporting principles very obnoxious to the revolutionary tribunal, which had been circulating amongst the people, was traced to the printing-house of Monsieur Gros, and suddenly himself and all his workmen were arrested and carried off to the Conciergerie, and amongst them poor Edward Gerfeuil, who, although he had never seen the pamphlet, nor was aware of its existence, being at

work in his printer's dress, shared the fate of his companions.

Who shall paint the alarm and distress of the parents on learning this intelligence; for, alas! how few were there who, once arrested on suspicion, ever escaped with their lives! What availed his youth?—what availed his innocence? How many, as young and as innocent, perished weekly on the scaffold! And then, how bitterly they reproached themselves. Their over-anxiety had been his destruction; and what to do to assist him they did not know. Even to prove his innocence, if innocence would have availed, was next to impossible; they had no acquaintance with anybody in power; in all probability their motive for sending him to the printing-office would not be credited, if they told it; and they almost dreaded to raise a stir about him, lest by drawing attention to his case, and betraying that he was what

would be called *an aristocrat*, they should only accelerate his fate.

In the meantime, poor Edward, after undergoing the form of an examination, in which he was only insulted when he attempted to explain who he was, and account for being found in such a situation, was dragged to the Conciergerie, and flung into a dungeon—a dungeon under ground too, for a French prison under the old *régime* was a dreadful place; they have since been much improved, as is always the case as countries become more civilized and enlightened. People then learn to know that the loss of liberty and the inevitable hardships of a jail, are punishments enough for slight offences, and all that we are entitled to inflict on unconvicted prisoners. But no such rays of mercy had yet reached the hearts or understandings of Edward's jailers, and he could not have been worse treated if he had robbed a church or com-

mitted murder. The poor boy's feelings may be imagined—torn from his comfortable home and his tender parents, and transferred to the custody of a harsh turnkey, in a miserable cell, without light, without fire, with a wretched pallet to lie on, and dieted on bread and water. And to all these sufferings was added terror—the terror of what remained behind. Though Edward had never seen the guillotine, he had heard too much of it; and although, with the natural thoughtlessness of youth, he had reflected little on the peril in which all men lived, as long as that peril did not approach himself or his parents, yet he had missed too many of his friends and neighbours from their accustomed paths and daily whereabouts, not to comprehend something of his own situation. Poor child! How did the darkness and the silence, too, frighten him! How eagerly he watched for the jailer's visits! how welcome was the gleam of his dull lantern! how he

drank in the tones of his husky voice! and how he listened to the echo of his receding footsteps, and sighed when he heard them no more! Then he wondered so much if his father and mother knew where he was, and he trembled with the dreadful apprehension that they might not be able to trace him, and that he might some day be carried to execution without ever seeing or hearing from them again. What, too, if they had been arrested as well as himself? Then there would be none to interest themselves for him, and he might perish either in the prison or on the scaffold, without an arm being stretched out to save him.

It may well be conceived that all these horrors—the anxiety of mind, the bad living, the confinement, and the unwholesome air of his dungeon—were not long in showing their effects on a boy of fifteen. Poor Edward fell ill; the medical man that attended the jail had him removed to a cell a degree less



wretched than the one he was in, and having with some difficulty saved his life, he ordered that he should take an hour's exercise every day in the court—a miserable place, surrounded by four high walls, little better than a dungeon open at top. However, such as it was, it was a great comfort to poor Edward, for here he at least caught a glimpse of the sky, and saw the faces of other human beings, although he was not allowed to address them, and many a kind glance cast upon the poor young captive, made him feel that there were yet tender hearts in the world, who could pity though they could not aid him.

It happened that the jailer had a daughter, a girl about a year older than Edward, whose home was with her father at the prison, whither she returned each night, whilst her days were spent in acquiring the art of dress-making at a fashionable establishment in the Palais Royal. She thus very rarely saw any of the prisoners; but one Sunday, as her



father was conducting Edward to take his daily walk in the court, she chanced to meet him, and, struck with his appearance of youth and suffering, she inquired the cause of his being there.

“It’s very hard,” said the jailer’s wife, when she heard the account given by her husband, and who, being a mother, was disposed to feel for one so young. “I dare say he only printed what his master told him, without troubling himself to know the meaning of it. What should a child like that care about politics?”

“It’s no business of ours, wifie,” replied the man, who, though by no means particularly hard-hearted, was afraid to cultivate feelings of compassion, lest they should bring him into trouble. “We have nothing to do but to look after our prisoners, without inquiring into the right and wrong of their cases.”

“That’s true, indeed,” said the wife; “walls

have ears, and the least said is soonest mended.”

The impression made upon Annette’s mind, however, was not so easily effaced ; and the emaciated form, and pallid cheeks of the young prisoner were often remembered when she was plying the needle at her daily toil.

