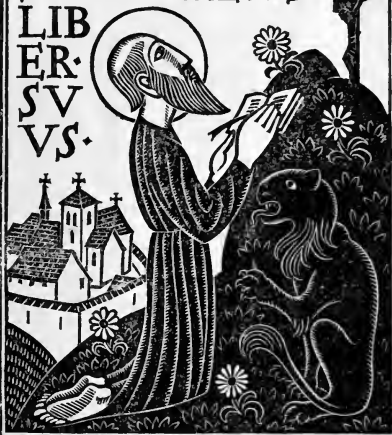


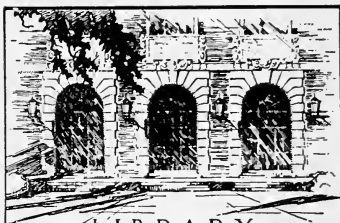


ALPHONSVS.  
MONTAGVE.  
SVMMERS.  
LIB  
ER.  
SV  
VS.



S·HIERONYME·O·P·N

Digitized by the Internet Archive  
in 2010 with funding from  
University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign



LIBRARY  
OF THE  
UNIVERSITY  
OF ILLINOIS

823  
R 346 r  
v. 2

# Rosalie;

OR, THE

CASTLE OF MONTALABRETTI.

IN FOUR VOLUMES.

---

VOL. II.

---

“ Led through a sad variety of woes.”

---

RICHMOND :

PRINTED FOR LONGMAN, HURST, REES, ORME, AND BROWN,  
PATERNOSTER ROW, LONDON.

---

1811.

1880

THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO

Printed by Eling & Wall, }  
Hill-Street, Richmond. }

823

R346r

v. 2

# Rosalie.

---

## CHAPTER I.

---

“ For much she scorn'd beneath deceit,  
Her sentiments to hide ;  
Nor wou'd a refuge meanly seek,  
From bashfulness, or pride.”



WHEN Olivia and Rosalie descended to the eating saloon, they found Lord Villers and Count Marioni with the Marchese, they having been invited to dinner

previous to the departure of the Marchesa. The Marchese appeared in one of his most gracious humours, and was even gallantly polite to Rosalie; but she shrunk involuntarily from the attentions he would have paid her, and imposed upon herself a very painful restraint, in receiving them with common civility. Her spirits were unusually oppressed, and she was seized with a pain in her head, which rendered her still more dispirited. As no other company had been admitted, on account of the absence of the Marchesa, she readily obtained permission to retire to her apartment early in the evening; and as her indisposition was apparent, it occasioned real concern to the little party:—the affectionate Olivia soon followed, to enquire the cause of her illness and administer to its cure. Rosalie protested that her chief ailment was an unconquerable dejection of spirits, for which she could alledge no



cause ; and besought her to return to her visiters, and leave her to her repose, which she believed would be her best restorative ; to which Olivia reluctantly consented. Sleep, however, deserted her, and she arose the next morning with a continued pain in her head, and a considerable degree of fever. Olivia's alarm kept pace with her love for her friend ; and the Marchese sent to beg she would permit the family physician to attend her. This, however, she absolutely declined, saying she felt assured that a day's rest would effectually restore her without the aid of medicine. Olivia could not be prevailed upon to quit her the whole day ; and towards the close of the evening, as with the most gentle touch, she was playing a little air of which Rosalie was particularly fond, some one rapped at the door, and in an instant Leonardo was in the arms of his sister. He started on behold-

ing Rosalie pale and languid; but no words could express the surprize and joy she felt, when she saw him in apparent health, and his intelligent countenance animated with the perfect expression of happiness. To his impatient enquiries respecting Rosalie, Olivia gave an answer, and then added, "but I must leave my patient under your charge, while I pay my duty to my mother."

"Olivia's fears have augmented my indisposition," said Rosalie. "Be assured, it yields to the pleasure of seeing you return in health, Signor Barrazzi."

"Oh, Rosalie!" exclaimed he, "this dear, this precious moment, once so little hoped for, and now so blissfully enjoyed, must be devoted to the purpose of disclosing to you all the feelings of my soul; of explaining to you the mysterious con-

duct, which must have rendered me capricious, if not contemptible in your eyes."

"How could you suppose that I could believe you either?" asked Rosalie interrupting him. "It is true I feared you were unhappy, and greatly rejoice at learning that I have been mistaken."

"Mistaken, my lovely friend! Oh, no! Misery—despair, have been my portion, ever since I believed you the affianced bride of Signor Massini."

"Affianced bride of Signor Massini!" repeated Rosalie. "How could such an idea—and why should it occasion"—she hesitated.

"Deign to listen to the history of my heart?" Rosalie bowed, and he proceeded, "The first moment that I be-

held you, was sufficient to inspire me with admiration; but a knowledge of your character taught me sentiments unknown before, and proved destructive of my peace. I loved—I was devoted to you, with all the ardour of fervent affection: and who ever felt such a passion unmixed with doubt and fear? The rich treasure of your heart, could alone satisfy me. To deserve it was beyond my hopes; but how to obtain it filled up every moment of my restless hours. At this period I learnt from the Marchesa, that an attachment subsisted between you and Signor Massini; and that, sanctioned by the approbation of his family, his proposals were to be made in form. Thunderstruck at this information, I became overwhelmed by despair. Watchfully as I had studied your character, I never perceived the least indication of a preference for Signor Massini; but appearances at the Duchesses concert doomed me to a con-

viction of this fatal error. I saw you faint—saw him bear you in his arms to another apartment; and heard you exclaim ‘where is he?’ as you looked around on your recovery. Distraction nearly seized my brain. Nothing, therefore, remained for me but to fly. I amused my family with a fictitious representation, and withdrew myself privately to the solitude of Monto Marco. Here my mother found me; and, as with repressed emotions I enquired after you, she gave me the history of your rejection of Signor Massini. Hope once more animated my bosom; and I was as impatient to return with her, as I had before been to quit Florence. She apprized me of the arrival of the Duke of Altieri’s family, with whom an alliance has been designed. On this subject it was necessary to be explicit with my father; but the chief object of my soul was to throw myself at your feet, my adored Rosalie, and to entreat you to tell me,

with the noble candour of your dignified mind, whether the man who lives but for you, and who now vows to consecrate every future moment of his life to the promotion of the felicity of your's, is neither heard with indifference, or viewed with dislike."

The alternate changes in Rosalie's countenance, had betrayed to Signor Barrazzi, the deep interest of her mind; and his eyes were still fixed upon her in fearful suspence, before she had acquired sufficient composure to reply: at length she said—

"I must be most ungrateful and unfeeling, if I could hear without interest and concern a detail which does so much honour to me. It is unnecessary to speak further on the mistake respecting Signor Massini, or, indeed, any other part of your flattering recital, except the en-

gagement which the Marchese has formed for you; and I should ill repay my obligations, or the friendship you profess for me, if I did not urge you, by every argument I could suggest, to a compliance with the wishes of your family."

"You mean then to discard from me all hope, Signora, and this is the mode you choose to adopt to acquaint me with your dislike."

"Dislike! How can you suppose for an instant?"—She stopped, and blushed deeply.

"Oh, let me then suppose, for an instant, that I am not indifferent to you!"

"Alas!" said she, "what misery might not such a supposition occasion for us both?"

“ I could encounter every other misery, but that of losing you, or being indifferent to you.”

“ In your estimate of miseries, have you not forgot those which your disobedience would inflict on your indulgent parents? Believe me,” and again she blushed deeply, “ that were not my esteem for you as great as it is sincere, I should not remind you of those obligations, which passion has only obliterated for a short time, or try to save you from the keen regret you would suffer, were you to fail in the performance of them. Your father, although affectionate, is peremptory ; and your mother’s existence nearly depends on the accomplishment of this alliance.”

“ On the affection of my father and mother, I build my hopes. When they know my attachment to be insurmount-



able, they will not require me to renounce it: and here I swear never to receive any other hand than this," pressing one of her's to his lips.

"Have you reflected on the improbable chance of this, when the exchange you have to propose for the daughter of a duke, is an obscure young woman, without fortune, rank, or connexions?"

"Neither, neither, could exalt her in my opinion, or add to the devotedness of my affection. And sooner would I renounce my own pretensions to them all, than the bliss of calling you mine."

"Generous Barrazzi!" exclaimed Rosalie, "Then more than ever does it become me to preserve to you that unblemished glory which you would sacrifice for my sake. Here then my solemn determination, never to listen to your

love until it becomes sanctioned by the consent of the Marchese and Marchesa.”

“ And would you then, my Rosalie, be mine? Do you hold out to me the dear, the ecstatic idea, that your heart would be truly, solely mine?” exclaimed Signor Barrazzi, forgetful of the impropriety of the required consent, and throwing himself rapturously at her feet.

Rosalie, deeply affected, said with a tender sadness, “ Barrazzi, where the happiness you deserve within my power to bestow, I would neither trifle with your feelings, or thus destroy your hopes: but even were the Marchese and Marchesa without an objection, my own fate is involved in a mystery which leaves me not the liberty of disposing of myself.”

Leonardo, rendered too happy by this confession to think any other obstacle insurmountable, or, at that moment, worthy consideration, yielded to the most unbounded transports. To be convinced that he possessed the undivided affections of Rosalie, was the all of felicity which the world could bestow ; and again he swore eternal gratitude at her feet. At this instant Olivia entered the room, exclaiming—

“ I thought my mother unconscionably tedious in examining the decorations of the apartments ; with which, however, she is highly pleased. But, my dear Rosalie, you look ill ; almost fainting ! What, my brother, is the cause of it ? ”

“ Myself,” replied he, “ my impetuosity has overpowered the spirits of your lovely friend. Oh, Olivia ! ” seizing her hand, and joining it with that of

Rosalie and his own, “witness for me that I declare unalterable affection to this dear object of my soul’s adoration, and be the advocate of your brother, should the Marchese and my mother prove averse to my pretenisons.”

“Oh, Leonardo!” replied she, “what a discovery do you make; and what a simpleton was I, not to guess it before. Yes;” kissing each of their hands, as they were fast locked together in her’s, “the sacred union of these, is the first wish of my heart, and shall unceasingly employ its cares.”

“Amiable Olivia!” exclaimed Rosalie, tears falling fast down her cheeks. “How shall I ever repay so sweet a proof of friendship and affection? Yet witness also the resolution I now irrevocably make. The Marchese’s design for his son, demand a dutiful acquiescence. I shrink

with terror from vows which *ought* to be addressed to another, and shudder at the idea of involving that family in unhappiness which has protected me, and distinguished me by every flattering mark of hospitable kindness ; therefore this is the last time I can listen to a subject, which, under different circumstances, would do me the highest honour, but which, at present, subject me to the condemnation even of my own heart.”

“ I did not mean,” replied Leonardo with energy, “ to insult the nobleness of your mind, or the delicacy of your character, by offering you clandestinely those sentiments of adoration which it will be my pride and glory to manifest to the world. And in declining a connexion which my father has formed for me, I commit no flagrant act of disobedience. I shall avow my attachment to him in the full confidence of hope ; and, should he

disappoint the expectations I have formed, you, my beloved Rosalie, shall be the arbitress of my fate ; the guide of every word, and every action."

" Will you promise to desist from any further conversation with me on this subject, until this appeal has been made ?" asked Rosalie with earnest emotion.

" I will," replied he.

" Permit me here to be the adviser," said Olivia. " Take no steps whatever until the Marchesa's assembly, and the other splendid entertainments, given in honour of the arrival of the Duke and Lady Madalene, be passed away. A premature discovery might throw every thing into confusion ; and, by that means, render the circumstance a matter of general notoriety."

Both Rosalie and Signor Barrazzi thought her remark judicious; and the latter, at the entreaty of Rosalie, promised a strict compliance.

“But,” added Olivia, starting, “I may, at this moment, be giving rise to the very suspicions I am cautioning you to avoid. The Marchesa was summoned to the saloon to receive the Count and Lord Villers, and sent me to request the immediate attendance of Leonardo. Hasten with me to her, my dear brother. I always find her anger formidable on these ceremonious occasions. She charges you, Rosalie, to be well by tomorrow night; and bade me say, that she would call upon you, when her visitors departed.”

Left alone, Rosalie found herself almost deprived of the powers of motion; almost bereft of the faculty of recollec-

tion. Could the scene which had past be real, or was it only an illusion? Had she indeed beheld Leonardo breathing vows of everlasting love at her feet? Scarcely could she have dared to trust herself with the belief, had not the throbbing emotion of her heart confirmed it. Alas, how treacherous had that heart proved! It had yielded to the omnipotence of love, and left her unconscious of her danger. Each sentiment that had agitated her bosom was now explained. Her solicitude for Leonardo's health, for his absence, for the alliance which was projected, and, above all, the conjectures of Olivia, that he was the victim of a consuming and unfortunate passion: what was all this, but the result of an attachment, which insidiously undermined her repose, and destroyed her health? If she could now assure herself that she loved, she had the exquisite delight of knowing that she was beloved again. Yet what



was the indulgence of this flattering idea, but a weakness, which she must teach herself to resist. Better acquainted with the Marchese's sentiments of her, than Leonardo, she knew the most decided rejection would be given to his suit; anticipated the unhappiness it would involve the whole family in; and almost dreaded the effects of that rage, which would unquestionably extend to herself. She saw that her fortitude would inevitably be put to a severe trial, and that her own inexperienced judgement was all she had to depend upon in the arduous struggle. In one point she felt convinced she could not err; which was that of refusing to listen to Leonardo, without the concurrence of his parents. Reason, pride, and a high-souled principle of honour, all urged her to form this determination. From the very source of her sufferings, she derived courage; for the knowledge that she was beloved by Leonardo, would

be her support, and enable her to act rightly. She wished there had been time to communicate the embarrassing situation in which she was placed, to the dear friends she had left at *St. Agnese*. And oh ! how much more did she wish that the obscurity of her birth could be removed, and that she should receive wealth, and be found to inherit ancestry, which might confer, instead of receiving, honour from the *Barrazzi* family. Then how would she glory in the election of her heart, and prove her gratitude to the disinterested *Leonardo* !

She sat absorbed in reflections like these, until she heard the voice of the *Marchesa*, as she ascended to the apartment.

The susceptible feelings of *Rosalie* vibrated to the smallest appeal of humanity. The recollection of the misery which was

preparing for the Marchesa, created in her, therefore, that sort of melancholy confusion which was easily mistaken by the Marchesa, as the effect of indisposition. Seating herself by her, she lamented her illness at such a time, and bade her be sure get well by the next evening; and then gave her a prolix description of the beauty of the apartments, and enumerated the guests of consequence she expected to entertain. Her extreme volubility, which was by no means natural, but excited only by the elevation of her spirits on this happy occasion, was the most favourable relief to poor Rosalie, who would have found it too painful an effort to enter into conversation on any subject. After the Marchesa had exhausted her topics and her spirits, she arose to depart, and, in the exuberance of her good humour, kissed the cheek of Rosalie, and bade her good night.

This little act of affection, struck on the heart of Rosalie the chill tremor of remorse. She burst into tears, and, throwing her arms round the neck of Olivia, exclaimed—"Oh, how happy and how good she is! And I, unfortunate as I am, shall blight these joyous prospects, and doom her to disappointment and mortification."

"The disappointments in life have their different degrees, and, in my opinion, are deserving only of their proportionate rates of sympathy: thus, the failure of the projects of ambition, are not to be set in competition with the first and most rational views of life. Wonder not, my dear Rosalie, that I speak in such terms of the designs of my mother: I am another victim to be immolated at her shrine. I am decreed to become the wife of a man whom I have not beheld, as you

know, for years; and whose character is so insignificant, that I shall at least be a partner in the disobedience of Leonardo. But you look seriously ill, my love: not another word will I speak, but send you, with the authority of a physician, to your repose.”

---

## CHAPTER II.

---

—————“Care  
Sat on his furrow'd cheek ; and, under brows  
Of dauntles courage, waiting revenge,  
A cruel eye.”



