







THE
MONASTERY OF ST. COLUMB;

OR,

THE ATONEMENT.

A NOVEL.

BY REGINA MARIA ROCHE,

AUTHOR OF THE CHILDREN OF THE ABBEY, HOUSES OF
OSMA AND ALMERIA, DISCARDED SON, &c.

The purest treasure mortal times afford,
Is spotless reputation: that away,
Men are but gilded loam, or painted clay.
SHAKSPEARE.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

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CHAPTER I

THE FIRST PART OF THE HISTORY

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MONASTERY OF ST. COLUMB.

CHAP. I.

“ When thoughts of love I entertain,
I meet no words but *never*, and, *in vain*.
Never ! alas ! that dreadful name,
Which fuels the eternal flame ;
Never, my time to come must waste,
In vain, torments the present and the past.”

‘ I STROVE, by gratifying the curiosity history excited, he proceeded, ‘ to divert the anguish of my mind ; but scenes, that at another period would have excited the deepest interest, were now powerless to fix my attention ; and, after a short desultory tour through some of the most famed and romantic provinces, I steered my way homeward, as to a haven, where, if happiness was not again experienced, at least all that can console for its loss would be mine.

‘ My return, unaccompanied, after the expectations that had been raised, excited, as you may suppose, no inconsiderable share of surprise : how was my proud, my wearied spirit, tortured by the explanation I was forced to give ! The parental tenderness, the affectionate regard, of father Francis, were, if possible, augmented by what he saw me suffer, and the consideration of it being in some degree through his means.

‘His society soon became my chief consolation, for in him I found more of sympathy than in any other; but, alas! a consolation I saw I should not long enjoy; his altered aspect struck me the moment of my return: I saw, in the ashy paleness of his sunken cheek, the feebleness of his steps, that he was journeying fast to the land of souls. Still, however, he continued to come abroad, when the weather was mild, and the evening sun upon the fields; but now chiefly confined his walks to the grass-grown cemetery of the monastery, half enclosed by detached masses of the building, and seamed with narrow footpaths.

‘Already had he marked out a spot for his grave; it was in the loneliest part of the churchyard, and close to a young hawthorn, scathed by lightning—‘an emblem,’ he said, with a mournful smile, ‘and therefore I like the thought of resting under it, for I, like it, was young, when the stroke came that laid my green head low, that scattered my leaves ere the time of my fading was near.’ But the composure which both pride and reason induced me to struggle to regain, was cruelly interrupted by the arrival of my perfidious friend and his wife, at his residence in the neighbourhood. I should instantly have quitted a place where I was so likely to encounter them, but that I could not bring myself to leave father Francis, convinced, as I was, a final separation was rapidly approaching.

‘Missing him one evening from his cell, I hastened to seek him in the cemetery, and catching a glimpse of him, seated on a low cairn, was emerging from a range of decayed arches behind him, when the sight of Elvira, rushing towards him, and whose entreaties to be allowed to introduce herself to him, I should previously have told you, he posi-

tively resisted, in resentment of her supposed inconstancy, fixed me to the earth.

‘With an exclamation of mingled rapture and deprecation, she threw herself at his feet, and embraced his knees. Her attitude, her strong resemblance to her mother, the tears that dimmed her radiant eyes, excited emotions too powerful in the mind of her aged relative to permit him to move. Her attempt to vindicate herself in his opinion, gradually led to a full development of the deception that had been practised on us both. Oh! what were my feelings at the discovery! what my wild anguish at the idea of having been instrumental to forcing her into the arms of another! I shall not dwell on the scene that ensued; suffice it, that such was its effect upon me, several weeks elapsed ere I recovered the perfect use of my reason.

‘My first inquiry, on my restoration to myself, was after father Francis; it was answered by the tears of my mother. They instantly revealed to me the truth: ‘Yes, my dear son,’ clasping my hands, she said, ‘he is at peace.’ Then taking from her bosom a letter, written in his almost expiring moments, to conjure me, by the friendship that had subsisted between us, the consideration due to the feelings of my parents, and the hope I entertained of being re-united in heaven to those I loved on earth, not to attempt revenging my wrongs, presented it to me. Instinctively I dropped on my knee to receive it; and the fever of resentment cooled at the moment by long suffering and grief, vowed, in that posture, to observe its injunction.

‘Yielding to the prayers and entreaties of my parents, for I felt I owed them much, I suffered myself to be dragged from place to place, in hopes,

change of scene might produce a favourable one on my feelings; but the shaft had penetrated too far to permit this hope to be realized. I had, however, to speedily drink yet deeper of the cup of sorrow: the best, the tenderest, the most indulgent of parents, were within a short period of each other, snatched from me. Oh! what a desert did my home appear after their death! and how truly did I feel, that no sorrow can surpass the sorrow endured by the forlorn heart, in witnessing the gradual dissolution of the sacred ties of nature!

‘The afflicting idea of having been a source of sorrow to them, led me often to bathe their ashes with repentant tears.—Those I shed over the grave of father Francis were of a more soothing nature: no sculptured marble pressed on his cold bosom; the sods of the valley alone cover it; a rude fence, to save me from the painful apprehension of its ever being disturbed, alone distinguishes the bed of his repose; the blighted hawthorn, alas! emblem of us both, still waves its withered branches over it; and there the violets that mingle with its luxuriant covering of grass, secured from vulgar hands, exhale their dying sweets; and the lark that forms its nest, rears, unmolested, its callow young. But my misery wanted completion, till I learned the unhappiness of the injured Elvira with her husband: had I imagined her in possession of felicity with him, reconciled, by his tenderness and affection, to the deception practiced on her, I make no doubt I also in time should have overcome the regrets it occasioned; but instead of being allowed to indulge so consolatory an idea, I soon became shocked by the information I received; his unworthy treatment of her becoming, by degrees, the general topic of conversation in the neighbourhood, and indignant theme of every tongue.

‘ Disappointed in the expectations that, notwithstanding her captivating sweetness and beauty, the united attractions of her mind and person were his chief inducement for wishing to possess her, he attempted not to restrain his natural fickleness and cruelty.

‘ Unable to forgive her supposed perfidy, the count banished her his presence immediately on her marriage, with a declaration, that it was a very doubtful matter whether he should ever again consider her as his.

‘ Months passed away without a reconciliation being effected; but what entreaties could not accomplish, was brought about by her explanation to her uncle. He immediately communicated it to his brother, who no sooner received it, than, all contrition for his unmerited severity, he wrote to assure her, not of his forgiveness, for there was nothing to forgive, but of his renewed affection. His resentment and indignation, however, were not subdued; their object only was changed; they became transferred from his wronged daughter to her husband, who, from merely disliking, he now began to utterly scorn and detest. To forgive the deception he had practised, he felt to be impossible; and nothing but the consideration of the monstrous light in which it must make him appear, should he attempt to revenge it, deterred him from an effort of the kind.

‘ Those who are capable of committing injuries, are, perhaps, those who are least liable to pardon them: the count knew not forgiveness; his vindictive temper was rendered still more severe and unbending, by the feelings he had given way to; first possessed with a thousand wrongs, then convicted by his conscience of having committed them, that

surly spirit Melancholy, that Shakespeare describes, as 'baking the blood, and making it run honey-thick, got, by degrees, such entire dominion over him, strengthened and confirmed as was its sway by the solitude in which he had immured himself, and his gloomy broodings over the cruel resolution he had formed of immolating his child at the altar of superstition, that all real warmth, but for her, was extinguished in his heart.

'The cold-blooded man is ever to be feared; he who broods over his wrongs, scarcely ever forgives them. The generous heart will, at once, either resent or pardon; but the gloomy and malignant can refrain from the former, though unequal to the latter.

'All that the count, however, could at present do, to shew his inveteracy, he did, by immediately taking every necessary measure for preventing Roscrea's having any control over the property that was to descend to his daughter: but to her, for the purpose of confirming the assertion he had made, he was lavish of his gifts. To the almost exhausted finances of her profligate husband, who, abandoning himself to every vice, shortly involved his fortune, these proved very seasonable supplies; far, however, from converting them to any proper use, they only served to render him still more extravagant; till at length he became so exceedingly distressed, as to insist on her applying for larger and more frequent ones.

'But though naturally of a yielding temper, and in considerable awe of him, from the ferocity of his, she could not be prevailed on to act so contrary to her feelings of delicacy; more especially, as by this time, she had a family, whose prospect of any pro-

vision from him she conceived extremely precarious from his conduct.

‘ Her inflexibility provoked the most brutal usage; her two children were torn from her; all further intercourse with the neighbouring families prohibited; and characters of the vilest description intruded on her: her letters, however, to her father were, as usual, serious, but not complaining; but what she concealed he was admonished of, by a secret correspondence in the neighbourhood, and, in consequence, made immediate preparation for a journey hither.

‘ His effort, on his arrival, to apprize his unhappy daughter of it, proved unavailing, so strictly was she watched and confined by her unrelenting tyrant. Still more exasperated by this circumstance, he forthwith repaired to the mansion of Roscrea, to insist on an interview with her; and either an assurance of immediate reformation on his part, or else her being resigned to him with her children.

‘ The terms in which these demands were made were not such as the brutal temper of Roscrea, now too seldom, from the vice he had in particular abandoned himself to, in a state of perfect recollection, could brook; instead of shewing any inclination to accede to them, he imprecated maledictions on himself, if ever he allowed him to see his child or grandchildren, except he cancelled the settlement he had made, and gave his daughter immediate possession of some part of the property she was hereafter to enjoy. But not to save, from instant and utter destruction, the only object of his affection, would the count have acceded to any proposition, calculated to relieve or gratify the object of his detestation. Mutual recriminations took place; and they parted still more inveterate than

ever against each other. But the count was not without a hope, from the weight and consequence he was aware his fortune was calculated to give him, of succeeding in time in awing his unprincipled son-in-law into greater propriety of conduct, if he settled in his neighbourhood; and accordingly lost no time in looking out for a suitable habitation in it; but in vain; Roscrea had too thoroughly succeeded in holding him up to universal contempt and abhorrence, to allow any effort for the purpose proving availing. Convinced, from the insight he had at last obtained into the inflexibility of his nature, that he had nothing to hope for from him, he determined to have the gratification, at least, of being revenged for his obduracy; and accordingly with all the eagerness of malice, disclosed the facts connected with him; his double apostacy, his filial impiety, his barbarous conduct to his brother, and the cruel resolution he had formed respecting the child for whom he now pretended such parental solicitude; though on the score of religion he never should have held him up to reproach having just at that period renounced his own, from interested motives.

‘With the forced calmness of affected disdain, the count retired, from the immediate experience of the humiliating treatment this exposure had subjected him to, to a lonely cottage, some miles distant, on a bleak heath, wild and savage on every side as were his own thoughts; for he had sworn never to depart till he had taken deadly vengeance for the injury done him; and was only calm, in order to be better enabled to meditate a scheme for the purpose.

‘In this dreary abode I often visited him; the idea of his being the father of Elvira causing me,

notwithstanding the little esteem in which I held him, to experience something of pleasure in his society; but though it was not possible for internal workings like his, not, in some degree, to be depicted in the countenance, I had no suspicion of the crime he meditated.

‘ He had resided here about a month, when returning one night from a gentleman’s house in his vicinity, where I had been to dinner, I was induced, by a coming storm, to cross the heath, for the purpose of taking shelter with him. Putting up my horse in an adjoining shed, I knocked with my whip against the door, but receiving no answer, laid my hand upon the latch and admitted myself.

‘ Finding the room empty, I called aloud, but still all was silence: concluding from this that both the count and his domestic, an old confidential follower he had brought with him from Spain, were out, without farther ceremony I took possession of it, throwing fresh turf upon the almost expiring fire, and drawing my chair close to it to dry my wet garments; but not without a sensation of surprise, both from the lateness of the hour, and the particular dreariness of the night, at the count’s at least being out.

‘ The heat of the fire, aided in its stupifying effect by the profound stillness of all around, was gradually overpowering me, when, from the drowsiness it occasioned, I was suddenly roused by something like a smothered breathing in the inner apartment. Starting up, I was rushing thither, when the count met me at the door. Recoiling a few paces, in unutterable astonishment—‘ You within, after all, count!’ I exclaimed; ‘ then you must have been asleep, for I called out on my entrance.’—‘ No, not asleep,’ he answered, in hesi-

tating accents, 'but—but—I did not recollect your voice, and so—'

'I am sorry I did not announce myself then,' I replied; 'but really I had no conception but that my accents were too familiar not to be immediately recollected.'

'They certainly ought,' he returned; 'but when one is under any kind of agitation—' again he paused abruptly, and passing me to the fire, seated himself as if mechanically by it.

'His air and manner strongly perplexed me; something I clearly perceived was wrong, but what, I could not possibly conjecture. Involuntarily I placed myself on a chair opposite to him, and, in silence, contemplated his countenance, of which the blazing turf emitted a light sufficiently strong to let me have a clear view. His more than usual paleness, the kind of ferocious rolling of his dark eyes, and the haggard expression of his features, heightened my suspicions, or rather gave rise to terrible misgivings; yet I knew not how to hint at either, though almost inclined to think it might be essential to his safety to do so. From examining his countenance, my eyes accidentally wandering over his person, I was startled by the sight of blood upon his garments: 'Good God!' with inexpressible emotion, 'count!' I exclaimed, 'you must have met with some accident, for your clothes are stained with blood!'

'With blood, say you!' he repeated, starting with wildness from his seat, and glancing downward; 'yes—yes—I see it is as you say; but no—no—matter!' with a convulsive motion of lip, and resuming, or rather dropping again into his chair; 'yes, 'tis as you think; I met with a slight accident to-night.'

‘Count!’ I exclaimed, no longer able to command myself, ‘I hope you’ll not take it amiss my expressing a fear of something more than a slight accident having happened.’

‘For a moment he looked steadily at me, then suddenly recovering all his wonted sternness and loftiness of manner, demanded the cause of such a fear?’

‘I candidly replied, it was impossible, from the extreme agitation I saw him in, not to experience one of the kind.’

‘Is my agitation then so very obvious?’ he said; ‘well,’ with something of an ironical air, he added, ‘since you are so very discerning, I will not pretend to deny that I am a little discomposed to-night, but you will not wonder at this, when I inform you, that to-morrow I leave the neighbourhood of my daughter: Kirwan has already preceded me to Cork, for the purpose of securing me a passage to Spain.’

‘To-morrow!’ I repeated, with surprise; ‘so suddenly!’

‘Again he looked earnestly at me for a minute; then with a kind of wild hysteric laugh, ‘Perhaps you’ll soon find,’ he said, ‘that I have not been too hasty in my movements.’

‘My conjectures became wilder; I was almost transfixed by the secret horror they inspired, when the hollow clattering of horses’ hoofs was heard at a distance, approaching in the direction of the cottage. The count started at the sound, and listened for a minute, as if to be convinced his ear had not deceived him; then suddenly clasping his hands with all the symptoms of ungovernable fear, ‘They are coming! they are coming!’ he exclaimed; ‘secure the door; and, should they burst it,

deny my being here ; I know your word will readily be believed.'

'He retreated, whilst I hastened to obey him: for a minute, the agony of suspense, or rather, expectation, was intolerable. I was then relieved from it, by the sound that had occasioned it taking a different direction, and dying away upon the moaning gale.

'The count rejoined me, on my calling to him. After what had passed, I conceived myself fully justified in avowing what I thought; recovered from his alarm, he listened to me with a mixture of anger and disdain.

'You may surmise what you please,' he at length returned; 'but all I have to tell you is, that it is necessary this last interview with me should be concealed; if your regard for me is what you profess, let it be buried in eternal oblivion.'

'This injunction, as you may believe, was not calculated to allay my suspicions; lost in thought, I leaned against the chimney-piece, with my eye vacantly fixed upon the count, who, as if no longer sensible of the grounds he had given for them, began moving about the room, making little preparations against the ensuing day.

'On a sudden, he started back, and striking his forehead, 'Oh God!' almost with a shriek, he exclaimed, 'I am ruined!'

'I flew to him, and caught him by the arm— 'For Heaven's sake,' I cried, 'dear count, collect yourself, and say what has happened.'

'With a livid look, he turned his eyes upon me; 'The dagger!' he exclaimed, 'the dagger! I find I've left it behind me, and it must betray me!'

'His terror became contagious, or rather those terrible words struck horror through my frame;

the blood curdled at my heart, and with difficulty, I demanded what he meant ?

‘ First tell me,’ he cried, again a little collecting himself, ‘ are you inclined to make an effort to save the father of Elvira ?’

‘ By a look, I reproached him for the doubt intimated by the question.

‘ Perfectly comprehending it, ‘ Well, then,’ he said, ‘ I will briefly explain, if you first swear not to pause, either to comment, or reflect, on what I shall tell you.’

‘ I swore ; perhaps I was too precipitate ; perhaps, with such doubts, such misgivings, as possessed me, I should have been more cautious, more deliberate ; but I believed him in danger, and my feelings were all commotion, from the idea of what Elvira would suffer should any ill befall him.

‘ The condition complied with, he kept me not long in suspense : how shall I bring myself to recount what he told me ! how that he was the murderer of his son-in-law ! but such was his revengeful spirit, nothing but his life could satisfy him. He had long been on the watch for an opportunity of inflicting the blow, but, till this evening, had not been able to obtain one. On this, he contrived to obtain access to a room opening to the shrubbery, and to which, he had previously been informed, Roscrea was often in the habit of retiring, when transiently overcome with wine. Almost beyond his expectations, he found him already there, wrapt in a heavy slumber ; and instantly stealing to the couch, plunged his dagger in his side. ‘ But the transport I felt in inflicting the blow,’ he added, with the look of a demon, ‘ was lessened by his not being in a state to know the hand from which it came. Starting aside to avoid his bursting blood,

I dropt the dagger: I thought I had picked it up, but now find it was only the sheath—a mistake that either the duskiness of the hour, or some little confusion I was in, did not sooner permit me to detect, and which I cannot help being agitated at, since, from the circumstance of my crest and initials being on the handle, if found, I must be in danger: but all may yet remain undiscovered in the apartment; it may not yet be too late to make an effort to save me from destruction.'

'I waited for no further explanation; what he required was obvious. With a charge to him to be on his guard, lest of the worst, I rushed out of the house, and throwing myself on my horse, set off full speed for Roscrea's. Alighting at a little distance from it, I cautiously approached the shrubbery, where, pausing to listen, I became somewhat reassured; convinced, by the deathlike stillness that prevailed around, no discovery had as yet taken place. Making my way softly through the rustling trees, I at length gained the entrance of the fatal chamber; for a minute after setting my foot within it, I was compelled to pause, so horrible was the image my fancy conjured up to view; with difficulty I forced myself to advance; guided by the twilight that faintly gleamed through the windows, I shudderingly approached the couch, feeling, as I did so, with my foot for the dagger. The streaming blood had rendered the floor slippery, and within a few paces of it, my feet suddenly sliding from under me, I fell with a force against it that threw me on the body. Good God! what was my horrible sensation at the moment! my still more horrible one, at finding a hook in the coat had caught in mine! ere I could succeed in tearing it away, the door opening to the interior of the house burst

open, and two men, one of them bearing a light, entered, with a loud hollo, intended to waken him, who slept, alas! to wake no more.

‘ Even now I feel a something of emotion at the idea of what I then felt: appearances were all against me. As light pervaded the room, I saw my fall upon the corpse had occasioned me to be stained with blood; and involuntarily glancing downward, beheld, immediately at my feet, the fatal dagger; added to which, was a general knowledge of the enmity subsisting between me and the deceased—the unsubdued attachment I entertained for his wife. The terrible situation in which I had placed myself struck at once upon my mind; I shuddered at the thought of being compelled, either to resign myself to an ignominious fate, or else give death to Elvira, by betraying her father to it.—But why look so wild, my dear girl?’ suddenly addressing himself to Angeline.

‘ Oh! at the idea of the terrible situation you were in.’

De Burgh smiled—‘ Your sensibility is too exquisite, my love,’ he said; ‘ since I find I have so affected you, I will, for the present, in order to afford you an opportunity of recovering yourself, suspend my narrative.’

‘ No, no,’ eagerly cried Angeline; ‘ for though you are now before me, though I hold your hand, though I gaze in your face, I shall not be able to respire freely till I know how you extricated yourself.’

‘ Well, my love, I shall not needlessly trifle with your feelings, by dwelling on the equal horror and astonishment of the intruders; one of whom was a relation and namesake of the deceased, and, like him, a man of profligate character; and the other,

a kind of dependant of both. For an instant, the shock I sustained deprived me of the power of articulation. On recovering it, I protested my innocence, though with an acknowledgment of my deeming the protestation useless.

‘Useless indeed!’ repeated the kinsman of Roscrea, moving, as he spoke, to secure the outer door; then turning towards the other, was on the very point of alarming the family, when, as if struck by a sudden thought, he stopped; and, after a momentary pause, softly approaching me, as if he feared the ear of death could hear him, ‘Your life,’ said he, with a pale countenance, of mysterious import, ‘is in my hands; but, on a certain condition, I may be induced to spare it, more especially as I know the provocation you had from the deceased.’

‘Impatiently I demanded the condition. ‘Why, I presume,’ he resumed, ‘you are aware of my being next heir to Roscrea’s estate, after his children: this very morning, tidings were received of the death of the boy, so that the little girl now only remains between me and the possession of it. Now, if you’ll consent to remove this bar to my immediate assumption of it out of the way, I’ll swear never to charge you with the crime you have perpetrated.’

‘What!’ I languidly demanded, ‘did he in reality want me to imbrue my hands in blood? the blood, too, of helpless innocence?’

‘By no means,’ he returned, with a shudder, that convinced me of his sincerity; ‘he was not so vile a villain; all he wanted of me was to take charge of the child; and for obtaining which a scheme could easily be devised.’

‘There was no time for deliberation, or rather

no alternative between acceding to his proposition, or resigning myself or the count to destruction. Accordingly I plighted myself, in the most solemn manner, to remove the child for ever out of his way; and he in return bound himself, by a sacred oath, to let no suspicion, through his means, glance at me; but he abruptly added 'Lest there should not be on each side equal sincerity, this,' suddenly wresting the dagger from me, which I had taken up, ere I was at all aware of his having an intention of the kind, 'shall remain here,' holding it up to my view with a threatening air, as 'a damning corroboration of what, in that case, I shall be wrought upon to disclose.'