It may be imagined, at a period when so many innocent and virtuous persons were thrown into prisons, and daily perishing upon the scaffold, that it was no uncommon sight to see their anxious friends hovering about the gate, and gazing at the walls which contained objects so dear, whom it was too probable they might never behold again. Annette’s eyes were therefore too much accustomed to these melancholy visions to be generally much struck by them ; but her attention had been drawn to the constant attendance and care-worn countenance of a lady, who, she fancied, not only looked at her as if she had a great desire to address her, but whom she had

observed, more than once, to follow her all the way to her magazine in the Palais Royal. She had also remarked this lady occasionally buying things in the shop ; but, as Annette worked in a back room, and only perceived this circumstance through a glass door, there was no opportunity of communication. At length, however, the lady ordered a dress to be made for her ; but when the mistress of the establishment proposed to wait upon her to try it on, she offered to save her the trouble, by stepping into her back shop and having it done at once. There were several young people at work in the room, but Annette could not but observe that the stranger's eyes sought none but her. When she went away, she gave her name as Madame Rosbeck, and said she lived near the Pont Neuf.

“ And,” continued she, glancing still at the jailer's daughter, “ if any of your young people come from that quarter, I should be

glad if she would call at my house to-morrow morning, on her way here, as I have some lace by me which I will send you to put upon my dress."

"That will be in your road, Ma'amselle Annette," said the mistress of the shop. "Don't forget to call as you come past."

"No, ma'am," replied Annette, involuntarily looking at the lady as she spoke, for she could not help fancying there was some mystery behind this matter of the lace. The lady, too, looked at her, and said: "Pray, do not forget," and then she took her leave.

"Father," said Annette that night at supper, "have you any prisoner here of the name of Rosbeck?"

"No," answered the jailer. "Why do you ask?"

"Oh, nothing particular," said the daughter; "only they were talking at the shop of somebody of that name being arrested."

"They have not been brought here, then,"

answered the man ; “ indeed, we’re quite full ; but I suppose the guillotine will take some of them out of our way to-morrow.”

“ Not that poor young boy, I hope,” said Annette.

“ Why, no,” answered the father. “ I don’t think it will be his turn just yet. There are others will go before him.”

On the following morning Annette, not without considerable curiosity, presented herself at the address given by Madame Rosbeck ; and on naming her errand, she was introduced into that lady’s bed-chamber.

“ Pray, sit down,” said Madame Rosbeck. “ I have desired my maid to bring the lace. In the meantime, let me give you a cup of chocolate. I am just going to take my breakfast.”

Annette would have been more surprised at an attention so unusual, had not her previous observations satisfied her that she was wanted to give some information, or to

perform some service, of more importance than fetching the lace; so she accepted the invitation, and seated herself, saying, at the same time, that she could not wait long, as her presence would be required at the magazine.

“Since that is the case,” said Madame Rosbeck, “I had better proceed at once to what I have to say to you. I am aware that you are the daughter of the jailer at the Conciergerie, and I dare say you have observed me in that quarter before this.”

“Yes, ma’am,” said Annette, “I have; and I fancied that perhaps you had some relation or friend there you were anxious about.”

“That is the truth,” said Madame Rosbeck; “there is a person there I would give the world to learn some tidings of. Do you think you could procure me any?—and would you, if you could?”

“I would very willingly, ma’am,” said An-

nette; “but I know very little about the prisoners, and very rarely see any of them. But perhaps I might find out something from my father, though he is not fond of talking about them either. Is it a lady or a gentleman?”

“Oh, it’s a child—a mere child!” exclaimed Madame Rosbeck, clasping her hands in agony; “it’s my son—my only son!”

“I saw one poor boy there, who is allowed to walk in the court because he is ill,” replied Annette; “but my father said his name was Gerfeuil.”

“Oh, that is he!” cried the mother—“that is my poor Edward! I am Madame Gerfeuil; but I have taken this lodging in the name of Rosbeck, in order to be near my son, and that I may watch the tumbrils as they pass with the prisoners for execution, that I may be sure he is not amongst them. Then you have seen my poor child, and he is ill?”



“He has been very ill,” said Annette ;  
“but he is now better.”

“Oh, if I could but see him !” exclaimed  
Madame Gerfeuil.

“I fear that is impossible !” replied  
Annette. “Since one or two of the prisoners  
escaped through the assistance of their  
friends, no visitors are admitted.”

“Could you give him a letter or a message  
from me ?” asked Madame Gerfeuil.

“I don’t think I could,” answered Annette ;  
“for the only chance I ever have of seeing  
him is as he is going to and from the court ;  
but then my father is always close beside  
him.”

“And is your father so very strict ?”

“Very,” said Annette ; “he is obliged to  
be so. But if you will give me the letter, I’ll  
keep it always in my bosom, and if any  
opportunity of giving it to him should offer,  
I’ll do it.”

It was arranged that Annette should call

for the letter at night; and after some more conversation, she took her leave, and pursued her way to the Palais Royal. Although a jailer's daughter, she was a girl of tender heart and kind feelings, and all day as she sat at her work her thoughts were upon the poor mother and son; and her young companions laughed at her silence and abstraction, and accused her of thinking of her lover, whilst she was taxing her ingenuity to find some contrivance for delivering the letter. But none could she hit upon. The only chance she ever had of meeting Edward was on a Sunday; but she had no excuse for going into the part of the building occupied by the prisoners, and had she not been sent with a message to her father, she would never have seen him at all; and even if she did contrive to throw herself in the way, the jailer was so watchful, that she feared it would be impossible to accomplish her object. And, accordingly, at the end of four weeks

the letter was still in Annette's bosom, and poor Madame Gerfeuil as miserable and anxious as ever, except that the daily visits of the young girl afforded her some little consolation. It was a slight comfort to her to speak to a person who dwelt under the same roof with her Edward, and to think that she had made a friend for him, powerless as that friend seemed to be.