THE following morning the whole of the Barrazzi family paid a visit of ceremony to the Duke of Altieri and Lady Madalene. The Marchesa dispensed with

the attendance of Rosalie, both on account of her recent indisposition, and that she might recover sufficiently for the fatigues of the evening. They were accompanied home by Signor Guanana, a young man who was but too much aware of his own importance; and, to the same blameable degree, conscious of the merit of a handsome person. The Marchese was in a high flow of spirits during dinner, which diffused general cheerfulness among the party: Rosalie sometimes relapsed into apparent thoughtfulness, but was suddenly recalled to her recollection by the assiduities of Signor Guanana, who addressed her with the freedom of a long intimacy, and gazed at her with such an expression of admiration, as extremely disconcerted her. With the propriety and delicacy of Leonardo's attentions, she had, however, much cause to be pleased.

Whilst they were dressing for the assembly, Olivia had an opportunity of speaking of their morning visit.—

“ I do not like Lady Madalene,” said she ; “ that is, I should not like her for a sister. She is certainly handsome ; perhaps, critically so : but she wants that feminine softness, and those retiring manners, which, in my opinion, give an interest to beauty.”

“ And the Duke, what is he ?” asked Rosalie.

“ The most delightful of human beings,” replied Olivia. “ His figure is elegant, his manners fascinating ; and nobility and goodness of heart are stamped on his countenance.”

“ And did Lady Madalene receive Leopardo without embarrassment ?” ask-



ed Rosalie, hesitatingly. "Surely the first introduction to the man who is destined for her husband, must have been painfully distressing."

"Indeed it did not appear so," replied Olivia; "and I could not help remarking, how widely Sicilian manners differ from those of Tuscany. But I believe I have not yet told you that the Lady Madalene has been educated by an aunt, who lived at Palermo, where Leonardo saw her six years ago, when she was only eleven years of age. The Duke her father has long wished her return, but the declining state of the health of her relation, as well as her own inclinations, have hitherto detained her. The death of that relation has added greatly to her wealth, which, I suppose, has rendered her more estimable in the eyes of the Marchese."

The company now began to assemble, and in a short time the crowd became immense, scarcely a person of fashion in Florence, having been omitted in the invitation. The splendour of the apartments, the magnificent dresses of the guests, and the air of happiness which every individual displayed, spread a magic over the scene which seemed to convert it into an elysium. Lady Madalene seemed to look, and move, the deity of the place. Her tall and elegant figure, the commanding dignity of her manner, and the pride of conscious superiority which sat on her features, arrested general attention, and might perhaps excite admiration, in those who can be pleased with haughty beauty, devoid of sweetness or sensibility. Rosalie was introduced to her by the Marchesa, with whom and Olivia she entered into conversation for some moments, then, passing an arm

through each of their's, she proposed viewing the rest of the apartments. Never did the beauty of Rosalie appear so transcendantly lovely:—the perfect symmetry of her person, the graceful ease of her movement, and the interesting expression of her fine features, afforded so striking a contrast to the imposing attractions of Lady Madalene, that a buzz of involuntary approbation ran through the room. But it was not merely in personal charms that they were thus contrasted, for the character of each was equally distinguishable. The Lady Madalene appropriated the expressions of admiration she heard wholly to herself, and looked around her in proud and unabashed triumph; while Rosalie, who could not avoid hearing her own name attached to the encomiums which pronounced her the superior beauty, shrunk with humility from the gazes which pursued her, and blushed at the

praises she dared not believe she merited. Leonardo followed her with his eyes, but scarcely durst approach her, lest the fervor of his admiration should be noticed by the Lady Madalene. Signor Guanana however took no pains to repress his sentiments; and the assiduity with which he pursued her, drew upon her so much observation, that Rosalie felt both vexed and displeased, as she wished his attentions to be paid exclusively to Olivia. She had, however, the gratification of perceiving that her friend was too much engaged in conversing with Lord Villers, to attend to the gallantries bestowed upon her by Signor Guanana.

Another suit of apartments were now thrown open, where a sumptuous supper was served up. Signor Guanana, with officious haste, seized the hand of Rosalie, to conduct her to it. Again she thought

of Olivia, but perceived that she was already seated at the table with Lord Villers by her side. As a band of excellent performers were stationed in a balcony to play during supper, and the music admitted of conversation, without being overheard, Signor Guanana availed himself of the opportunity to explain to Rosalie, in the most unequivocal terms, the violence of his love. When every other means she could use had failed in repressing his suit, even that of laughing at the idea of his becoming so deeply enamoured in so short a time, she said seriously—"Surely, Signor Guanana, you are acting a most dishonourable part, since you have been received in the Marchese's family, as the acknowledged lover of his daughter."

"I came to Florence for that purpose, I own," replied he, quite undaunted

at her remark ; “ but the fates have destined that I should fall a victim to your charms, instead of her’s ; and, as no human efforts can control their decrees or my inclinations, I swear never to relinquish the hope of making you mine.”

“ The fates then have destined you to an endless pursuit,” replied she, quite tired of his importunities ; “ and you may read your reward in one of the mythological fables of the ancients. But tell me, I beseech you, who that extraordinary looking man is, that I see seated at the bottom of the table, next to the Marchese ?”

“ I protest I did not observe him before. He is a *Religieux* by his dress ; and the familiarity of his manner, bespeaks him an intimate acquaintance. He is certainly an odd-looking man.”

“Odd!” repeated Rosalie. “His visage is so singular, that were I never again to behold him, it could not be effaced from my memory.” And she shuddered as she spoke.

The company, soon after this, arose; and, dispersing themselves in the different saloons, sat conversing in small parties, until the arrival of their carriages.

When the two friends had retired to their own apartment, the events of the evening afforded them ample subjects for discussion. Olivia gravely congratulated Rosalie on her new conquest; but perceiving she looked much disconcerted, assured her with most convincing smiles, that the predilection of the Signor in favour of another was the happiest circumstance of her life; for that her dislike to him was as strong, as it was invincible:

and that her only chance of escaping so miserable a fate as the marrying him, must be by his rejection of her, since her family were too inflexible to admit an objection on her part. She next spoke of the Lady Madalene, whom she professed greatly to dislike; and pronounced that she would never have been the chosen of Leonardo, had not his affections been previously engaged. At length Rosalie asked her if she had observed a stranger of most singular appearance, and how he could gain admission into such a society? adding—"my eyes were involuntarily fixed upon him, although his countenance was of that description, that I could not view it without a sensation of terror."

"Lord Villers pointed him out to me," replied Olivia; "but I know not who he is. I remember we agreed, that if his mind was capable of the evils his



countenance foreboded, he might become a scourge to the whole human race.”

Notwithstanding the repulses Rosalie had given to Signor Guanana, his hopes remained unextinguished; for, with his usual self-complacency, he attributed the refusal of Rosalie, to her fear of offending the Marchese by rivaling Olivia: and as nothing was more gratifying to his vanity, than the celebrity of being talked of; nothing so delightful to his pride, as a display of his importance; he determined to make it public, that he should break off the treaty of alliance the Marchese had solicited, and then pursue Rosalie with unremitting assiduities. He little imagined that her charms had obtained for her, that evening, a lover so much above himself in rank, wealth, and endowments, that, even in his own estimation, he must have shrunk into

nothing by the comparison. In fact, the Duke of Altieri had viewed her with so much admiration, and heard her with so much delight, that he became the willing and devoted slave to her perfections. He had married at an early period of life, and been so passionately attached to the mother of Lady Madalene, that although he had lost her almost as soon as she had given birth to a daughter, his heart, faithful to its first attachment, had revolted from the idea of a second choice. His title, which would become extinct, and his immense possessions, most of which would be alienated from his daughter, had been urged to him by his family, as imposing upon him a sort of duty to form another connexion; but, until the moment he beheld Rosalie, he had found no object worthy of succeeding his first lady. He might yet be called almost a young man; and, in countenance, per-

son, and manners, was pre-eminently interesting and pleasing. The goodness of his heart was a theme on which all those who knew him delighted to dwell; and his actions were regulated, not merely by a nice sense of honour, but by the exalted spirit becoming his high rank and superior mind. Few indeed could be compared to the Duke of Altieri, and fewer still had the power of imitating his beneficence; for his vast wealth and influence seconded every generous and noble act he meditated. The establishment of his daughter, which he expected to take place immediately, would release him from the only obligation which fettered his will; and he had only to ask of the Marchesa if the connexions of Rosalie were respectable; for as to wealth or rank, they occupied not a moment of his care. The apprehension that the heart of Rosalie might have made a prior selec-

tion, gave him some pangs; but he was unwilling to anticipate such a destruction of his hopes, and strove to give place only to the generous designs he had formed, should she distinguish him with her regards, of making her the happiest of her sex.

Olivia and Rosalie were summoned late to the breakfast-room, where, seated again by the side of the Marchese, they beheld the terrific stranger. Rosalie averted her face from an object so unaccountably revolting to her nature, and took a vacant chair next to the Marchesa; but the enquiries of the morning were scarcely ended, when the Marchese said, "Signora, Father Benedetto goes to succeed the Abbot Sebastiano. If you have dispatches to the Monastery of *St. Agnese*, he will convey them."

“ To succeed Father Sabastiano !” replied Rosalie, the blood receding from her cheeks. “ Oh, my Lord Marchese ! where, where is he !”

“ In a better world than this,” replied a voice, whose tones struck still greater dismay into her bosom. “ In a world, where his piety and his virtues have obtained for him a crown of glory.”

Tears flowed fast from the eyes of Rosalie. She attempted not to speak, for no words could express her sorrow. A silence of some length prevailed : at last the Marchese said—“ You have lost a friend, no doubt ; but I will venture to promise you another equally valuable, in Father Beneditto.”

The comparison—the idea, indeed,

of any one being worthy to replace such a character as the Abbot Sebastiano, restored to Rosalie the full possession of herself, and she exclaimed with energy, "Blessed indeed, to himself, but irreparable to all those who knew him, is the exchange! To me he was father, friend, and protector; and I can never sufficiently lament his loss." She looked at Benedetto as she finished speaking, and perceived that the malignant scowl of his dark countenance became still darker.

Olivia, who bore a part in her grief, joined in the eulogy she pronounced on the virtues of Father Sebastiano; and Leonardo designedly protracted the conversation by his enquiries and observations.

The first violence of Rosalie's grief having subsided, she once more raised

her eyes, to contemplate the countenance of the man who, in future, would possess an ascendancy in the councils of the monastery. His features perhaps might once have been handsome, but bold, designing, and ferocious. The deep lines which furrowed his visage, seemed more to have been effected by violent emotions, than the discriminating hand of time. His eyes, small, dark, and piercing, betrayed suspicion, defiance, and cruelty; and his mouth, which from habit was drawn into a curve, when he spoke, was distended to a satanic smile. His cheeks were colourless, except from the deep bronze of his complexion. His forehead and nose were truly Roman, but his eyebrows were contracted and frowning. His figure had the assumption of dignity; and his being of the order of White Benedictines, proved him of noble descent. To an appearance thus calculated to convey

every unfavourable impression, he added the affectation of piety and humility; which so ill accorded with those bold outlines of a vindictive spirit, that hypocrisy stood confessedly, the finishing trait in his character.

After some conversation carried on with him in a low voice, the Marchese apprized Rosalie that his friend was about to depart, and that her letters must be prepared. She, therefore, withdrew, her eyes overflowing with tears, and wrote a few lines to the Abbess and Sister Magdalena. Alive only to the expressions of nature and truth, she gave full scope to her feelings on the death of the good Father Sebastiano; and, with the candour and inexperience natural to her age, expressed the strong aversion with which she had been seized, against his successor. These letters were delivered by Olivia to



the newly appointed Abbot, whom Rosalie could not prevail upon herself to see upon the occasion. Leonardo accompanied his sister back, and would not be denied passing half an hour with her; but he respected her injunction and her sorrow, and entered upon no other topic than the one which occupied her thoughts so deeply.

In the evening nearly the same party were again assembled at the Palazzo di Altieri. Lady Madalene, who had been greatly struck with the elegant figure and polished manners of Leonardo, scrupled not to hold out to him that encouragement, which his imagined pretensions, she thought, claimed from her. His embarrassed air and manner, when she addressed him, rather surprized her; but, confident as she was in the influence of her charms, she attributed it to the un-

certainty of hope, rather than the absence of passion ; an idea which, by redoubling her attentions, gave still greater alarm to the object on whom they were bestowed. Signor Guanana persecuted Rosalie with unceasing assiduities and incessant volubility ; and it was an inexpressible relief to her and Leonardo when music was proposed, and some of the company proceeded to the concert room.

The Duke, now left more at liberty from ceremonious attentions to his visitors, pursued Rosalie, who had yielded to those solicitations which could not in fact be declined, and taken her station by the side of Olivia, at the piano forte. Much as the Duke had heard of her voice and taste, they so greatly surpassed his expectation, that he became more deeply enamoured than before. He attached himself to her for the remainder

of the evening, which she rejoiced at, as it released her from the persecutions of Signor Guanana. Well informed, sensible, and polite, he could not fail of interesting her extremely; and having no suspicion of his partiality, she unconsciously added to the passion with which she had inspired him, by the unreserved ease of her manner, and the intelligence which he discovered in her mind. With the most delicate propriety he avoided every expression which could betray the sentiments of his heart, wishing rather to obtain a place in her esteem, before he ventured upon the declaration of his love. Whilst they sat conversing, Lady Madalene ran up to them, and exclaimed—"I have just learnt, Signora, that you are named after my favourite Saint, who is adored beyond any other in Palermo. The feast of St. Rosalia is the finest thing in the whole world, and she has worked

more miracles than all the saints in the calendar together."

Your comparison is a good one," replied the Duke gallantly; "for her present prototype has an equal claim to general admiration."

"Her history is extraordinary," continued Lady Madalene, "for she had been buried five hundred years before any body heard of her; when all at once she appeared at Palermo, in the time of a great plague, and preserved the city from destruction: since which they have honoured her with a festival, which lasts four days, and exceeds in magnificence any spectacle, even at Rome."

"Ah!" said Signor Guanana, "this fair saint," affecting a sigh, "emulates not the mercy of your's. She is seen

but to destroy, and heals not those whom she wounds.”

The Duke looked surprized, but Rosalie laughed excessively, and replied that there was little chance of her being canonized by him.

“ No !” replied he ; “ for I am too jealous of the adoration of others, and would have you solely worshipped by myself.”

“ Then,” said Lady Madalene, “ she might remain forgotten for five hundred years, just like poor Santa Rosalia.”

Several days had passed, which were dedicated to a variety of amusements, before the Marchesa began to suspect the failure of her plans. She was first led to this by the haughty demeanour of the

Lady Madalene towards Leonardo, who, in fact, had been offended at the coolness of his attentions, and took this method of shewing her resentment. This observation led to others, and the Marchesa began to perceive, with equal dismay, that Signor Guanana conducted himself with the utmost indifference towards Olivia. There was no difficulty in obtaining certain and immediate information from her daughter, who assured her that Signor Guanana had not given the least room to suppose he felt for her either preference or regard. The Marchese, at this juncture, was gone to pass a few days at a distant Villa, so no step could be taken until his return; and she remained in a state of restless vexation. The frequency of the Duke of Altieri's visits were the only consolation which remained to her, as she wholly ascribed them to respect for herself, and approbation of the intended

alliance. Of this, however, she was soon to be deprived, for having found her alone, and disengaged, one morning, he besought her interest with Rosalie, for whom he avowed he entertained the most unbounded affection. "Her temper is so sweet," added he, "and her manners so gentle, that I scarcely dare flatter myself I have made any impression on her heart, since she is alike good, alike uniformly attentive to all: but if she can be prevailed upon to honour me with her acceptance, I shall think myself the happiest of men, and the whole study of my life shall be to prove my gratitude."

Surprize and mortification, for a few moments involved the Marchesa in profound silence; but a quick-sighted policy is ever ready to adapt those exigencies to useful purposes which cannot be averted; so she soon saw an evident

advantage to be obtained for herself from this. Rosalie would, no doubt, be devoted to her, should she assist in procuring for her so splendid an establishment. Her charms would gain an entire ascendancy over the Duke; and, therefore, should the marriage be broken off between Leonardo and Lady Madalene, she still might obtain the strong interest she wished to establish with the Duke, by her means. All this passed, in quick succession, in her thoughts; and, accommodating her features to the purposes of her mind, she expressed great joy at the happy selection the Duke had made, assuring him that she knew not a more amiable or accomplished young creature than Rosalie, and adding, what she verily believed to be a truth, that there was no doubt of her being fully sensible of the honour which his choice conferred upon her.