'But 'tis unnecessary to enter into any further particulars of this scene; suffice it, that every thing necessary towards the deception he had planned being arranged, I was at length suffered to depart. But how! bound to commit an act of injustice, and under the imputation of a horrible crime! The reflection was terrible; but the image of Elvira dying over a fettered father, confirmed the resolution it began to shake.

'I found the count almost sunk beneath the horrors to which my departure had consigned him. His quivering lips, the ashy whiteness of his cheek, his starting eyeballs, wildly rolling at every sound, gave me clearly to see—

'That Conscience doth make cowards of us all.'

'Oh God! who would resign the peace of virtue, the ennobling confidence it inspires, for aught this world can bestow in exchange? The count now began to feel, that revenge, though sweet at first, 'bitter ere long, back on itself recoils,' now, when the reflection of the deed it had led him to

commit made him start and shrink within himself at the moving of a shadow. Seized with an invincible dread, he persevered in setting out the next morning for the place of embarkation; not, however, without its being previously settled, that as soon as its mother had joined him in Spain, of which her immediately doing he entertained no doubt, his infant grandchild should also be conveyed hither; and whose unexpected restoration to its parent would, he flattered himself, make her ample atonement for the pain its supposed death must cost her; and to account for permitting such a supposition to prevail, he was not without a hope of being able satisfactorily to do.

‘ In consequence of the arrangement made with the kinsman of the child, I was unable to delay to witness his departure; agreeably to it, I proceeded to a certain place, where receiving the child from the interested witness of our secret compact, I proceeded forthwith with it to the wife of a poor cotter, whom I had previously prepared for its reception; while he rode back to report its death, of the same disorder which had, the preceding day, carried off its little brother.

‘ My precious charge deposited, I hastened home, and with the feelings of a person anticipating some terrible convulsion, presageful of some o’erwhelming shock, waited the dreaded coming of the morning. The horrible catastrophe it announced threw the whole neighbourhood into consternation: the usual measures were of course immediately had recourse to, for discovering the perpetrator, but in vain; suspicion glanced at several, but without once pointing at the real author. Indeed, I believe the idea of his having committed the crime would have been considered too mon-

strous a one for any one to have given it admission. What I endured while these inquiries, these inquiries, were going on, you may easier conceive than I describe—the state of anxiety, of apprehension, of agitation, in which they kept me—a state rendered still more painful by the air of indifference and composure I was feign to assume.

‘ Gradually subsiding, I was again beginning to breathe with something of freedom, when again I was destined to experience the cruellest conflicts, by the shock imparted to my harassed feelings by the unexpected death of the ill-fated Elvira; at least unexpected to me, unapprized as I was of the innovations of long-suffering on her constitution. She sunk beneath the shock of recent events. She could not affect grief for the loss of a tyrannic husband, but then the manner of his death was dreadful; and the imagined loss of her two lovely infants was an overwhelming stroke to a heart like hers. In little more than a month after the decease of her husband, ‘ slow through the church-way path I saw her borne,’ to that bed where the sun shines without awaking.

‘ I immediately resolved on abandoning the neighbourhood, unable to endure the feelings it kept alive; besides, I did not conceive myself perfectly secure in it, from the change that might, it was possible, I reflected, take place in the sentiments of Roscrea; and, exclusive of this consideration, I could not feel myself at ease, could not act, as if I retained my self-esteem, that esteem so essential to the support of dignity of character, in a place where I was conscious I secretly laboured under the horrible imputation of an atrocious crime. My thoughts directly turned to Spain; so true it is, that there, where delicious affections have been

first awakened, they ever after hover.—Greatly as I detested the character of the count, yet still the idea, that with him I should be indulged in conversing of my beloved, rendered soothing that of fixing my abode near him; besides, I wished to be where I should have an opportunity of uniting in watching over her child, of guarding her from injury or evil, should she be suddenly deprived of his protection, to which I had no doubt of his requiring her to be immediately resigned.

‘Accordingly I directly steered my course for his residence in the Alpuxarros mountains; but I was disappointed of finding him there; he had no more returned to it; an aged hermit was now the sole inmate of the once magnificent pile: stript of all its gorgeous decorations, it was abandoned to decay. ‘Tribulation had taken the seat of hospitality; and where the jocund guest had laughed over the sparkling bowl, adders hissed, and owls sung their strains of melancholy to the moonshine that slept upon its mouldering battlements.’ Oh! how chilling my sensations at the reverse it presented to my view! Forgetting, for a minute, in the fever of agitated feelings, the lapse of years, I called upon her who could no more answer me, as I roved through the desolate apartments, but without hearing any sound, save that of the breeze, that was wont to lift her heavy locks, sighing with its mournful voice, through the scattered arms of her fathers, in the ancient hall. ‘Where art thou, my love,’ I cried, ‘with thy songs? where, with the soft sound of thy steps?’ Recollection suddenly returned; and the frenzy of idle impatience yielded to the torpifying influence of despair.’

Again De Burgh paused; and suddenly rising, walked to the other end of the room; and again

Angeline was a mute though not an unconcerned spectator of his emotion, aware that feelings like his were best soothed by being indulged. In a few minutes, however, he had sufficiently recovered himself to be able to resume his seat, though not his narrative, and which, indeed, the appearance of the landlady, just at this time, to lay the cloth, and who, like Scrub, was all and every thing by turns, prevented.

But bustle was the soul of her enjoyment; the greater the hurry, the greater her pleasure. Not satisfied this day, with playing the part of the attendant, she also, out of the affection she bore father Cormac, almost took upon herself doing the honours of the table, pointing out what she conceived the best, and pressing her guests to eat.

Such hospitality, in a person of her description, was rather a novel circumstance to Angeline, and therefore amused, as well as pleased her, both as a trait of national manners, and a trait of real good nature.

A doubt had been suggested, by what Angeline had already heard, that agitated her too much not to render her anxious in the extreme for the continuance of the narrative; but, notwithstanding, she feared to urge it, lest a longer respite should be necessary to the narrator. But nearly as desirous as she was to have it brought to a conclusion, he required no solicitation or hint on the subject; of his own accord, soon after they again found themselves alone, he proposed resuming it, and accordingly did as follows.

 CHAP. II.

Stupid he sat, his eyes on earth declin'd,
 And various care revolving in his mind;
 Rage, boiling from the bottom of his breast,
 And sorrow, mix'd with shame, his soul oppress'd;
 And conscious worth lay lab'ring in his thought,
 And love, by jealousy, to madness wrought;
 By slow degrees, his reason drove away
 The mists of passion, and resum'd her sway.

DRYD. VIRG.

‘ I AM now coming to that part of my relation, my dear girl, which immediately concerns you. With difficulty I discovered the count, so obscure was the retreat to which the dread inspired by guilt had driven him. In one selfish consideration, that of his own safety, every other now seemed absorbed. He heard of the death of his daughter with an air of gloomy insensibility; and far from expressing any solicitude about her helpless orphan, protested neither his state of mind, nor health, would allow of his personal care of her.

‘ Then on me let the sacred charge devolve!’ I warmly and involuntarily exclaimed; ‘ let me be the person delegated to supply to her the place of every natural tie; let me have the ecstatic happiness of becoming the guardian of Elvira’s orphan child!’

‘ The count coolly assented to the proposition, and still more coolly said some thing of a settlement, to prevent her being any tax upon me; but I spurned at the idea, both from the manner in which it was mentioned, and my own superabundant means of giving her every requisite advantage.

‘ Impatient to have her under my care, I short-

ly separated from the count, for the purpose of proceeding in quest of a habitation, which, from many considerations, I still persevered in determining should be Spain. Journeying in pursuit of this, I at length found myself in the ancient and romantic town of Loxa, where chance threw in my way an old friend of the name of Power, the son of a family with whom mine had ever been in habits of the strictest intimacy, and one of my earliest friends.

‘ Our joy at this unexpected meeting was mutual, from the delight each manifested at it; it was evident that the long suspension of our correspondence, owing to his having entered the Spanish service, had not weakened our attachment. But though I found him still retaining all that warmth of heart, that ardent sensibility, which so irresistibly attracted my affections towards him, I found him no longer in possession of the enviable vivacity that had once distinguished him; but I ceased to be at a loss to account for this change, when I understood the domestic calamity he had recently sustained, in the death of an amiable and lovely wife, the object of a long attachment, though circumstances of a particular nature had, for a length of time, delayed their union; and for whom his regret was so unconquerable, as to have induced him to withdraw entirely from active life, to a delightful seat, which, in right of her, he possessed in the neighbourhood.

‘ The secret sympathy, excited by the similarity of our afflictions; rendered me more than ever pleased in his society, and, by degrees, impelled me to unbounded confidence in him. The result was a pressing entreaty to pause where I was, or, in other words, take up my abode with him. The proposal was too tempting to be resisted; my

heart, wounded, but not chilled, sighed for retirement, but not solitude. Accordingly, there being nothing further to delay my departure, I was soon on my way back again to Ireland, for my little charge. The transient view I had previously of her features scarce allowed me to know what she was; but now, on her being presented to me, I beheld a perfect cherub. Good God! what were my emotions on extending my arms to receive to them the supposed child of the deceased Elvira!

Angeline uttered a faint exclamation—‘The supposed child!’ she exclaimed, with a look of wildness and dismay. ‘Oh Heavens! who then am I? Already I anticipated having no natural claims upon you, and now, I find that those allowed me, from affection for another, were also unfounded!’

De Burgh, tenderly taking her hand, conjured her, in a soothing tone, to restrain her anxiety, alleging the impossibility of being able to fully satisfy it, except allowed to proceed uninterruptedly.

Angeline, for the first time, found it difficult to obey him; she forced herself, however, to do so, and he thus continued:

‘Over your years of childhood I shall briefly pass; merely observing, that if I loved you first for the sake of her to whom I imagined you belonged, I soon loved you for your own alone. To describe the powerful interest you created in my heart, is utterly impossible; but how resistless is the appeal of smiling innocence, the endearing charms of early infancy, charms that, in you, were heightened by cherub beauty, and playful sweetness!

‘Not without difficulty could I bring myself to resign you, for a time, to the care of others; but to render your education perfect, I knew the measure

necessary ; and accordingly ventured over to England, for the purpose of placing you at a boarding-school there, wishing to have you educated in the Protestant faith, in consequence of your supposed father having embraced that religion. Owing to this, my friend Power was not altogether prepared for the sight of a lovely young woman, instead of a playful child, on your return to Spain.

‘ With a kind of joyful eagerness, I hurried you, as you may remember, to the remote apartment in which he was often wont to immure himself for hours at a time. Deeply engaged with a book, he heeded not our entrance, as you may also remember, until I laughingly called to him to look up, and welcome home his little playfellow. Languidly he obeyed me, but to what an animated expression of rapture, of admiration, of delight, did his air of languor give place, the instant he cast his eyes upon you! I smiled at his emotion, little aware of the real nature of it, little aware of the pulses of passion still throbbing as wildly as ever at his heart ; that the feelings to which he had abandoned himself had but quickened his perception of what was beautiful and interesting ; that softened by the habitual indulgence of unrestrained sensibility, he was but too exquisitely susceptible. The charms that burst so suddenly upon him were heightened by a fancied resemblance between their possessor and her whom he had so long mourned, and with whom he had experienced such blissful enjoyment. Long was it, however, ere I in the least suspected the inclination with which he was inspired ; nor can this be wondered at, striving, as he did, for some time against it, from the consideration of the impropriety of its object, or rather, an apprehension of the light of a relative, in which she had been taught to regard him, proving injurious to

his wishes. But, on a topic I perceive so painful, I will not enlarge. With the indignation he has excited in your bosom, I know is mingled commiseration. I know, from the impression his kind attentions, his persuasive eloquence, the graces of his manner and appearance, must have made upon your mind; that his weakness can never be a pleasing theme to you.

‘ But ere I come to the circumstance that first gave me an insight into his feelings, ’tis necessary to reveal another to you. While you were yet absent from what you had been so long taught to consider your native home, I was surprised, one day, by a message from a lady in a convent, more immediately in the environs than yours, requesting to see me. Obeying it, this surprise was heightened, by recognising in her the wife of the then possessor of the Roscrea estate—a woman of very amiable manners, but who, through the tyrannical conduct of her husband, had been compelled to take refuge in her present retreat. Having thanked me for my prompt attention to her request, she would not, she said, apologize for the liberty of it, satisfied, when her motive for desiring an interview was explained, I would deem no excuse for it necessary.

‘ This preface, as you may believe, whetted not a little my impatience for the explanation of the motive thus alluded to. Reading it in my looks, she briefly proceeded to inform me, that discovering, by chance, my being a resident in the same place with her, she had immediately determined on availing herself of the discovery, to reveal a secret that had long lain heavy on her heart.

‘ Like the unhappy Elvira, her children were brutally torn from her, by way of punishment, for some opposition to the will of her tyrant, and sent

to the same place where they were. The youngest, a boy, was the darling of her heart. Unable to depart the kingdom without again seeing him, again clasping him to her fond bosom, she rested not, until a day or two previous to her quitting it, she had obtained access to him. But all her maternal tenderness renewed by his sight; the endearing caresses he bestowed on her, her despair at the idea of parting from him, became so violent, that partly through terror, partly compassion, the woman who had him in charge consented to her proposal of passing his little cousin for him, whose likeness to him was so great, that but little apprehension of the imposition being detected was entertained, especially as the child had then been some months absent from home; and letting the sudden disappearance of her son be accounted for by a report of his death, as the child of the other Roscrea.

‘But for my selfish consideration for my own feelings,’ she added ‘I was shortly punished, by the death of my lovely boy, soon after my arrival here; since when, I have been a prey to remorse, as well as grief, for the deception practised; more especially, from the reflection of its having been the means of preventing the child’s immediate succession to the inheritance of his father; but though anxious to atone for it, as far as lay in my power, I was still withheld from the confession necessary for the purpose, by a dread of the ungovernable fury of Mr. Roscrea, without the interposition of some person between us.’

‘I exerted myself to calm her agitated mind; no argument, however, for the purpose, so effectually tended to do this, as my giving it as my decided opinion, that, since the confession had been so

long delayed, it were better to avoid it entirely, especially, as the withholding it would not eventually be of any injury to the boy : for this, apparently strange, advice, what I have already disclosed must account ; in return for the consolation it was said I had imparted, I demanded inviolable secrecy, relative to our interview, and my residence at Loxa

‘ I shall pass over the reflections suggested by her unexpected disclosure, only observing, that I could not but admire at the means by which an intended wrong had been prevented. It was a considerable time after this, that, as we were returning one delightful evening, as you may recollect, from a romantic ramble, that had led us to the Pina de los Enamorados, that spot rendered so interesting by the tradition concerning it, a tradition, that with all the graces he so well knew how to bestow on a relation of the kind, Power, on whose arm you leaned, was giving you, when a young cavalier, who had for some time been sauntering after us, sufficiently near to over-hear our conversation, suddenly joined us, with a request for permission to introduce himself to us as a countryman.

‘ That name was sufficient of itself to have excited an interest for him ; but a still livelier one than that alone could have created was immediately excited in my breast, by the likeness I instantly traced in his features to those of the lamented Elvira, a likeness that in vain I had sought in yours. For a minute I gazed at him in silent rapture, then extending my hand, with all the cordiality of an old friend, expressed the pleasure his sight afforded, and insisted on his completing it by accompanying us home, and passing a few days with us, glancing, as I spoke, at Power, to join me in the invitation.

‘ But instead of doing this, he only merely bowed, measuring, as I thought, the youth at the moment with a supercilious look. I felt surprise, and something of resentment, but checked myself from any indication of the latter, by the reflection of his capriciousness, owing to the humours in which he had indulged himself; and that, probably, from the real urbanity and hospitality of his nature, he would ere long seek to atone for what at present seemed repulsive.

‘ He gradually drew you away, as you may remember, and hurried you on. My new companion and I slowly followed; for the pleasure I took in gazing at him, in listening to him, made me involuntarily linger. The more I looked at him, the more I was struck with his resemblance to her I had loved. The smile of feminine sweetness that dimpled his sun-tinted cheek, the fine contour of his open countenance, the dark eyes, sparkling beneath long lashes, so penetrating, yet affectionate in their expression, were all hers.

‘ With difficulty I repressed the emotion occasioned by this likeness; but how almost impossible to maintain any longer control over it, when, enquiring the part of Ireland he came from, I found he was indeed the son of Elvira! I checked myself from enfolding him to my heart, but the agitated pressure of his hand at the moment surprised him almost as much as that could possibly have done. His look recalling me to recollection, I endeavoured to resume an air of composure, but still could hardly forbear demanding, whether some secret instinct had not guided him to the spot where he was to meet with so near a relation as I then thought you to him.

‘ I found he had been to visit his supposed mc-

ther, and that a sense of filial duty, as much as any other motive, had been his inducement for a journey to Spain.

From the confidence I had previously reposed in Power, you may be surprised at my determination to conceal this unexpected discovery from him; but his conduct had latterly become so strange and inconsistent, as to deter me from any further disclosure to him. We found you in the antique hall, overlooking the garden. The silver Gemil, flowing at the foot of its enchanting terraces, reflected the bright visage of the luminary, whose beams alone gave light to the apartment, but a light from the purity of the atmosphere, sufficiently brilliant to render every object in it conspicuous. The aromatic herbs, that in such profusion cover the mountains of that enchanting province, scented the air, on which came trembling, at intervals, the thrilling notes of the nightingale, that, as in the garden of Capulet, sung nightly on a pomegranate tree. All was serene and beautiful. The ear caught no sound, the eye no object, that was not calculated to attune the feelings, to exalt the imagination, and dispose the heart to still greater tenderness. It was the hour of visionary bliss. The music that met our ears on our entrance, proclaimed its influence upon your feelings. You would have laid aside the guitar on our joining you, but were prevented by the impassioned entreaty of my young companion: how well did the enchantment of its full rich tones, touched as it was by the hand of taste and delicacy, agree with the scene! But they had not the effect on all. Power, from a seat in the obscurest corner, on which he had flung himself, with a sullen air, suddenly started up, and rushed past you to the garden. Long aware, though with-

out surmising to what your powerful influence over him was owing, that none like you could sooth him in these moments of nervous irritations, to which alone I imputed now his apparently extraordinary conduct, I motioned for you to follow him; you obeyed, and found him, as you told me, extended on the ground: he started up at the sound of a footstep, and would have fled, but that your voice prevented him. - Turning, the moment he found it was you that sought him, he eagerly seized your hand, and fastened his eyes upon you, with a look that seemed to intimate a wish of reading yours. Their calm expression had an instantaneous effect upon him; the wildness of his agitation subsided; and returning with you to the hall, joined a little in the conversation that was going forward, but still without that recovered air of urbanity I had hoped to have seen in his manner.

His continued coldness and constraint had the effect of heightening my attentions to my young companion, as a means of preventing his noticing the circumstance, and thus, perhaps, shortening a visit from which I derived such gratification. But had I been able to have looked into his heart, I should not have been under any apprehension of this nature, from the spell I should then have discovered cast over him. Fearful, however, he might entertain an idea of the kind, I rested not, after he had been a few days with us, till I obtained a promise of his remaining some weeks. To vary his stay, we took, as you may recollect, several delightful excursions, excursions evidently productive of the greatest pleasure to you, though with all the romantic and interesting scenes in the neighbourhood, I should rather say, province, you were already well acquainted, owing to the lively remarks they

elicited from your companion. Our chagrin, you must remember, was often great, at Power's uniformly declining, with an air of savage sullenness, to accompany us in any of them; but though he regularly refused to set out with us, he was always sure to join us before we returned; sometimes stealing upon us with the cautious air of suspicion, sometimes starting on us with all the wildness of a person expecting to make some agitating discovery.

' At length my eyes began to open to the truth; at length the real cause of all this strangeness, this eccentricity, became obvious. I began to see that he loved, and that jealousy was the cause of all this inconsistency. My uneasiness, or rather, unhappiness at the discovery, was extreme; yet faint, trifling, to what I sustained at that which speedily followed it, of your having also inspired the bosom of my young friend with a similar passion. Good God! never shall I forget what I felt at the confession of his attachment, a confession, for which I was as much unprepared, as if I had believed in the utter impossibility of his conceiving such an attachment, or rather, in the existence of a secret instinct, to guard him from forming one of the kind.

' Our last excursion, as you may recollect, was to Granada, in which, as usual, we were joined in the course of the day, though not at the commencement, by Power. We had viewed every thing that was worth seeing, yet the decline of evening found us still lingering on the heights of the Alhambra, unable to tear ourselves away from so enchanting a scene, or rather detained there by that secret charm attached to whatever the poet or historian has rendered interesting. Slowly

sauntering on, now stopping to inhale the sweets wafted by the delicious breezes from the gardens scattered on the declivities of the neighbouring hills; now to survey the concourse of people sitting on the grass; now to listen to the busy venders of toys and refreshments, we reached the enchanting gardens of the Generaliff, not without the unhappy fortune of the ill-fated Abdali being forcibly recalled to recollection, by our passing to them through the gate which had favoured his escape, on the taking of Granada.

‘ Our small party was, as usual, whenever Power made one of it, divided. He and you preceded Roscrea and me; I saw the eyes of my companion pursue you, but, though his looks betrayed impatience to follow, the contemplations I was indulging would not permit me to quicken my pace. On a sudden, we saw you pause at the cypresses of the sultana queen, and, from the impassioned gestures of your companion, and your fixed attention, instantly surmised, the tradition from which they derive their title being the subject of your discourse.

‘ Roscrea made a movement for joining you, but catching his arm, to call his attention to something else that had caught mine at the moment, I prevented him. He faintly struggled to release himself; then suddenly yielding to my effort—‘ No,’ cried he, ‘ I will not yet join her, for such another opportunity, for revealing what I wish to disclose, may not again speedily occur.’ He now, of his own accord, passed his arm under mine, and led me in a different direction. For a few minutes he hesitated; then urged by feelings of resistless impetuosity, frankly avowed his passion for you, and conviction of obtaining his father’s immediate con-

sent to your union, provided mine was previously secured.