Suddenly, however, about this time, a fresh access of fury and rage for executions seemed to seize on the minds of the blood-thirsty revolutionary tribunal; and Madame Gerfeuil was plunged into daily agonies of terror at hearing of the fearful rapidity with which their victims were hurried to the scaffold; and from the hints dropped by her father, even Annette began to tremble for her young *protégé*.

Madame Gerfeuil had a waiting-maid, a young person without father or mother, whom she had taken into her house when a child,

and brought up. This girl, who was now about sixteen, was extremely attached to her mistress, and sympathized warmly with all the mother's anxiety for her son. "If I could but be the means of procuring his release," she often said to herself, "it would be some return for all I owe to Madame Gerfeuil." In the vague hope that some opportunity of being of service might offer, she neglected no means of cultivating the good-will of the jailer's daughter, who at length invited her, one Sunday, to supper; from which time she became a visitor in the family—a privilege she took care to make the most of, frequently contriving to meet her friend as she returned from the Palais Royal, where, having accompanied her as far as the gate of the Conciergerie, the jailer, on opening the door, would invite her in to see his wife; and thus, little by little, Madeleine had got on a footing of intimacy, and was a pretty constant visitor in Maitre

Jacques's parlour. Having accomplished thus much, she next began to hint to Annette how possible it would be to possess themselves some evening of the jailer's keys, at an hour that he was not likely to miss them, and make their way to Edward's dungeon. "If he were only to see me for a moment, it would be such a comfort to him," said Madeleine; "and it might perhaps save the life of his poor mother, whose heart is breaking, and who, I am sure, will not live long if we cannot afford some relief to her anxiety."

Annette was not unwilling to do anything she could for Madame Gerfeuil; but she saw many difficulties in the way, and, above all, she dreaded her father's anger if their attempt were discovered. However, Madeleine contrived to overcome her objections, and the ensuing Sunday night was fixed upon for the enterprise.

The young girls spent a good part of the day together, first attending mass, and then

walking with their friends, till, at the approach of evening, they directed their steps towards the prison, each armed with a bottle of wine, which Madeleine had bought at a *guingette*, and which they carried under their shawls, wherewith to treat the jailer. "Whilst he is drinking, he will not be so likely to observe what we are doing," said Madeleine; and when she told Maitre Jacques that she had brought him a couple of bottles of good wine to make merry with at supper, he expressed himself extremely obliged for her kindness. "But," said she, "you must do me a favour in return; you must let Annette go home and sleep with me to-night; to-morrow, you know, is a *fête*, and as she has a holiday, we have made a party to go to St. Cloud; and we are to start very early, that we may have a long day of it." To this proposal, fortunately, no objection was made; and, to cut short the narrative of the insidious proceedings of the

two girls, the jailer's senses were lulled, the keys were taken possession of only for a few minutes, and the active pair reached the cell of the unfortunate Gerfeuil. In a moment he was in the arms of his faithful Madeleine, and inquiring for his dear mother. "She is quite well, and living in the next street, in order to be near you," answered the girl; and in a few hurried words she gave him the information which he was most urgent to have. "But there was one thing," continued she, "that your mamma particularly desired me to caution you about, in case you are brought up again for examination;" and as she spoke, she drew him gradually towards the door, whispering as if making some private communication, whilst Annette, whose limbs had almost failed her through fear, seated herself on the side of the bed.

The door was ajar, the key on the outside.



“Now run !” said Madeleine, thrusting him out ; and in a moment more they were both hurrying along the passages by the light of the lantern which she had taken care to carry herself. When they reached a convenient spot, she paused, and taking off a loose upper dress, and a shawl, with which she had provided herself, she disguised Edward in this female attire, and completed it by placing on his head a drawn muslin bonnet, which, being pliable, she had also contrived to conceal about her person. She had too carefully marked the road as she came along to miss it now, and presently they found themselves at the door of the jailer’s parlour. “Now,” said she, to Edward, placing him in a dark corner, “stand there, and, when I come out, take hold of my arm ; but don’t speak, for your life !” and she entered the room.

“Maitre Jacques,” said she, shaking the jailer by the arm, for he was still asleep, “how can you keep us waiting so ? Here

are Annette and I wanting to get out; and I shall get into trouble if I stay here so late. Pray, do come and open the gate for us."

"Eh!" said Maitre Jacques, rubbing his eyes, and shaking himself awake; "what do you want?—where are you going?"

"Home to bed, to be sure," replied she. "You know you gave Annette leave to go home with me to-night. Come, do open the gate, will you? We can't wait any longer."

"Annette! Where is Annette?" said Maitre Jacques.