“ I have watched her,” said the



Duke, "most scrupulously; and I can neither discover a latent attachment, or indeed that vain aim at conquest which most young women practise."

"I think I can venture to pronounce," replied the Marchesa, "that her heart is yet untouched. Her life, hitherto, has been spent in the seclusion of a convent; and her mind, as well as manners, has been so well cultivated, that she is superior to the little arts of coquetry, or, indeed, of any deception whatever."

"She is an orphan, I find," said the Duke, "and left to the care of the Abbess of the monastery of *St. Agnese*."

"So we understood," answered the Marchesa, "but what part, or whether any, of her family are living, is, I believe, unknown to herself: they must, however,

have been respectable, or she would not have received the protection of the Lady Abbess; and we have never questioned her on the subject, being sufficiently satisfied both with her patroness and herself."

"With herself!" repeated the Duke. "Oh, nothing can be more perfect than she is! All further enquiries are superfluous, after what you have told me; and, indeed, her being your guest precluded the necessity of making any. If I can obtain her heart, it is all that I desire; and, in the applications I am to make, I will be guided wholly by herself."

"She has the highest possible veneration for the superior," said the Marchesa, "and will take no step without her concurrence; but there is no danger to be dreaded from that, for being a woman of distinction herself, she will well know

how to appreciate the advantages of an union with a person of your rank."

The Duke was hurt at the conclusion of the Marchesa's speech. He wished not to owe the hand of Rosalie merely to his rank or riches: there was something so revolting to his noble spirit in this sordid idea, that sooner would he have renounced Rosalie herself, than have made her his on terms like these.

The Marchesa observed the silence of the Duke, but, attributing it to another cause, she said—"Do you wish me, Duke, to declare to her the sentiments with which she has inspired you."

"I had thought of writing to her," replied he, "but if you think it the better mode, I shall ever be your debtor, if you will."

“ Then be assured that I will say, and do, every thing that is proper upon the occasion.”

The Duke made her his fervent acknowledgments, and declared that he left his happiness wholly in her hands. They then parted ; and the Marchesa sat down to a second, and more ample view of this unexpected disclosure. Some strong emotions of mortification still remained in her bosom, but she combated them with all her energy. She reflected that it was highly probable the Duke would marry whenever he lost his daughter, even should she employ artifice, to destroy his present views : that the mind of Rosalie was grateful and affectionate, and that by promoting the union, she would look up to her as the person to whom she owed her good fortune, and, in return do her every kind office in her power. Still her hopes (if the marriage

of Olivia with Signor Guanana did not take place) for the aggrandisement of her family by the dormant title, would rest upon the Duke. Again, she thought, that however Lady Madalene might be disposed to treat Leonardo at present, her sentiments would certainly experience a change, when she saw her father determined to marry; and if Signor Guanana declined acceding to the wishes of the Cardinal, Olivia, under the advantage of such an introduction, might form an alliance of still greater consequence. In short, there were many reasons of importance why she should encourage this alliance, and only one to be opposed to it; but as that existed in her own bosom only, and consisted chiefly of envy, for the distinction so obscure a young woman would obtain in being elevated so far above herself, she determined to banish it at once, that being a practice of philosophy she could, in appearance at least,

readily conform to, whenever the precepts of self-interest commanded it. She wished the Marchese at home, that she might take his advice; but having ever had a better opinion of her own talents, for intrigues of this nature, than his, she determined to abide by what seemed to herself the preferable plan.

The moments in which Leonardo could speak to Rosalie alone, or only in the presence of his sister, were now, by her precautions, become so few, that his impatience was almost uncontrollable. "Unkind Rosalie," said he to her, as they were waiting for the Marchesa in the eating saloon, "am I constantly to hear the language of love addressed to you by others, and be doomed myself to a silence that nearly destroys me? But if you will not listen to me on that subject, hear me, at least for an instant, upon another. I accidentally heard my father and the Abbot

Beneditto, conversing in broken sentences on your resemblance of some one, and the extraordinary coincidence of your bearing the name of Rosalie. Know you to whom, or what, they alluded? I am agonized at the idea of your engrossing a thought in that man's breast."

"Heaven forbid that I should be at all known to him!" replied Rosalie. "The first presentment of evil my bosom ever experienced was felt when I heard him announced as the successor of Father Sebastiano."

"Suppress that terror, at least, my adored Rosalie," said Leonardo; "for never must you become an inhabitant of *St. Agnese* again."

"To yield to contingencies," answered Rosalie, in a softened tone of voice, "is, I believe, required from most

people ; and I know of no difference between a great mind, and one of an inferior cast, but the being prepared to meet disappointments with firmness, and to endure misfortunes with equanimity."

" Admirable Rosalie ! How every sentiment I hear from your lips, adds homage to affection. Yet did you feel, or know the fervor of my passion, you could not resolve thus coolly."

" It is because I do *know*," replied she, deeply blushing, " that a sincere and fervent passion is capable of ennobling us : it is because I *feel* the elevated sentiments it inspires, that I am enabled so to judge, and so to advise."

The hasty entrance of the Marchesa, who had to apologize for detaining the party from dinner, not only put an end



to the conversation, but also concealed the embarrassment she would perhaps have perceived in the countenance of Rosalié, who was little able to disguise her emotions. The repast was no sooner over, than the Marchesa invited Rosalie to accompany her to her *boudoir*, who followed her with a palpitating heart, dreading that either the affection of Leonardo, or the attentions of Signor Guanana, had attracted her observation. Both these circumstances had, however, escaped her. She never could have suspected Leonardo of so much degeneracy, as to wish to ally himself to an obscure, unportioned, young woman; and as for Signor Guanana, when she understood that he had not devoted himself to Olivia, she ascribed it to the levity of his character, and believed him incapable of forming an attachment with any other person.

When Rosalie was seated, the Marchesa said—"I have a most flattering piece of news to communicate to you, Signora; which gives me so much pleasure, that I know not whether I rejoice at it most on your account or my own."

Leonardo's passion for me, thought Rosalie, is then discovered: yet can the Marchesa speak of it thus favourably? And, while these ideas past in her mind, the paleness which had at first appeared on her cheeks, gave place to a deep suffusion of rosy red.

"My sweet love," said the Marchesa, taking her hand, "such an elevation is due to your merit; and I know not any family who might not pride themselves in an alliance with you."

Again Rosalie grew pale: so strange a revolution in the designs of the Mar-

chesa overpowered her, almost to fainting.

“ I thought,” said the Marchesa, “ that I should enjoy the flattering pleasure of being the first to apprise you of the Duke de Altieri’s passion for you ; but I see, by your emotion, that he has already made you acquainted with it.”

“ The Duke !” faintly articulated Rosalie.

“ The Duke,” continued the Marchesa, “ commissioned me to declare to you the sentiments with which you have inspired him ; and a more attached lover does not breathe. His high rank and amiable character, promise to you every felicity this world can bestow ; and as the most affectionate of your friends, I offer you my fervent congratulations on such

an enviable destiny;" and she arose and kissed her cheek.

"Dear Marchesa," said Rosalie, recovered in part from her confusion, by this speech, "your goodness to me upon all occasions claims my highest gratitude; but I assure you that, until this moment, I had not a suspicion of the favourable opinion the Duke of Altieri honours me with."

"You surprize me," cried the Marchesa, interrupting her, "as I thought your manner indicated—but it is of no importance. His attachment to you is unquestionable, or he would not have spoken to me on the subject."

"The deep sense I have of the obligations I am under to him, and to you, points out to me the necessity of declaring with candour, and without delay,

that it is not in my power to reward the Duke with my affections; and that I must, therefore, decline the acceptance of the generous offer he makes me."

"I will neither convey, nor can I permit you to make, such a romantic reply to his proposals," said the Marchesa, with a considerable degree of anger. "You cannot seriously mean to reject a proposal, which every young woman in Florence will envy you; and any sort of coquetry might possibly deprive you of such a splendid establishment, as in all human probability will never occur again."

"Pardon me, dear Marchesa, when I tell you, that your own repugnance to coquetry does not exceed mine; and, whatever condemnation I may meet with from others, I am justified in my own opinion, for declining the dishonour-

able act of marrying a man I cannot love.”

“ If you have a predilection in favour of another,” replied the Marchesa, with a scrutinizing look, “ I am answered. And, indeed, it must be so, since nothing but a prior partiality could render it possible for you to dislike the Duke. You have only then to reflect on the folly of losing such an establishment, through an improper and weak attachment.”

“ If I felt the predilection you suppose,” replied Rosalie, in a gentle but firm voice, “ it would surely to you offer a sufficient excuse for the rejection of the Duke. I do declare to you, however, that no engagement can ever take place between us, from causes which can neither be explained or removed.”

“ As the *mystery* is not confided to

me," said the Marchesa, haughtily, "I may be permitted to think your conduct extraordinary at least."

"In a matter which involved in it your good opinion, dear Marchesa, I would tax my conduct with the most scrupulous severity; and, did I not stand acquitted to my own honour and conscience, I should never dare to hope for the continuance of your protection and esteem."

"Well," said the Marchesa, after a pause, "in a matter of this sort, I admit that you are to act up to your own feelings: but as a friend, who has lived long enough to know how to estimate the real advantages of life, I would advise you to take time for consideration, and to decide with caution."

"I would do so," replied Rosalie, "merely because you wish it, was I not

convinced that my resolution cannot be shaken. Would it be honourable to trifle with the Duke, or give him hopes which never can be realized?"

"Certainly not," answered the Marchesa, musing as she spoke. At length, recollecting herself and looking at her watch, she said—"I am sure my carriage must be in waiting. I am going to visit an invalid friend this evening, and as the distance would be formidable to return alone at night, I have requested the attendance of Leonardo. You and Olivia I hope will be able to amuse yourselves until my return."

Rosalie felt most happy to be dismissed, and rejoiced in the interval that would allow her leisure to compose her spirits, and regulate her future conduct. She found Olivia waiting impatiently for her, to whom she related the conversa-



tion she had held with the Marchesa, and then added—

“ It is in vain for me to attempt to conceal from myself, the misery which Barrazzi would inflict upon his parents, and be made to endure, were he to have the temerity to avow his affection for me to them. It is, therefore, necessary for him to be informed, that I will never consent to such an application. When the Marchesa questioned me, relative to a prior engagement, it was scarcely possible for me to evade an answer, without being disingenuous; but I most resolutely determined at the moment, to keep my integrity inviolate, by renouncing Barrazzi for ever. Tell him this, my Olivia; but tell him, that the world can offer me nothing of equal value to his esteem, and that I shall return immediately to the monastery of *St. Agnese*, and devote the remainder of my days to an

attendance on the beloved friends of my youth, and to the duties of my religion."

Olivia shed tears at the solemn and affecting manner in which she pronounced these words.—

"Promise me," said she, "that you will not enter upon your novitiate rashly? Remember, you are more than my sister; you are such by adoption, as well as affection: and I have, therefore, a double claim upon your heart. Should I be severed from you by irrevocable vows, when I most stand in need of your presence and friendship, the happiness I am tempted to look forward to, must ever remain incomplete."

Olivia blushed deeply, and Rosalie perceiving that some latent meaning gave rise to her visible confusion, with kind

and delicate solicitude, asked the cause of it. Olivia, throwing her arms round the neck of her friend, and concealing her face in her bosom, owned that she had given her heart to Lord Villers; that he was to solicit her hand of her father, and if his consent could be obtained, she wished Rosalie to accompany her to England.

“Dearest Olivia!” exclaimed Rosalie—“beloved friend of my heart! I cannot express my joy at the felicity which seems in store for you. And although other duties may for a time interfere, and claim my first observance, yet I do promise that I will form no engagements which shall oblige me to neglect that friendship which distinguished me in solitude and obscurity, and ever must remain my sweetest solace. Be assured, that I have no intention at present of taking the veil; and should I hereafter

resolve to do so, I will first visit you in any part of the world you may inhabit."

She now questioned Olivia whether she thought it probable that the Marchese and Marchesa would consent to her marriage with a foreigner.

"The moment," replied she, "is propitious for asking it: they cannot fail of being mortified at Signor Guanana's breaking off a treaty which had been agreed upon, and, consequently, made public; and this may reconcile them to an offer which is certainly inferior in no one point, to that of the Signor Guanana."

She had scarcely pronounced his name, when, to the great surprize of the two friends, who had given orders that

no visitors should be admitted, he entered the saloon.

“ Did you see no servants, Signor,” said Olivia, “ who could have informed you that the Marchesa and Leonardo were from home ?”

“ I required no such intelligence from them,” answered he, “ for as I knew the circumstance, I made my way without staying to hear a single word they said. So, beautiful Olivia, be neither angry with them, or me, for the boldness of my intrusion. How could I have endured the theatre or the casino, in the absence of yourself, and your too lovely friend.”

“ Oh !” said Rosalie, smiling, to take off somewhat from the sarcasm of her retort, “ I perceive that you are wholly

selfish. You can inflict punishment, although you will not endure it."

"Do you know," said Olivia, "that we have refused to let in a score, or more of people, who, like you, did not know what to do with themselves?"

"Place me not, I beseech you, among such a horrid set of insensibles. I felt an attraction that was irresistible." And he sighed profoundly.

"Signor Guanana is incorrigible," said Olivia, "and I may, therefore, as well reverse the orders given to the servants, or we shall give offence to our acquaintance;" and she quitted the room for that purpose.

"It is the omnipotence of your charms, divine Rosalie," said he, "that

has made me guilty of a transgression, which ceremony will condemn, and love pardon."

"When you thus amuse yourself," said Rosalie, "does it never occur to you, Signor Guanana, that you may, very probably, be fatiguing me?"

"Cruel and insensible Rosalie! Do you call that passion which destroys all the happiness of my existence, amusing? But you shall receive incontrovertible proofs that I am serious at least; for I will apply to the Marchese on his return, and desire him to give a sanction to my addresses."

"The Marchese," replied Rosalie, rather alarmed at his intention, "has neither authority over my actions, nor

power to dispose of my inclinations ; and you must permit me to tell you, Signor, that an application from you to him, would be dishonourable in the highest degree, unless for the object to whom your faith has been pledged."

" Never," said he, " was that faith pledged. I was only passive, in an affair about which I was at that time indifferent."

" Those who so easily enter into solemn engagements," replied she, " and who can so lightly break them, may justly be suspected of not retaining any lasting impression. This inconstancy of disposition leaves me free from regret, when I inform you, that your pretensions are highly displeasing to me, and that I shall never willingly listen to you again."



The return of Olivia put a stop to the reply he was going to make, and the names of Count Marioni and Lord Villers, were at that moment announced; and, soon afterwards, those of the Lady Madalene and the Duke de Altieri.

“ I protest,” said Olivia gaily, “ that we owe Signor Guanana our best thanks, for the delightful levee by which we are surrounded, and, perhaps, our apologies also; for we have been abusing him unmercifully, for breaking through the restrictions of ceremony.”

The words of Olivia were perfectly in unison with the feelings which at that moment agitated the bosom of the person to whom they were chiefly addressed. The hopes of Signor Guanana would have been completely extinguished, by

the resolute refusal which Rosalie had just pronounced, had not vanity, the prominent feature in his character, prompted him to believe that the partialities of friendship, alone rendered her averse to the pleadings of his love. He believed all that opposed him was ‘ a ceremonious restraint ;’ and, as the words struck his ears, had just determined, in spite of the prohibition he had received, to speak to the Marchese or Marchesa on the subject, the first opportunity that offered.

Lady Madalene, as soon as she could address Rosalie without being overheard, said—“ This visit is to you, Signora, and I was determined to come while that part of the family I dislike were away. Indeed I cordially *hate* the Marchese and Marchesa. I hate Florence too : and you are the only person I like in it. I wish you would marry Guanana, who it is easy to

see is devoted to you, and come to Rome."

"You flatter me highly," replied Rosalie. "But you forget that Signor Guanana is devoted to another."

"*Mio Dio!*" exclaimed she. "Just as much as I have been; and, like me, he will soon break through his thralldom."

The Duke had watched the countenance and manners of Rosalie; and, perceiving no alteration in them, had concluded that the Marchesa departed in too much haste to deliver the commission with which he had entrusted her.