‘ I have already touched on the shock this avowal gave me, a shock heightened by the terrible idea that instantly suggested itself, your perhaps participating in the sentiment you had inspired. For a few minutes my confusion and distress were too great to allow of any kind of reply ; then a little recollecting myself, I decided on an unreserved disclosure to him, as soon as possible, in order to effectually relieve myself from the fearful apprehension I felt I should otherwise still continue to labour under. Accordingly, but with a countenance that made him turn pale, from the chill it threw upon his hopes, I begged of him to let the subject drop for the present, nor renew it till our return to Loxa, when I should take an early opportunity of explaining myself on it. Our return took place the next day ; and, solicitous to relieve both him and myself from the suspense and anxiety each laboured under, I immediately after came to the promised explanation. How he was affected by my communication, may easier be conceived than described. Nothing passionate, nothing intemperate, however, escaped his lips. He submitted with patience, though not without regret, to fate ; fully confirming, by the manner in which he bore the complete annihilation of his hopes, and the discovery of the usurpation of his birthright by another, the opinion I had formed. A thousand times he assured me, that sooner would he submit to its eternal deprivation, than let any selfish consideration induce him to risque my safety.

‘ This mutual explanation too forcibly suggested the propriety of his immediate departure from Loxa, to permit either to propose his longer delay.

‘ Our regret at parting was somewhat alleviated by a mutual promise of corresponding, a promise he faithfully adhered to; in consequence of which, in the course of a few months, I had the satisfaction of learning he had formed a connexion calculated to remove all unavailing regrets.

‘ That you experienced none, I had soon the unspeakable happiness of being convinced; your calm and unaltered manner, the unembarrassed air with which you frankly avowed your esteem and high opinion of his merits, assured me, beyond a doubt, that the passion which agitated his breast was as yet a stranger to yours.

‘ Power attempted not to dissemble the satisfaction his departure afforded him; aware of his motive for rejoicing at it, I felt equal pain and resentment at the circumstance. After the discovery I had made, to allow of your longer continuance under his roof, was not to be thought of. Accordingly, I made a pretext for sending you to a convent. Unwilling yet awhile to remove from Loxa, lest of your supposed grandfather requiring to see you, more especially from not knowing, owing to his change of residence, and keeping it concealed from me, where to address a letter to him, circumstances that argued a degree of distrust and selfishness, that permitted me clearly to see, if either were endangered, he would have no hesitation in deciding which should be the sacrifice.

‘ Power did not submit to your removal with calmness, but the efforts he evidently made, for a time, to subdue the emotions it caused, induced a hope of his determining to resist the passion you had inspired. But the uncontrolled latitude he had long given to his feelings had given them too complete an ascendancy over him, to allow of any

resistance to their imperious sway proving availing. After many struggles, from hinting what he felt, he began to grow more explicit, finding I either did not, or would not comprehend the nature of the allusions he had recourse to, for the purpose of saving himself the embarrassment of a direct declaration.

‘ When I found I could no longer affect ignorance, I had recourse to remonstrances, representing to him, but with as much consideration as possible for his feelings, the little probability there was of your ever being induced to consider as a lover a person whom you had been so long taught to regard in the light of a paternal relative. But, when passion reigns, how powerless is the voice of reason! Maddened by my opposition to his wishes, he at length avowed his determination, if I persevered in it, of taking advantage of the confidence I had reposed in him, to compel me to compliance.

‘ Good God! what did I not feel at that moment, when at hearing the man I so fondly loved avow himself capable of an act of such cruel atrocity! capable of betraying what even villains have been known to hold sacred—the confidence of an unsuspecting heart!

My looks alone, however, bore testimony to what I felt, for a mingled sensation of astonishment, indignation, and regret, deprived me of utterance. They were too expressive, however, not to penetrate the heart of Power, not yet entirely lost to every generous feeling. In an agony of shame and compunction, he fell upon my neck, imploring me to forgive, as the burst of irritated passion, what had escaped him: but impossible, or at least I could not forget it; and accordingly resolved on immediately withdrawing from his roof, convinced that no secure alliance is to be placed on

him, who, from being the slave of passion, is likely to be the alternate slave of vice and virtue; who, like Alexander, may, in a moment of sudden irritation, do what, 'tis true, he may ever after regret, but without the power of atoning for.

‘ The precautions necessary to adopt in departing, rendered it absolutely necessary to repose a partial confidence in you; yet most unwilling was I to agitate your gentle mind, by acknowledging I had secrets of a nature to put me in the power of any one. But, with delight, I saw this acknowledgment had no effect to my prejudice.

‘ My departure from Spain, however, did not free me from apprehension; from my knowledge of Power’s disposition, I was convinced he would follow; and, in order to avoid being traced, saw it would be necessary to live in retirement for some time, more especially, as from having appointed a person of his recommending to the agency of my estate, I concluded I could not, with any degree of safety, apply immediately for my rents. In this emergency, I conceived the best plan would be, to repair to the neighbourhood of Roscrea, in order that, by an introduction to his family, you might be secure of a proper residence, in case any thing unfortunately occurred to render a transient separation necessary. His reception fully justified the confidence I had reposed in his regard. No son could be more attentive, no brother more affectionate; and to have been at liberty to disclose your imagined claim upon his attention, would have been at once a source of delight and pride to him. But the happiness imparted by his society and kind attentions, was fated to be of short duration. On being compelled to resign you to his protection, by my unexpected meeting with Power,

I formed the idea of coming here, conceiving, from the alteration that time must have effected in my appearance, as well as the knowledge of my having none but friends within the walls, that I should here be perfectly secure, notwithstanding its contiguity to my native dwelling; indeed, so convinced was I, from the first, of this, that but on your account, I should at once have directed my steps hither. My wish for concealment was no sooner known, than I received every necessary assurance on the subject. Perfectly confiding in these, I again felt myself at ease; but a long interval of tranquillity seems not destined for me. As I was retiring to rest one night, a large sealed packet on the table caught my attention; taking it up, to my heightened surprise, I perceived it addressed to me. The emotions excited by its perusal you will be better able to form an idea of, when acquainted with its contents:’ as he spoke, he took it from his pocket-book, and began as follows.

CHAP. III.

‘Thoughts cannot form themselves in words so horrid
As can express my guilt.’

‘THE most perfect are ever the most lenient; with the horror, therefore, my confession must excite, I do not altogether despair of some degree of commiseration being mingled.

‘Who, or what I am, matters not, or rather no effort that may be made for the purpose of endeavouring to discover, is likely to succeed, feelings for others having led me to adopt every necessary measure for concealment—a concealment, perhaps,

I should not deem requisite, could the heart be read, since then man would see, that his unrelenting vengeance could not inflict a severer punishment, than allowing the continuance of a being, on which guilt has entailed intolerable wretchedness.

‘ Oh God! could death be deemed a punishment to him, o’er whom the blessed sun rises, without the power of gladdening; on whom the darkness of night descends with tenfold horrors, from the blackness of his own thoughts; to whom the social heart of friendship can no more impart a cheering glow, nor the revolving seasons a transport with their rich varieties.

‘ But to be brief, know then, that the purpose of this address is to disclose to you a secret in which you are concerned, and the revealing of which is essential to the performance of an act of humanity and justice.

‘ With a dreadful catastrophe, that, about eighteen years ago, happened in the Clanronel family, you must doubtless be acquainted, since, from the high respectability of that family, it was for a considerable time the general subject of conversation. How shall I proceed, how force myself to tell you, that I was the author of that catastrophe! that mine was the accursed hand that deprived its youthful representative of a lovely and beloved wife.

‘ In an hour, for ever to be regretted, I met with the unprincipled being on whom he had first bestowed that title; but though soon aware of her being equally unworthy of esteem or tenderness, I knew not how to extricate myself from her, or rather feared making an effort for the purpose, lest, from a motive of revenge, provoking her to betray a secret she had unhappily become possessed of,

and on the preservation of which my reputation depended.

‘ She had long meditated a scheme of dreadful vengeance against Mr Clanronel, from a belief, or rather persuasion, she forced herself to give way to, in order to have a pretext for indulging her rancorous hatred of him, of his having connived at her misconduct, in order to obtain an opportunity of breaking the tie between them; and at length demanded my aid for the furtherance of it—an aid I knew not how to refuse, from the dread already mentioned.

‘ What slaves are we rendered by vice! none but the virtuous can be considered truly free, for none but they possess that firmness which is requisite to the support of the manly character.

‘ On the mechanical arrangement of her diabolical plan I shall not dwell; suffice it to inform you, that having contrived to get Mr. Clanronel out of the way, she took advantage of her knowledge of a subterraneous communication between a grotto at the sea-side and the chamber of Mrs. Clanronel, to gain access to her apartment, in the dead of night, accompanied by me; and from whence, favoured by the darkness of the hour, and loneliness of the place, we succeeded but too well in bearing her off to a place of concealment, previously prepared. Nothing, indeed, necessary to prevent any danger of disappointment had been omitted. But though the death of her innocent rival was ultimately intended by this fiend in human form, the gratification she felt it would be, to see her languishing under the tortures of her situation, prevented any immediate attempt on her life; accordingly she carefully attended her in the hour that quickly approached, terror hastening the birth

of a lovely infant. Maternal affection, the strong energies it imparts, and hope, that never forsakes the innocent breast, enabled the unhappy Mrs. Clanronel to bear up against the horrors that assailed her. Full of regret and compunction for the part I had acted, though withheld, by a selfish dread, from making atonement for it, I strove, by kindness and attention, to mitigate these horrors. Fearful of leaving her entirely in the power of her tyrant, I seldom ventured to absent myself for any time from the place of her confinement; and in consequence of this painful and embarrassing restraint upon my actions, shortly began to grow impatient for her removal to the continent, where Sanders assured me she had provided another still more eligible for her; but my remonstrances on the subject were unavailing; and I at length began to fear she had completely deceived me, in allowing me to imagine it was her intention to let her existence be prolonged. With the brutal capriciousness of insolence and cruelty, she sometimes loaded her with invectives, accusing her of being the usurper of her place in society, and threatened her with instant death for her offence; at others, affected a soothing and relenting air, but only for the purpose of obtaining an uninterrupted opportunity of detailing the artifice she had had recourse to, for the purpose of prepossessing Mr. Clanronel with a belief of her disappearance being the effect of a criminal attachment. At length, tired of being confined to one place, and of the privacy, or rather solitude, in which apprehension occasioned her to live, she began to speak openly of the destruction of her rival, thus confirming the fear by which I had been so long tormented.— With horror at the suggestion, I reminded her of

the promise she had plighted, ere she could succeed in obtaining my assistance towards the accomplishment of her plan, to offer no personal injury to Mrs. Clanronel; but vain were arguments and entreaties; she in her turn recalled to my recollection the one I had given, to offer no opposition to her wishes; or betray her projects, provided she kept inviolate the secret on which my honour depended; assuring me, with a smile of demoniac malice, a violation of the compact on one side, should be considered a release from it at the other; and that nothing but the exquisite gratification derived from witnessing the superlative misery of her victim, at knowing she was within reach of her friends, yet without any hope of obtaining their succour, should have induced her to spare her life so long. I knew not how to act; the predicament I felt myself in was dreadful; I persisted in determining to prevent the atrocity she meditated, yet felt unable to endure the contemplation of what might accrue from the circumstance. While trying to temporize with her, in hopes a little further time for reflection would induce her of her own accord to relinquish her horrible design, Mrs. Clanronel was secretly contriving her escape. The residence of her enemy covered the entrance to a series of wild coves, extending along the coast, and with all the intricacies of which the unprincipled Sanders was perfectly acquainted, owing to their having been long used as a place of concealment by a set of smugglers, with whom her father had been connected: one of these she had fitted up for the reception of Mrs. Clanronel. Elemental storms had considerably injured it, occasioning various fissures, and loosening the stones in such a way as rendered no great exertion necessary to detach them en-

tirely from the rock. Chance discovered this to Mrs. Clanronel, or more probably, the narrowness with which she doubtless examined her prison, and of which joyful discovery, as may naturally be supposed, she lost no time in availing herself; but fearful of her escape being impeded, should she take her child with her, weak and ill as she was from long suffering and confinement, she resolved on leaving it behind. Just as she had forced herself through the narrow breach she had succeeded in making, I entered the cave, for the purpose of conducting her to an upper apartment, for air. For a minute I became transfixed from astonishment at what I saw; then recollecting that if I suffered her to escape, I was lost for ever, from the discovery that must necessarily ensue, I desperately rushed out to impede her flight, but owing to my being compelled to reascend to the house, for the purpose of pursuing her, she had so considerably got the start of me, as to render me almost hopeless of overtaking her in time. Urged onward, however, by feelings nearly as desperate as those that impelled her, I at length came up with her, just as she had gained access to an unoccupied part of the house. Of my knowledge of this I immediately availed myself, to try and force her into the subterraneous passage already mentioned, but with piercing screams she resisted my efforts. Approaching sounds on a sudden convinced me these were heard, and, in the madness of heightened terror, I held up a poniard, which, hastening to pursue her, I had almost unconsciously snatched up; but she was not to be awed; she attempted to pass me; in struggling to do so, she fell against me, and received the deadly weapon in her breast. For an instant after, I stood transfixed with horror; then hearing voices still nearer,

I instinctively fled, and hastily retracing my way, roused the accursed Sanders from the couch on which she was slumbering, unconscious of all that had recently passed, to a partial participation of my terror. At once exulting and dismayed, she hastily collected whatever valuables were portable, and descended with me to the caves, whence a secret outlet inspired us with hopes of being able to effect our escape, favoured as we should be by the darkness of the hour, for it was now night, and the intricacies of the mountains. In our way through the nearest cave, her glaring eyes fell upon the child of our hapless victim, wrapped at the moment in the balmy sleep of infancy and health, on the wretched couch which its miserable mother had so often bathed with tears of anguish and despair. Suddenly darting towards it, 'thou shalt never bless the eyes of thy father,' she exclaimed; 'no, no,' snatching it from its slumber, 'my revenge would be incomplete, did I permit him to recover thee.' Guided by the light of a torch I carried, she hurried on, cruelly stifling with her hand the cries of the affrighted babe, until we came to a place that required greater caution in proceeding, a cavern, that sinking in the centre to a deep abyss, at the bottom of which the gurgling sound of water was heard, left but a narrow ledge at either side for the feet: suddenly pausing, 'Here,' cried this monster, addressing herself to her little captive, 'here shall your cries cease! here shall you be hurled, to rejoin your hated mother! yes, detested urchin, whatever may be my fate, I shall still exult to think the heart of your father can never be gladdened by you!' As she spoke, she lifted up the child, and would certainly have executed her horrid threat, but for my interposition: 'Fiend!' I exclaimed, as I caught

it to my bosom, and felt its little arms entwining round my neck, 'have you indeed entered into a compact with the powers of darkness, that you could meditate such a deed?' She attempted to tear it from me, but pressing forward, as fast as a sense of extreme danger would allow, I evaded her effort for the purpose, and on reaching the outlet, darted from her; but whither to betake myself I knew not, apprehensive as I was of being hemmed in on every side, or rather fearful of her fury, at being deprived of the full gratification of her prey, leading her to betray me; yet not this alarming apprehension could induce me for a moment to regret what I had done; no, though stained at the moment with the blood of its mother, I felt I could infinitely sooner allow my own to be shed, than give up the babe to destruction. Mechanically I moved forward, but starting and shrinking at every sound, now rejoicing at the darkness of the hour, and now dreading the gloom would prove my destruction: Oh! even now I relapse into terror when I think of the horrors of that night—that night in which I felt as if all hell were in my heart, and I in hell—abandoned of God, and beset by man. After proceeding some way, the consequences that could scarcely fail of accruing from suffering myself to be surprised by daylight in that state became too obvious not to induce me to determine on immediately bending my steps towards the metropolis, where alone I could hope for safety; but I had so completely lost myself amidst the intricacies of the mountains, that without a direction, I feared there was but little probability of being able to regain the road to it; but in vain I looked for some place to make the necessary inquiry at; and at length abandoning myself to despair, was almost on

the point of throwing myself on the ground, and without a further struggle, submitting to a fate that seemed at the moment inevitable, when a faint ray glimmered athwart the wild and savage path I was pursuing. Perceiving no habitation, I felt surprised, and perhaps a little startled; nevertheless, eagerly approaching the spot from whence it issued, I beheld a cabin, but which, but for this circumstance, I should certainly have overlooked, so completely did it appear 'a thing of nature,' so completely a part of the broken and turf-covered bank, in which it was sunk. Looking through the hole that served for a window, I saw an elderly woman, busied in cooking something on a miserable fire. Conceiving I might here procure the direction I required, as well as safely ask for it, I tapped at the door, and on replying, in answer to the interrogation that was immediately put to me, that I was a benighted traveller, readily gained admittance. Having obtained the information I wanted, I was departing, when the cries of the child reminding me of the necessity of procuring it food, I begged to know if she could furnish me with a little bread and milk; she replied in the negative, but added, if I would remain a little longer, she would give me a share, with a hearty welcome, of the potatoes she was then cooking for supper. I accepted her offer, and accordingly took a seat on the three-legged stool she handed me by the fire: here I soon found her attention alternately engaged by the potatoes and child, at which suddenly bursting into tears, she declared she could not help looking, it reminded her so much of one she had just lost.

'Feeling myself under a necessity of saying something, I languidly asked, was it her only one?'

'It was not hers, she replied, which, strange as

it might seem, made her sorrow the greater, but a child entrusted to her care, whose death she feared would be her ruin, the means of depriving her of the best friend she had in the world.

‘That would be cruel indeed,’ I said, ‘that she should suffer for what she could not prevent.’

‘She looked wistfully at me for a moment on this observation, then wringing her hands, said, if it was as I thought, she should have no fear of the kind, but, God forgive her, it was far otherwise.’

‘Notwithstanding the state of mind I was in, her words excited a curiosity I could not resist, and with something of sternness, I demanded had she then to accuse herself of any crime?’

‘Crime!’ she repeated, with a curious expression of countenance; ‘no, not that she knew of; but then a body might be to blame,’ she observed, ‘without being absolutely wicked:’ but not to exhaust your patience, she soon revealed all she had to communicate. A few months back, a gentleman, on whose estate she and her husband resided, had committed a little girl to her care, with a charge of secrecy on the subject, and promise of amply recompensing her, if she proved careful of her charge. This promise, she said, had made her watch over it as if on its life hers also depended, never letting it out of her sight a moment, till unluckily, she came to visit a dying relative in this part of the kingdom, the owner of the cabin in which she then was, on the evening of whose funeral she had been prevailed on to leave it in care of some grown-up children belonging to one in the neighbourhood, who, unmindful of the promise of watching over it, had suffered it to creep to the edge of a precipice, whence falling, it was dashed to pieces.

‘ Scarce had I heard her to an end, ere, owing to a thought suggested by these particulars, I eagerly demanded whether its death was as yet known in the place she had come from; she replied in the negative, adding, she knew not, after what had happened, how to return thither, so great was her dread of facing her husband. I then proceeded to ask, was the likeness between it and the child with me as great as she at first seemed to think? Assuring me it was, I had no longer any hesitation in deciding how to act—no longer any hesitation in declaring my readiness to relinquish mine, as I called it, for the purpose of letting it pass for the one she lamented; adding, she would cease to wonder at this declaration, I was certain, or doubt my being serious, when I informed her, I was an unhappy man, flying from merciless creditors, and at such an utter loss at the moment, from the situation I was in, to know what to do with the child, as almost to have been tempted to wish its death. Implicitly believing what I said, and ready almost to acquiesce in any measure likely to relieve her from the dread she was in, she did not long deliberate about embracing my proposal: as soon as the astonishment it had excited had a little subsided, she fell on her knees, and, in an ecstasy of gratitude, vowed to prove herself worthy of the goodness of Heaven, in freeing her from the trouble she was in, by attention to the child.

‘ Nothing, however, could have induced me to consign it to any being but its natural protector, but for my conviction of drawing upon my head the unrelenting vengeance of the wretched creature in whose power I had so completely placed myself, were I to obey the dictates of feeling.—Terrible was the aggravation of misery acting con-

trary to it occasioned ; terrible the thought of being compelled to resist the impulse that would have led to some alleviation of the wretchedness I had caused.

‘ On reaching the retreat to which it had been previously settled we should go, I found Sanders already there. Her fury at first seeing me was ungovernable, from an apprehension of my having contrived to get the child conveyed to its parent ; my solemn assurances to the contrary, assurances of having been at length induced, by a dread of its being the means of betraying me, to destroy it, could scarcely calm her ; she continued to suspect, and repeat her determination of giving me up to the punishment I had merited, if she found I had deceived her.

‘ In this determination, her manner would not permit me to doubt her being sincere ; consequently, I could not avoid rejoicing I had resisted the impulse of my heart. My name not being known to Mrs. Clanronel, the idea of any information she might have given could not of course so materially alarm me as it did her. Confident her safety must be endangered by a longer continuance in the kingdom, she had no hesitation in resolving to quit it ; and accordingly relieved me from the horror of her immediate presence by repairing to the continent.

‘ Chancing soon after to be in the neighbourhood to which the child was conveyed, I could not resist my anxiety to inquire concerning her, and in consequence had the happiness of learning she was resigned to the care of her destined protector—yes, happiness, I repeat, for the estimable character of St Ruth had previously been known to me, and was equally admired and revered :—start not

at this disclosure, neither indulge in conjectures on the subject; from the precautions I have taken, they can answer no other end than that of bewildering you.

‘ But still I continued the most wretched of mankind, unable to enjoy the blessings I possessed, from my torturing consciousness of not deserving them. True, I could not reproach myself with being the intentional cause of Mrs. Clanronel’s death, but how could I excuse myself of the part I had previously acted towards her? But this was not the sole occasion of my remorse; oh no; I writhed beneath the reflection of other ‘undivulged crimes, unwhipt of justice:’ but I hasten to a conclusion. A few weeks ago, I received intelligence of the death of Sanders, that persecuting fiend, who had so long triumphed in my compelled submission to her wishes; and immediately after decided on making this confession, as the only atonement in my power for the injuries I had committed. To this I was still further impelled, by a circumstance that happened about the time, but one which I shall not explain, lest you should indeed imagine me bereft of reason; yet, perhaps, it might have been an illusion of the brain; how horrid, how fearful, are the spectres conjured up by a guilty conscience! how often has guilt, maddened by its terrors, been compelled to deliver itself up to the chastisement of retributive justice! The unexpected discovery of your residence facilitated my wishes; but let not any idea of that discovery being owing to treachery alarm, or induce you to seek another retreat; within the walls of St. Columb, rely on it you are safe.