"Here, at the door, waiting for you. Come, do make haste;" and she half dragged the drowsy jailer from his seat, and led him towards the door. "Come, Annette," said she, taking Edward under her other arm; "your father will let us out now;" and they proceeded towards the gate—the key was at the jailer's belt—he opened it, and in an instant more they were in the street, and the fearful gate locked behind them. Through

cross streets, and at first with a deliberate pace, lest whilst near the prison they might excite suspicion, they traversed a considerable part of the city, till at length Madeleine stopped at the door of a house unknown to Edward. "This is not papa's," said he. "No," said she; "it would not be safe to take you home; you must be concealed here for the present." In that house dwelt an old servant of Monsieur Gerfeuil, to whom the family allowed a pension, and on him Madeleine knew she might rely with confidence. Her reliance was not disappointed. Edward was gladly received; and, continuing to wear the dress of a female, he remained there several weeks, and Madeleine with him; till, favoured by the disguise, it was thought possible to remove them both from Paris; and not till then, so fearful were they of betraying the place of his concealment, did the anxious father and mother permit themselves the happiness of beholding their rescued

child. It is gratifying to be able to add, that, except her father's displeasure and her own terror, poor Annette suffered no ill consequences from the adventure. When Edward's name appeared in the list of those to be sent to the scaffold, Maitre Jacques contrived to persuade the authorities that he had been executed some time before; and as he was not a person of sufficient consequence to excite much inquiry, and as they had plenty of heads to cut off without his, after a little blustering and pretence at investigation, the affair was suffered to die away, and was forgotten.

Edward and his parents escaped to England, where he found the means of putting the knowledge he had acquired in his profession to some use—indeed, the greatest which can be supposed, the support of himself, and an aid to that of his parents. Thus, for several years, did the family remain in London till the Reign of Terror was over, and

refugee emigrants found it safe to return to their native country. One of the first acts of the Gerfeuils, on being restored to their property, was to seek out Madeleine, to whose fidelity they owed so much, and to place her beyond the reach of want for the remainder of her existence.

## VII.

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### MADAME LOUISE.

LOUIS XV. of France had, by his marriage with Maria Leczinska, daughter of Stanislaus, King of Poland, two sons and several daughters. These ladies were the aunts of Louis XVI., of whom we frequently find mention made in the history of that unfortunate monarch.

Madame Louise, the heroine of our story, was one of the youngest, and was also the one that took most after her mother in character.

Maria Leczinska was a pious, amiable, tender-hearted woman, and Louise resembled her in these characteristics ; whilst the sort of education she received, being brought up in the Abbey of Fontrevault, tended very much to increase the seriousness of her natural disposition ; so that, after she lost her mother, though she continued to reside with her father at Versailles, or Paris, or wherever he might be, and so lived *in* the court, she was not *of* it, nor ever imbibed a taste for its splendours or amusements, and still less for its dissipations and vices. Notwithstanding all her virtue and piety, however, Louise was a woman still, and a woman with a tender, loving heart ; and in a court where there were so many gay and accomplished cavaliers it must have been next to impossible for that loving heart to remain untouched. But poor Louise had one safeguard against love, which, pure and pious as she was, she would willingly have dispensed with—she



was deformed. With a lovely and bewitching face, and eyes of inconceivable beauty, her figure was quite distorted, from the consequences of an unfortunate fall in her infancy, Without meaning to derogate from her merit, it is extremely possible that this misfortune may have considerably influenced her character, and led her to seek in Heaven those consolations of the heart that she despaired of enjoying on earth.

Of course each of the princesses had a regular suite of servants, and of ladies and gentlemen in waiting; and amongst these, each had also an *écuyer* and a lady of honour, who were in immediate and constant attendance on their persons. The office of the *écuyer* was one which placed him in a peculiar situation as regarded his mistress: he placed her chair, opened the door for her, handed her up and down stairs, and accompanied her in her drives and walks, and, in short, wherever she went; so that, were it not for the respect due

to royalty, it must have been difficult for a susceptible young man, or a susceptible man of any age, to be in this hourly attendance on a charming Princess and retain his heart entire. The deformity of poor Madame Louise, as well as her piety, however, were perhaps thought sufficient defences against any dangers of this description, as regarded either party; for without some such confidence, it would seem a great oversight of the King to have placed in this necessarily intimate relation with her one of the most fascinating men about the court; for such, by universal admission, was the young Vicomte Anatole de Saint-Phale, who was appointed *écuyer* to the Princess upon the marriage, and consequent resignation, of the Baron de Brignolles.

At the time of his appointment, Saint-Phale was not much more than twenty years of age, the son of a Duke, handsome, accomplished, eminently agreeable, and with a

name already distinguished in arms. He had himself solicited the appointment, and it had been granted to his own wishes, and the influence of his father, without demur; Madame Louise, when the thing was mentioned to her, making no objection. Indeed she had none. The Vicomte was but little known to her; for, avoiding the court festivities as much as her father would permit, and when she did attend them, appearing there rather as a spectator than a partaker—beyond the general characters and the personal appearance of the gay cavaliers of the court, she knew nothing of them. She had always heard Saint-Phale's name coupled with the most flattering epithets; she had also heard that he was brave, generous, honourable, and extravagantly beloved by his father and mother; and her own eyes had informed her that he was extremely handsome. To the latter quality she was indifferent; and the others well

fitting him for his office about her person, she signed his appointment without hesitation, little dreaming at the moment that she was also signing the fiat of her own destiny. In due time the Baron de Brignolles took his leave, and the Vicomte entered on his duties ; and it soon appeared evident to everybody that he had not sued for the situation without a motive. The Princess's lady of honour was the Comtesse de Château-grand, Anatole's cousin ; and with her he was, to all appearance, desperately smitten. He wore her colours, as was the fashion of the gallant world at that period, paid her the most public attentions, and seemed determined not only to be violently in love, but that all the world should know it.