Rosalie seized the opportunity she had long been anxious for, to ask Count Marioni, if he knew any thing of the character or connexions of the stranger

who was gone to succeed Father Sebastiano?

“ Very little,” replied he ; “ indeed, nothing more than, that the Marchese and he were inseparable companions in their youth, when their fortunes were desperate : and, from appearances, the same intercourse subsists between them still ; for to the interest of the Marchese, he owes his present advancement.”

“ I have no ‘ art to find the mind’s construction in the face’—” said Rosalie ; “ but his countenance inspires me with a sort of terror which I cannot describe.”

“ And would still more, a greater adept than yourself,” replied he.

“ Your words rather increase, than allay, my fears, Count ; for I know that

you always discriminate with judgement, and that your remarks are the result of experience.”

“ Alas !” replied he, “ you have fatally reminded me of one of the chief misfortunes of my life. It has been said by one of the sages of antiquity, that— ‘ a man who avails himself not of experience, will be, like a child, beginning to live every day ; and that he who uses it, will have lived too long.’ Certain it is, that experience daily robs us of some of the sweetest charms of life, and that its attendants are distrust and suspicion. I hope, however, the dangers I fear may be averted.”

As Lady Madalene now arose to take her leave, the whole company departed. The words of Count Marioni sunk deep in the heart of Rosalie. “ He

too," said she, mentally, " dislikes Father Beneditto, and seems to be apprehensive on my account : yet surely, for me, individually, there can be no danger. Ah, that I had never quitted *St. Agnese!* The joys I have found in the world are evanescent—its evils multiply around me : and Count Marioni, who is no misanthrope, thinks we may become too wise to be happy."

---

### CHAPTER III.

---

“ For ever, Fortune, wilt thou prove  
The unrelenting foe to Love?  
And when he binds each faithful heart,  
Step in between, and bid them part?”



As the Marchesa, in consequence of her late journey, did not rise to breakfast, the two friends, at the request of Rosalie, took their morning repast in their

own apartment, by which means she avoided the possibility of meeting Leonardo. At dinner, when they met, it would have been apparent, to any observer, that each individual was suffering under some anxiety, from the over solicitous, and ill-acted parts they attempted to perform. The Marchesa lavished ceremonious civilities on Rosalie, which were quite unusual with her; and Leonardo, in forcing himself to talk, forgot what he had began to say, and left off before he had completed the sentence. Olivia, at length, luckily thought of the intrusion of Signor Guanana the preceding evening, and the consequent necessity they had been under to admit visitors, when the Marchesa had wished them to be alone. She had introduced the subject merely for the sake of conversation, as she was not without fears that it might incur her mother's displeasure. Contrary to her



expectations, it helped to dispel the mixed hauteur and gloom which sat upon her features. She considered this as the first dawn of a partiality to Olivia, which, at this moment, was perhaps the only pleasure to which her bosom was accessible. As they were engaged to attend the theatre, to the great relief of every one present, Lord Villers and Count Marioni came in to entreat permission to attend them.

The Count had too much penetration not to perceive the constraint which pervaded the whole party, and had previously made such observations as left him little difficulty in conjecturing the cause. His first compliments were paid to the Marchesa; and, as they included a long list of enquiries respecting her journey, an opportunity was afforded

Olivia to draw her brother aside, and repeat to him the message of Rosalie.

“Tell her,” said he, “that in every other circumstance of my life she shall be the entire arbitress of my thoughts and actions; but that to live in the dread of losing her, is more than I am able to endure, and that I must either cease to live, or exchange doubt for certainty.”

Olivia was rather glad than otherwise, that she had not an opportunity of repeating his words to Rosalie, as she wished to spare her the agitation she knew they would occasion, until the opera was ended.

The Duke of Altieri entered the box during the performance. As Rosalie was perfectly collected, and received him with her usual ease, he looked at the Mar-

chesa to find out whether she had communicated his proposals, and perceiving no expression there which he could construe into disappointed hopes, he was stationary by the side of Rosalie, for the rest of the evening.

“Are you pleased with the performance, Signora?” asked he.

“Very much, indeed, Duke; yet still, I will own, I am more abundantly gratified at the private concerts I attend here. I dislike the theatrical part of an opera. It seems unnecessary to me to add gesture and character to those sounds which convey more to the soul than language can express. Words certainly must be the vehicle of music; yet, how often is the most affecting expression destroyed by a burlesque appearance? How often do those tones which convey

the most lively emotions of love, grief, or despair, cease to elevate the soul to rapture, or melt it to tender sadness, when we perceive them addressed to an object incapable of feeling or inspiring either."

"Whoever listens to your remarks," said the Duke, "must be aware that they proceed from a mind which is susceptible of whatever is just and beautiful. But, if you would banish the opera, where are we to seek that perfection of melody, the human voice?"

"In the orchestra, where personification is unnecessary: in our churches, where divine precepts are more deeply impressed upon the mind, through the medium of the senses."

"Charming Rosalie!" replied the Duke, "Who that hears you, and views

you, as I do, will not exclaim that ‘truth comes heightened from *your* tongue!’—”

Rosalie appeared not to notice either the remark, or the manner in which it was conveyed; but added—

“ I know I am combating a national partiality, and, therefore, ought to have been more diffident of my judgement, and my taste.”

“ Both,” interrupted the Duke, “ are so exalted in my opinion, so dear to my heart, that I would joyfully repose the future conduct of my life on their decisions.”

Disconcerted at so pointed a compliment, yet still unwilling to appear to appreciate it to herself, she replied, smiling—

“ With so polite an antagonist, I stand no chance of being corrected, if I am wrong. I have, therefore, no victory to boast, since I have an opponent who will not contend with me.”

“ Your victory over me is entire,” said the Duke. “ No conqueror ever formed chains so strong : no captive ever rejoiced at liberty, as I do in my thralldom.”

Here the Marchesa rose to depart, but the party did not separate, the Marchesa having previously engaged them to supper ; and she dispatched Leonardo to the box in which Lady Madalene was seated, to solicit her company also ; but he received so cold and haughty a refusal, that, extremely piqued, he reported it to his mother in the exact words in which he had received it.”

As it was full half an hour to supper, the company proceeded to the concert-room, to inhale the fresh breezes from the lawn, which the heat of the theatre rendered delicious and reviving. Olivia seated herself at the harpsichord, and fixed Lord Villers and the Count to her side, as she attempted to imitate one of the symphonies she had just heard; while the Marchesa, Rosalie, and the Duke proceeded to the colonade, which ran in the front of it. The Marchesa, either by accident or design, soon quitted them; and the Duke, the moment he found himself with Rosalie alone, said—

“The fear that I may have appeared frivolous or presumptuous in my conversation with you this evening, will not permit me to lose this opportunity of learning if the Marchesa has made an avowal to you of my passion. If she has

not, suffer me to assure you, that my admiration of you exceeds even your own merits, if that be possible; and that if you can honour the man who aspires to the happiness of calling you his, with your approbation and esteem, his felicity will be complete, and he will devote his whole life to the study of promoting the happiness of your's."

"Can any one view the Duke of Altieri without approbation, or know him without esteem?" said Rosalie. Be assured I feel both: but if you require a more tender sentiment, it is not in my power to bestow it. Accept this candid confession, as a proof of the gratitude I feel for the distinguished honour your choice confers upon me."

"If, when you tell me that you can make no return to my passion," replied



the Duke, sorrowfully, " I am to infer that your affections are engaged, I must submit to a destiny the most afflicting ; since it would be ungenerous and unfeeling to persist. But if, as my fond hopes would flatter me, you have still a heart to bestow, suffer me to try if it cannot be subdued by an attachment so faithful, so fervent, as mine."

" The declarations you make me, are painful in the extreme, because I can neither doubt, or receive them," replied Rosalie. " But, with equal sincerity, I will own to you, that I think no woman could listen with indifference to the Duke of Altieri, unless her affections had been previously disposed of. You will make your own inference," continued she ; " and, at the same time, will, I trust, believe, that this confession would be made only to yourself, and is confided to

you as a mark of the high respect I feel for your exalted character.”

“ This candour charms me,” replied the Duke, “ although it destroys me. You almost disarm me of the envy I feel for my rival, since it is impossible to wish otherwise than for your happiness. May it be perfect, most adorable of your sex ! Fear not that I will again disturb the heart devoted to another, by my sorrows, or my sufferings. I will, at least, endure in silence ; and, when you find me worthy of the name of friend, promise to number me among those you value most.”

“ When I find you worthy !” exclaimed Rosalie. “ Oh, be assured, that I am emulous— anxious, to enjoy the proud distinction !” And she held out her hand to him.

“This then,” said he, impressing a kiss upon it, “shall seal our future friendship. And, Oh, Rosalie! Can there be a more pure or delicate sentiment, than that which arises from a passion, sacred, though hopeless, as mine?” He paused for a moment, and then added, in a firmer tone of voice, “Remember me, as your friend; and let me serve you, although you forbid me to love you.”

As soon as he had spoke these words, the Duke disappeared; but the Marchesa made no enquiries after him at supper: for she easily guessed the conversation which had passed, and had certainly anticipated the result of it.”

About the middle of the following day, the arrival of the Marchese was announced. He retired immediately to

his closet, and was followed by the Marchesa. When they met at dinner, he viewed Rosalie with a supercilious eye, and scarcely returned an answer to her enquiries. Actuated no less by the natural sweetness of her disposition, than by what she conceived to be the respect due to the Lord of the mansion, where she resided, she made several efforts to restore his good humour; but finding that they not only proved ineffectual, but seemed to draw upon her still further contempt, she assumed that air of composed dignity which an independent spirit will ever evince, when conscious of not having deserved unworthy treatment.

As no notice was taken of their going to the cassino that evening, which had been intended, Olivia and Rosalie

retired to their own apartment, the former involved in the utmost consternation, by the behaviour of her father.

“ If,” said Rosalie, “ your brother has broken my prohibition, and declared his sentiments to the Marchese, the mystery is cleared at once; but he knows me not, and is guilty of a cruel outrage on my feelings and my principles: and it will then only remain for me to inform him and the Marchesa what these are, and retire immediately to *St. Agnese*.”

Olivia wept.—“ Oh,” replied she, “ that I might be permitted to accompany you. How, my beloved Rosalie, shall I be able to endure a separation from you?

In mutual regrets, and in forming

various conjectures, several hours elapsed; but, at length they were both summoned to the library.

The firmness and composure of Rosalie were not shaken, even when she beheld the Marchese pacing the room in the most violent effervescence of passion, and the Marchesa in an agony, which vented itself in convulsive sobs and tears. She, however, spoke first; and, looking indignantly at Rosalie, said—

“Is it possible that the person we have cherished as a friend should turn apostate to her gratitude, and poison the peace of those who have fostered her?”

The Marchese gave Rosalie no time to reply.

“Signora,” said he, “I am at a loss

to express my abhorrence of your art, or my rage at your duplicity. You refused Signor Massini; you have rejected the Duke of Altieri: establishments so infinitely beyond your situation, that conjecture might have been lost, in finding out the motive, had not the declarations Leonardo has just made convinced us that your gratification led to a different object, that of proving your power over the heart of a rebellious son, and disuniting him from the bosom of his parents."

"The severity of your language, my Lord," replied she,— "so insulting to me, neither deserves, nor should receive, a reply, did I not feel compassion for the disappointment you endure, although I am injuriously supposed to be the cause of it. The supplications of your son have been made without my consent; and I have never given encouragement to his passion."

“ To persuade us to believe, that is impossible,” said the Marchesa. “ Would you have rejected the addresses of the Duke, unless your heart had been occupied by another attachment ?”

“ From those who consider titles and splendour the only desirable attainments in life, I neither expect or require belief,” replied Rosalie, “ when I assert that I value them infinitely below reciprocal affection and domestic felicity : of course, to my unambitious mind, such considerations would never determine my choice.”

“ You speak heroically, Signora,” said the Marchese, sneeringly ; “ and we might have given you credit for disinterestedness, had not an object engrossed your heart, which, we think ourselves justified in believing to be the sole motive of your conduct.”



“ To the judgement of persons predetermined against the evidence of facts, it is useless to appeal,” said Rosalie, with dignity: “ it is easier to end this conversation. I have, therefore, only to assure you, my Lord and Lady Marchese, of my entire rejection of your son ; and to give you my solemn promise, that I will never enter your family, or, indeed, that of any other, unsolicited and unapproved.”

“ Of what use is such a promise as that ?” replied the Marchesa, peevishly. “ Whilst my son has room to entertain hopes, from knowing that you remain unengaged, his resolutions will not be subdued.”

“ The line of conduct I have prescribed for myself,” answered Rosalie, “ I should have supposed satisfactory : for that of another I cannot be answerable. My entreaties have already been

used to Signor Barrazzi, to conform to the wishes of his parents : if my advice could have any effect, it should be offered to the same purpose."

" You possess so much strength of mind," said the Marchese, endeavouring to throw some degree of complacency into his looks, " and there is so proud a sense of propriety in your conduct, that I am willing to believe you are capable of making an effort to secure your own happiness, as well as that of my son. An union with him can only be productive of misery to you both. The fortunes of his House demand that he should form connexions of a certain rank ; and the moment would assuredly arrive, when he would reproach himself for having made such important sacrifices to a boyish passion. The Duke of Altieri adores you : his character is as exalted as his rank : his good qualities must have gained your

esteem, and they cannot fail, in time, to convert that esteem into love. Suffer these considerations to have weight in your mind. The romantic affection of early youth, seldom is permanent: an engagement sanctioned by prudence, generally terminates in a life of solid comfort."

"My Lord," replied Rosalie, "to the suggestions of friendship and prudence, I hope I shall ever lend an attentive ear; and although I cannot divest myself of the remembrance that your advice is interested, I will reply to it as if my own advantage had solely been the motive of it. The knowledge that I should lead your son from his obedience is sufficient, without any other consideration, to teach me that it is my duty to renounce him, and I do it. But I have been accustomed, in some measure, to think for myself, and have been told

that true virtue consists in regulating our actions by those pure maxims of truth and justice, which no one, who reflects, can be ignorant of. The marriage you recommend, with the Duke of Altieri, would, in my opinion, be an act of treachery to his affections, an imposition upon his generosity, and, in me, a violation of every sacred principle I have been taught to respect, for the sake of that wealth which I do not covet, and for that rank to which I do not aspire.”

“ You declared to me,” said the Marchesa, “ that your heart was disengaged. It is evident now, that you have a partiality for my son.”

“ Pardon me, Marchesa, I evaded making a confession, which, as the conversation then stood, you could have no right to exact from me. If a test of my truth and sincerity is now demanded, I

scruple not to declare," said she, deeply blushing,—“that is, I will neither seek a refuge from bashfulness nor pride, to conceal, that he possesses too deep an interest in my bosom to be succeeded by another. Were not this the case my acquiescence with your wishes would have less merit: and, as it is so, I am entitled to your forbearance, as well as your respect.”

The Marchese, whose agitation had been visibly increasing, now approached her, and in a voice almost rendered inarticulate by passion, said—

“If these are your unalterable sentiments, Signora, you will give me leave to remind you, that the only alternative after your refusal of the Duke, is to return to your convent.”

“That, my Lord Marchese,” said

she, "has been my wish for some time. May I dare to solicit the escort of one of the Marchesa's attendants, during a journey of such length and danger?"

Olivia, who had hitherto been attending in agonized silence to this extraordinary scene, now sprung forward, and, throwing herself at the feet of the Marchesa, intreated to be permitted to accompany Rosalie to the convent.

"If I only see her safe, in the arms of her friends," said she, "I shall be satisfied, and will return immediately with the attendant. Yet, Oh, my mother! banish not the unoffending friend of my heart in this ungracious manner."