‘ Mr. Clanronel, I should conceive, may easily be satisfied of the identity of his daughter. The

woman who received her from me is still, as probably you know, living on your estate, and her testimony of course will not be wanting to corroborate my statement: a very remarkable ring, belonging to Mrs. Clanronel, and which, at the time of my parting with the child, was suspended by a ribbon from her neck, may also, if preserved, be another evidence in support of it. Amongst other particulars, I must not forget to mention that her name is Clora; on resigning her to the woman, I gave her instructions on the subject, which she punctually obeyed.

‘ Every thing is already prepared for my departure to St. Columb’s, in order that, with my own hand, I may deposit this where I shall be assured of its reaching yours; and oh! would that the moment after, I could deposit in the silent bosom of the earth this harassed frame! yet, wretch as I am, ought I not to bear my miseries without repining? ought I not to bend in gratitude to that merciful Being, who, by protracting my life, has given me still greater time for repentance? But I am impatient to be gone. Farewell, St. Ruth, noblest and best of men; thou, in whose generous breast compassion never can be extinguished; with whose detestation of the sinner, commiseration for the penitent will ever be mingled—Farewell.’

CHAP. IV.

Oh, my more than father!

Let me not live, but at thy very name,
 My eager heart springs up, and leaps with joy.
 When I forget the vast debt I owe thee—
 Forget! but 'tis impossible; then let me
 Forget the use and privilege of reason;
 Be driven from the commerce of mankind,
 'To wander in the desert 'mong the brutes;
 'To bear the various fury of the seasons,
 The night's unwholesome dew, and noonday's heat;
 To be the scorn of earth, and curse of Heaven.

ROWE.

'I AM then the daughter of Clanronel?' said Angelina, as St. Ruth folded up the narrative he had been reading to her—'Good Heavens! how astonishing is this discovery, but how tenderly, how cautiously, have I been prepared for it! indeed, I feel else, that I should have been completely overcome by it: but though another may perhaps claim and receive me, to him whom I have so long known as a parent must my heart ever fondly turn.'

'And believe me, my dearest girl,' said St. Ruth, tenderly embracing her, 'most unwillingly should I resign my imagined claims upon you, was I not aware that he to whom nature has given real ones, is every way worthy of such a daughter: with him you'll enjoy those advantages, that certain place in society, that with me could not have been the case, from the mystery in which your birth must have appeared enveloped. Selfish considerations, however, I am aware are not those that will soonest reconcile you to our separation; but when I remind you, that no great distance will separate us, and

the constant opportunities we shall have for corresponding, I flatter myself you will not give way to any feeling that may alloy your happiness.'

'Since I am no longer to consider St. Ruth as my father, I am indeed grateful that Clanronel is the parent to whom I am to be resigned, so great is the esteem and sympathy his virtues and afflictions have excited; but, good God! when shall I cease to wonder on what has happened? when, without shuddering sensations, on having actually been the inmate of the chamber where my unfortunate mother met with so terrible a death?'

'I shall presently inquire into all that has occurred since our separation,' returned St. Ruth; 'in the meanwhile, to explain to you the further particulars you have to learn, the astonishment excited by the confession you have just heard had no sooner a little subsided, than I hastened to make the inquiries necessary for ascertaining its truth. These proved completely satisfactory, and, in consequence, I lost no time in writing to Mr. Clanronel on the subject, but with a determination of not being explicit with you on it, till I had learnt the result of my communication to him. Relative to this I was not long kept in suspense; his steward was instantly dispatched for the purpose of investigating the affair, being himself unequal to a personal effort for it, owing to the effect of sudden joy upon his long-depressed spirits.

'As I surmised, he would not allow himself to doubt the truth of what he felt it such extacy to believe; yet, that he might not be accused of credulity, he commissioned the steward, who from his keenness and penetration was well calculated for the task, to make such inquiries as should preclude all danger of imposition.

‘Thoroughly satisfied, from the strictness with which these orders were obeyed, that nothing of the kind was attempted, he returned a few days ago to England, so that in the course of a few more, I expect a summons for you.’

‘And have you no suspicion,’ demanded Angeline, ‘of the person from whom the packet has been received?’

‘None; and aware that to discover him would place me in an embarrassing predicament, I have refrained from any effort for the purpose: it occurs to me, his obtaining an opportunity of secretly laying it before me, was owing to one of the reverend inmates of St. Columb being the repository of his fearful secret; of the unreservedness and sacredness of confession, you have heard too much to be able, I dare say, to deem the idea improbable.’

‘Certainly; unhappy man, as he himself observes, prolonged existence must, to a mind tortured with feelings like his, be the heaviest punishment that could possibly be inflicted.’

‘For my long estrangement from my native country,’ resumed St. Ruth, ‘I accounted to your father,’—how strange to the ear of Angeline did the sound of that title, bestowed by him on another, seem!—‘by hinting at an unhappy attachment, and mentioning my supposing you the orphan child of a very dear and particular friend, whom I had adopted. An ingenuous nature hates any thing of mystery, especially with the generous and estimable; but notwithstanding innumerable considerations preclude the possibility of my being more candid with him than I have already been, the ring alluded to in the confession I have, perhaps fortunately, preserved; conceiving it belonged to her of whom the slightest memorial was precious, I

carefully treasured it as a sacred relique, and have now brought it to restore it to you its rightful owner:—as he spoke, he produced it, and attempted to take the hand that lay next him, for the purpose of putting it on. Instinctively, however, Angeline drew back, seized with unspeakable dismay at the idea of the discovery that allowing him to take it must occasion, for she had not thought of taking off her wedding ring. Believing it impossible to extricate herself from this dilemma, apprehension overpowered her, her very lips turned white, and a dimness spread itself before her sight.

‘Good Heaven! what is the matter?’ said St. Ruth, suddenly raising his eyes to her face, alarmed by the cold damp feel of her hand.

Angeline attempted to reply, but her voice was not articulate, and he hastened to procure her a glass of water. She instantly availed herself of the opportunity this afforded of secreting what she wished to conceal, and presently after was sufficiently recovered to receive the tendered ring from him.

The landlady now made her appearance with the tea equipage, the evening being by this time pretty far advanced. Necessarily compelled for some time to converse on indifferent subjects, Angeline became so still more composed, that St. Ruth had no hesitation, on their being again left alone, to inquire, as he had given her to understand was his intention, into all that had occurred since their parting.

Angeline had too much to conceal to be able to reply to this inquiry without hesitation. Devoid, however, of all suspicion of this being the case, St. Ruth seemed not to notice her imperfect statement. Not even to him could she bring herself

to disclose the degrading suspicions of lady Rosamond; she merely, therefore, assigned as a reason for not applying to him on the subject of her journey, as she had been instructed, an unwillingness to put him to any further trouble on her account. On being closely questioned, however, by St. Ruth, as to her motive for repairing to Greymount, instead of returning to Leixlip, on being compelled by the impropriety of Mrs. Lennard's conduct to quit her, she was compelled to acknowledge, lady Rosamond's conduct, while beneath her roof, was not altogether such as to allow her to think of a thing of the kind.

‘Indeed!’ said St. Ruth, apparently equally surprised and hurt by this acknowledgment, ‘on Roscrea's account I am concerned to hear this, for it must wound him to the soul to find he is not united to a being of equal liberality with himself, and to this must surely be owing the conduct you have hinted at.’ Strange, that real amiableness should on some minds have a very different effect to what it ought; but though you cannot hope to escape envy, since, as some poet has observed, ‘it still follows merit as its shade,’ yet, may it never again have the power of inflicting a moment's pain on you, for to its baneful influence must I impute lady Rosamond's want of kindness. With you, may that trial, that kind of ordeal of their patience and fortitude, which, at some period or other, almost every one is destined to undergo, be already past. Though you have not had to complain of absolute sorrow, yet, through various circumstances, you have met with sufficient to deeply affect, and impress your mind with a conviction of the chequered lot of man: may the coming day be bright and tranquil, still retaining all that amiable simpli-

city of character, which has hitherto distinguished you! may you pass from the arms of a fond indulgent parent to those of a husband, equally capable of appreciating your worth, and requiting your tenderness! oh! what must the triumph of your father be, in having such a daughter to bestow! oh! what the transport of the lover who receives such a gift!

Angeline was unable to look up, or reply, so much was she affected by the tenderness of his wishes, the reflection he revived, of having already disposed of herself—of having already deprived the amiable, the interesting, the long-sorrowing parent, to whom she was about being resigned, of more than a nominal right over her. Unable, from her distressing consciousness, to bear his looks for a moment, involuntarily, in order to avoid them, she bent her crimsoning face upon his hand. Every feeling revolted from the idea of letting him know how she had acted, not merely because she was bound to silence on the subject, but because the more she reflected on it, the more she was persuaded it merited condemnation.

‘My dear girl,’ said St. Ruth, mistaking a little the cause of her too evident emotion, ‘these sensitive feelings of yours are not those that are best calculated for steering you with calmness through the varying scenes of life.’

‘Or rather,’ returned Angeline, half looking up, and forcing a languid smile, ‘to allow them to guide me, would be to ensure unhappiness.’

‘True,’ assented her companion, with a corresponding smile, ‘to yield unresistingly to them is not the way to be happy. Their keenness gives poignancy to happiness, for sensibility is indeed the source of all that is precious in our joys, or

costly in our sorrows; but their violence destroys it.' But to return to the point from which we have digressed: my conviction of the envy that abounds in the world, and the dangers to which a lovely young woman, not immediately under the protection of any relative, is exposed, heightens my joy at the recent discovery. Beyond the reach of these you'll soon be placed, not, it is true, without being exposed to others—those attendant on flattery, and the general homage paid to fortune; but dangers from which I fear no evil result to you; no, I feel firmly persuaded, from my knowledge of your disposition, that no adventitious circumstance, no sudden elevation, will have power to warp you from the simplicity, the sweetness, that have hitherto distinguished you; that still, as heretofore, you'll be the friend of modest merit, the almoner of pity, the reliever of distress; she to whom the bursting heart of sorrow may, in full confidence of sympathy and aid, freely disclose its woes. Oh! happy they, who, despite of temptation, continue to retain their native feeling and integrity—happy, even though the scene should change, the brightness of the horizon vanish; for the heart in which dwells the peace that virtue gives, cannot be utterly destitute of comfort.'

'Oh! to you, to you am I indebted for what I am,' cried the greatly-affected Angeline, dissolving into tears; 'I am the creature of your forming, from the cruel circumstances of my early fate; but for your fostering care, I might at this moment have been a wild vagrant on the face of the earth, untaught, unfriended, a source of misery to others and myself.'

'Education can certainly effect much,' returned St. Ruth, affectionately kissing her tear-dewed

cheek, 'almost wonders, indeed; but still, except nature has given a certain degree of richness to the soil, the hand of culture can seldom succeed in producing altogether what may be wished; as Shakspeare's old countess says of her *élève* Helena—'disposition you inherit, which makes fair gifts fairer.'

The pleasure of conversing was too great to allow of an early separation; but at length, the clock that ticked in the parlour striking the ghostly hour of midnight; reminded St. Ruth of the expediency of letting his fair companion retire to repose. As he bade her farewell, he promised to be with her by an early hour the next morning; but he did not leave her in the happy state of mind he had hoped and imagined.

The habits of ingenuousness in which she had been brought up, made her feel her departure from sincerity as a crime—a feeling she could not experience without agitation and dejection; yet she tried to hope all would yet end well; that Villiers, as he had led her to believe, would speedily be at liberty to publicly solicit her hand; and that in the approbation she could not doubt his meeting from her friends, she should feel her conduct, with regard to him, excused. But the weight upon her spirits was not easily to be shaken off; she hastened to bed, but without being able to enjoy the repose she needed. Tormenting visions haunted her imagination through the night, banishing peaceful slumbers, and rendering her rejoiced, when she saw day-light dawning.

The cheerful aspect of the parlour, with the sun shining bright upon it, and decorated with a profusion of autumnal flowers, had a happy effect on her mind. The Sure, glittering in the dancing

beams, and scattered over with country boats and fishing-smacks, contributed not a little to heighten this: as delighted she gazed upon the dazzling scene, the following lines on morning recurred to her recollection:

' Parent of day, whose beauteous beams of light
 Spring from the darksome womb of night,
 And, midst their native horrors, shew
 Like gems adorning of the negro's brow;
 Not heav'n's fair bow can equal thee,
 In all its gaudy drapery.
 Thou first essay of light, and pledge of day,
 Rival of shade, eternal spring of light,
 From thy bright unexhausted womb,
 The beauteous race of days and seasons come;
 Thy beauty ages cannot wrong,
 But spite of time thou'rt ever young;
 Thou art alone heav'n's modest virgin light,
 Whose face a veil of blushes hides from mortal sight;
 At thy approach Nature erects her head,
 The smiling universe is glad,
 The drowsy earth and seas awake,
 And from thy beams new life and vigour take;
 When thy more cheerful rays appear,
 Ev'n guilt and women cease to fear;
 Horror, despair, and all the sons of night,
 Retire before thy beams, and take their flight.
 Thou risest in the fragrant east,
 Like the fair phoenix from her balmy nest;
 But yet thy fading glories soon decay,
 Thine's but a momentary stay;
 Too soon thou'rt ravish'd from our sight,
 Borne down the stream of day, and overwhelmed with light;
 Thy beams to thy own ruin haste,
 They're form'd too exquisite to last:
 Thine is a glorious, but a short-liv'd state;
 Pity so fair a birth should yield so soon to fate.'

Turning to the window at the other end of the room, looking upon the road, she seated herself there, to watch the approach of St. Ruth, and soon felt herself amused by the number of passing vehicles, the people going to and coming from the ferry, and an assemblage of half-clad but sturdy-looking children, (to whom she flung a handful of

loose change), pigs, dogs, and poultry, all basking together, in the most sociable manner possible in the sun; the agreeable concert they formed, heightened by the gabbling of geese, the shouting of boatmen, the boisterous merriment of labourers taking their morning pipe, and the monotonous strokes of a smith's hammer in a neighbouring forge.

St. Ruth soon made his appearance, and immediately after breakfast, they proceeded to St. Columb's, which, from finding it to be his residence, she was still more anxious than before to see. She found it perfectly according with the description she had received, or rather, the idea she had from that description formed of it—a venerable pile, magnificent in its dimensions, though decayed in many parts; its ancient buttresses were tufted with grass; and the massy foliage of the ivy, that over-run the walls, was beautifully contrasted with the wild flowers that waved their yellow and purple heads upon the battlements; the dark shade of thickly-clustering trees heightened its air of religious gloom; and a murmuring rivulet divided its precincts from the native home of St. Ruth. Of this there was a noble view through the spreading oaks and venerable beeches that gave richness to the park in which it stood; but no spiral smoke, ascending above their foliage, gave cheerful signs of its being, as heretofore, the seat of hospitality; festivity had indeed forsaken it, and all around strikingly announced its desertion. 'I cannot look in that direction,' said St. Ruth, as he pointed it out to the eager inquiry of his companion, 'without mingled sensations. But forlorn indeed must he feel himself, who finds himself stripped of all his early connexions, without having

formed new ones to supply their place. Such, indeed, are the feelings imparted by the image of past joys, the retrospect of early scenes, that I perfectly acquiesce in the observation of our suffering equal pain, from the pertinacious adhesion of unwelcome images, as from the evanescence of those which are pleasing and useful; and that indeed it may be doubted, whether we are most benefited by the art of memory or forgetfulness; yet, oh! not for all the torpid tranquillity the latter could bestow, would I,' he added, with all his wonted animation, 'be deprived of the exquisitely painful delight attendant on the review of past happiness—the treasuring up in our heart of hearts the memory of those we have loved. To think of being deprived of the power of remembering them, strikes me with the same terrible, the same death-like sensation, that the idea of annihilation does.'

'I can readily indeed believe,' said Angeline, 'that the grief which time has softened may be pleasing to the feelings; for, as in the mild gloom of twilight, there is an inexpressible charm in tender melancholy, or, as Ossian expresses it, a joy in grief, when peace dwells in the heart of the mournful.'

St. Ruth gratified her with a view of the interior as well as exterior of the monastery: she found it well worth seeing, containing many ancient reliques, and curious tombs, highly interesting from their antiquity, and the historical anecdotes connected with them.

Almost the whole of the day was passed in strolling about, but sometimes without being almost conscious where they were, so interesting were the subjects on which they had to converse.

But frequently was the pleasure Angeline derived from these conversations damped by the painful consciousness of a secret from him—him who, both as her first friend, and the being so long regarded by her as a parent, had so great a right to her unreserved confidence.

A hope that the change in her prospects might be the means of hastening the avowal she was now so anxious for, and thus relieving her from the pain she felt she should endure, while she had to accuse herself of any thing like insincerity towards him, induced her to write to Villiers, for the purpose of acquainting him with what had happened, though uncertain whether her letter would reach him, from not exactly knowing whether it was his intention or not to return to the hotel in town, where he had informed her he lodged.

On the same subject St. Ruth also wrote to Roscrea, and, by return of post, received a congratulatory letter from him; for aware of the anxiety he suffered on account of Angeline, he could not doubt the recent discovery being a source of real happiness to him: after giving utterance to the joy which he himself experienced at it, he mentioned his intention, if possible, of quitting town directly, for the purpose of seeing Angeline ere her embarkation, and offering her his congratulations in person.

Pleased as Angeline felt she should be at such an opportunity of expressing her grateful sense of the kindness she had experienced from him, yet, when she reflected on the construction lady Rosamond might put on the circumstance, should it ever come to her knowledge, she fervently hoped he might not be able to do as he wished, but of course without acknowledging so to St. Ruth, from

the concealment she had already observed relative to the real cause of lady Rosamond's coolness to her.

CHAP. V.

Nothing so kind as he when in my arms ;

* * * * *

But when we met, and I
 Ran to embrace the lord of all my wishes,
 Oh ! then he threw me from his breast,
 Like a detested sin ; as I hung too
 Upon his knees, and begg'd to know the cause,
 He dragg'd me, like a slave, upon the earth,
 And had no pity on my cries—
 Dash'd me disdainfully away with scorn ;
 He did, and more, I fear will ne'er be friends,
 Though I still love him with unbated passion.
 Alas ! I love him still ; and though I ne'er
 Clasp him again within these longing arms,
 Yet bless him, bless him, Gods, where'er he goes !

OTWAY.

A FEW successive days were passed in this manner ; Sunday was the day on which Roscrea was expected, if he came at all. On the morning of this day, Angeline repaired to a little country church in the neighbourhood ; and soon after her return to the inn, not well knowing what to do with herself, St. Ruth having told her he should not come out that day, owing to the greater probability there was on this than any other, of encountering some one that might recollect him, walked out. In the stillness that on this hallowed day prevails in the country—the cessation of those busy sounds that on others fluctuate on the air—the ploughman's whistle, the clacking of the noisy mill, the uproar of the joyous children just let loose from school—

together with the sight of the implements of rural industry carelessly scattered about, the pitchfork leaning against the stack it helped to raise, the scythe half-buried in the turning grass and wild field flowers it cut down, the cabins shut up, and their inhabitants, in their best attire, sauntering along the roads, or collecting in groups about the chapels, there is something inexpressibly tranquilizing to the mind, something particularly calculated to calm the feelings, and excite a tender pensiveness.

Those of Angeline gradually acknowledged its powerful influence; she felt a serenity diffusing itself through her mind, such as she had long been a stranger to. The retrospect of recent occurrences, for the first time, failed of producing any violent emotion. She still dwelt on them with astonishment, but without that violent agitation they had heretofore occasioned. For the first time her transport at the idea of her union with Villiers—the reflection of their fates being irrevocably blended, was unalloyed. The benevolence that was awakened for others, by the general aspect of all around, was, in some degree, extended to herself; she began to think her conduct excusable, and that if discovered, it would, when he was known, be deemed equally so, by those in whose opinion she was anxious to be justified. With mingled rapture and tenderness she dwelt on his idea, and fondly apostrophized him in her heart, with ecstasy yielded to the belief of his thoughts being at that moment employed in a similar way—his absent spirit, if any reliance was to be placed on internal feelings, mingling in sweet and mysterious communion with hers.

Rapture, at least that rapture which souls of

high-wrought sensibility experience, is often in its effect like grief. Tears dropt on the soft cheek of Angeline; but like the morning, blushing through its balmy dews, she unconsciously smiled through them, at the blissful images presented to her fancy.

Lost in reverie, she strolled along the rural road, without a thought of turning, till the lengthening shadows reminded her of the expediency of advancing no further.

She found the landlady at the door impatiently watching for her approach, with cheeks as red from vexation at her staying so long beyond the time at which she had informed her dinner would be ready, as the flaming ribbon that decorated her cap, and almost tempted, in the name of St. Patrick, to demand where she had been, observing, if the goose was as dry as the stubble amongst which it fed, she must blame herself for it; and that had she staid out much longer, she should have been after going to father Cormac, to let him know she was afraid of her being run away with.

Angeline, laughing, demanded whether the gentlemen in this quarter were of so adventurous a character as to allow her to entertain such a fear? and in reply, received a compliment, that, from its unqualified flattery, excited another smile.

In momentary expectation, from his letter, of seeing Roscrea, Angeline, after dinner, involuntarily seated herself in the window to watch for him; but carriage after carriage passed, without the expectation she could not avoid indulging being realized. At length, tired of remaining in this way, or rather desirous of trying to obtain a little air, the atmosphere being uncommonly heated, she bent her steps, soon after tea, towards St. Columb's, not however without leaving a direction for him, in

case he should arrive during her absence, and prefer following to sending for her.

With the pensive gloom of twilight, whose dusky veil had already fallen o'er the face of nature, the soft music of the village bells, now in full motion, sweetly accorded,

Falling at intervals upon the ear
In cadence sweet, now dying all away,
Now pealing loud again, and louder still,
Clear and sonorous as the gale comes on ;

Nor was this the only sound that reached her ear ; the more mighty bells of the cathedral of W—— flung, at intervals, across the water, their deeper and more reverberating sound, mingled with the hum of the scattered multitude there.