There was, however, nothing very surprising in this. The Comtesse de Château-grand was a widow, with a considerable fortune, and, though nearly ten years older than Anatole, she was still extremely handsome ;

added to which, she was very amiable, much esteemed by her mistress, and she and the young Vicomte had always been on the most friendly terms. His passion, therefore, as we have said, excited no surprise in anybody; but whether the lady returned it, was altogether another affair, and was, indeed, a question that created considerable discussion amongst the curious in these matters.

“But she looks so happy—so calm!” said the young Duchesse de Lange.

“And why not, when she has every reason to be so?” answered the Comtesse de Guiche. “Are not his attentions unremitting? What can she desire more?”

“Ah, true,” replied the other; “happy, if you will, but calm!”

“Well, and why not calm?” repeated Madame de Guiche.

“Ah, one is never calm when one loves!” returned the Duchesse, with a little air of affectation.

“That is so like you!” returned the Comtesse, laughing. “You are so sentimental, my dear—a real heroine of romance. I maintain that Madame de Châteaugrand is perfectly content, and that she intends, in due time, to reward his devotion with her hand. I am sure he deserves it. Except waiting on the Princess, he never does anything in the world but attend to her caprices; and I do believe she often affects to be whimsical, for the sake of giving him occupation.”

“He certainly does not seem to recollect that there is another woman in the world beside the Princess and his cousin,” said the Duchesse, with some little spite.

Many a conversation of this nature was held almost within hearing of one of the parties concerned—namely, the Vicomte—and many a jest besides, amongst his own companions, rendered it quite impossible that he should be ignorant of the observations made upon him and Madame de Châteaugrand; but

he never showed himself disposed to resent this sort of interference, nor did it cause him to make the slightest attempt at concealing his attachment ; whilst the Comtesse herself, though she could not be more ignorant than he of the court gossip, appeared equally indifferent to it. The consequence was, as is usual in similar cases, that the gossip nobody seemed to care for, and which annoyed nobody, became less interesting, and gradually the *grande passion* of the Vicomte Anatole for his cousin being admitted as an established fact, whilst it was concluded, from the calmness of the lady's demeanour, that she had accepted his proposals, and that they were to be married some day, people began to think little about them ; and, except a hint now and then, that in all probability the true interpretation of the mystery was, that they were privately married already, very little was said.



But now there arose another bit of court gossip.

“Observe, my dear,” said the Duchesse de Lange to her friend the Comtesse, “how fast Madame de Châteaugrand is declining in the Princess’s favour !”

“I am perfectly confounded at it,” returned Madame de Guiche ; “for certainly her attachment to Madame Louise is very great ; in short, it is devotion ; and the Princess herself has always, till lately, appeared to set the greatest value on it. How is it that she, who never in her life showed the slightest tendency to caprice, should begin with such an injustice towards her most faithful friend ?”

“It is inconceivable !” replied the Duchesse. “But what do you think the Duc d’Artois says about it ?”

“Oh, the wicked man !” returned the Comtesse de Guiche, laughing. “But what does he say ?”

“ He says it is the attachment between her and Saint-Phale that offends the Princess ; that she is so rigid, that she can neither be in love herself, nor allow anybody else to be so ; and that he has seen her turn quite pale with horror at the sight of the Vicomte’s attentions.”

“ Be in love herself—certainly not,” said Madame de Guiche ; “ besides, to what purpose, poor thing, with her unfortunate figure ? But I think she is much too kind-hearted to endeavour to cross the loves of other people. However, certain it is, that she is not so fond of Madame de Châteaugrand as she was.”

And so, to her great grief, thought Madame de Châteaugrand herself. Louise, the gentle, the kind, the considerate, was now often peevish, impatient, and irritable ; and what rendered the change infinitely more afflicting to the Comtesse was, that all these ill-humours seemed to be reserved solely for her—to every one else the Princess was as

gentle and forbearing as before. So she was even to her at times still; for there were moments when she appeared to be seized with remorse for her injustice, and on these occasions she would do everything in her power to make amends for it; but as these intervals did not prevent an immediate recurrence of the evil, poor Madame de Châteaugrand began to think very seriously of resigning her situation, and so she told the Vicomte.

“If you do, my dear Hortense,” answered he, turning as pale as if she had pronounced his sentence of death—“if you do, I am undone!”

“Why?” said the Comtesse. “You need not resign because I do.”

“I should not dare to remain,” answered he. “Besides, it would be impossible—I know it would! I have always told you so. But for you, I never could have undertaken the situation, as you well know: I should have been discovered.”

“But, my dear Anatole, you can hardly expect me to remain here to be miserable; and I am really so,” returned Madame de Châteaugrand. “It is not that I would not bear with her humour and caprices; I love her well enough to bear with her a great deal more; but to lose her friendship, her affection, her confidence, breaks my heart.”

“She must be ill,” said the Vicomte. “Some secret malady is preying on her, I am certain. Do you observe how her cheek flushes at times, and how her hand trembles? To-day, when I handed her a glass of water, I thought she would have let it fall.”

“It may be so,” returned Madame de Châteaugrand. “Certain it is, that she does not sleep as she used to do—in short, I believe she is often up half the night walking about her room.”

“I think his Majesty should be informed of it,” said the Vicomte, “that he might send her his physician.”

“ I think so too,” answered the lady ; “ but when I named it to her the other day, she was very angry, and forbade me to make any remarks on her ; and, above all, enjoined me not to trouble her father with such nonsense.”