The Marchesa spurned her daughter from her feet with indignation. The Marchese became outrageous with passion. He accused her of having been

the means of introducing a serpent into the family, who had poisoned its most precious hopes ; and absolutely interdicted the request she had preferred. At this moment the door opened, and Leonardo rushed in. The voice of the Marchese, raised to the highest pitch of passion, had penetrated to his apartment, whither he had retired in a state of distraction bordering on despair, after a conversation with his father, in which he had avowed his affection for Rosalie. He caught Olivia in his arms, whom Rosalie had just raised from the floor, and, looking at her, he exclaimed—

“ Oh, Signora ! what a scene of violence you must have witnessed.” When observing her countenance, which had in it that expression which a dignified resentment of injury discovers, he added—  
“ Surely my father and mother have not

violated the sanctuary of their house, so far as to treat you with insult? If so"—

“Learn,” said the Marchese, in a voice of thunder, “I have reprobated her conduct, and have banished her from my palazzo; and that my malediction will pursue a rebellious son, until he returns to a sense of duty.”

“Pardon me, my adored Rosalie,” said Leonardo, sinking upon his knees before her, “for the disgraceful treatment which I have brought upon you. Authority, supported by cruelty and injustice, can retain no influence over me; and I swear to you, that no force, no time, shall efface your image from my heart, or compel me to offer my vows to any other woman. My oath is registered in heaven, where tyranny and oppression cannot reach it.”



“ Is this the son whom I nurtured with so much care, and for whom my affection was unbounded ?” said the Marchesa.

“ I might retort, my Mother, by doubting that affection which can blight my heart’s best and only joyous hope, and doom the life she gave to misery.”

“ Young man,” said the Marchese, sternly, “ how dare you reflect on the duties of a parent, who have broken those which belong to a child ?”

“ I have broken no duties, my Lord. I have most solemnly assured you that I will not attempt it. But my inclinations cannot be fettered. My love for this exalted creature is become one of the fixed principles of my existence : when I part

with the one, I only can lose the other. I now repeat to you, that nothing shall tempt me to swerve from the promises I have already made, except the knowledge that Rosalie endures persecution or misery on my account: I shall then stand absolved from my word, assert my claims as her protector, and willingly abandon that rank, which robs me of felicity.”

“ Generous Barrassi !” mentally exclaimed Rosalie, her eyes filling with tears at this noble proof of his regard. Recovering, however, her firmness, she extended to him her hand, and said—

“ As this is, perhaps, the moment we sever, never to meet again, I will not be withheld from expressing the gratitude such sentiments must ever impress upon my memory. May you be happy, Signor !” Her voice faltered, and she could say

no more; but moved towards the door.

“Never,” exclaimed he, vehemently. “Never can I feel happy whilst I am separated from you! Remember, Rosalie,” again wildly seizing her hand, “my more than life depends on your constancy. I should cease to breathe were I to hear that you were wedded to another.”

“It is time to end this scene of folly,” said the Marchese, impatiently. “The day after tomorrow, Signora, the travelling carriage of the Marchesa, with a proper escort will be ready to attend you to the convent; until which time you will probably find employment in your apartment, in arranging for your departure.”

Rosalie bowed, and was again preparing to withdraw, when the passionate exclamations of Leonardo once more arrested her steps. "My Lord," said he, "Do I hear Signora Rosalie committed a prisoner in this mansion, and the sentence pronounced by you? An act so degrading to your character calls a blush into the cheek of your son. My absence shall remove the unworthy suspicions you entertain. But should she quit your palazzo without receiving those distinctions to which she is entitled, my exile shall extend to a period, when both may, perhaps, be recalled together."

Rosalie now quitted the room, accompanied by Olivia; and Leonardo waited with some degree of haughty impatience for the Marchese's reply to his proposition; who, with an ill grace, at

length acceded to it, on condition that Leonardo quitted the palazzo immediately, and promised that he would not attempt another interview with Rosalie before she quitted Florence.

---

## CHAPTER IV.

---

“ Celestial Happiness ! when'er she stoops  
To visit earth, one shrine the goddess finds,  
And one alone, to make her sweet amends  
For absent heaven—the bosom of a friend !”



AMIDST all the strong and con-  
tending emotions which had agitated the  
breast of the Marchese, during this scene,  
surprize had scarcely held a subordinate

degree. The calm and dignified deportment of Rosalie, her inflexible principles, and magnanimous mind, had astonished him; although, as opposing his will, he found in them motives for hatred, instead of admiration. In his son he had witnessed a decision of character, and a determination to think for himself, which he had never seen displayed before, and which now gave him considerable alarm. He almost reproached himself for the precipitance of his behaviour, and wished that he had prescribed to himself a degree of moderation, better adapted to the generous feelings of Leonardo.

On his return to Florence the Marchesa had related to him, in all the bitterness of that anguish which mortification and disappointment could inflict, Rosalie's rejection of the Duke of Altieri, and that Signor Guanana had come to no sort of

eclaircissement with Olivia ; but, on the contrary, had displayed the most perfect indifference in his behaviour. From the former had arisen the contemptuous silence with which he treated Rosalie during dinner ; and the latter had increased the acrimony of his disposition so much, that when Leonardo followed him into his closet, and, declaring his passionate attachment for Rosalie, besought his permission to address her, his soul was worked up at once to a fit of frenzy.

Leonardo determined to bear all his reproaches, and to make every allowance for the effect of his disappointment ; but in vain did he attempt to reason him into calmness, or avert the peremptory negative he gave to his hopes. He declared he never would live to see him the husband of Rosalie, and that his last breath



should pronounce a malediction which would pursue him through every stage of his existence.

Leonardo, whose soul was the seat of every honourable feeling, and alive to the sense of every moral duty, gave his word readily that he would not marry without the consent of the Marchese; but, at the same time, protested unequivocally, that he would not form an engagement with any other woman.

The conversation having ended with the utmost wrath on one side, and without any further concession on the other, the Marchese summoned his lady, to consult what measures could be pursued in this bitter dilemma. By her advice, Rosalie was sent for, with the intention of trying either threats or persuasions, as they seemed most likely to conduce to

their purpose: but the intemperate passion they both betrayed, and the indignity with which they treated her, defeated the plan they had agreed upon, and roused Rosalie to a proper sense of the insults offered to her delicacy.

Nothing could exceed the mortification and dismay which they both endured, when left alone, after the interview with Rosalie, and Leonardo's departure. The Marchesa gave many bitter sighs to the inflexibility of her son, which she termed obstinacy; to the blasted prospect of her splendid schemes; and the notoriety with which her frustrated ambition would be published.

To obviate the latter, was now all that remained; and, with the yielding facility of her disposition, when any object worth attaining was in view, she

besought the Marchese to conceal his hatred of Rosalie, and shew her the civilities of a guest. She urged how much better it would be to place her departure to any other cause, than the one which really existed. The enquiries of the Duke of Altieri, Count Marioni, and many other of her friends, would, she said, lead them into perpetual embarrassments, if she was permitted to depart without taking leave. There was no fear that she would betray the real cause, since it was a tacit reproach upon herself; and her pride would equally prevent her from disclosing the behaviour, which proved the inconsequential light in which she was regarded. She added, that at her *conversazione* the following evening, her departure might be spoken of without exciting suspicion, as she could circulate a report that she had been summoned to the convent; and that as she had not joined in the

command he gave Rosalie to confine herself to her apartment, she could assume the office of mediatrix, and could convey to her his desire that his prohibition might be forgotten, and his wish that she should feel as much at home as she had done heretofore, for the remainder of the time she was to stay in the palazzo. She averred that Rosalie's nice sense of propriety would incline her to receive the apology, and accept the proposal; and, finally, she reminded him that Leonardo's return depended upon this circumstance.

The Marchese, who had long been a much deeper practitioner in the arts of hypocrisy than even the Marchesa, was convinced by these arguments, and promised to accede to her plan.

After allowing some little time for

the composing of her spirits, and assuming a complacency of features very foreign to her heart, the Marchesa proceeded to her daughter's apartment.

She found Olivia in tears, and Rosalie bending over her, as her head rested on her shoulder, apparently in the act of offering advice as well as consolation. As they had not heard the approach of the Marchesa, they both arose in surprize, not knowing how to account for this unexpected visit: but she drew a chair close by them, and, having replaced them on their's, said—

“ My dear children, it is impossible for you to conceive the feelings of a parent, when the heart's dearest wishes, and long projected schemes, are broken—destroyed! Could you do so, the impetuosity of the emotions you have witness-

ed this evening would excite sympathy only. The Marchese is sorry he was transported into unbecoming behaviour towards you, Signora; and hopes that this concession, and his wish to continue to you those marks of respect which he has shewn you, since you have been his guest, will remove any displeasure you may have conceived against him. The request you made to me, Olivia, could not be granted with comfort to us, at a time when we may, perhaps, more than ever, want the solace of a child's society; but, at some future period, you shall be gratified with a visit to your friend."

Olivia's eyes sparkled with joy. She kissed her mother's hand at this unexpected condescension, and avowed her gratitude in terms of affectionate respect. Rosalie too, felt happy to be restored to an interchange of civilities with the Marchese

and Marchesa; for the tenderness of her nature pleaded more powerfully for them, than any thing they had themselves urged; and entirely dissipated the resentment, which those who had given cause for it, had ascribed to her. Too good to be suspicious, she gave full credit to the sincerity of all that the Marchesa had uttered; and, with great sweetness replied, that she thanked them for having forgiven the distress into which she had involuntarily plunged them, and received with gratitude the permission they gave her, to pay them respect to the last moment of her stay.

The Marchesa looked at her for a moment with doubt, but in her beautiful countenance and expressive eyes, beheld so much candour and innocence, that she felt abashed at her own duplicity; and

yielded a sentiment of admiration, which would not be repressed.

She next spoke of her assembly, the following evening, and hinted that she should extend her invitations, to give Rosalie an opportunity of taking leave of all her friends; and announce that it was given in honour of her, as a *sudden order*, from the convent, compelled her to an immediate return.

Rosalie blushed at the turn, so near the truth, which had been given to her departure. It implied, to her at least, a more delicate attention to her feelings than she had expected, and she bowed her acknowledgments.

The Marchesa having effected the purpose of her visit, now rose to depart;



saying, with great apparent kindness, that as she believed a *tête-à-tête* would be more agreeable to them, than to join the party below, she would dispense with their attendance for that evening. She then kissed a cheek of each, and wished them a good night.

The conversation which the Marchesa had interrupted by her entrance, was the attachment of Lord Villers.

Olivia, from weeping over the loss of her friend, naturally recurred to her own situation. She had prevented his making an application to her father, until both he and her mother were satisfied that Signor Guanana had no designs of making her an offer; justly supposing that, in the moment of such a disappointment, they would more readily attend to

another proposal. With all the affection which she acknowledged she felt for Lord Villers, the idea of accompanying him to a foreign country, with the language of which she was even unacquainted, gave her serious alarm. The presence of Rosalie could alone banish those terrors. Lord Villers had promised to importune her to go with them, and she had even told him that his own success with her depended on that of his application to her friend. She was, therefore, urging Rosalie to give her a solemn promise that she would be ready to join them on their way across the Appennines. To this Rosalie opposed the displeasure of the Marchese, and the danger of encountering Leonardo; and represented also the impossibility of her making such an engagement, without the concurrence of the Abbess.

As soon as the Marchesa had retired, the two friends renewed a conversation so interesting to them both. Olivia again urged, with the utmost solicitude, her former request; but all that Rosalie dared venture to promise, was that, if the obstacles she had mentioned could be removed, she would most joyfully attend her.

“Consider,” said she, “my dearest Olivia, that when I become again an inmate of *St. Agnese*, both my wishes, and my actions, will be regulated by the best of women, our beloved Abbess. Encircled, as I am, with danger and difficulties, my removal to the convent is the happiest circumstance which could befall me. If I have erred, she will point out the mistakes I committed, with all the indul-

gence that is due to my inexperience ; and if I have acted rightly, she will encourage me in the arduous conflict. There is, however, one point, in which I am sure her judgement will agree with mine. She would never consent to my going to England, if there was the least possibility of my meeting with Leonardo : and how, my Olivia, would you be able to interdict a visit from a brother, so greatly, and so deservedly beloved ?”

“ Are you not unjust to him as well as yourself ?” asked Olivia. “ Have you not received proofs, that his conduct, whatever may be his sufferings, is regulated by a scrupulous sense of duty : and do you not know that your own influence over him is unbounded, and that he would not disobey any injunction you laid upon him ?”

“ However I might rely upon all this,” replied Rosalie, “ yet even accident might destroy”—

“ Trust to my care for that,” said Olivia, interrupting her. “ As sacred as dear to me, would be the preservation of my Rosalie from aught that would annoy her peace, or throw an imputation on the delicate propriety of her character. Depend upon my assurance, that whilst you remain in England, Leonardo will never approach it.”

“ You subdue me,” said Rosalie, “ by your promises, and your affection. To you, I ought to refuse nothing, which I can grant ; and it is the sad peculiarity of my situation, which alone prevents me from telling you, that you may dispose of

every moment of my existence. The first request I make to the Superior, will be for permission to accompany you."

Olivia next declared her fears, that Rosalie would be induced to take the veil; but Rosalie assured her that nothing could be more remote from her thoughts at present; but that whilst the beloved friends of her youth, the Abbess and Sister Magdalena lived, she would continue with them.

"You will resist persecution then?" asked Olivia, anxiously.

"Certainly: for never, compulsatorily will I become a *religieuse*; but there is no danger of such a trial, as no one is interested in my becoming a recluse."

The mode of their correspondence was next arranged: and if any interruption to it took place, Olivia undertook, through the means of Lord Villers, to transmit her letters by a private courier. By these reciprocal interchanges of regard, the pain of their approaching separation was, in some measure, blunted.

The heart-rending, and never to be forgotten occurrences of this day had inflicted a deep wound in the bosom of Rosalie, which, with the most sedulous care, she had concealed from Olivia. Accustomed, heretofore, to the distinctions of kindness, of approbation, and of respect, the severity, the contempt, and the condemnation of the Marchese and Marchesa, were as new as they were painful. Perhaps, in the steady, the generous, the fervent affection of Leonardo, she had a

compensation for their rejection : but it had been made with cruelty—with insult. It proved to her, that a female unprotected by family ties, was exposed to the unfeeling attacks of the proud, and the oppressive. For herself, therefore, she had nothing to hope or expect from the world. The mystery of her birth, most probably would never be removed; and the obscurity in which it plunged her, instead of exciting compassion, threatened her only with mortification and neglect.

The visit of the Marchesa, although it had highly gratified her at the moment, on reflection, appeared too sudden a transition from rancour to affection to be sincere. She was undoubtedly made to play a part in a hypocritical plot, which had nothing farther in view, than to con-



ceal the flagrant violence of which they had been guilty. Yet, if so, it became her to pass over unmerited indignity in silence. Such forbearance not only suited the mild tenor of her own disposition, but was due to the affection of Leonardo, and the friendship of Olivia. Whatever her own thoughts and sensations might be, she, therefore, resolved to keep them in the most strict subservience; and never to lose sight of those obligations which had been conferred upon her on her first entrance into the Marchese's family; and which, in her grateful bosom, could scarcely be effaced by his recent ill-treatment.

Although Rosalie had passed a sleepless night, and her spirits were still perturbed and unhappy, she had command enough over herself to meet the Mar-

chese the next morning at breakfast, with her usual grace and ease. There was not, however, in his countenance, any of that repentant cordiality she had been taught to expect. True, he at first attempted to be civil; but it was only an effort, which was succeeded, by an undefinable expression; which, if it could not be called contempt, betrayed something like a malignant triumph, which he endeavoured to repress.

The Marchesa was good humoured and voluble. She ran over the names of the visitors she expected, and took care to mention all those to whom Rosalie was most partial and attached. The Marchese once interrupted the conversation to ask the route she was to take over the Appennines; to which, indeed, she could give no reply, and she almost fancied that

it was introduced merely to remind her that she had nothing to expect from the Marchesa's present condescension. An idea like this could not fail of stimulating her to exertion. She spoke of their former journey; of the surprize and delight Olivia and herself had experienced from prospects so new, and so sublime; and even anticipated the effect they would have upon her, when viewed a second time. The Marchese fixed a penetrating look upon her while she spoke, and she was gratified to perceive that it partook more of surprize than any other emotion.

As soon as breakfast was ended, they separated for the morning, that Rosalie might commence the operation of preparing for her departure.