In proceeding to the retired walks of St. Columb, she had to pass the front of the edifice. She could not do so without involuntarily pausing, for a few minutes, to contemplate it—so sublime, so picturesque, so impressive, was the effect produced by the blaze of light within, affording, through the narrow windows of the pinnacles, just a sufficient view of the range of upper cloisters, designated the walk of the friars, to give scope to the imagination, and pouring through the lower ones,

‘ Where Superstition, with capricious hand,
In many a maze the wreath had plann'd ;
With hues romantic ting'd the gorg'ous pane,
To fill, with holy light, the wondrous fane,’

A flood of varied splendour on the foliage, the contrast between this splendour and the duskiness of the silent shades to which she repaired, had the effect of heightening their gloom to her imagination, but which soon became varied by the incen-

sant flashings of the sky, accompanied at times by a muttering sound of distant thunder.

But though startled at times by the momentary corruscations, and experiencing a thrilling sensation at the still deeper darkness they occasioned, Angeline found a walk beneath the venerable trees of St. Columb, at this pensive hour, too pleasing to her feelings to be able to prevail on herself immediately to depart, more especially as she was not without a hope of here meeting St. Ruth. She could not find herself in the lonely haunts of his youth, without his interesting story being recalled to her recollection. Musing upon his unmerited sufferings, she almost unconsciously strayed to the spot where the fatal discovery had taken place, that so considerably augmented them. As she glanced round it, the scene that had passed here became pictured to her imagination; St. Ruth bursting, in wild despair, from the concealment of the low-browed arch—the silver-headed monk, pale and mournful—and Elvira, lovely in distress, so etherealized by sorrow, as to appear ready to mount on the wings of the wind, to the airy halls of her father.—‘Oh, what a group!’ involuntarily exclaimed Angeline, as if in reality she beheld the sketch of her fancy embodied: ‘and oh! what a conviction must the sufferings of such beings afford of the existence of a future state!—another and a better world! For that the divine Creator should permit the virtue he must approve to experience the misery it often does in this life, without there was a state in which for every trial, every sorrow, an adequate reward is prepared, would not be consistent with the idea we have formed of his benevolence and justice: yes, every thing tends to convince the reflecting mind of there being

‘A bright reversion in the sky
For those who nobly think, or bravely die.’

The sound of approaching footsteps caused her to turn, and through the gloom she beheld a tall slight figure advancing; instantly concluding it was Roscrea, from the resemblance it bore to him, she was on the point of uttering his name, when a vivid flash of lightning allowed her to see she was mistaken in her supposition, by disclosing to her other features than his, the features of Villiers.

Yielding to the impulse of her feelings, with a shriek of glad surprise, she was throwing herself into his arms, when raising his hand against his breast, he prevented her—‘No, sorceress,’ he cried, ‘no! the spell is broken that would have rendered your blandishments enrapturing; I can no longer be deceived—the mist is removed from my eyes—the illusion vanished! Oh God, God!’ he impatiently added, frantically striking his forehead and stamping on the ground, ‘why, why not sooner! why not in time to prevent my entailing eternal shame and lasting wretchedness upon myself! but I am justly punished for the violation of a solemn promise—for the indulgence I gave to headlong passion: but for this I should not now find myself bound by a tie I must ever execrate: but hearken to me, wretched creature!’ grasping the arm of the almost petrified Angeline, ‘though I cannot rend it asunder, though our miserable fates are for ever linked together, no act of mine shall ever confirm it. Once more have I sought you—once more prevailed on myself to hold converse with you, to look on you; but it is only for the purpose of telling you that I for ever disclaim and renounce you, that we shall meet no more, and that the only atonement you can make for the misery it inflicts, is by

letting the unfortunate connexion between us remain for ever a secret.'

'Do I hear aright?' cried Angeline, when the shock her outraged feelings had sustained would permit her to speak; 'is it he who has so recently vowed to be my protector—in whose keeping, at the altar of our God, I deposited my happiness—is it him I hear renouncing me? Villiers, for this strange, this terrible determination, this sudden alienation of an affection on which I so fondly, firmly relied, there must be some deeper cause than mere caprice—tell me how I have offended, how unhappily incurred your displeasure? I have a right to know—a right to insist on being informed—how else can I vindicate myself? Let me know my crime, my offence—or rather my imputed crime and offence; for to all my heart acquits me of either, and most of all to you.'

'Oh Heavens!' exclaimed Villiers, again impatiently stamping on the ground, 'what consummate artifice this pretended ignorance! but, traitress, it will not do. To your own heart I refer you for the explanation you require of me. Oh, would to God it could indeed acquit you! I should not then experience the distraction I now do; but to yield belief to your assertion would be to unite the folly of credulity to the madness of passion—to render myself a

'Fix'd figure for the hand of Scorn
To point his slow unmoving finger at.'

No! the hour that proved I was deceived, that hour took from the deceiver all further power of deception; nor should I now, I repeat, have suffered myself to seek you, but that I deemed it expedient, in time, to apprize you of the inutility of

disclosing the fatal connexion between us, in consequence of my irrevocable resolution never to recognise you as my wife; not, however, without being ready to make an adequate provision for you, should any thing of the kind be required.'

'Provision!' in bitterness of spirit repeated the heart-struck Angeline. 'Oh Villiers, from him who despises, who cast me from him like a loathsome weed——' then suddenly recollecting her letter to him, and uncertain of its having been received, she besought him to hearken with calmness to her for a few minutes.

'I have already hearkened too long to you,' he replied; 'yet ere we part, and part for ever, let me have,' seizing her hand as he spoke, and feeling for her wedding ring, 'that fatal proof you possess of my folly.'

Angeline wildly shrieked, and resisted his cruel effort to deprive her of what it might be yet essential to her honour to produce.

'Well, still retain it then,' said he; 'retain it as a memorial of folly, of impetuosity, that will never cease being deplored! as a memorial of the short-lived triumph of deceit—as a memorial of the fatal consequences of yielding to our passions! Had I resisted mine, these upbraidings would not now have pained—these pangs not now have tortured.'

'Pangs!' repeated Angeline; 'oh, Villiers! rather acknowledge, as I am now fearfully beginning to imagine, that these upbraidings are but feigned, to give a colour of justice to your intended renouncement of me:—you answer not—speak, in pity! in mercy!' sinking before him, unable longer to support her trembling frame; 'relieve me from this terrible incertitude! my senses seem receding—oh Villiers, torture me not to death! Still no re-

ply !' with a frantic scream, catching him by the coat, on seeing him shrink back.

'Angeline, cling not thus to me,' he cried, but in a voice scarce articulate from emotion, spite of his imagined cause for execrating the hour that threw her again in his way, but too much penetrated, too much touched, too much affected by her suppliant tones, the unutterable anguish they indicated ; ' I would not rudely tear me from your grasp, but we must part, and part directly.'

' Yet hear me, Villiers !' still more alarmed, she exclaimed ; ' by the agony I suffer—by the vows you so lately plighted—by the right I have to expect, to demand explicitness from you, let me implore you not to plunge me into irretrievable despair, by refusing to come to an explanation with me, by persisting in leaving me benighted and forlorn. Oh Heavens ! when so lately I beheld you at my feet, did I imagine I should ever be a trembling suppliant at yours—that every vow would so soon be forgotten—that such a meeting as this could ever have taken place between us ! But though I might be passive under the wrong—though to my bursting heart I might confine the grief it caused, is it to be imagined my friends will calmly see me robbed of happiness, perhaps of fame, without any resentment of my injuries, or attempt at enforcing the claim, the acknowledgment of which, to the latter at least, must be essential ?'

' Ha ! is it then come to threatening at last ?' exclaimed the dreadfully-agitated Villiers. ' Publish then that claim, but publish it without a hope of accomplishing, through its publicity, the desired end ; for never, never, I swear, shall any circumstance induce or compel me to acknowledge what my heart resists.'

‘Oh, I did not mean as a threat what I said,’ cried the weeping Angeline, holding him still more firmly; ‘outraged, insulted, as I may deem myself, still Heaven can witness for me, I would not threaten, but implore. I have a friend, the best, the noblest, the most upright of men; Villiers, let him be umpire between us; to him, since not to me, explain why, ere well a bride, I should feel myself a deserted wife! his integrity is too great to allow partiality to warp him from justice; should he deem the cause assigned for the cruel circumstance sufficient, rely on’t he will acknowledge his opinion.’

‘Free me!’ said Villiers, with firmness, ‘I see through your artifice; you would draw me into some situation that would prevent my fulfilling, to its full extent, the resolution I have formed. Unloose your hold, or you’ll force me to use violence.’

‘Nay, you cannot be so barbarous,’ said Angeline, struggling to detain him, ‘as to persist in your cruel resolution of forsaking me? of never, never letting me behold you more?’

‘You err in thinking so; I swear it, by all I hold sacred I swear, this is the last moment we shall ever converse together! that from this moment I am to you for ever dead! Inquiries to discover me will be useless, or should they succeed, they can accomplish no other end than that of compelling me to fly to some far-distant retreat.’ As he spoke, by a sudden effort he extricated himself from the grasp of the trembling Angeline, and springing over some intervening tombstones, was out of sight in a moment.

The suddenness with which he burst from her hold caused Angeline to fall to the ground; for a moment her senses were overpowered, but it was

only for a moment; her anguish was too acute, her wild terror, at his terrible threat of seeing her no more, a threat so desolating to every hope, to allow of more than a momentary stupefaction. Starting on her feet she rushed after him, shrieking with despair, and calling on his name; but no voice replied to her cries—‘Yet hear me, Villiers!’ she exclaimed; ‘Oh! if we must part, yet another instant let the parting be delayed!’ Again she listened, but still no answer was returned; her fears became more maddening: ‘He is gone! he is gone!’ she exclaimed, wringing her hands in wild despair; ‘I shall never see him more, and all that remains of life is a dreary blank! yet, no,’ she cried, raising herself in a sitting attitude on the low tombstone on which, in despair, she had thrown herself, and trying to still the throbbings of her heart, ‘it cannot be that he could have left me entirely in such a state! Villiers! beloved Villiers! speak to me; oh! let me hear your voice again! let me once more behold you, if it is but for an instant!’ A low sound met her ear; with a faint flutter of joy at her heart, she held in her breath to listen, but it was only the breeze rustling in the high grass of the tomb she heard. ‘Still silent!’ she again cried; ‘Villiers, have pity; my soul dies away with fear.’ Again she became all ear, for again she fancied she heard a low sighing near her: but it was only the mysterious whisperings of the trees in the air of night: she started up, she rushed forward a few paces, she strained her sight to try and penetrate the gloom in which every object was now enveloped; but in vain she looked—in vain she called; no shadow met her sight, no sound her ear, that could long keep alive a hope of Villiers not having carried his cruel

threat into effect : the chillness of death succeeded to its relinquishment in her heart ; that sense of desolation, that terrible feeling of forlornness, to which the heart of sensibility is but too apt to resign itself on the loss of a beloved object ; and sinking on the earth, she lost all immediate perception. In this state of insensibility she was discovered by St. Ruth. Towards evening, he repaired to the inn, for the purpose of passing a little time with her, but learning whither she had strolled, speedily returned to St. Columb's to seek her. Not finding her, after a very diligent search, he was on the point of speeding back, when he nearly stumbled over her. His alarm at finding her in such a state, was, as may be conceived, indescribable. Raising her from the ground, he found her eyes closed, and a cold dampness on her cheek. Immediate assistance he deemed necessary, and accordingly bore her with all possible expedition to the monastery, entering, as the first he came to, by the portal of the church. Placing her on a seat, he sprinkled her profusely with water from one of the cisterns : this application had the desired effect ; she quickly opened her eyes, but almost instantly closed them again, dazzled by the golden splendours that burst upon her vision, and bewildered by the sight of a number of strange faces, for the altars still blazed with innumerable tapers, reflected and multiplied by the glittering ornaments ; and a number of the priests, in the habits of their various degrees, with several of the young choristers in their white surplices, and still bearing, suspended from their wrists, the golden censors, from which they had scattered throughout the holy fane the balmy fragrance of the east, had collected round her. De Burgh, motioning

for all to draw back, soothed her with his beloved accents; he implored her to relieve him from the terrible suspense he was enduring, by saying whether any thing had occurred to frighten or distress her? Angeline, turning her eyes with a fond though despairing look upon him, for never is the voice of tenderness so affecting to the sensitive heart as in the hour of sorrow and desertion, forced herself to reply in the negative, though, with a burst of tears so sudden and impetuous, that, had any suspicion lodged in his heart, he could scarcely have failed of being induced, by it, to discredit her assertion.

But when, after her being sometime returned to the inn, he still found himself unable to extort more than a simple negative from her—saw her bosom still heaving with convulsive sobs, her countenance deluged with tears, her eyes alternately raised with an appealing look of despair to heaven, and bent to the ground with an expression of unutterable woe, he began to grow seriously alarmed; and, with a hint of his suspecting there was some unrevealed cause for the agonizing emotion she betrayed, entreated her to unbosom herself to him.

But though to have obtained his advice in the terrible situation in which she found herself—though to have cast herself upon his bosom, and poured out all the sorrows of her heart into it, would have been some little consolation, she shrunk in inexpressible terror from the idea of meeting the silent rebuke of his eye—awful in displeasure from the calm severity of its expression, from hearing the animadversions her conduct could not fail of occasioning; from giving him the affliction of knowing his precepts, his lessons, his admonitions, had all proved unavailing, to guard her from im-

prudence; that in one hour, one fatal hour, all were forgotten; the happiness it had been his generous care for years to guard, completely forfeited, and suffering and repentance entailed on her for life. No, no, she could not bring herself to let him know how much his care, his tenderness, had been thrown away—could not bring herself to sustain the idea of hearing him lament o'er the blighted promise of her youth, of reading in his looks what he felt at finding she had not proved herself the creature he had fondly, and too, too partially imagined her. But the restraint she forced herself to put upon her anguish rendering it still more intolerable, united to the surmises she clearly saw it was creating in his mind, she at length expressed a wish for retiring, under the feigned belief that repose might be of service to her. De Burgh accordingly uniting in the belief, or rather in the hope, for he perceived nothing in her countenance like ability to enjoy it, tarried no longer, repeating as he took his affectionate leave, the unhappiness he should suffer till he saw her restored to herself, and that he should be with her by breakfast-time the next morning.

CHAP. VI.

A rising storm of passion shook her breast,
Her eyes a piteous show'r of tears let fall,
And then she sigh'd as if her heart were breaking.

Rowe.

BUT not immediately had the afflicted Angeline the comfort of finding herself alone; the landlady was officiously attentive: at length, however, she

was prevailed on to retire, and Angeline found herself at liberty to give unrestrained vent to the wild anguish, the agonizing despair that filled her soul.

The suddenness of what had happened had a bewildering effect upon her senses, that almost inclined her to discredit their testimony: but not long could a doubt of the reality of what had occurred remain. No, the recent scene was too terribly impressed upon her mind—the soul-harrowing expressions of Villiers—the wild flashings of his eyes through the gloom of sorrow and despair, like those flashings of the sky which had allowed her to see his countenance through the gloom of twilight, to allow a belief of her having been under the influence of an illusive dream, a disordered imagination: but was not this air of sorrow and despair assumed, for the insidious purpose of inducing a belief of his conceiving himself justified in the manner in which he had acted?—Yes! the more she revolved his conduct, the more was she confirmed in the idea; or rather, acquitted as she was by her heart of ought meriting reproach from him, she could no longer avoid considering him as an unprincipled wretch, unworthy, in every respect, of the confidence and affection she had bestowed on him—a seducer in intention, who, finding there was no hope of obtaining a triumph over her innocence but by the semblance of honour, had had recourse to a holy rite, for the purpose of enabling him to deceive her. But should she allow him to exult in the idea of having done so—to triumph in his intended perfidy?—should she rest passively under her wrongs?—should she make no effort to obtain redress for her injuries? Redress! ah! what could it obtain her? could the mere confirmation of her claim upon him—could compelling

him to acknowledge her his wife, bestow felicity, without the certainty of his regard? Oh no! she felt, or rather fancied she felt, it could not; for still she dwelt, with doating fondness, on his idea—that her wretchedness would be less in an eternal separation, than living with him under the conviction of the circumstance being one of pain to him. But, oh! in the wild extravagance of grief, a thousand times she was on the point of demanding what had she done, to incur such misery, to be neglected and forsaken;

And like a rose just gather'd from the stalk,
But only smelt, and cheaply thrown aside,
To wither on the ground?

In the distraction excited by the reflection, she was more than once tempted to think of throwing herself at the feet of her first protector; and avowing the predicament in which she stood; but still, as she revolved the probable consequences of such a measure, shrunk appalled from the idea of deciding on it.

From the violence Villiers had betrayed, she trembled to think what the result of his being traced might be, and to do which, she was but too well convinced St. Ruth would make every exertion, if once apprized of their connexion. Roscrea too, to whom he would naturally apply for information, would probably, too, be drawn into something unpleasant. But if terrified at the thought of this, how, in silent sorrow, did her very soul seem to dissolve, at the idea of what her newly-discovered and long sorrowing parent must suffer, if apprized of the truth! the grief, the consternation, the despair he must endure, at learning her doom was fixed—her destiny already decided—all susceptibility

to happiness already destroyed in her bosom! From occasioning such mischief, such anguish as her affrighted imagination represented to her as the probable consequences of revealing her wrongs, she shrank dismayed, more especially as she could not be assured their communication would obtain her any redress. She could not be positive that Roscrea could give the necessary information respecting Villiers; and besides, began to apprehend her marriage might not have been legally solemnized. The reflection of those who had witnessed it was no security for this not having been the case; for from all that had occurred, fearful suspicions began to be suggested concerning them. The manner in which she had been hurried into the measure, the previous conduct of Mrs. Dillon, deemed, at the time, so inconsistent with the prudence she affected; above all, for the first time, the recollection of their having omitted to procure her the document usually obtained on such occasions, as now considered, tended to excite an alarming belief of their having been drawn in to aid in betraying her.

Suddenly and solemnly, therefore, for the present, she decided on not revealing her unhappy situation: indecision, like incertitude, never fails of heightening our misery. She had no sooner determined on the line of conduct she should pursue, than her thoughts became more settled, her mind more composed; a heavy sense of calamity still weighed upon her heart, but she no longer felt herself bewildered as well as forlorn, wild as well as despairing.

In resolving, however, to keep her agonizing secret lodged within her breast for the present, she did not also resolve to remain entirely acquiescent under her injuries. She resolved on endeavouring

to obtain the necessary information respecting Villiers from Miss Roscrea, for the purpose of addressing another letter to him, and also by writing to Mrs. Dillon, to try and ascertain whether her present suspicions were justifiable.

Throughout this night of wretchedness, sleep remained a stranger to her eyelids; indeed, she attempted not to court its influence; for though she more than once threw herself on the bed, the agony of her mind was too great to allow of her remaining long there.

With that feverish restlessness and impatience peculiar to sorrow, she longed for day; yet when she saw it breaking, almost wished again for night, so greatly did she dread the remarks that might be made on her altered looks; for if her countenance at all corresponded with her feelings, its expression, she was aware, must be that of wretchedness.

Even earlier than she expected, she saw St. Ruth approaching the inn; she instantly descended, with a forced smile, to meet him; but her effort at deception was unsuccessful; St. Ruth was startled by her looks the moment he beheld her.—‘My dear girl,’ he cried; tenderly taking her hand, and earnestly regarding her, ‘I am alarmed; have you been ingenuous with me?—does no secret uneasiness weigh upon your mind?’

‘Well,’ said Angeline, ‘since you thus urge me to be explicit,’ convinced nothing but this acknowledgment would save her from farther embarrassing interrogations, ‘I will not longer deny that my spirits are depressed; but is there not some cause for depression? What should I be, could I remain entirely unmoved by the sudden dissolution of the ties that I so long fondly imagined connected us? what, if in the contemplation of new prospects, I

viewed my approaching separation from you, the parent, my heart will ever acknowledge, without emotion?

St. Ruth was too much affected by this speech, to be able to reply to it, in any other manner than by straining her to his bosom: in the midst of the emotion it excited, however, he rejoiced at the belief it inspired, of her having no regret but what time would gradually lessen.

The restraint which, in order to prevent his having any reason to doubt her sincerity, she felt herself under a necessity of imposing on her feelings in his presence, became, however, so irksome, as to make her, at length, almost wish as much for the arrival of the expected summons from England, as before she had dreaded it.

Her patience, in this instance, was not put to any very severe test. In the course of the next day, the steward arrived, accompanied by the housekeeper, for the express purpose of conducting her to her father; and the ensuing one was fixed for her departure.—‘Had I seen this young lady in the first instance,’ said the steward, who had lived a long time in the service of Mr. Clanronel, as he cast his eyes on her, ‘I should have deemed it unnecessary to make the inquiries I did, so strong is the resemblance she bears to her deceased mother.’

The housekeeper, who was also an old domestic, united with him in his assertion; and also in expatiating on the happiness their master would derive from the restoration of such a daughter.

Angeline listened to them with faint smiles; but a livelier emotion was excited by the letter which was presented from her father, containing, after a thousand self-congratulations on the felicity that had so unexpectedly been bestowed on him, the tenderest assurances of making it his study to ren-

der her happy; and an apology for not coming over for her, on the plea of being so much agitated by the recent discovery, as to be unequal to the exertion. He also wrote to St. Ruth, in terms equally indicative of his feelings, expressing his hope that he should soon have a personal opportunity of evincing his sense of the obligations he conceived himself under to him.

But with the inconsistency of a mind torn by conflicting passions, Angeline now regretted what she had recently wished for—the nearer the hour for her departure approached, the more wretched she became: but when she found it actually arrived—when she heard herself summoned to the boat which was to take them to the place of embarkation, her feelings nearly overcame her.—‘My dear, my beloved girl,’ said the greatly-affected St. Ruth, straining her to the bosom on which, in a transport of grief, she had thrown herself, ‘this sorrow flatters, but, at the same time, almost unmans me. I should grieve, indeed, to think there was a chance of your forgetting me; but if my idea must always be productive of regret, greatly will the delight of living in your remembrance be alloyed. You must exert yourself, to moderate the feelings of a heart too tenderly susceptible for its peace. You owe it to the estimable parent to whom you are going to do so; for what a damp on his happiness, if led to believe you did not participate in it! You must not bring sorrow along with you.’