“ I am afraid her religious austerities injure her health,” said Anatole.

“ Apropos,” returned the Comtesse ; “ she desired me to tell you that she goes to St. Denis to-morrow, immediately after breakfast, and that no one is to accompany her but you and me.”

St. Denis, as is well known, is the burying-place of the royal family of France, and there, consequently, reposed the remains of Maria Leczinska, the Princess's mother ; and it was to her tomb that Madame Louise first proceeded alone, whilst her two attendants remained without. A long hour they waited for her ; and Saint-Phale was beginning to get so alarmed at her absence,

that he was just about to violate her commands by opening the gate of the sanctuary, when she came out pale and exhausted, and with evident traces of tears on her cheeks. She then entered the precincts of the convent, requesting to be conducted to the parlour. Even in a convent of holy nuns, who have abjured the world and its temptations, the *prestige* of royalty is not without its effect; and on this occasion the Prioress came forth to meet the Princess, whilst the sisters rushed to the corridors to get a peep at her, with as mundane a curiosity as the mob runs after a royal carriage in the streets of Paris or London. Louise looked at them benevolently; and with tears in her eyes, and a sad smile, told them how much happier they were than those who lived amongst the intrigues and turmoils of a court. "Ah, my sisters," she said, "how happy you should be! What repose of spirit you may attain to in this holy asylum!"

Alas ! could she have looked into some of those hearts, what a different tale they would have told her ! But when we are very miserable ourselves, that situation which presents the greatest contrast to our own is apt to appear the one most desirable.

“ There is amongst you, my sisters—that is, if she be still alive—a Princess, at whose profession I was present when a child, with my mother,” said Madame Louise. “ Is the friend of Maria Leczinska here ? ”

“ I am here,” answered a sweet low voice.

“ Clotilde de Mortemart ? ” said the Princess inquiringly, looking in the direction of the voice.

“ Formerly,” answered the nun, “ now Sœur Marie du Sacré Cœur.”

“ I would speak with you,” said Madame Louise, taking her by the hand : “ lead me to your cell.”

Accordingly, whilst all the others retired,



Sister Marie conducted her royal visitor to her little apartment.

“ That stool is too inconvenient for your highness,” said she, as the Princess seated herself. “ I will ask the Prioress for a chair.”

“ By no means ; it is what I wish,” said Madame Louise. “ Sit down opposite me—I want to talk to you. Nay, nay, sit !” she added, observing the hesitation of the nun. “ Sit, in the name of Heaven ! What am I, that you should stand before me ? Would to God I was as you are !”

“ How, madame !” said the sister, looking surprised. “ Are you not happy ?”

“ Friend of my mother, pity me !” exclaimed the Princess, as she threw herself into the nun’s arms with a burst of passionate tears—for they were the first open demonstration of a long-suppressed grief. “ Tell me,” she continued, after an interval, as she raised

her tearful face—"tell me, are you really happy?"

"Yes," replied Sister Marie, "very happy now."

"Would you go back again to the world; would you change, if you could?"

"No, never!" answered the nun.

"I remember your taking the veil," said Madame Louise, after an interval of silence; "and you will remember me, probably, as a child at that time?"

"Oh, yes; well, quite well, I remember you," replied the nun. "Who could forget you that had once seen you?"

"I was pretty, I believe, as a child," said Louise.

"Beautiful! angelic! as you are now, my Princess!" exclaimed Sister Marie, surprised for a moment, by her enthusiasm and admiration, out of her nunlike demeanour.

“As I am now?” said Louise, fixing her eyes on the other’s face.

“Pardon me!” said the nun, falling at her feet, fearing that the familiarity had offended; “it was my heart that spoke!”

“Rise, my sister,” said Louise; “I am not offended; rise, and look at me!” and she threw aside the cloak, which, with its ample hood, had concealed her deformity.

“Jesu Maria!” exclaimed the sister, clasping her hands.

“You are a woman—you were once young yourself, and, as I have heard, beautiful also. Judge, now, if I am happy!”

“But, my Princess,” answered the nun, “why not? Is there no happiness on earth, nay, even in a court, but with beauty? Besides, are you not beautiful? Ay, and a thousand times more so than hundreds that are not—”

“Deformed,” rejoined Louise: “do not fear

to utter the word; I repeat it to myself a hundred times a-day."

"This amazes me," said Sister Marie, after a pause, whilst her countenance expressed her surprise as eloquently as words could have done. "Madame Louise, the fame of whose devotions and self-imposed austerities has reached even our secluded ears, are they but the refuge of a mortified—"

"Vanity," added the Princess, as respect again caused the nun to hesitate. "Not exactly: I cannot do myself the injustice to admit that altogether, for I was pious before I knew I was deformed. It was my natural disposition to be so; and my mother, foreseeing how much I should need the consolations of religion, cultivated the feeling as long as she lived; and when I was old enough to be aware of my misfortune, I felt what a blessing it was that I had not placed my

happiness in what seemed to make the happiness of the women that surrounded me. But it was not to speak of myself that I came here," continued Madame Louise, "but to ask a favour of you. Young as I was when you took the veil, the scene made a great impression upon me; and I well remember my mother's tears as we drove back to Paris after she had bade you farewell. I remember also, when I was older, hearing a motive alleged for your resolution to retire from the world, which, if it would not give you too much pain, I should be glad to learn from your own lips."