At dinner time the Marchese and

Marchesa seemed to have exchanged characters. He was disposed to be in high spirits; she gloomy and reserved. In short, it appeared as if they had but one stock of good humour between them. He questioned Rosalie particularly about the situation of the convent, and the character of the Abbess. The latter was a theme on which she delighted to dwell, and on which she could never exhaust half the admiration she felt, or believed to be her due. He was equally curious to gain some account of her connexions, and to learn what part of her family were still living. On this subject, however, Rosalie could give him no sort of information: but, to her surprize, he seemed to listen to her with doubt, and to attribute her silence rather to caution, than ignorance. She was at a loss to account for this extraordinary suspicion, which she

did not, however, appear to notice, until she recollected that, having been introduced to him under the name of a distant branch of the Lady Abbess's family, he believed her to have some motives for concealment.

The rooms were crowded early: and Rosalie was soon convinced, that the Marchesa had actually sent out cards to their intimate friends, announcing her departure from Florence. Such numbers pressed round her, to declare their parting good wishes, that those who most truly loved and admired her, could scarcely find room to approach her, or an opportunity to express their regrets, at an event so little expected. She observed that the Marchese kept continually in sight, and that he attended to all that passed with an inquisitive look. Count

Marioni at length found means to detach her for a few moments, having in fact employed a friend to engage the Marchese, and call off his attention to them.

“As I cannot dissemble the grief I feel at your departure, Signora,” said he, “I will not waste time in speaking of myself, especially as I have a message to you from Signor Barrazzi, and am not without suspicions that we are watched. He is now my guest, and has confided to me, what I before had discovered, his inviolable attachment to you. He is distracted at the thoughts of losing you, and dreads the means which may be practised to deprive him of your regard. The scene of yesterday has been repeated to me, and my fears even exceed his, for I know, better than he does, the extent to

which the Marchese is capable of carrying his resentment. Be upon your guard, my lovely friend: suspect every thing; and resist, with all the energy of your character, every attempt to compel you to take the veil. You will arrive safe at the monastery; for *protection unseen*, will guard you from any treachery which might be practised on the road."

Rosalie turned pale, and trembled: Count Marioni perceived it, and added—

"It grieves me thus to excite your fears, but it is necessary for your safety, to put you upon your guard; and Barrazzi bids me adjure you, most solemnly, to remember, that his word is pledged to his father no longer than you remain unmolested: and that the moment he hears you are persecuted, or rendered unhappy,

he shall fly to you, and claim you as his own."

"I know not what I can, or ought to say, to him or you," answered Rosalie, "for this generous solicitude. I trust the evils you apprehend will not be attempted; but should any force be aimed against my liberty, or my inclinations, be assured that I shall resist the tyranny of my oppressors, to the last moment of my existence."

"Alas!" replied Count Marioni, "your resistance would not long avail you, without more powerful interference. I have suggested a plan which will instantly bring us to your rescue. Your friend, the amiable Magdalena, was once, is still the dearest object to me on earth. Attached to each other, and separated as



you and Barrazzi are, by the mercenary dictates, and pride of our families : she was sent to a convent, and, yielding to apparent necessity, became a nun. The death of those friends who opposed my happiness, soon put me in the possession of rank and fortune ; but they were now valueless, and incapable of even bestowing peace upon me. My heart, faithful to its first affection, has owned no second choice. This little history of myself, I have often tried to give you ; but my feelings are acute, and the subject is sacred. On this occasion I disclose it to you : use it as a hint, to guard you from inflicting similar misery on the man who adores you. Magdalena, the gentle, the noble-minded Magdalena, will assist to save you. Let her address to me the single word, ‘ *Remember,*’ and protection will be immediately afforded you.”

Rosalie dashed away a tear, which was forcing its way down her cheek, and began to speak, when Count Marioni saw the Marchese approach, with an observing look. He, therefore, seized her hand, and, pronouncing the word *remember*, he hastened out of the room. Olivia was by the side of the Marchesa, Rosalie joined them; and, passing her arm through that of Olivia, said, loud enough to be overheard,—

“The pensive melancholy of the poor Count is always distressing to me; and now, that I have been taking leave of him, it is more than usually infectious.”

“You must prepare yourself for another scene of the same nature,” whispered Olivia, “for Signor Massini, who

has not been visible for this age, has just made his appearance. See he approaches us."

He bowed, but walked silently by the side of Olivia.

"I rejoice to see a friend here, to whom I longed to convey my parting good wishes," said Rosalie. "How glad I shall be, at all times, to hear that Signor Massini is well and happy."

"I fear neither of those blessings are to be my portion," replied he; "but may they be your's, Signora."

She was deeply affected by his words, and his melancholy air, but Lord Villers coming up just at that moment, and addressing her in English, prevented her from making a reply.

“ I make no apology for the abruptness of my request,” said he, smiling. “ You know my heart’s first hope : the second is, that you will be propitious to our prayers, and consent to visit England!”

Rosalie assured him that the event he alluded to, would give her more pleasure than any other she knew of; and that such an excursion, were it practicable, would delight her beyond measure.

“ We shall direct our course across the Appennines, storm the convent, and carry you off *per force*,” said he, gaily.

“ Then,” replied she, in the same tone, “ as you English are invincible in those sort of attacks, I had better not make any resistance.”

“ I trust,” said he, in a solemn voice, “ that you will depend upon me for guarding your peace, and promoting your happiness ; and that no groundless fears will deter you from an act which will confirm mine.”

“ Assuredly, I will depend upon you,” said she ; “ and the consent of the Abbess shall be followed by mine.”

He thanked her with fervor ; and, to avoid suspicion, immediately left her.

The rooms were beginning to thin very fast, when the Duke of Altieri and Lady Madalene made their *entrée*. The Marchesa said she would punish them for being so late by making them stay supper ; and they promenaded the apartments until they should be summoned to the eating saloon.

It was evident to the Marchesa, that the Duke wished to detach Rosalie from the rest of the party ; and she, therefore, afforded him the means, by first giving a hint to the Marchese, and then calling the attention of Lady Madalene and Olivia to something she wished to shew them in the next room : for so powerful were the attractions of grandeur to herself, that she could not even yet discard the hope that Rosalie would be tempted to revoke her decision, rather than be again immured in the gloom of a convent. The Duke then said, with a respectful air,—

“Do not fear, Signora, that I am going to importune you further on a subject which I know to be displeasing to you. When my hopes of becoming united to you by a still dearer title were destroyed, we exchanged promises of

friendship. How was it possible to lose you, without requiring a renewal of those promises?"

"Oh!" replied Rosalie, "gladly, gratefully, do I register you on my memory, as a most valued and kind friend."

"Then prove your friendship, and put mine to the test!"

"How Duke?"

"You are unhappy: tell me how I can serve you?"

Rosalie blushed: but, recovering from her confusion, she said with sweetness—

"Your conduct is noble, and deserving of my confidence; and did my situ-

ation require advice, I would repay it with a degree of candour equal to your own."

"I am too sincere to be ceremonious. My daughter has informed me that a mutual attachment subsists between you and Leonardo Barrazzi. That, on the discovery, of it the Marchese behaved to you with outrageous violence, and gave you your choice, either to marry me, or devote yourself to a conventual life. That Leonardo was banished from Florence, and you had been commanded to leave his palazzo. How she gained her information, I did not ask. Has she heard truth, or not?"

"Very little, if any, has the fact been exaggerated. The violence of the Marchese's passion, must have betrayed it to the servants, by whom it has, unquestionably, been repeated."



“ The Marchese’s authority over his son is incontestible ; but has he power to direct your fate ! ”

“ Certainly not . ”

“ Then suffer me to snatch you from the destiny he meditates . Accept an asylum in my palazzo . There can be no impropriety in your becoming my daughter’s guest ; and she is here purposely to solicit the honour of your company , and prevent your journey to the convent . If , on a point of so much delicacy , you can speak without reserve : if Leonardo is devoted to you , and you have distinguished him with your regard : my influence is great with the Marchese , and it shall be exerted to the utmost with him , and in every other way , to make you happy . ”

“ Oh,” cried Rosalie, tears streaming down her cheeks, “ how transcendantly great and good this is! But words fail me, and my homage must be silent.” And she crossed her hands on her bosom, in an attitude of pious acknowledgment.

“ Rosalie !” said the Duke, after he had gazed at her some moments, during which she had been absorbed in a total abstraction of thought : “ Rosalie, when you rejected me, I had the vanity to believe it owing to a previous engagement. Could I be offended at you for that? And can I do otherwise than wish to promote the happiness of her who is so inexpressibly dear to me? Let not that passion be dignified with the name of love, which is insensible to the exquisite delight of averting misfortune from an adored object, independent of selfish gratifications !”

“The more I hear, the more I cease to be surprized,” said Rosalie; “and I ought to beg pardon of you, for not having discovered before, that your mind is capable of all the sublimity of virtue.”

“Your praises,” replied the Duke, “will stimulate me still more in the practice of it. But consider my present plan, and we will decide on the rest hereafter!”

“If I am restored in safety to my friends at *St. Agnese*, I dare believe that the Marchese will not have power to injure me; and not less from my own request, than his wishes, I am to commence my journey tomorrow morning, in one of his carriages, and under the escort of some of his servants. I feel that reserve with such a friend would be as repugnant to my feelings, as it would be unpardonable in itself, and will, therefore,

own that, were I even disposed to put myself under the protection of Lady Madalene, I am not at liberty to take such a step, without the approbation of the Lady Abbess, who is my sole guide and guardian, and to whom I owe every attention which affection and duty can suggest. It, indeed, appears to me, that were I to remain in Florence, and the Marchese really has any unjustifiable designs against me, the utmost vigilance might not be able to secure me. Besides, he might impute to me the wish of making an appeal to the world against him; or even accuse me of the design of giving further encouragement"—

She paused, for a moment, and blushed deeply. The Duke heard her with the most fixed attention, but did not attempt to interrupt her, and she continued.—

“ I cannot forget that I have been a cherished guest in the Marchese’s mansion, and that I have, unfortunately, destroyed his proudest hopes. I have surely then no reason to resent the recent unkindness he has shewn me ; and I fervently pray that my absence may be the means of restoring Leonardo to his duty : for, however I may suffer from a partiality, my principles forbid me to accept the hand of a man whose vows of love would be blighted by those of broken obedience.”

“ The correctness of your judgment,” replied the Duke, “ almost makes me reproach myself for the officiousness of which I have been guilty.”

“ Oh, say not so, Duke !” replied Rosalie, “ Say, rather, that you approve of my scruples, or you add to the poign-

ancy of my affliction. Suffer me to hope that I partake, in some degree, the essence of your own noble spirit, when I declare, that the influence you propose trying over the Marchese would annihilate the reciprocity of our friendship; since, in my own eyes, I should become too despicable, to wish the continuance of your esteem."

"To say merely that I approve," said the Duke, with visible agitation, "is too great a restraint upon my feelings. I adore the exalted enthusiasm of your character; and, whilst I yield to you the unbounded admiration of my soul, I submit to the superior dictates of your reason,"

"That any force should be used to compel me to take the veil, is so very improbable, that, although the threat

might have been made, I know not how to entertain serious fears of its being put in execution," said Rosalie. "Whilst our present beloved Superior lives, there is at least no danger of it."

"If her death then, or any other evil should befall you, will you make me acquainted with it, and command my services?"

"Ill, indeed, should I deserve such a friend, if I knew not how to appreciate his value. If misfortunes accumulate round me, I have only to recollect this conversation, to feel convinced that I am not friendless."

The rest of the party approached as the Duke was beginning to reply with great earnestness, and Lady Madalene enquired if she was to be indulged with

the pleasure of Signora Rosalie's company? The Duke informed her that Rosalie had urgent motives for wishing to return to the convent immediately, and mutual acknowledgments and expressions of regret were exchanged on each side.

During the beginning of this conversation, a marked look of discontent and eager attention sat on the countenance of the Marchese, which gradually dispersed as he listened to the conclusion of it. Lady Madalene had apprized him and the Marchesa, that the Duke meant to solicit Rosalie to favour them with a visit, and hence arose the emotion the Marchese had endeavoured to repress, but could not entirely conceal.

The supper time was silent and cheerless; for each individual either was,



or affected to be, sad, at the approaching separation. The words of the Duke were nearly inarticulate when he would have pronounced his parting adieus, and Lady Madalene was the only one who talked of their meeting again, with hope, or expectation.

Both the Marchese and Marchesa saluted the cheek of Rosalie, when they bade her farewell. They confined themselves merely to the expressions of good wishes: for, practised as they were in the arts of dissimulation, they would venture nothing more, in a scene like this. Rosalie with ease, but dignity, thanked them for the hospitable attentions they had paid her, and for their kindness in sending an escort with her across the Appennines; and, after bowing respectfully to each, withdrew with Olivia.

The two friends passed the greatest part of the night in conversation, which was, however, frequently interrupted by their tears. The grief of poor Olivia would have been almost insupportable, if the prospect of seeing her beloved friend again soon, had not helped to assuage it.

They rose with the earliest dawn; and, after partaking of a breakfast which was in readiness, descended to the portico, where a carriage was in waiting, and one of the women belonging to the Marchesa already seated in it. There was a delicacy and distinction in this which affected the grateful heart of Rosalie, and argued a greater attention to her feelings than she was prepared to expect, and gave to Olivia no less joy than surprize. They threw themselves into each other's arms: it was a moment

of speechless agony ; and when Rosalie first became sensible, by its motion, that she was in the carriage, she had lost sight of the Palazzo di Barrazzi.

---

---

## CHAPTER V.

---

“ The beauteous scene of lofty mountains,  
Smiling vallies, murm’ring fountains ;  
Sheep in flow’ry pastures bleating,  
Echo our last words repeating ;  
Bees with busy sounds delighting,  
Groves to gentle sleep inviting ;  
Whispering winds the poplars courting,  
Swains in rustic circles sporting.”



ROSALIE continued deeply and painfully absorbed by melancholy reflections, as the carriage moved slowly along

the banks of the Arno. Her attendant preserved a respectful silence, which left her to the indulgence of the various emotions which agitated her bosom.

A retrospection of the events which had occurred, during the few past months of her life, passed in such rapid succession across her imagination, that she would have been tempted to doubt whether they were realities, had not an aching void at her heart convinced her they were fatal truths.

As her's was a disposition which always sought consolation, instead of yielding to despair; and she had been taught to consider fortitude the parent of resignation, she opposed to the evils she had endured, the sweet and unalienable friendship of Olivia, and the disinterested attachment of Leonardo. Ought she to

murmur at misfortunes which were mingled with blessings of such inestimable value?

The anger, the resentment, the violence of the Marchese and Marchesa were past, and, she trusted, never to be experienced again: for was she not proceeding to a safe asylum, where no danger could assail her! Yet what did not the fearful insinuations of Count Marioni impart; and what, alas! remained to her of Olivia's affection and Leonardo's regard? They too were also past: for from both she was probably separated for ever. To erase the image of Leonardo from her bosom, she found to be impossible: but the most imperious duty did not demand a sacrifice like that. His cherished remembrance should neither embitter the hours of her solitude, or weaken the powers of her mind. The recollection of

his exalted virtues, would be an incentive to the performance of every good act; and with her prayers for his happiness, she would offer up those for his return to his duty: for never would she consent to become his wife. Insulted delicacy and conscious dignity of mind, forbade an alliance with the Marchese, who had mingled asperity with injustice, and cruelty with contempt. The disgraceful manner in which she had been banished from the Palazzo di Barrazzi, ought not to hurt her feelings. She should be received with transport at the convent; and, whilst no degree of condemnation could be affixed to her own conduct or principles, it would be a weakness to suffer the injury which another had the power of inflicting, to destroy her repose. In arguing thus with herself, she restored her spirits to a peaceful composure. The fortitude of a virtuous mind rises in pro-

portion to the injustice which pursues it.

An exclamation of pleasure from Margaurita, fully roused her from her abstraction; and, turning round to ask the cause, the waiting woman said—

“Do but look, Signora, at that group of peasants dancing under the shade of the palm trees, and listen to their music. Oh! it would make any one happy but to look at them! How pretty their dresses are; and how cheerful the music is! My Lady Marchesa’s cassinos and concerts are nothing to it!”

“It is, indeed, an interesting spectacle,” replied Rosalie, “and I hope,” added she, with a sigh, “that they are as happy as they appear to be.” Recurring, in her own ideas, to the splendid



scenes she had partaken of, when her heart was sad, and her spirits too much oppressed to enjoy them.