‘Must not!’ involuntarily repeated Angeline, casting her tearful eyes, with a despairing look, to heaven; ‘must not!’ wringing her hands, and dropping, in convulsive agitation, at his feet; ‘oh, what,’ in smothered accents, ‘but sorrow have I the power bringing with me?’

‘Angeline,’ cried the astonished St. Ruth, ‘you really alarm me: these violent emotions indicate a deeper cause for regret than that which is acknowledged.’

‘No, no,’ hastily returned Angeline, ‘but the long restraint I have imposed on my feelings has had the effect of at length rendering them more violent; ‘I shall soon become more——’ resigned, she was on the point of saying, but checking herself in time, added ‘more composed.’

‘I hope so,’ rejoined St. Ruth, ‘on many accounts, but chiefly that no unpleasant surmises may be formed—indeed you have only to allow yourself time to reflect, I think to regain composure; for surely no human prospects can be more felicitous than those which now open to your view—they are such indeed as to many would render you an object of envy.’

‘Of envy!’ repeated Angeline, with an intense groan; ‘oh, Heavens! but the world judges from appearances—it forgets that those are not always the happiest, on whom hereditary diamonds sparkle, that the roses which strew the paths of prosperity, no more than those less profusely scattered in the humbler walks of life, are divested of thorns. Oh! if happiness be not the inmate of the heart, can any adventitious circumstance bestow it?’

‘Certainly not; to allow them to do so, it is requisite that we should be at peace with ourselves—able to bear reflection without regret, and look forward without apprehension.’

‘Oh, doubtless!’ said Angeline, with a fresh burst of sorrow.

‘Come, come,’ cried St. Ruth, ‘I can no longer permit the indulgence of these tears.’

‘Yet another moment,’ she exclaimed, resist-

ing his effort to raise her; 'yet another moment let me have the soothing gratification of weeping at your feet. In this posture let me hear you promise, never, never to let any circumstance have the power of estranging you from me.'

'That I may safely promise,' he replied, with a faint smile, but, at the same time, without being able to prevent a tear from falling on her white forehead, as, unutterably affected, he bent over her: -- 'Yes, so completely have you entwined yourself round my heart, that were it possible you could disappoint the expectations I have formed of you, still, still might you rely on finding a home, a sanctuary with me.'

Angeline, with convulsive emotion, pressed his hand to her lips; in this moment of exquisite tenderness and agitation, the agonizing secret that throbbed in her breast was ready to escape her quivering lips; but when she reflected on the feelings to which she should leave him a prey, by communicating it now—now when time would not permit any minute explanation, she checked the impulse that prompted the disclosure, and lest of being betrayed into it, started up, and again embracing him with fervor, rushed from the house.

The packet sailed that evening; and towards the decline of the ensuing day the party landed at Bristol, whence, the next morning, they commenced their journey for Rooksdale, the seat of Mr. Clanronel.

Angeline strove, but not always successfully, to combat with her feelings: at times, they gained a complete ascendancy over her; but it was some relief to perceive that her companions imputed her dejection to her sudden separation from him whom she had been so long taught to consider her pa-

rent : but would their master be equally deceived ? would he attribute her deep melancholy—the agonies that at times shook her very frame, to no other cause ? Oh, much she feared the contrary—much she dreaded what the result of his keener penetration and nicer knowledge of the human heart might be.

This apprehension made her dread the termination of her journey, and in consequence, gladly allow every delay that consideration for her caused to be proposed.

But notwithstanding all these delays, towards the decline of the third day, it drew towards a close. From the summit of a hill, just as the sun was approaching the verge of the horizon, the woods and clustered chimnies of the dwelling she was henceforth to consider her home, were pointed out to her ; something like a sensation of terror seized her at the moment, flushing her pale cheek with agitation, and suspending the tears that were falling on it. A sudden sinking of the road, by concealing them, almost immediately after, from her view, enabled her to breath again with greater freedom, from inducing a hope of not being so near the end of the journey as she had just been led to imagine ; but presently again bursting on her sight, she found herself just at it.

Magnificent gates of wrought iron, surmounted by the sculptured arms of the owner, admitted them into a noble avenue planted with triple rows of venerable oaks and beeches, intermingled with limes, at 'dewy eve diffusing odours.' On one side, the beautiful park extended to a distance not immediately determinable ; on the other, shrubby hillocks and scattered copses, with the spire of the village church, and an extensive view of a finely-diversi-

fred country, were seen. At the termination of the avenue, the venerable mansion was seated, on a gentle eminence, flanked at each side with round towers, beautifully swelling on the eye, and partially bespread with ivy; a delving path, overspread with the deep funereal gloom of forest scenery, led past the house to the river, the romantic banks of which, in one direction, formed the boundary of the grounds.

But of the beauties that here met the view, Angeline was not immediately sensible. As the gates unfolded to admit the chaise, she sunk beneath her feelings, nor recovered consciousness till the arms of her father had enfolded her. Involuntarily she disengaged herself from them to kneel at his feet, and as she raised her eyes to his, beheld a countenance, that, from its expression, would instantly have reassured her, but for the cruel reflections that overwhelmed her at the moment.

To do justice to the feelings of the enraptured father were impossible: if, with his glowing pencil, the painter despaired of delineating the grief of the parent for his child, how shall a writer hope to do justice to the transport of a parent at the restoration of one? Those are feelings and emotions that mock description—that can only be conceived, not represented.

His happiness at the recovery of such a daughter, so surpassing every expectation he had allowed himself to entertain, was almost too great for him to support.—‘Oh, how amply does it recompence me for all my past sufferings!’ he exclaimed; ‘but can it be that it is real? am I not rather under the influence of one of those illusive dreams that are sometimes sent for the relief of the unfortunate?’—

but no, the blissful vision does not vanish! it remains—it smiles upon me—it lifts its benignant eyes to mine—it bathes my hand with tears;—yes, yes! I clasp to my heart a living image of my sainted wife! an angel recalls me to the joys of domestic life—to those joys I thought for ever withered on her tomb.

‘Oh! tell me, mine own,
Where hast thou been preserv’d? where liv’d? how found?’

The news of her arrival soon spread through the neighbourhood. He who takes an interest in the joys and sorrows of others, may be sure of others taking an interest in his; but not to chance did he leave the announcement of it to his friends at the Abbey. Their written congratulations immediately followed; for to offer them in any other way, for the present, would, they conceived, be an intrusion. The proudly-exulting father was too impatient to display the treasure so unexpectedly restored to him, to long defer the introduction of his Angeline, by which familiar name, in preference to her real one, she continued to be called, to his friends; accordingly, the evening after her arrival was fixed on for the purpose.

Angeline knew not whether to rejoice at or regret the idea, since though the state of her mind rendered the thoughts of society painful to her, she more feared particular than general observation. Every hour seemed to render her anguish deeper and more corrosive, or rather, the restraint she was compelled to impose on her feelings had the effect of aggravating them. But, like Shylock, she could not, with truth, have said, there was no tear but of her shedding—no sigh but of her breathing; the author of her immediate wretchedness was, if possible, still more wretched.

 CHAP. VII.

Thou shalt not break yet, heart, nor shall she know
 My inward torments by my outward shew ;
 To let her see my weakness were too base,
 Dissembled quiet sit upon my face ;
 My sorrow to my eyes no passage find,
 But let it inward sink, and drown my mind ;
 Falsehood shall want its triumph—I begin
 To stagger, but I'll prop myself within ;
 The spacious tow'r no ruin shall disclose,
 Till down at once the mighty fabric goes.

DRYDEN.

THE moment lord Hexham parted from her at the inn, he proceeded, with all possible expedition, to colonel Dunsaney's residence, in the county of Wicklow, to which, by this time, he concluded, he was returned from his excursion.

In thinking so he was not mistaken ; the instant he was announced, the colonel surmised the motive of his visit, and felt pained at the idea of the disappointment that awaited him ; but, at the same time, rejoiced to think, that by having already written explicitly on the subject to the marquis, the affair was brought to such an issue, as precluded all probability of argument or remonstrance relative to it—an apprehension he would not else have been entirely free from, owing to his not being perfectly acquainted with the real pride and delicacy of lord Hexham's nature.

He received his lordship alone, and after a little desultory conversation, hinted his surmise, in a laughing manner, anxious, as soon as possible, to get over the unpleasant explanation he had to give. Lord Hexham, with that interesting ingenuousness which was peculiar to him, frankly acknow-

ledged him right in his conjecture, not without a sensation of pleasure at being saved the embarrassment of entering on the subject himself; and concluded his acknowledgment with the request he had to make, but without letting any expression escape him, that could lead to a suspicion of his having seen Angeline since their first parting.

‘Your wishes are anticipated, my lord,’ said the colonel; ‘it is now some days since I wrote a long circumstantial letter to the marquis; but I am concerned to add, the information it contained was not in consonance with them—not such as I had hoped and expected to have had the power of—but I am distressed to see you so agitated,’ observing him change colour, and begin to tremble.

‘Agitated!’ repeated the alarmed Hexham, starting from his seat, and again throwing himself on it; ‘oh God!—but you—you mistake; I travelled in such haste, and—and—’ involuntarily applying his handkerchief to his face, ‘the day is overcomingly close, I think.’

Dunsaney thought the reverse, but did not attempt to heighten his too evident confusion by saying so.—‘Well, I trust so,’ he rejoined; ‘for a worthless woman is undeserving of a second thought. Honour and friendship required my being candid with the marquis; the result of my inquiries relative to Miss De Burgh proved her utterly unworthy of the honour that was intended her; and I unhesitatingly acquainted him with the fact.

Oh, what a dagger did these words implant in the wildly-throbbing heart of the proud, the keenly-susceptible Hexham! ‘Utterly unworthy!’ in faltering accents, he repeated; ‘utterly unworthy, say you!’

‘Utterly; and when you hear the particulars I

have communicated to the marquis, you must agree with me in thinking so.' He then briefly detailed the whole of what he had heard from Miss Roscrea concerning Angeline, but without revealing names, withheld by delicacy and feeling, the consideration of the unhappiness he should occasion, by disclosing the unworthiness of so near a connexion as Roscrea; or rather perhaps a dread of something unpleasant resulting from the circumstance, impelled, as he would be, by a double motive, to resent it—his sister's wrongs and his own disappointment; and concluded by demanding whether, after what he had heard, he did not unite with him in thinking Miss De Burgh unworthy of another thought?

Oh! what a question to him whose fate was irrevocably blended with hers!—on whom her shame must reflect shame—her disgrace, disgrace! He tried to reply, but his lips refused utterance to the demanded assent. Oh! what were all the pangs he had previously endured, though such, at the time, as he imagined would have driven him to madness as well as despair, compared with those he now felt! conscious as he was, for the act that had incurred them there was no excuse—nothing that could be offered in extenuation—that they were alone owing to the violation of a sacred promise—to the impetuosity of headlong passion, an impetuosity which, from what it had already made him suffer, he should have resisted.

From absolute distraction at the idea of the disgrace, the shame, the obloquy he had incurred—the agonizing idea of having again given a relative to his family unworthy of being connected with them, nothing, perhaps, saved him, but the hope suggested by the sudden reflection of his real name

being still unknown to Angeline, of being enabled perhaps to keep their bitterly-repenting union a secret.

But miserable was the consolation derived from this hope—terrible the thought, that on chance he must depend for retaining the esteem of his family, the respect of the world—that every avenue to domestic bliss was completely barred against him by his rashness—that the remaining years of his life must be passed in constant dread and anxiety.

Yet it was only by clinging to it he could think, with any degree of calmness, on the situation in which he had placed himself, his wretchedness could obtain any mitigation. Should his fatal marriage transpire, he resolved on an immediate abandonment of his native country, and thus avoiding the reproaches, the contempt, the indignation of his insulted family. No, never, he solemnly determined, if once known to his father, would he face him again—no, never enter his presence, under the agonizing conviction, which in that case, he must feel, of being solely indebted to the tie between them for admission to it; so contemptible must his breach of promise, the headlong passion he had again yielded to, render him, he was aware, in his eyes.

No exertion requisite to conceal his feelings in the present instance was wanting, pride making him shrink from the idea of being supposed capable of regret for such a being as Angeline was represented; but the efforts he made for the purpose were not so successful as he wished; the wild expression of his eyes, their terrible flashings, the colour that alternately flashed and faded from his check, together with his sudden starts, his momentary musings, gave his collected and penetrat-

ing companion but too great an insight into them; but though he could not help condemning the emotion he betrayed, neither at the same time could he help some little degree of commiseration for him.

At length he started up to be gone. The friendly Dunsaney earnestly besought him to remain, if not a few days at Greymount, at least for that one; but the tortured Hexham was not in a frame of mind to be able to bear society; and accordingly having received a solemn promise to have his present visit to him concealed, he took a hasty leave, and immediately repaired to an inn in the neighbourhood, unable, or rather unwilling to proceed to town, till he had a little collected himself, and finally decided how to act. But to what transports did he abandon himself, when again free to indulge his feelings! how in indignant bitterness of soul did he execrate his conduct!—how the perfidy that had given him such cause to deplore it! a perfidy of which not a doubt remained: no, the tale fabricated for the destruction of Angeline was too well connected to permit him to discredit it. Yet despite of her supposed unworthiness, he could not entirely tear her from his heart. His anguish, his torments were aggravated by

‘Fancy pouring
Afresh her beauties on his busy thought;
Her first endearments twining round the soul,
With all the witchcraft of ensnaring love.’

Yes, he now experienced those terrible moments felt by him,

‘Who doubts, yet doubts—suspects, yet strongly loves.’

The reluctance evinced by Angeline to their clandestine union, he could now no longer suppose real; and gradually began to experience the same doubts of the integrity of Mr. and Mrs. Dillon that she had admitted.

But severe as were his immediate sufferings, he was destined, through the malignancy of Miss Roscrea, to find them still more insupportable.

An enforced visit to her father had brought her into the neighbourhood just at this juncture, and coming to Greymount, just as he was quitting it, she saw him, but without being perceived, owing to the extreme agitation he was in at the moment.

All anxiety to learn the motive of his visit there, she hastily informed the colonel of her recognition of him. Since she had seen him, he conceived he might as well be candid with her; or rather that it was necessary he should, in order to account for his enjoining her silence on the subject; and accordingly acquainted her with the cause of his visit.

She heard with exultation of the conversation that had passed between them; but when she found he had persisted in concealing from him, as well as from his family, the name of the person whom Angeline was accused of being attached to, her pleasure was a little damped, lest the circumstance should be a means of yet causing some doubt to be entertained of the truth of the allegations against her: and accordingly, she, in consequence, resolved, after a little consideration, on revealing it herself to him; though well aware of the disclosure being one that could scarcely fail of creating a lasting breach between him and Roscrea, from the manner in which it was but natural to suppose it would occasion him to treat the latter.

To this determination she was still further induced, by her ardent desire for an opportunity of conversing with him—an opportunity she knew she must not attempt to seek, without being furnished with a plausible pretext.

From the direction she saw him taking as he was quitting Greymount, she concluded it was not his immediate intention to return to town. Instantly making the necessary inquiry, she found she was right in her conjecture; and having ascertained the place where he was, she lost no time in dispatching a billet to him, to request a few minutes conversation with him in the course of the evening.

Lord Hexham was not a little agitated by the receipt of this billet; but though nothing could be more unpleasant than the request it contained, his curiosity was too strongly excited by it, to allow of his making any excuse to avoid complying with it.

Accordingly he returned for answer, that at the time appointed, he should be in waiting at the place she had mentioned. That she did not allow him long to watch for her, may readily be imagined; but her transport at beholding him was checked by seeing no corresponding transport sparkle in his eyes—no indication of his being actuated by more than politeness on the occasion—his experiencing even pleasure at the interview; on the contrary, the earnestness with which he entreated her to conceal from her brother and lady Rosamond having seen him, was an evident proof of his sincerely regretting the circumstance.

But though at present she could not help giving way to the mortifying belief of being an object of perfect indifference to him, she yet flattered herself she should be able to inspire him with the sen-

timents she wished; and at all events felt it would be a lasting source of consolation to reflect she had succeeded in depriving her detested rival, as she still continued to consider Angeline, of his regard.

Having given him to understand, as indeed he had all along supposed, that her knowledge of his being in the neighbourhood was owing to chance, she proceeded to explain the motive that led her to request this meeting, or rather the pretended one:—‘Whether colonel Dunsaney has informed you,’ she said, ‘of my being the person from whom he received the information he was so desirous of obtaining relative to Miss De Burgh, I know not; if not, a dread of his having, perhaps, been tempted to reveal more than I wished, impels me to betray the circumstance myself.’

‘Then you wished,’ involuntarily repeated the confused Hexham, hurt, mortified beyond expression at finding her acquainted with his unfortunate attachment, or rather, perhaps, at finding her acquainted with the cause he had to blush at it. ‘Have the goodness,’ in still more agitated accents he added, ‘to explain yourself.’

‘Yet by giving way to my fears, should I be the means of in reality betraying what I am so anxious to conceal,’ she musingly replied, ‘ere I am more explicit, let me beg of you to say whether, in the course of your recent conversation with the colonel, my brother was mentioned?’

‘Your brother!’ said lord Hexham, again involuntarily repeating her words; ‘your brother!’ with almost a start of wild dismay at the surmise suggested by this question; ‘no: but why did you inquire, may I ask? There was nothing in our recent conversation that could possibly have led to

the mention of his name,' intently regarding her as he spoke.

'Oh, I am satisfied!' she answered, with affected carelessness; 'the colonel, I see, was discreet;—come, let the subject drop. I want to know how long you propose remaining here?'

'Excuse me,' said the terribly agitated Hexham, trembling with strong emotion, and, for the first time, fervently grasping her willing hand, as if fearful else of her vanishing from his view, ere she had satisfied the dreadful solicitude she had excited; 'I cannot let it drop so soon. The manner in which you have expressed yourself has given birth to a surmise, that—that my—anxiety for my sister's happiness,' he with difficulty proceeded, 'will not allow me to yield passively to: do you mean to insinuate that Roscrea——' he paused, unable from conflicting feelings, to articulate the question he would have asked.

'Good Heavens! that I should have been so unfortunate as to betray what I had such powerful reasons for wishing to conceal,' returned Miss Roscrea; 'but since I have done so, let me make the only amends in my power for the inadvertence I have been guilty of, by imploring you to feign ignorance on the subject; if not to oblige me, at least to save lady Rosamond from the pain I am certain you must be aware she would feel, at any misunderstanding between you and Roscrea. Notwithstanding what has happened, I am convinced he is sincerely attached to her; and that sensible of his error, he either has, or speedily will, relinquish the unhappy connexion he formed—an error, in extenuation of which,' looking with malicious significance at him, 'you must allow there was strong temptation.'

Lord Hexham, but too well understanding the

meaning of her look, started ; and frantically striking his throbbing forehead, stamped on the ground. He had believed his tortures incapable of aggravation ; but the feelings he now experienced, at being led to consider so near a connexion as the husband of his sister the betrayer of the being on whom he had conferred the title of his wife, convinced him he was mistaken in thinking so.

‘ I am sorry to see you so agitated,’ resumed Miss Roscrea, after a momentary pause ; ‘ though to be sure, when I reflect on your affection for your sister——’

‘ Lady Rosamond!’ almost frantically exclaimed her agonized companion ; ‘ oh, ’tis not of lady Rosamond I think: oh, no, no!’ again passionately striking his forehead, and stamping on the ground ; then suddenly recollecting himself, he stammered out an apology to the cruel dissembler, whose arts had been the means of working him up to this frenzy, for the violence he had been betrayed into before her ; and reminding her of the promised silence relative to seeing him, would immediately have taken leave, but was prevented by her.

While it was possible to detain him, she could not bring himself to let him depart ; under the pretext of wishing to moderate his indignation against her brother, she succeeded in keeping him a few minutes longer with her ; but without seeing any thing like an indication of a warmer sentiment for her than he had previously experienced ; but more than ever fascinated from this interview, she resolved, almost against hope, to persevere in her designs respecting him.

Again on entering the inn, the unhappy Hexham abandoned himself to the most dreadful transports. He felt scarcely able to endure with a settled brain,

the reflection of the husband of his sister being the rival who had given him such cause to execrate the hour that bound him to Angeline.

A thousand wild projects of revenge and despair took alternate possession of his mind, but all of which gave way to the consideration of being unable to accomplish any one of them, without betraying what he had now, from the recent discovery, such additional motives for wishing to conceal. Yes; in consequence he was more than ever solicitous to hide his repented marriage—more resolutely determined than ever on renouncing Angeline.

What immediately followed is already known. It seemed, indeed, throughout the affair, as if circumstances purposely combined to injure the cruelly-persecuted Angeline. Lord Hexham, according to the direction he had received from her at parting, proceeded to the Ferry-house, to inquire for her; and being mistaken for Roscrea, received, in consequence, the message she had left for him—a message which, giving the exasperated Hexham to see she was in expectation of being followed by his imagined rival, tended not a little to heighten the furious tempest then raging in his soul.

With what devastating violence it burst upon the defenceless head of the hapless Angeline, has been already described; but the misery it occasioned, though such as to wring her very heart, was still surpassed by his, owing to the dread that tormented him, and the terrible reproaches he had to make himself. On quitting her, he hastened to the place of embarkation, impatient, on many accounts, to find himself out of the kingdom; but owing to the excessive agitation of his spirits, he was taken so ill, almost immediately after his landing, as to be compelled to pause, for a few days, on the road,

and, accordingly, did not reach St. Cuthbert's, till after Angeline's arrival in its vicinity.

The marquis was too anxious to see him freed from an unworthy attachment—disentangled from the snares which an artful and unprincipled woman, as he was led to believe the innocent Angeline, had spread for him, to be able to prevail on himself to defer, for any time, communicating the explanatory letter he had received from his friend colonel Dunsaney; little aware that to the knowledge already possessed of its contents, was owing the extreme agitation he could not avoid noticing in his manner.

Lord Hexham perused, or rather seemed to peruse it, with feelings that damped his forehead with the cold chill of agony, and varied his cheek with the alternate glow of confusion and paleness of death.