The pale cheek of the nun flushed with a faint red, as she said, "What would my Princess wish to hear?"

"Is it true," said Madame Louise, "that it was an unrequited love that brought you to this place?"

"It was," answered the sister, placing her hand before her eyes.

“Excuse me,” said Madame Louise; “you will think me cruel to awaken these recollections; but it must have been a bitter sorrow that could have induced you, so young, so beautiful, so highly-born, to forsake the world, and become a Carmelite?”

“It was,” returned the nun, “so bitter, that I felt it was turning my blood to gall; and it was not so much to flee from the misery I suffered, as from the corruption of my mind and character, that I fled from the sight of that which I could not see without evil thoughts.”

“Ah, there it is! I understand that too well!” said the Princess; “you were jealous!”

“I was,” answered the nun; “and what made it so bitter was, that the person of whom I was jealous was the woman I loved best in the world.”

“You loved Henri de Beaulieu, and he loved your cousin?” said Madame Louise.

The nun covered her face with her hands and was silent. "How cruel you must think me, to rend your heart by recalling these recollections!" continued the Princess.

"It is so long since I heard that name," said Marie. "I did not think I was still so weak."

"But tell me," said Louise, seizing her hand, "did your anguish endure long after you had entered these gates? Did repose come quickly?"

"Slowly, slowly, but surely," returned the nun, with a sigh. "Till I had taken the irrevocable vow, I had a severe struggle; but I never wavered in the conviction that I had done wisely; for it was only by this living death I could have ever conquered myself. Dreadful temptations had sometimes assailed me whilst I saw them together. Here I saw nothing—heard nothing; and my better nature revived and conquered at last."

"I see," said the Princess, rising: "I



comprehend it all!" and then embracing her, she added, "Pardon me the pain I have given you: it has not been without a motive. We shall meet again ere long."

On the following day, Madame Louise requested a private interview with the King, for the purpose of obtaining his permission to join the Carmelites of St. Denis. Louis was at first extremely unwilling to hear of the proposal. Louise was his favourite daughter; and he not only did not like to part with her, but he feared that her delicate health would soon sink under the austerities of so rigid an order. But her determination was taken; and at length, by her perseverance, and the repeated assurance that she was not, nor ever could be, happy in the world, she extracted his unwilling consent. She even avowed to him that, besides her own private griefs, the being obliged to witness his irregularities afflicted her severely; and as she believed that to immure herself in a convent, where she

could devote her life to prayer, was a sacrifice pleasing to the Almighty, she hoped by these means to expiate her father's errors, as well as attain peace for herself. Fearing the opposition she might meet with from the rest of her family, however, she entreated the King's silence, whilst she herself communicated her resolution to nobody except the Archbishop of Paris; and he having obtained his Majesty's consent in form, Madame Louise at length, on the 11th of April, 1770, at eight o'clock in the morning, bade adieu to Versailles for ever. Accompanied by the Vicomte and Madame de Châteaugrand, to whom, since her former visit to the convent, she had been all kindness, she stepped into her carriage, and drove to St. Denis. As by taking the veil she renounced all earthly distinctions, and amongst the rest, that of being buried with the royal family of France, she now visited those vaults for the last time; and having knelt for some minutes at the tomb

of her mother, she repaired to the convent, leaving her two attendants in the carriage. The Abbot, who, having been apprized by the Archbishop, was in waiting to conduct her to the parlour, now addressed several questions to her with respect to her vocation, representing to her the extreme austerity of the order, which was, indeed, a sort of female La Trappe. She answered him with unshaken firmness; and then, without once looking behind her, passed into the cloister, where the Prioress and the sisterhood were informed of the honour that awaited them. She next proceeded to the chapel, where a mass was performed; and having thus, as it were, sealed her determination, she requested that her two attendants might be conducted to the parlour, whilst she, through the grate which now separated her from the world, told them that they were to return to Paris without her.

The effect of this unexpected intelligence

on Madame de Châteaugrand was no more than the Princess had anticipated. She wept, entreated and expostulated ; but the Vicomte de Saint-Phale, after standing for a moment as if transfixed, fell flat upon his face to the ground. Amazed and agitated at so unexpected a result, the Princess was only restrained by the grating which separated them from flying to his assistance ; but before she could sufficiently recollect herself to resolve what to do, the Prioress, fearing the effect of so distressing a scene at such a moment, came and led her away to her own apartments.

It would be difficult to describe the state of the Princess's mind at that moment. The anguish expressed by Saint-Phale's countenance could not be mistaken. He that she had supposed would be utterly indifferent to her loss ! Why should it affect him thus, when he had still with him his love, the

chosen of his heart—Hortense de Château-grand? She did not know what to think; but certain it is, that the resolution which had been so unflinching an hour before, might perhaps, but for *pride*, have been now broken. With a bewildered mind and a heavy heart she retired to her cell, and there kneeling, she prayed to God to help her through this last struggle.

From that time nothing more was known with respect to Madame Louise till six months afterwards, when, her novitiate being completed, she made her profession. On that morning the humble cell inhabited by the Princess exhibited a very unusual appearance: robes of gold and silver brocade, pearls and diamonds, and a splendid lace veil, were spread upon the narrow couch. In this magnificent attire she was for the last time to appear before the world, and for the last time her own women were in attendance to

superintend her toilet. When she was dressed, everybody was struck with her beauty; and as she wore a superb cloak, the only defect of her person was concealed.