“ Do not give way to sorrow, Signora,” said Margaurita, whose simplicity gave interest to her compassion. “ Do not fear, but the Marchese’s cruel designs will be prevented. From all that I have heard, and from what I saw this morning, I am sure that there are persons who will lose their lives to save you.”

“ My good Margaurita,” asked Rosalie, with surprize, “ what do you know of the Marchese’s designs; and what did you observe this morning ?”

“ Indeed, Signora, all the domestics know, as well as me, that the Marchese has sworn you shall be a nun, and that you are going to the convent to be made

one: but you are so beautiful and so amiable, and the Signor loves you so greatly"—

"But what did you observe?" said Rosalie, interrupting her.

"You know the conservatory that opens into one of the quadrangles of the great court, Signora? There, whilst I sat waiting for you in the carriage, I perceived the Signor concealing himself behind the shrubs, looking so pale, and so unhappy. And then, when you tore yourself away from the arms of Signora Olivia, I saw him raise up his clasped hands, and his eyes to heaven, with such a look, that it terrified me!"

Perceiving that Rosalie remained silent, she thus proceeded.—

“ Then, just after we had quitted the town, and well may it be called *Florence the Fair*, it is so pretty a place, as we turned round that rock which is shaded by such a number of vast trees, I saw several horsemen, who I am sure were watching the carriage, for I saw one of them point to it; and I am sure he was giving some directions. *Santa Maria!* I was so rejoiced; for, without a doubt, they will take you away, before you reach the convent.”

Margaurita's last words excited no less terror than attention in Rosalie; who, far from supposing the men so stationed, if, indeed, they were placed there for the purpose of observing the carriage, to be her deliverers, concluded they were sent to seize, and convey her to some other monastery, instead of that of *St. Agnese*.

It was now too evident that the Marchese had threatened to confine her; and, to effect that purpose, some other convent must have been fixed upon, than the one where the Abbess was her protecting friend, and the sole arbitress of her fate. The assertions of the servants were confirmed by Count Marioni, who, in their last conversation, had intimated a belief that such designs had been formed. True, he had said protection should await her; but if such a defence was necessary, in what a dreadful predicament was she placed. The event was uncertain: success might attend the emissaries of the Marchese; and if otherwise, how much would it expose Leonardo to the anger of his father.

She tried to persuade herself that the men Margaurita had seen, might have been those designed to see her safe

at the convent; but it was improbable that the Count, or Signor Barrazzi, would be so unguarded in their mode of pursuing their plan. As for the Marchese, having no suspicions that his designs were detected, he might act more fearlessly, and without precaution. She recollected his look the preceding evening, so anxiously fixed upon her, whilst the Duke of Altieri was repeating to Lady Madalene the answer she had given to their invitation; and the dark smile of triumph his features displayed, when he heard she persisted in her denial. She almost believed herself at this moment his prisoner, and shuddered with the presentment of the punishment his hatred might have decreed for her. So great was her alarm, that she debated upon the propriety of dismissing the carriage at some of the places where she might stop for refreshment, before she entered

upon the wild and desolate pass of the Appennines. Her judgement, however, soon led her to renounce this idea: if her fears were unfounded, it would attach a blameable degree of suspicion to her character; and if violence was really intended, she would, even then, remain equally exposed to the danger of an attack. It appeared to her to be impossible to do otherwise, than to await, in fearful suspense, the event of her journey: and, above all, she saw the necessity of concealing her apprehensions from Margaurita, who might relate them on her return to Florence; and, by an exposure of her pusillanimity, render her an object of derision to the Marchese.

With as much composure, therefore, as she could assume, she forced herself to smile at the stories Margaurita had heard, and the fears to which they had given

rise ; and, to convince her of the little effect they had upon herself, began to converse on the beautiful scenes which now rapidly succeeded each other. Indeed, to any mind, except one actually overwhelmed with despair, the enchanting view of fields covered with flocks, grain, and herbage ; trees bending beneath the weight of the most delicious fruits ; healthy children, employed in gathering leaves from the mulberry-trees, for food for the silk-worms ; and the peasants, in their picturesque habits, singing gaily, as they were busily engaged in collecting this rich harvest ; must have afforded the most exquisite sensations of pleasure.

As the evening advanced, and they drew near to the Inn, where they were to repose for the night, the stately edifices

decreased in number, but the neat cottages rose in proportion; and, under the spreading branches of some tall chesnut, or still more majestic larch, the rustics were collected in groups, to listen to the soft melody of the flute, or foot it to the more exhilarating sound of the tambourine.

These scenes of domestic bliss, so dear to the imagination, because so interesting to the heart, soothed the perturbed spirits of poor Rosalie; and when, from the window of the little Inn, she listened to the last cadences, which died away on the stillness of night, she felt a tranquillity diffuse itself over her mind, congenial with the peaceful scenes she contemplated.

The progress of the travellers became



less rapid on the second day. The appearance of cultivation and cheerful habitations gradually receded; and they found themselves beginning to ascend the steep and dreary sides of the Appenines. Gloomy ideas again took possession of the mind of Rosalie. She had not yet met with any incident which might warrant the suspicions of Margaurita, but they were now entered upon that part of their journey, where, if such designs had been planned, they might with more ease be carried into execution. She felt a cold chill creep over her at every projecting rock they approached, and almost fancied she beheld living forms moving in the gloom of their dark recesses. At length, a few twinkling lights announced to Rosalie, that they must have arrived at the obscure Inn, where she and Olivia

had slept, the first night after they had quitted the monastery.

She was shewn into the same large and comfortless apartment as before; and here she felt how much the absence or presence of a beloved object can influence the soul, and change the appearance of the most dreary situation. *Then* she was accompanied by Olivia: the flattering promises of happiness flitted before them; and, in the interchange of friendship and affection, the hours were lessened down to moments, and the gloomy inconvenience of the place was overlooked. *Now*, alone, unhappy at the past, and dreading the future, she threw her eyes around in fearful observation, and shuddered at the prison-like appearance of this dark and spacious apartment. The house had formerly been a fortress, to

guard one of the passes of the Appennines, and had undergone little change in the interior. Even part of the furniture, which had suited the ferocious inhabitants of those barbarous times, was preserved, and still in use. A long, dark, oak table maintained its place, in the centre of the room, along each side of which, were large chairs coarsely carved, and wooden benches of a rude make. Two lamps were suspended from the vaulted roof, and the dim light they afforded, was just sufficient to discover that the walls were no less blackened by age and damp, than smoke. As the light afforded by these miserable lamps, was not strong enough to shew the extent of the place, and the motion of the carriage, for such a length of time, had, as well as the sudden transition from darkness, left

Rosalie but a vague and indeterminate sight, she was persuaded that, in the indistinct distance, she beheld moving figures. Trembling with apprehension, and in expectation that her footsteps would be arrested, she advanced hastily towards the door, to summon Margaurita, when she rushed into the room, exclaiming—

“Oh, Signora, they are here indeed! The very men I saw under the shadow of the rock, soon after we quitted Florence, are now in this house.”

Rosalie, nearly fainting from terror, clung to one of the heavy chairs for support, and forgot her imaginary fears, in this real and certain danger. All the horrors of her situation rushed upon her mind at once. This spot, so favourable

for the commission of crimes, had, doubtless, been selected for her destruction; since, had less than her death been meditated, it would have been easy to change the direction of her journey long before this; and, in a few moments, she should fall by the poniard of some relentless ruffian, whilst her fate could neither be known, or lamented. Scarcely could she recover the powers of articulation sufficiently to ask of Margaurita what she had observed.

“ Oh, the Saints!” exclaimed she, “ they have more the appearance of a banditti, than the friends I expected to be in pursuit of us. I was searching for the mistress of the house, to learn what could be procured for your supper, when I saw three ill-looking men whispering

with her, and one of them pointed to the Marchese's servants, making signs to her, that she should not discover that they were there. I am sure it was so, and I staid no longer, but ran to tell you, Signora. Oh, *Santa Maria!* what will become of us?"

“What will become of us, indeed!” repeated Rosalie, in a tone of the utmost dismay. “No rescue is near; and, without the protection of Heaven, we are lost!”

They listened long, in almost breathless agony; until Rosalie, no longer able to endure this terrible suspense, besought Margaurita to question the landlady, and procure some information respecting these dreadful strangers.”

Scarcely had she left the apartment, before Rosalie heard some heavy footsteps; and, in an instant, perceived they approached her. Flight was impossible. A tall gaunt figure appeared at the door: his cloak was thrown back, and in his belt he had pistols. He gazed at Rosalie, who stood in mute despair, for a moment, and then, stepping hastily forward, put one knee to the ground, and presented her with a billet.

The action, and his departure, were instantaneous; and scarcely could her trembling hands retain the paper so mysteriously placed there. Drawing near to the lamp, she tore it open, and found within but the word '*Remember.*' She knew it to be the hand-writing of Count Marioni: it had been the last word he

had pronounced: it was to be the secret signal for protection; and she instantly comprehended the whole of the design.

She had scarcely deposited the paper in her bosom, before Margaurita appeared, and, in joyful accents, told her that the men she had seen had been guarding some foreigners of distinction across the Appennines, and were now returning. That she had found them socially seated with the servants of the Marchese, over a flask of wine, and that they had agreed to travel together on the following morning.

Rosalie appeared to be entirely satisfied with this explanation; but, as she perceived poor Margaurita had still a dread of this gloomy habitation, she



kindly retained her in her apartment for the evening.

She now reflected on the delicate attention of Count Marioni and Signor Barrazzi, with the most exquisite delight. It was now evident that these men had been directed to keep at a proper distance, to give her succour, if any outrage had been offered on the road; and that they had contrived to give her a hint, which could be understood by no one but herself, even if it should be discovered; that in this dreary solitude, where her apprehensions might be the strongest, she was protected and in safety. Tears rose to her eyes; they flowed in abundance: but her's was now that luxury of grief, which only those can know, who, in the midst of affliction and suf-

ferings, have received proofs of the most faithful constancy and undeviating friendship.

At an early hour the following morning, Rosalie and her attendant pursued their journey; and it was with much satisfaction she observed that the strangers were conversing familiarly with the servants of the Marchese. In these frightful mountains, where the jarring elements seem at least to have agreed in sweeping away every appearance of its being an habitable region, the guard was of the utmost service. They supported the carriage, where the rugged acclivities threatened its overthrow; and, by their alertness and assiduity, obviated, in a great measure, the dangers and difficulties which every traveller must encounter, in mounting these Alpine tracts.

The near approach to the convent, now filled the heart of Rosalie with unalloyed transport. Soon should she be encircled by the arms of her beloved friends. Their surprize, at her unexpected appearance, would yield to joy; and, when they learned her undeserved disgrace, they would applaud the magnanimity with which she had endured it, and love her the more for what she had suffered. The palpitation of her heart increased at every angle of the winding ascent; and it almost bounded from her bosom, when the grey spires and turrets of the convent appeared, rising in venerable majesty from among the trees, over whose foliage autumn had spread her rich and mellow tints. Farther distant in the perspective, and under the shade thrown over it by an almost perpendicular rock, she indistinctly discovered the

large square tower, and high pointed dormitories of the Abbey ; and, at that moment the deep-toned sound of the matin bell struck her ear, as it reverberated among the mountains. All the affectionate cares of the good Father Sebastiano, now rushed into her memory, and tears flowed fast from her eyes, whilst she reflected that she should not behold his venerable form, bending forward to bless and welcome her. His successor too, who had appeared so very repulsive to her nature, would now be associated in those offices, which required from her observance and obedience. How she should acquit herself of these duties, or prevail upon herself to pay him the outward semblance of respect, she was deeply revolving in her mind, when the coach stopped at the outward gate of the convent.

Different sensations, again filled her bosom. She jumped from the carriage, and rather flew than ran up the steps of the terrazzo: and, giving the portress only an affectionate smile of remembrance, proceeded along the cloyster, to the apartments of the Lady Abbess. In the anti-room she found one of the sisters.—

“Is she well?—shall I find her in her parlour?” cried Rosalie, her voice rendered tremulous through agitation. “Oh! tell her that Rosalie is here, waiting anxiously, impatiently, for permission to throw herself at her feet!”

Sister Magdalena was in her arms in an instant. “It is, it is our Rosalie!” exclaimed she, leading her to the Abbess: who, although prepared, in some mea-

sure, by this little delay, was unable to recover her composure until, she saw that Rosalie was well, and actually shedding tears of delight at her feet, and covering her hands with kisses, as she held them to her lips.

When the first emotions of joy and astonishment had subsided, Rosalie begged for accommodations for the servants of the Marchese, and particularly for her attendant, Margaurita, for whom she entreated that a bed might be prepared in her own apartment, speaking highly of her faithful attentions during the journey, and declaring that she could not be satisfied to abandon her, the moment her services were unnecessary.

The Superior applauded this sentiment; and, straining her once more to

her bosom, exclaimed—" My own Rosalie is indeed returned to me ! She has neither been contaminated by the pride nor the ingratitude of the world."

Perceiving that Rosalie was beginning to speak of the causes which led to her unexpected appearance, she added—

" My beloved child, my heart is fully satisfied for the present, with beholding you again, and is indeed incapable of attending to any other circumstance. Go now and see the sisterhood, who are impatiently waiting, no doubt, to embrace you : we will then proceed to the refectory ; and, tomorrow morning, all my interest will be excited, while I listen to your recital.

Rosalie soon found herself surround-

ed by the nuns, who welcomed her with professions of unfeigned pleasure: and the Abbess, well knowing that her accommodations, for the two last nights, could not have been very favourable to repose, dismissed her to her apartment, as soon as supper was over.

She found Margaurita in waiting, and very grateful for her condescension: for "Indeed, Signora," said she, "I never liked a convent; and I was, some how, almost afraid of being a night within the walls."

"My good Margaurita," replied Rosalie, "you have afforded me comfort, and I owe it to you in return."

"Oh, sweet Signora!" said Margaurita, "if it was not for these dismal walls,



and the frightful dresses of the nuns, I never should wish to leave you; but I never could bear a nunnery, and if I thought you were to be made a nun of, I should cry my eyes out. But somebody, that I know of, will prevent that; and, when I get back to the palazzo, I shall tell him to keep a good look-out, for, as sure I am here, there is mischief going on between my Lord Marchese and that ugly old friar, who was lately at the palazzo."

"I insist upon your not mentioning any thing about me to—to any body," said Rosalie, blushing at the name she was unconsciously going to utter. "But what designs, and what friar do you allude to?"

"To him they call Father Beditto,

who is so frightful, that, I pray all the Saints to forgive me, I cannot help hating him, although he is become an Abbot."

"You know nothing farther of him then?" said Rosalie, endeavouring to appear as little interested as possible.

"Oh, yes, Signora! I heard Micheli the coachman, say, that he had letters from the Marchese to deliver to him, and that he was become the Superior of an Abby hereabouts, and that he must go there, as the letters were of consequence, and must not be trusted out of his own hands; and, just as he was so talking, up came this frightful Father: I declare he made me start. He took Micheli aside, and they talked very low; but when he came back, he told me he had asked a great deal about you, Signora; and he

said to Micheli, that he must not go back without letters from him: and then, what was more odd than all the rest, he bade him not tell you, Signora, that he had heard from the Marchese, or that he was to write back again: so I think it can be no good they are about, or they would not make such a secret of it."

"Perhaps," replied Rosalie, with as much composure as she could assume, "Micheli has only an inclination to attach the idea of something extraordinary to his embassy, in order to amuse you, or excite your curiosity?"

"And I protest, Signora, I *have* a great curiosity to find out their schemes; and I can do it very well, if you will give your consent."

“ Are the means justifiable, and prudent ? ” asked Rosalie.

“ Nothing can be more so, ” replied Margaurita, “ for it is as easy to be done as possible, and we never can be found out. You must know, Signora, the first night we stopped on the road, I wanted your dressing case, so I went to the coach seat, and brought out, as I thought, the trunk which contained it ; but when I had unlocked it, I found out that it was a trunk which belonged to Micheli, and in it I saw the very letter that was to be taken to the Abbot : so I locked it up again safe, and said nothing. So as my key will unlock it again, and Micheli is sure to put the answer in the same place, I can easily make pretence that I want to put up some more things in the seat,

and so take out the letter and bring it to you, Signora, and then you will know all that they are about."