'I am concerned, my dear Edmund,' said the marquis, on his returning it to him, in impressive silence, 'to perceive you so much affected; but this is the last pang, I trust, a worthless woman will ever cause you. From this moment, I trust, she will be forgotten; and that by banishing her your heart, you will make room for the admission of one every way worthy of a place in it. That I could allow any selfish considerations to induce me to rejoice at the degeneracy of a fellow-being, I hope and trust you do me the justice to believe impossible; but to be ingenuous, I own I cannot bring myself greatly to lament your recent disappointment, though most sincerely do I the cause to which it is owing, having, since your departure hence, beheld a prospect of an alliance for you, so every way answering my hopes and wishes on the subject, that I own I cannot help almost rejoicing at your being still at liberty to think of it: but ere I am more explicit, I must give you the particulars of a most extraordi-

nary event that has lately taken place here—one of those singular occurrences, that when only known by relation, requires something of credulity to be credited.’ He then, without further preface, proceeded to inform him of the unexpected restoration of the long-lamented daughter of Clanronel; concluding with an acknowledgment of hers being the alliance he had just alluded to.—‘She is represented as all that is amiable,’ he continued; ‘for owing to her recent arrival, no introduction has yet taken place; and on this habitable globe there exists not a man with whom I could so much wish to form a family connexion as her father, and who, I am well convinced, would derive equal pleasure from the circumstance; for frequently, in deploring the treasure he imagined lost for ever, has he expatiated on the happiness it would have afforded him, had she been spared, to have seen her the bond of a still closer union between our families: at his side, therefore, I expect no obstacle to my wishes; and trust you’ll soon empower me to explain them—my anxiety to see you in possession at last of domestic happiness being unutterable. How shall I rejoice should my present hope be realized! how, at length, at the prospect of growing old amidst a race of thine! nay, be not so agitated, my dear boy; what must that father be, whose solicitude for the felicity of his offspring were less? In the course of the ensuing day, we shall have an opportunity of ascertaining how far report is to be depended on, the evening being fixed on for the introduction of the young heiress to the friends of her father: I am glad you arrived in time to be present at the ceremony, persuaded, from his attachment to you, Clanronel will be gratified by the circumstance.’

Not so agitated! oh Heavens, how impossible for the almost distracted Hexham to be less so! finding, as he now did, from this conference, his situation becoming still more embarrassing, his hope of even a transient respite from anxiety destroyed. Oh, as well might silence have been enjoined the raging winds, as calmness recommended to a breast torn with conflicting passions like his.

That he could hope entirely to escape being addressed on such a subject, he had never flattered himself; on the contrary, his apprehensions relative to it were no inconsiderable augmentation of the unhappiness and agitation he experienced; but so immediately he did not imagine he had any thing to fear: in consideration of his recent disappointment, he had flattered himself some time would have been allowed to elapse, ere a wish of the kind was hinted, and thus some for enabling him to collect himself.

But, contrary to his expectations, he now found himself not only taken by surprise, but an alliance suggested, for declining which he feared no plausible excuse could be offered, and consequently, that nothing could prevent the circumstance drawing upon him the indignation and resentment of his family; the thought was agonizing, yet could he see no way of relieving himself from it, act as he would. Whether he remained or departed—whether, by allowing himself to be introduced to the lady, he rendered it still less than ever in his power, if she at all answered the description given of her, to find a plausible pretext for rejecting the projected alliance, or by abruptly departing, allowed the marquis to believe him resolutely bent on thwarting his wishes, he saw no possible way of avoiding what he dreaded.

Convinced, however, that he should not only hasten, but aggravate it, by any appearance of premeditated opposition, he resolved on quietly remaining a little longer at St. Cuthbert's. Painful in the extreme, however, was the resolve, from the efforts he knew it would oblige him to make—the restraint it would compel him to impose on his feelings.

CHAP. VIII.

He withers at the heart, and looks as wau
As the pale spectre of a murder'd man ;
In solitary groves he makes his moan,
Walks early out, and ever is alone ;
Nor mix'd in mirth, in youthful pleasures shares,
But sighs when songs and instruments he hears.

DRYDEN.

MEANWHILE preparations were making for the introduction of Angeline to the friends of her father. The ceremony was too interesting to his feelings, not to induce him to give something of solemnity to it; till the whole of the party invited were assembled, he decided on her not making her appearance, and then on conducting her in himself.

Sinking beneath the pressure of concealed sorrow, her thoughts confused, her cheerfulness assumed, dreading the encounter of every eye, lest of its glance proving too penetrating, Angeline could have wished there had been less of parade on the occasion, but of course without allowing herself to give a hint that she did.

The family at the Abbey was, of all others, the one her father intimated his wish of her being on intimate terms with; and by his particular

mention of his friends there, first gave her to understand she was in the vicinity of a place where she was likely to encounter lady Rosamond again—an idea that agitated her not a little; but when she reflected on the little likelihood there was, from her being settled in another kingdom, of her at least immediately meeting her there, and the improbability there was, situated as she now was, of her insinuating any thing to her prejudice, she tried to calm the emotion excited by the thought; and decided on leaving to chance the disclosure of their acquaintance.

This of course she could not have thought of doing, but that she was aware of St. Ruth having concealed from her father his assumption of another name than his own, and consequently that that which she had recently borne being unknown, if mentioned to lady Rosamond, it would be by one she was unacquainted with.

The marquis and his family, with the exception of lord Hexham, were too impatient to offer their personal congratulations at Rooksdale, to unnecessarily delay proceeding there; under some frivolous pretext, he declined accompanying them, but promised speedily to follow. The truth was, he determined on seeing who the party there consisted of, ere he made his appearance in it; accordingly he alighted at the entrance of the avenue, and taking advantage of his knowledge of every private entrance to the house, to gain admittance to it unperceived, repaired to a door, whence, without any risk of being seen, he could obtain the view he required. The room with which it communicated, and to which he had been guided by his ear, was, in days of yore, the feudal chiefs' grand hall of audience; for, as already mentioned, Rooksdale

was a mansion of ancient date; its dimensions were magnificent, and decorations in a corresponding style; the walls were hung with crimson velvet, and ornamented with a variety of exquisite paintings from the glowing pencils of the Italian school; several fine antiques, in statues and vases, were ranged along them; and a blaze of splendour diffused around by glittering chandeliers. At the extremity of the apartment was a pair of immense folding doors, giving a complete view of a noble staircase, still ornamented, as in former times, with pieces of armour and warlike trophies; immediately opposite to this entrance, was the private one, at which the unhappy Hexham had taken his station, and where he had not been many minutes, ere he saw Clanronel advancing with his daughter; the crowd that gathered round them as they entered, prevented, for a little while, his having a perfect view of the latter; but as she came more forward, he suddenly obtained this, and beheld, oh, what was his emotion—his astonishment—his wild dismay at the moment! the features of Angeline—of his renounced wife—his forsaken bride, decked like a bride, and receiving congratulations on every side!

Scarce could he credit the evidence of his senses—scarce that he was not in a delirium—that the agitation of his mind had not at last affected his brain: gracious God! was it possible? did he hear, did he see aright? what! was she the weeping outcast whom he had so recently thrown from his bosom—spurned at his feet? what! was she, a being loaded with obloquy and shame, was she the daughter of the generous, the noble Clanronel?

Oh Heavens! how was he to comprehend all this! but the present was not a situation for him

to dwell on the bewildering circumstance. Shuddering at the idea of what he had escaped by not accompanying the family, and equally at being discovered where he was, he abruptly retreated, nor paused till he again found himself within St. Cuthbert's. For his unexpected return he assigned sudden indisposition; his valet was summoned to attend him, and in lighting him to his apartment, delivered him a letter just arrived. The hand was not perfectly known to him, and this circumstance heightening his impatience to peruse it, he hastily dismissed his attendant, and breaking the seal, found, by a glance at the signature, it was from Angeline.

It was indeed the letter she had deemed it necessary to write to him immediately after the recent discovery, but, as may be recollected, without being absolutely certain of its ever reaching him. As she apprehended, he had not returned to the hotel; but being rather expected again, it was kept there for some time; and then, agreeably to the direction he had given, in case any thing of the kind occurred, forwarded to St. Cuthbert's.

All that had previously appeared incomprehensible was explained by it. It was then too true that she was the acknowledged daughter of Clanronel, alas! for him too much so, since, from her abode being consequently fixed in the vicinity of the Abbey, he must be under the necessity, he saw, of entirely forsaking it—entirely forsaking his paternal home, the loved society of his family, the scenes endeared to him by a thousand fond recollections.—‘Dear Clanronel,’ he mentally exclaimed, ‘ah! how little, when listening, with tearful sympathy, to thy pathetic tale of sorrow, deploring with thee thy lost child, and uniting with thee in ardent wishes for her restoration, ah! how little

did I then imagine that the accomplishment of those wishes would ever have proved a source of distress and dismay to me ! but strange as unforeseen are frequently the circumstances in which we find ourselves placed ; alas ! to thee also it may yet be productive of misery ! for she who has allowed herself to deviate so widely from the path of propriety, there is too much reason to dread will not speedily permit herself to be recalled to it ; yet who, that only judged from her looks, could believe a tale to her prejudice ? how mild, how innocent her countenance—how angelic its expression ! what sweetness in the smile that faintly brightened over it ! but, oh ! deceitful looks ! what indeed, it proves, is all our sovereignty, or boasted power, when the sex oppose their arts ! who could think that such a heavenly face concealed a nature capable of the most perfidious deception, that underneath its smiles, lurked pride, vanity, and dissimulation !

He dreaded to think of the motive to which his acting as he had just done might be ascribed, and was almost tempted by his apprehension to decide on departing from St. Cuthbert's the ensuing day ; but when he reflected, that by pleading indisposition, he should have a pretext for not appearing in company, he resolved on not yet awhile tearing himself from it, nor yet awhile relinquishing the society so dear to his heart ; for banishing himself from which, he was aware he should in vain seek consolation.

Long, long indeed is it ere the heart of feeling can admit any for the loss of that it has been accustomed to. Suddenly deprived of it, or exiled from the companions to whom we have been in the habit of opening our bosom, with whom our hours of leisure and merriment have been shared, how

heavy feels the day! how sad, how solitary the minutes that pass away, and return without restoring to us our wonted gratification!

To this resolution lord Hexham was perhaps also unconsciously stimulated by anxiety to know how Angeline would conduct herself, in the situation in which she had been so unexpectedly placed; whether, with her assumption of a new name, she also meant to assume a new character; or rather allow the consideration of her being now more exposed to observation, of consequence, to censure, influence her to a more rigid adherence to propriety.

CHAP. IX.

Oh! let me turn away my eyes,
 For all around she'll her bright beams display;
 Should I to gaze on the wild meteor stay,
 Spite of myself I should be led astray.

OTWAY.

CLANRONEL, not less anxious than the marquis for an alliance between their families, looked impatiently for the expected arrival of lord Hexham. since so transcendantly beautiful did Angeline appear in his eyes this evening, he thought it next to impossible she could be seen by him without his becoming her captive. But infinitely more was it from a conviction that her happiness was likely to be ensured by a connexion with a family so estimable, than any ambitious motive, that rendered him so solicitous for it.

His acquaintance with the marquis had commenced at a very early period; and gradually im-

proved into a friendship that time continued to strengthen, from letting neither see any surpassing the other in integrity and real feeling.

From his despoiled home Clanronel hastened to the vicinity of St. Cuthbert's, as to a place where alone his sorrows were likely to receive mitigation; and found the hope that allured him thither so completely fulfilled, as to be induced finally to settle there.

But to lord Hexham he was, if possible, still more attached than to any of the rest of the family. Even in his boyish days, there was something so interesting in his manner as to attach him unalterably to him, and deepen his regret for the loss of the daughter who might have given him a claim to the title of his father:—now she was restored, and he knew of nothing to impede his wishes on this head.

At the imagined failure of lord Hexham's word, the marquis was not merely disappointed, but irritated; he considered it as a mark of disrespect which could not be excused, and accordingly determined on being very explicit with him on the subject, the next morning; but when, on returning to the Abbey, he learnt to what his not appearing at Rooksdale was owing, or more properly, the reason he chose to assign for not doing so, his resentment vanished; and not without feeling displeased with himself, he wondered how he could have been so unjust as to condemn him unheard—how, to accuse him of what, from his knowledge of his nature, he might have been convinced he was incapable of.—‘But this is the consequence of letting our hearts be too much set upon any thing,’ he said; ‘when disappointed, it is but too apt to

have the effect of rendering us captious and unjust.'

But from the painful anxiety his reported indisposition occasioned, the family were agreeably relieved by being joined at the usual hour in the breakfast-parlour by him, unable to resist an indefinable wish to learn their sentiments of Angeline, notwithstanding the necessity there was for his supporting the appearance of indisposition, or rather acknowledging that which he actually felt from the extreme agitation of his mind.

As he imagined, the whole conversation turned upon Angeline; she was unanimously pronounced truly lovely and interesting; she had indeed so far exceeded expectation, so completely charmed every heart by the sweetness of her manners, her innocent modesty and native simplicity of look, that a pleasure was experienced in praising her.

'Had you been introduced to her last night, rely upon it, my dear brother,' said his sister, lady Mara, addressing lord Hexham, 'your heart this morning would not have been in its right place.'

'Indeed!' he replied with a forced smile, but eyes involuntarily declining, from the painful consciousness he felt at the moment; 'is she then so very dangerous?'

'She indubitably is a prodigious fine creature,' said lord Mountbrilliant, a young nobleman of high celebrity in the fashionable world, and who, drawn to the Abbey by an attraction he was not yet perhaps fully aware of, frequently came posting from town for the purpose of passing a few weeks at a time there; 'her father, no doubt, will have various splendid offers for her, such combined attractions rendering her a prize the most exalted may be ambitious of.'

‘But which I hope may not fall to the lot of any one who is not himself possessed of sufficient merit to be capable of fully appreciating, and of course doing justice to hers,’ said the marquis; she is too amiable not to inspire a strong interest for her happiness.’

‘When I first cast my eyes on her last night,’ resumed the viscount, ‘I was quite tempted to imagine her complexion one of the finest imitations of nature I had ever seen; but from its variableness, I soon found I was mistaken in thinking there was any art in it: it quite reminded me of Virgil’s description of the beautiful Lavinia—

‘A crimson blush her beauteous face o’erspread,
Varying her cheeks by turns with white and red;
The dawning colours, never at a stay,
Run here and there, and flush, and fade away,
Delightful change! thus Indian iv’ry shews
Which with the bord’ring paint of purple glows,
Or lilies damask’d by the neighbouring rose.’

Should she persist in not rouging, the interesting hue of the lily will doubtless be all the rage the ensuing winter, for I presume Mr. Clanronel then proposes bringing her out.’

‘If by bringing her out your lordship means bringing her to London, I really can’t positively say,’ returned the marquis.

‘Oh, but doubtless such is his intention,’ rejoined the viscount; ‘for as it is not now the fashion to send the pictures of beauties about, it would be doing an act of cruel injustice not to give her an opportunity of being seen.’

‘The report of a person of allowed taste, such as every one knows you to be, Mountbrilliant,’ said lord George, the marquis’s younger son, laughingly, ‘would equally avail, I dare say; should you sound

her praises, the fair cynosure of the neighbouring woods need not be at the trouble of exhibiting herself to obtain admirers.'

'You flatter certainly; but,' addressing the marchioness, 'your ladyship will derive some amusement from the perusal of the papers arrived this day, I rather conceive, for there's a good deal of chit-chat in them, on account of several *dejeunés* and rural *fêtes*; and a very detailed one of the private arrangements of some certain persons of high distinction, who have lately afforded the public a great deal of conversation: it is positively asserted that lady Gaylove proceeds directly to Scotland, to obtain a divorce from her truant lord, for the purpose of bestowing her fair hand on the earl of Lochleven; and that he, lord Gaylove, in the event of her succeeding, is immediately to make the *amende honorable* to lady Languish, for the sacrifice he avers she has made for his sake; and whose *ci-devant sposa*, in his turn, is again shortly to lead to the hymeneal altar, a lady of not less distinguished merits than her whom she succeeds; but as the respective parties have all families, what a tangled consanguinity is not this likely to occasion amongst the rising generation!'

'Upon my word, such things are quite deplorable,' said the marquis.

'Oh dear, no; only a little strange; for some of the parties *assurément*, in my opinion, change for the worse;—lady Gaylove is, indubitably, a finer creature than her rival, lady Languish.'

'What I hear,' rejoined the marquis, 'reminds me of an observation I met with in an old author, that innocent inquiries are not what please the over-inquisitive and busy-bodies; they delight in tragedies and stories of crimes and misfortunes, for

which reason a learned prelate said—‘ Envy and Idleness married together, and begot Curiosity,’ which is an incontinence of the mind; that the most perfidious of crimes is often nothing but a curious inquisition after, and envying of another man’s happiness; many having refused fairer objects, to force the possession of women, purely because they were possessed by others.’

‘ Upon my honour, a vastly judicious and correct observation,’ assented the viscount; ‘ *assuré-ment* there’s a vast degree of inordinate curiosity in the human mind; I pretend not to be free from it myself. There’s lady Vancouver, one of the most prodigiously disagreeable women nature was ever pleased to form; yet the happiest of mortals seems her *caro*: a good deal surprised at this, and curious to know whence his happiness could originate, I contrived to get intimate in the family, for the purpose of ascertaining; and in consequence, was very near having my name most unpleasantly mentioned.’

‘ How terrible!’ cried lord George, laughing, ‘ and your head, perhaps, in a caricature shop; pardon me, dear Mountbrilliant, but positively, I should not have been able to restrain my risibility, had I seen it there.’

‘ How vastly kind to tell me so! but perhaps there are some other heads that would become a place there quite as well.’

‘ Oh no—I deny that; there’s a certain whimsical expression in your countenance, that particularly suits it for such a place.’

‘ Flattering, upon honour! I shall become quite vain, if I listen to many more such compliments; so, to avoid the danger, pray, lady Mara, let me order the horses—the morning shines, and the fresh fields invite us.’

‘Very well; you have my permission to ring for them. To save such a pure unsophisticated nature from the dangers of flattery, what is there,’ a little archly as well as ironically, she said, ‘I would not do?’

No sooner had they withdrawn, accompanied by lord George, than the marquis expressed to lord Hexham the hope he entertained of having that day the happiness of which he had been so unexpectedly disappointed the preceding evening, namely, of introducing him to Miss Clanronel, who, with her father, and the whole of the party assembled at Rooksdale that evening, were this day to dine at the Abbey.

Lord Hexham shook his head ‘You do not mean to intimate that I shall again be disappointed?’ said the marquis, in rather an alarmed tone.

A heavy sigh burst from the struggling bosom of the unhappy Hexham.—‘Oh, why, why,’ he exclaimed, ‘must I appear unbending and ungrateful! my dearest father, do excuse me this day; for really I am unequal to the effort of entering a large party.’

The marquis looked earnestly at him, and, in consequence, the remonstrances he was on the point of giving utterance to were prevented, so clearly did his looks testify his being indeed indisposed. The marchioness, equally alarmed by them, now united her entreaties with his, to try and prevail on him to have advice; but, at length, was induced to give up the point, on his solemn assurance of ceasing to oppose her wishes, should he not speedily get better; and at present deeming quiet the only thing he required.

Clanronel had so fully expected this day to have been gratified by the introduction of the two dear-

est and most interesting beings in the creation to him to each other, that nothing could surpass his mortification at the disappointment that again awaited him, but his regret at the circumstance to which it was owing. He could not, he would not be prevented paying his young friend a visit after dinner.

Lord Hexham, rather expecting something of the kind from his ardent and affectionate nature, left nothing undone that could possibly enable him to regain some degree of composure. But the reflections which he strove to keep aloof for the purpose, recurred too forcibly the instant he beheld him, not to destroy what he had been trying to attain.

He trembled universally, and with difficulty, from the powerful emotion his sight occasioned, or rather the ideas connected with it, could articulate his pleasure at seeing him.

‘My dear, dear boy,’ cried the warm-hearted Clanronel, grasping his hand between both his, ‘how do I rejoice at again beholding you! yet is the pleasure of the meeting damped, by finding you here, the melancholy inmate of a sick chamber. You must, you must get well directly; my happiness will not be complete till you come abroad to participate in it.’

‘If nothing but my participation is wanting to perfect it, let me now assure you of that,’ returned the agitated Hexham.

‘Tut, tut, that is not what I meant; I meant that it would not be complete, till you had seen what cause I had to rejoice—in short, till you and my Angeline,’ (oh, how did the sound of that name thrill through every throbbing nerve of Hexham!) ‘my daughter, my new-found treasure, are known to each other. Oh, my young friend, was there

ever any thing so wonderful—so extraordinary, as the event that has elevated me to felicity? after so long considering myself a solitary isolated being, without any natural tie, any claim upon an individual but what friendship allowed, to find myself on a sudden possessed of such a daughter! oh, my brain often grows giddy with dread of its all proving a dream! But again I say, my dear boy, you must recover speedily; for not one of the delightful plans and projects I have been forming, since the restoration of my daughter, can be realized without you—you, whose boyish cheek was so often dewed with tears of pity for my sufferings—you, who, by a thousand indescribable traits of feeling and affection, gradually entwined yourself round my heart—you, the son, long since, of my adoption, and now—but, good Heavens! you shock, you alarm me!” he added, in an altered tone, on seeing lord Hexham suddenly start from his seat, and again throw himself on it, as if abandoned to despair; ‘this agitation, this too evident emotion, surely argues something more than mere bodily indisposition. You know we have been old confidants to each other,’ he proceeded, with a constrained smile; ‘let that consideration induce you to unbosom yourself to me, if any thing weighs upon your mind in which I can possibly assist you.’

With difficulty the agitated Hexham prevented himself from again betraying the emotion he was in; he wrung his hands in agony—‘No, no,’ he replied, but in accents scarce articulate, ‘you mistake.’

‘Heaven grant I may!’ said Clanronel, for, from sad experience, I know that of all maladies, there is none so terrible as the malady of the heart;

but remember I am not to be deceived; I shall be here to-morrow myself to listen to your tale of symptoms.'

Again lord Hexham assured him, fearful of letting him depart with an impression on his mind of any thing extraordinary being the matter with him, that he had no malady to complain of, but a slight nervous one, which he trusted speedily to get the better of.