Of course the profession of a "daughter of France" was an event to create a great sensation. All Paris turned out to see the show, and the road from thence to St. Denis was one unbroken line of carriages. Mounted officers were to be seen in all directions, the Royal Guard surrounded the abbey, and the Pope's nuncio came from Rome to perform the ceremony.

On this solemn occasion, of course the attendance of the Princess's *écuyer* and lady of honour was considered indispensable, and Louise had prepared to see them both; but instead of Saint-Phale, to her surprise she beheld advancing to offer his arm her former attendant, the Baron de Brignolles. A pang of disappointment shot through her heart:

he had not cared, then, to see her for the last time, and she should behold him no more! She felt that she turned pale and trembled, and she could not trust her voice to inquire the cause of his absence; but De Brignolles took an opportunity of saying, that hearing the Vicomte was too ill to attend, he had requested permission to resume his service for this occasion. Louise bowed her head in silence—she durst not speak.

At that solemn ceremony were present Louis XVI., then Dauphin of France; Marie-Antoinette, the queen of beauty, and the idol of the French nation; the Comte de Provence, afterwards Louis XVIII.; and the Comte d'Artois, who subsequently, as Charles X., likewise lost the throne.

After an eloquent discourse by the Bishop of Troyes, which drew tears from every eye, the Princess retired for a few moments, and



presently re-appeared stript of her splendour, shorn of her beautiful hair, and clothed in the habit of the order. She was then stretched on the earth, covered with a pall, and the prayers for the dead pronounced over her. When she arose, the curtain which closed the entrance to the interior of the convent was lifted, and every eye was fixed on it as she passed through the opening, to return to the world no more. As that curtain fell behind her, a fearful cry echoed through the vaulted roof of the abbey, and a gentleman was observed to be carried out of the church by several persons who immediately surrounded him. Every one, however, was too much occupied with his own feelings at the moment to inquire who it was. On the ear of the new-made nun alone the voice struck familiarly; or perhaps it was not her ear, but her heart that told her it was the voice of Saint-Phale.

Louise was a Carmelite ; the profligacies of the King and the court proceeded as before ; Madame de Châteaugrand, instead of marrying her cousin Saint-Phale, married M. de Rivrement, to whom it appeared she had been long engaged ; and Saint-Phale himself, after a long and severe illness, which endangered his life, quitted France for Italy, whither he was sent for the sake of the climate. At length, in 1777, when Lafayette astonished the world by his expedition to America, the Vicomte astonished his friends no less by returning suddenly from the south, in order to join it ; and in spite of the entreaties of his relations, he executed his design, and there he fell at the battle of Monmouth, in the year 1778.

He did not, however, die in the field, but lingered some days before he expired, during which interval he wrote farewell letters to his father and mother ; and one also, which he

entreated the latter to deliver according to its address, which was to 'The Sister Thérèse de Saint Augustin, formerly Madame Louise de France.'

As soon as the poor bereaved mother had sufficiently recovered the shock of this sad news, she hastened to St. Denis to fulfil her son's injunction; and the Sister Thérèse, having obtained permission of the superior, received and opened the letter. The first words were an entreaty that she would listen to the prayer of a dying man, who could never offend her again, and read the lines that followed. He then went on to say that from his earliest youth, he had loved her; and that it was to be near her, without exciting observation, that he had solicited the situation of *écuyer*; but knowing that, from the inequality of their conditions, his love must be for ever hopeless, he had studiously concealed it from its object. No one had

ever penetrated his secret but Madame de Châteaugrand. He concluded by saying, that when that curtain hid her from his view on the day of her profession, he had felt the world contained nothing more for him, and that he had ever since earnestly desired that death which he had at length found on the field of battle, and which he had gone to America on purpose to seek ; and asking her blessing and her prayers, he bade her farewell for ever.

Poor Louise ! poor Thérèse ! poor nun ! poor Carmelite ! For a moment she forgot that she was the three last, to remember only that she had been the first ; and falling on her knees, and clasping those thin transparent hands, wasted by woe and vigils, she exclaimed with a piercing cry, “ Then he loved me after all ! ”

Rigid as were the poor nun’s notions of the duty of self-abnegation, such a feeling as

this was one to be expiated by confession and penance ; but as nuns are still women, it was not in the nature of things that she should not be the happier for the conviction that her love had been returned—nay, more than returned, for Saint-Phale had loved her first ; and if she had forsaken the world for his sake, he had requited the sacrifice by dying for her. It was a balm even to that pious spirit to know that she, the deformed, the *bossue*, as she called herself, who had thought it impossible she could inspire affection, had been the chosen object of this devoted passion.

Madame Louise survived her lover nine years ; and they were much calmer and happier years than those that preceded his death. She could now direct her thoughts wholly to the skies, for there she hoped and believed he was : and since human nature, as we have hinted before, *will* be human nature within the walls of a convent as well as

outside of them, she had infinitely more comfort and consolation in praying for the repose of his soul in heaven, than she could have had in praying for his happiness on earth—provided he had sought that happiness in the arms of Madame de Château-grand, or any other fair lady.

THE END.

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