"Margaurita," said Rosalie, "I thank you for your attachment, which is proved by your solicitude to serve me; and, whenever I have the power, I will certainly reward you for it: but it behoves me to inform you, that the means you propose are dishonourable. I am persuaded you have forgot, through your anxiety for me, that it is highly criminal to search into the depository of another person's thoughts; and that a letter, either sealed or unsealed, ought, and ever will, be held sacred by every person of integrity. It is a robbery of the most atrocious nature to defraud people of their private sentiments in such a way; and much more so, to possess ourselves of

secrets, where we are certain that such exist."

"What, Signora," asked the astonished and somewhat abashed Margaurita, "when you are sure people intend to harm you, would you not try to find out their designs?"

"Certainly not, by dishonourable and dishonest means; for then I should be guilty of the same degree of criminality, however it might differ in circumstance. If you were to suffer misfortunes, Margaurita, would it not be a consolation to you, to know that you had not done any thing to deserve them?"

"No, indeed, Signora! Nothing would vex me so much, as to know that I suffered innocently."

Rosalie smiled at the simplicity this answer betrayed, and then added, seriously—

“Remember, Margaurita, to be just and virtuous yourself, and then you will have little to dread from the wickedness of others. Fortunately there are very few who have the power to inflict misery on an independent mind; and should the Marchese really possess such an influence over me, I will not give him reason to reproach me with any one action which may have merited his ill-treatment.”

“Indeed, Signora,” replied Margaurita, with tears in her eyes, “you are too good; for I am sure you think better of your enemies than they deserve.”

“ My kind Margaurita,” replied Rosalie, “ in whatever situation I am placed, I will not forget the proof you have given me of your attachment. I conjure you, however, to be guarded in all you say of me, in the Marchese’s family ; and never to repeat your own suspicions, or any of the conversations which have passed between us.”

Margaurita promised faithfully to attend to her injunctions, and Rosalie soon sunk into undisturbed repose.

Early the next morning Micheli informed Margaurita that he was ready to depart ; and she, therefore, solicited the last commands of the Signora. Rosalie forced upon her a valuable mark of her acknowledgment for the attentions she had paid her ; and gave her in charge a



note to be delivered to Olivia, and another to the Marchese. In the former, she had confined herself merely to expressions of affectionate regard; and to the latter, she thought it right to express her obligations, for the safe escort afforded her across the Appennines, and to acknowledge the respectful demeanour of the attendants. The nuns had ransacked their little stores of ornamental work, to send Olivia some marks of their remembrance; and the Lady Abbess had furnished Rosalie with a magnificent present for the Marchesa, from the manufactures of Venice.

In conversation with Margaurita, Rosalie proceeded across the outer court, and down the steps of the terrazzo, where Micheli and the lackey were waiting with the coach. To each of them

she presented marks of her liberality, together with thanks for the care they had taken of her. To her great surprize, the eyes of Micheli were moistened with a tear, as he softly uttered—

“ Heaven bless you, Signora ; and may all the Saints have you in their protection ! And I would it had been their blessed will, that I should have taken you from hence in safety, rather than left you to—

At that moment the tall figure of Father Benedetto, shrouded in his cowl, appeared at one corner of the terrazzo, from whence he had probably been, for some time, surveying the little group. Micheli shut the coach door, and mounted his box in haste, without looking once more at Rosalie ; who, regardless of the approach of the Abbot, stood stationary

for some moments, overwhelmed with a contrariety of contending emotions, and watching the distance, which gradually lengthened, between her and the last objects she might ever behold, belonging to the Marchese di Barrazzi's family.

Having traced the receding wheels beyond the last projecting rock, she turned slowly round with a sigh, and close at her side beheld Father Benedetto.

“ Daughter,” said he, “ is that sigh given to the worldly pleasures of Florence, which you have renounced ?”

“ If the sentiment which excited it, Father,” replied she, “ could be seen, it would do no discredit to my feelings : but, as it cannot, suffer me to assure you,

that it arose more from the regrets of parting friendship, than the loss of those trivial joys to which you allude.”

19'

“ Ah!” said he, “ Would you have me credit this assertion, when your early, your *only*, friends, are to be found within these sacred walls?”

“ True,” replied Rosalie, piqued at his suspicions of her want of sincerity, and the indelicate allusion to her history; “ within these walls, I am reunited to the best, the dearest of friends, and the most exalted of human beings: but I have a soul, sufficiently expanded to admit of other attachments; and, in the world, which, perhaps, may abound with many, as incapable of the sentiment as they are undeserving of the title, I have been fortunate enough to discover a few, who are

worthy of my highest regard and estimation.”

She now gave him the morning salutation, and was proceeding, to the steps of the terrazzo; when turning full upon her his dark and frowning countenance, he enquired, if it was usual for the inhabitants of that holy pile to pass its precincts unattended, and without permission.

Rosalie was alike startled at the aspect of the Father and his interrogation; but a moment served to restore her composure, and she coolly answered—

“ I, at least, have enjoyed that privilege; for my footsteps, as yet, have never been watched by fear, doubt, or suspicion.”

The Abbot spoke not; but, darting upon her a look of malignancy sufficient to strike terror through her whole frame, took the path which wound round the outward walls of the monastery.

*End of the Second Volume.*

THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO  
LIBRARY  
540 EAST 57TH STREET  
CHICAGO, ILL. 60637

DATE

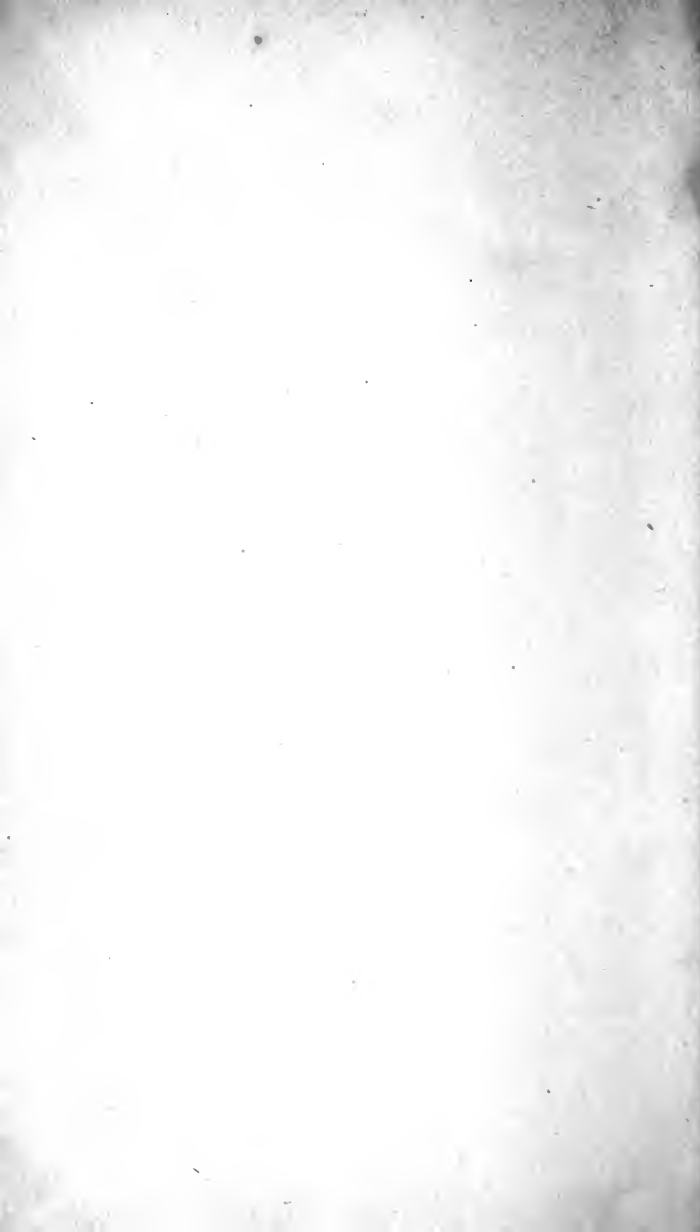
BY

REMARKS

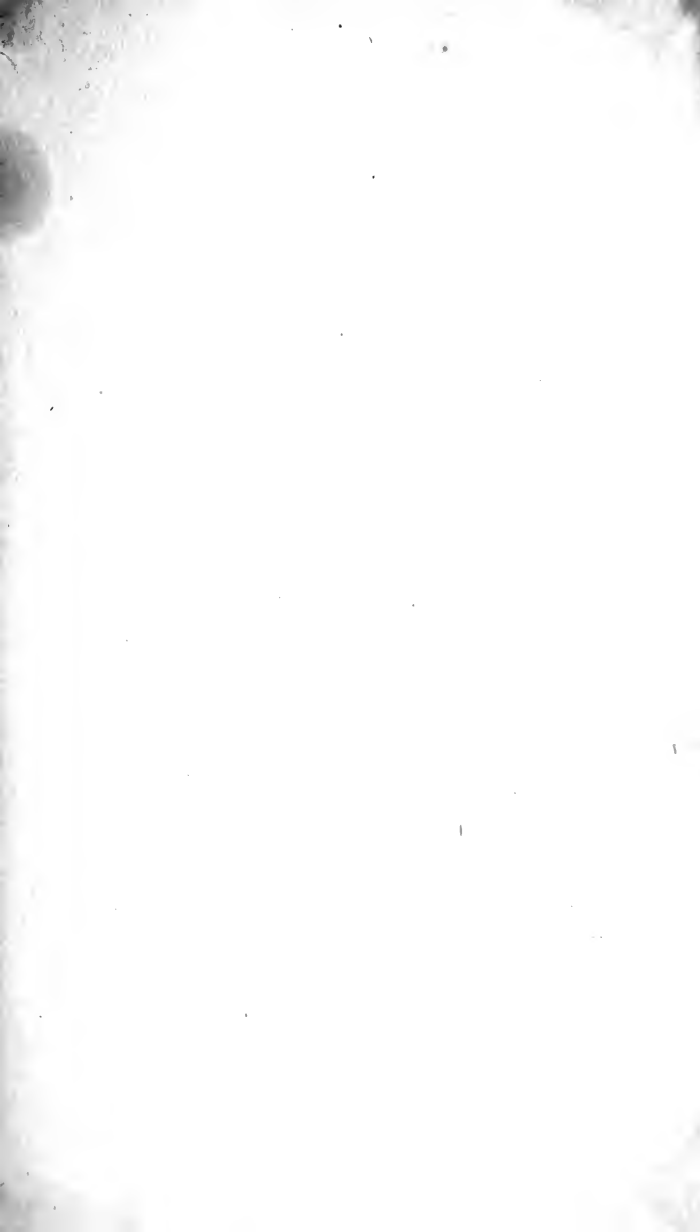
DATE

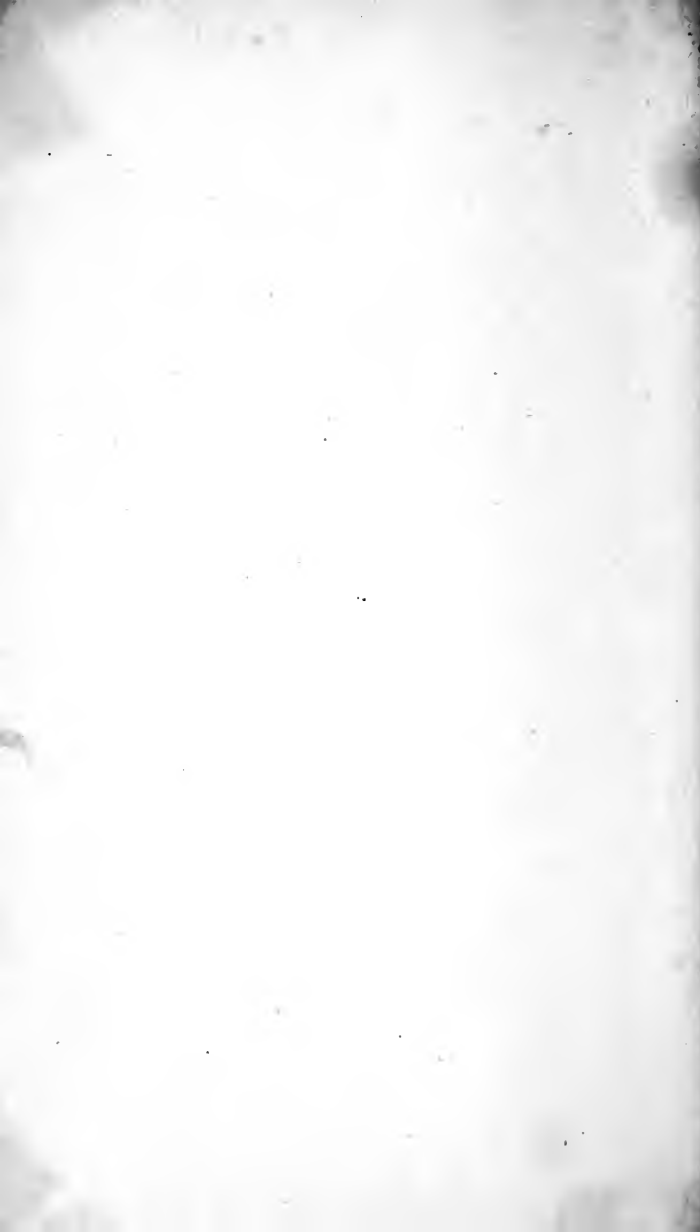
BY

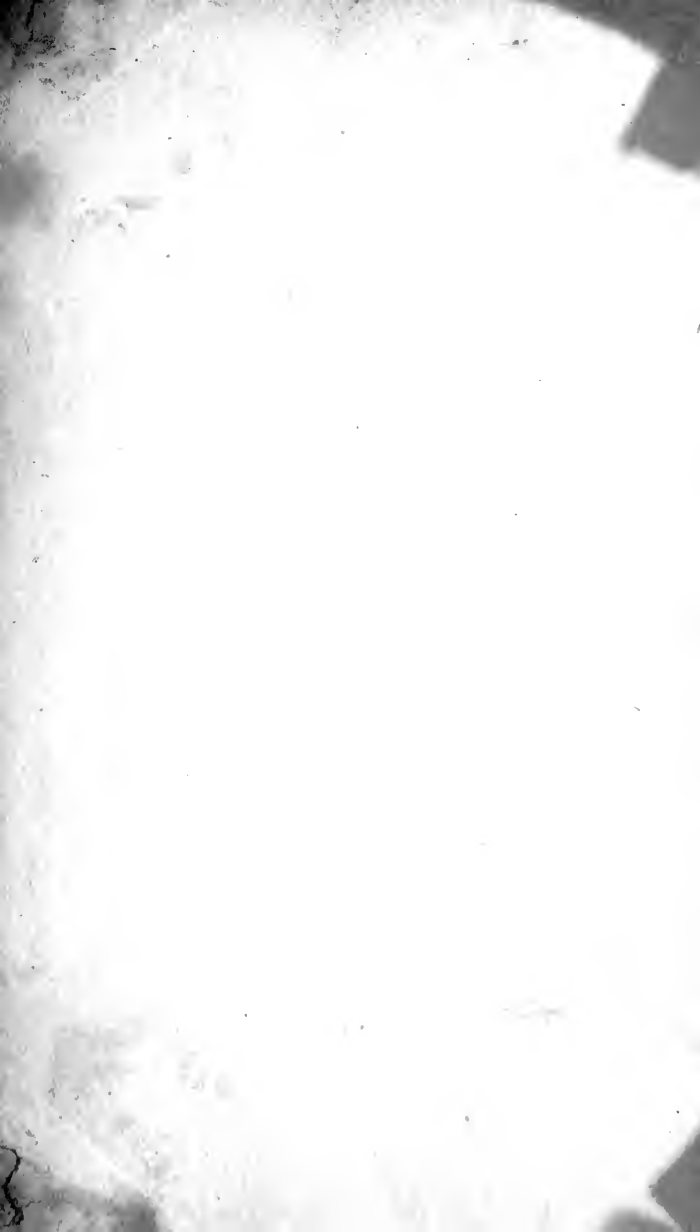
REMARKS











UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS-URBANA



3 0112 060920748