'Well, well, I believe I need not say how sincerely I join in the hope,' said his deeply-interested visitor; 'I shall try, however, what my prescriptions will do for you, and give you timely notice. Solitude will not be included in them. I am jealous,' he continued, again reverting to the topic on which it was so delightful to him to dwell, 'of my little girl, on your account; I feel as if, I wished her to treasure up all her smiles and bewitching looks for you, and must therefore have you soon come amongst us, in order that you may secure them for yourself. There's that popinjay Mountbrilliant, overwhelming her with compliments; but that I know, our blue-eyed Mara has too great a hold of his heart to allow of his long persevering in them, I should be quite cross at listening to him.'

He remained some time longer with him, nor would have left him, perhaps, when he did, but that he could not resist his wish of witnessing the admiration his daughter was receiving. From all that he had said, it was evident, but too evident to Hexham, that, like the marquis, he was bent on an alliance between their families; and an additional pang was experienced by him, from the idea of what he might feel at his declining it. 'Oh, blind indeed, in this instance to fate!' he cried;

‘how little is he aware that to unbosom myself to him, as he urged, would be to destroy his newly-experienced happiness, dash the cup of bliss for ever from his lips, and again level all his prospects in the dust! how little that to the solitude which he condemns, I am doomed by her who to him is such a cause of rejoicing! that, through her means, I am for ever banished the social circle—for ever excluded from participating in the sweet delights of domestic happiness! that the power of those smiles, those bewitching looks, of which he speaks, I have already but too fatally experienced! Good God! how strange, how singular does what has happened seem! can I persuade myself I am not dreaming, when I think of my wife being, at this very minute, beneath the roof with me, in the midst of my connexions, my friends, yet without either party having a surmise of the tie between them! of her whom they are so anxious to see me united to being already mine, but mine never to be acknowledged!’

He continued lost in thought, till roused by the faint sound of distant music from the ball-room. Impelled by resistless feelings, he softly quitted his chamber, and gliding into an obscure passage, leading immediately to the scene of gaiety, again beheld the enchanting form of Angelina moving through the mazes of an intricate dance with his brother. Again, as his eyes became riveted on her—again, as he beheld her an object of general admiration, he wildly demanded of himself, was she indeed the weeping suppliant he had so recently thrown from him?—hers the beauteous form he had spurned at his feet?—‘Oh, Heavens! as I now gaze,’ he internally exclaimed, ‘I wonder I had power to do so! but have I had power to expl-

her from my heart? Oh no, no!' striking his forehead, and rushing back to the solitude of his chamber; 'the pangs that now rend it convince me to the contrary, convince me that she still reigns within it, to my equal misery and shame.'

While her idea was thus a source of torture to him, his, as lord Hexham, was dwelt on with a feeling of placid esteem and admiration by the forsaken Angeline. The terms in which her father had mentioned him had created for him an almost unconscious interest in her breast—an interest that occasioned her to feel something like disappointment on seeing him return unaccompanied to the ball-room; for on quitting it, having mentioned to her where he was going, she did not, in consequence, deem it altogether improbable that the interesting invalid might be prevailed on to make his appearance there for a few minutes; but she would have thought herself insensible, had she not experienced some little anxiety to behold a being in whose praise every tongue was eloquent—who had been represented to her so amiable, so interesting; more especially as she had not, as yet, the remotest suspicion of her father's motive for desiring to excite such a prepossession in his favour. In speaking of him as he did, she had no conception of his being actuated by any other than mere esteem and admiration.

 CHAP. X.

In vain you sooth me with your soft endearments,
 And set the fairest countenance to view;
 Your gloomy eyes betray a deadness,
 And inward languishing.

LEE'S *Œdipus*.

BUT for the secret that weighed upon the tortured heart of Angeline, her embarrassing situation, how pure, how perfect would now have been her happiness! finding herself, as she did, the pride, the joy, the delight of one of the most estimable of human beings, and possessed of the means of gratifying every wish in its fullest extent! But, alas! the past had to her poisoned the present and the future. The reflection of what she in reality was, a deserted wife, ere well a bride; of all that was most precious in existence—her fame, the peace of her idolizing parent, being at the mercy of a man, who, from his inhuman conduct, there was but too much reason to apprehend would hesitate at no act of cruelty or injustice, rendered vapid to her every enjoyment—tasteless every pleasure.

In particular, but for her cruel situation, she would have been happy in the society of the amiable family at the Abbey, so truly did she find them answering the idea she had been led to form of them.

The constant constraint she was under a necessity of imposing on her feelings aggravated her wretchedness; to be obliged to smile, and appear happy, with a heart wrung with anguish, a spirit possessed with dismay, was a misery scarce supportable, but a misery from which she was not quickly relieved, so delighted was her exulting fa-

ther at exhibiting her to his friends—so anxious were those friends, by every suitable compliment on the occasion, to evince their sincere participation in the happiness her restoration had occasioned.

At length she began to have longer intervals to herself, intervals that were passed in a manner that soon rendered her acquainted with all the romantic solitudes of Rooksdale—solitudes so delightful, as to induce her to repair to them at every opportunity : exclusive of the state of mind that rendered their privacy and deep gloom particularly adapted to her present feelings, she derived a kind of pensive pleasure from straying amidst them, now, when

The pale descending year, yet pleasing still,
 A gentle mood inspires; for now the leaf
 Incessant rustles from the mournful grove,
 Oft startling such, as, studious, walk below,
 And slowly circles through the waving air;
 But should a quicker breeze amid the boughs
 Sob o'er the sky the leafy deluge streams,
 Till choked and matted with the dreary show'r,
 The forest walks at every rising gale.

But the relief she imagined her o'erfraught heart would experience, from an opportunity of venting its feelings in tears, was not always felt. Recollections were revived by the scenes she frequented, that at times had the effect of rendering them less endurable than ever—the subduing recollections of the delightful hours she had passed in similar ones with him who had so cruelly renounced her. In those moments of unutterable softness, of reviving tenderness, of weakened resentment, oh ! how wild was her anguish at the thought ! how like the icy chillness of death the sensation imparted by the idea of seeing him no more ! A thousand times, with her humid eyes involuntarily bent on the wide-extended horizon, as if she hoped, in the extensive range, to

have discovered it, has she demanded whither he had betaken him? and yet as often has doubted, if possessed of the knowledge, whether she would avail herself of it—would, by seeking him, incur the risk of encountering his cruelty again; the risk of being again spurned, reviled, upbraided, cast like a loathsome weed away; above all, the risk of being torn from her fond, her idolizing parent; oh, no! never could the dread inspired by his inhumanity be sufficiently conquered to permit of such a measure.—Yet was this dread, now so powerful, a new emotion, originating entirely in her solicitude about her father? but for that, what was there which she would not voluntarily have encountered, for the sake even of once more seeing him?

But not always for the purpose of giving utterance to her feelings did she repair to solitude; she sometimes sought it for the purpose of trying to subdue them, of endeavouring to attain such a degree of calmness, as should enable her to enter society with less pain, or meet the observation of her father with less alarm.

But the eye of real tenderness, ever anxious in its nature, is not easily deceived. The melancholy that weighed upon her spirits was apparent to her father, from the very first hour of her arrival at Rooksdale; believing it, however, the natural result of what she felt at her sudden separation from her earliest friend—the kind of revolting sensation which the mind is sometimes apt to experience in acknowledging unexpected claims, he in consequence felt but little uneasiness at it, conceiving, as she became reconciled to her change of situation and connexions, it must give way. But when, instead of this, of yielding to the influence of tenderness and unremitting attention to every wish, he

saw it daily strengthen—saw her, whenever she thought she was unobserved, lost in gloomy thought, or bathed in tears—saw her sometimes, even in the midst of company, look abstracted, and forlorn, he became seriously alarmed from being compelled to impute it to some other cause; still, however, he checked himself from speaking on the subject, under the hope of yet seeing it yield to her own efforts, and from an unwillingness to distress her by noticing what she wished to conceal. This hope, however, gradually weakening, he could no longer control himself—no longer calmly endure to see her fading and drooping before his eyes, like some beauteous floweret of the spring, nipt by the returning winds of winter. Stealing upon her one day, in a remote apartment, where, as usual, when alone, she had abandoned herself to tears, he gave unrestrained utterance to all the anxiety and alarm she had excited.—‘In vain, in vain,’ he cried, ‘you try to deceive me—in vain to set the fairest countenance to view; your eyes betray an inward languishing, that too fatally convinces me some secret grief preys upon your heart. Oh, my child, be merciful, be compassionate; relieve me from the tortures endured from the idea, by a candid avowal of the cause of your unhappiness? Think ’tis a father solicits the confession, whose affection is too great not to induce him to any measure that may be deemed essential to its removal. If owing to any secret attachment, fear not to disclose it, since be assured, neither inferiority of fortune, nor even of birth, provided the object be proved worthy of them, shall influence me to disappoint your affections, so essential to mine is your happiness, so interweven with yours,’—yet involuntarily hesitating a little, as he proceeded, from a dread of this proving the case, and

consequently his fond wish for an alliance with the Pontefract family abortive; 'my existence, yes! I feel that was it now the will of Heaven to deprive me of you, now that the endearing ties of nature have indeed been wound round my heart, I should not long survive to mourn you.'

'Oh my father!' said the greatly-agitated Angeline, as she raised his hand to her pale quivering lips, 'this tenderness, this goodness overpowers me! but I trust I shall never put either to too severe a trial.—I—' but faltering as she spoke, and involuntarily inclining her face upon the hand she still held, in order to conceal the conscious blushes she felt mounting to it, 'have nothing of the nature you allude to to confess. Is it, is it not possible,' again half-meeting his eye, and again half-shunning it, 'is it not possible to experience melancholy without any definite cause? is it not often known that, without any immediate external one, the

'Flagging soul flies under her own pitch,
Like fowl in air too damp, and lags along,
As if she were a body in a body,
And not a mounting substance made of fire.'

'Assuredly,' replied Clanronel; 'of the propensity to melancholy in the natures of many who have no immediate cause of complaint against fortune on their own account, there are but too many instances; but then, 'tis almost uniformly confined to those whose long acquaintance with the world has afforded them ample opportunities of witnessing the variableness of all human enjoyments, the sudden changes and chances to which all in this sublunary life are liable; but for the young to experience a feeling of the kind would be strange and unnatural. Cheerfulness and joy are their natural feelings;

life, from its freshness alone, appears to them possessed of inexhaustible charms; a happy thoughtlessness, if I may so style it, is their distinguishing trait; they buzz and flutter in the genial ray, without thinking, for a moment, that it may be withdrawn. The fading of the rose full-blown we can account for; but when we see the bud withering as it opens, we at once surmise a canker at the heart.

Angeline gushed into tears.—‘Oh my father!’ she cried, ‘do not render me miserable, by yielding to an idea of that kind; allow something for the trials my feelings have lately experienced; nor imagine I do not fully appreciate my happiness, because a sigh has now and then escaped me—I shall soon, I trust, be able to convince you, in the way you wish, of my doing so. In the meanwhile, should a chance tear be sometimes seen on my cheek, do not seem to mind it; to leave me to myself will have a better effect than any observation.’

The fond father promised what she required—required without allowing herself to reflect that the request was a tacit acknowledgment of having some secret grief to conceal. Indeed, so thorough was he convinced of this, that but for his dread of hearing some avowal that must compel him to abandon his favourite project of uniting her to lord Hexham, he would not so soon have ceased to importune her on the subject. That she had formed some attachment, which, from some cause or other, she could not bring herself to avow, was his confirmed belief; and in consequence, he was more than ever solicitous for an introduction between her and lord Hexham; conceiving it scarcely possible they could be known to each other without a mutual interest being excited.

The kind of partial explanation that had taken place between Angeline and her father afforded some little relief to her oppressed mind, by the indulgence it had allowed her to solicit. Convinced, however, of the source of misery she should be to him, should she permit him to imagine she still continued the prey of dejection, she had recourse to innumerable innocent little arts, for the purpose of inducing a contrary belief, of persuading him that her hours of solitude were not all passed in the indulgence of melancholy. Sometimes she returned with a sketch of forest scenery, or of some striking feature in the landscape; sometimes with a collection of herbs, or, as the poet says, 'what the dull incurious, weeds account;' sometimes with various passages marked in a poem, illustrative of the scenes amidst which she had been wandering.

Straying one day farther than she had before been, she suddenly found herself in a romantic glade, at once so retired and beautiful, as involuntarily to cause her to pause: nothing could surpass the fineness of the verdure, and which, struck as it was at the moment by the rays of the morning sun, formed an admirable contrast to the deep gloom of the contiguous and far-receding shades, diversified with trees of every growth, alike, yet various; a silvery rill meandered amidst the intertwined roots; and couched beneath a grassy hillock was a low hermitage, overshadowed by one of the mightiest, the most magnificent oaks Angeline had ever seen, and which, from the grandeur of its dimensions, immediately recalled to her recollection the poet's description of this sovereign of the woods;—

' His wide-extended limbs the forest drown'd,
Shading its trees as much as they the ground ;

Young murm'ring tempests in his boughs are bred,
 And gath'ring clouds trown round his lofty head ;
 Outrageous thunder, stormy winds, and rain,
 Discharge their fury on his head in vain ;
 Earthquakes below, and lightning from above,
 Rend not his trunk, nor his fix'd root remove.

Examining the cell, the following pencilled lines within it, in the hand of her father, caught her eye, and convincing her of its being a favourite retreat of his, strengthened the inclination she felt to take a sketch of the spot, for the sake of having a drawing of the beautiful oak :—

In this lone cell, his hopes o'erthrown,
 Each fond delusive prospect fled,
 When hid, each dell and leafy bow'r,
 O'er all a sadd'ning gloom is spread,

A wretched wand'rer loves to weep,
 Where seems the passing gale to moan,
 When darkness veils the beetling steep,
 And cold dews wet the rugged stone.

Retreating to a proper distance, she seated herself on a felled tree, and quickly succeeded in taking the intended sketch ; returning then immediately home, she hastily coloured it, and seeking her father, presented it to him with a smile, and request to know whether there was any place it reminded him of? A glance sufficed to let him answer her in the affirmative. Delighted with the accuracy of the sketch, the richness of the colouring, he protested lord Hexham must see it—must be gratified with seeing what an admirable drawing she had made of his favourite oak, which he had often declared worthy of equal honours with that of Hainault.

Angeline made a faint effort to oppose this intention, but a vain one. She then entreated to be.

allowed to re-examine and retouch it ; but in this also she failed ; Clanronel was too impatient to exhibit it, to hearken to any thing that could occasion this to be delayed a minute, and accordingly almost ran off with it to the Abbey. Admitting himself by a door in the cloisters, opening on the private staircase leading to the apartments of lord Hexham, he ascended to them unannounced. The day being sultry, the intermediate doors were all lying open, so that he had nearly a view from one end of the suite to the other. In consequence, just as he entered the outer room, he beheld his young friend hastily retreating from a further one, into an adjoining closet. Concluding, however, that he did not know whose approach it was he heard, he continued to advance. The windows of the apartment thus suddenly vacated were all open, and just as he set his foot within it, a paper came blown towards him by the air. He took it up, and was about placing it under a book, when chancing to glance at it, he became nearly motionless with astonishment, at beholding an admirable, though evidently hastily executed likeness of Angeline, sketched in the attitude of making the drawing he had brought along with him. But astonishment was not the only emotion it excited ; equal at the moment was his pleasure to his surprise, from the conviction it afforded of Angeline having been seen by his young friend, and seen with the admiration he wished.

While his eyes were fastened on it, the door of the interior chamber opened, and lord Hexham came forth ; he was eagerly advancing to shake hands with him, when seeing how he was employed, he suddenly stopped, drew back for an instant, and then again stepping forward, made an effort to

take the paper from him, exclaiming—‘ Good Heavens! how did that come into your hands? I thought I had put aside all the papers in the portfolio.’

‘ Why by means of a kind zephyr, more obliging than you would have been, I make no doubt,’ returned Clanronel, ‘ for I am persuaded you would not have let me know you saw my little girl; but why, now, when you had such an opportunity, not introduce yourself to her? She would have been so pleased.’

‘ Pleased!’ involuntarily repeated Hexham, with an emphasis that must have struck Clanronel as rather strange, had not his attention been too much engrossed, at the moment, to permit him to mind it.

‘ Yes, pleased; but don’t grow conceited because I say so; for remember, and be suitably grateful, ’tis only from my favourable report she is anxious to know you. But come, confess the truth; was your not presenting yourself to her owing to your thinking, after this long indisposition, you did not look quite so charming as you could wish? but only let her see you, blushing as you do now, and my life for it, she deems you handsome enough.—Why even that puppy Mountbrilliant, with all his conceit, would be inclined to envy you, if he saw you this moment. Come, come, as you have been out once to-day to oblige yourself, you shall come out again to oblige me: we’ll dine early on your account, and return to tea with you.’

‘ Excuse me,’ said lord Hexham, in extreme agitation, and disengaging his arm, which he had taken, ‘ ’tis really not in my power to accompany you.’

‘ Not!’ repeated Clanronel, ‘ and why so? but I

shall take no excuse I assure you. I quite enjoy the idea of the surprise it will be to Angeline, my bringing you with me.'

'Surprise!' cried lord Hexham; 'good God!'

'Why, yes: is there any thing terrific in the idea, that you look so wild?'

'No, certainly not,' faltered out Hexham; 'but, in short, I am compelled to repeat you must excuse me, and to add, that I shall esteem it an obligation your not mentioning to any one my having been out this day. I have the most important reasons for the request.'

'Well, I certainly shall not act contrary to your wishes in either instance; but,' surveying him with earnestness, 'I cannot avoid telling you, my dear fellow, that I really am beginning to think you, what I never did before, a little whimsical, since able to make the exertion of going out, what, in the name of Heaven, can be your motive? but I will not put questions the anticipation of which has, I see, distressed you. But though I wont question, I can't avoid threatening; you know there's an old saying, 'If Mahomet wont come to the mountain, &c.' so if you don't soon make your appearance in the social circle again, I give you timely notice you may, some day or other, expect to see me walking in to you, with Angeline in my hand'

'Oh, good God, I hope not!' involuntarily exclaimed the alarmed Hexham.

Clanronel laughed.—'Hope not!' he repeated; 'why even if the visit was *mal apropos*, is there no convenient screen at hand behind which a little French milliner might be popped in a moment? but come,' shaking hands with him, 'I won't tease you any longer; invalids, I know, are pettish.—There (presenting it to him) is the sketch you saw

Angeline taking; you may keep it as a recompence for the one I am going to deprive you of.'

'Why you have no idea of shewing that to Miss Clanronel?'

'Indeed but I have; I shall like to see how she'll blush when she learns that all the time she imagined herself unobserved, you were gazing on her.'

'Nay, I cannot allow of such a thing,' said lord Hexham; and suddenly wresting it from him, he crushed it in his hand, and threw it into the fire-place.

'This is rather disobliging,' cried Clanronel, in a tone of evident pique.

'Nay, pardon me,' said Hexham, hurt to the soul at being compelled to act so contrary to his natural feelings; 'you must not leave me in displeasure. My vanity,' trying to soften the resentment he saw he had inspired, 'would not allow me to let Miss Clanronel see the little justice I had ability to do her.'

Clanronel, however, was too seriously vexed to be prevailed on readily to forgive him; at length, yielding to his importunities, he promised to think no more of the matter; and shaking hands with him, with his usual air of cordiality, soon after departed.

Passing through the cloisters again, he encountered the marchioness and lady Mara returning from a walk, and who would not let him leave them, till he had promised to come back to dinner with Angeline.

The communication he made to Angeline had the effect of painting her cheeks with all those beautiful blushes he had anticipated from it: she could not indeed hear of having been the object of

lord Hexham's secret observation—lord Hexham described so interesting as to have excited an involuntary wish for his esteem, without extreme agitation and confusion. Her father augured favourably, from these blushes, to his hopes, little aware of their being owing to a mixed emotion, a pleasurable sensation, which she condemned herself for feeling—an agonizing reflection, which she shrunk from dwelling on.

CHAP. XI.

Floating in a flood of care,
 This way and that she turns her anxious mind;
 Thinks and rejects the counsel she design'd;
 Explores herself in ev'ry part,
 And gives no rest to her distracted heart.

DRYDEN.

A SELECT party dined this day at the Abbey. On quitting the dining room, instead of repairing with the marchioness and the other ladies to the drawing room, the lively lady Mara and Angeline turned into the cloisters, faintly illumined with the receding beams of the evening sun.

After allowing her sufficient time, lest an appearance of impatience should beget suspicion, to gratify her curiosity by an examination of the curious inscriptions and engravings on the monumental stones that here composed the pavement, lady Mara, agreeably to a preconcerted plan of her own, led her companion to the gallery in which were situated the apartments occupied by lord Hexham; and in pointing out to her the various pictures and statues that embellished it, drew her almost insen-

sibly towards the door opening to them.—‘ That head,’ she began, directing her attention to a bust, ‘ is said to have been found in the baths, which, together with his gardens near the Pantheon, Agrippa bequeathed to the Roman people, but of which the antiquarian now in vain seeks for some trace. This beautiful fawn is also supposed to have belonged to the still more magnificent *Thermæ Dioclesanæ*. That Bacchante is a copy, by an ancient artist, of the celebrated one in the Vatican Museum; and this beautiful nymph, appearing as if dancing to the pipe of the fawn, a precious antique from Greece; but within,’ softly laying her hand upon the door of her brother’s apartment, ‘ is a piece of workmanship I must not forget to show you—a statue that without any thing of antiquity to recommend it, is still pronounced worthy of notice; but you shall judge whether it might not be considered ornamental, at least in a lady’s boudoir,’ throwing open the door as she spoke, and bolting in, followed by her unconscious companion.

Somewhat startled by this intrusion, lord Hexham raised his eyes from the book with which he was engrossed at the moment, to see who it was that had made so unceremonious an *entrée*; perceiving, he was on the point of requesting her little ladyship to be less abrupt for the future, when he caught a glimpse of Angeline; he had but just time to snatch up his handkerchief from the arm of the couch on which he was reclining, and apply it to his face, ere she stood before him; what he felt at the moment may easier be conceived than described: the conscious awkwardness of his situation heightened not a little his agitation; motioning for Angeline to take a seat, he kept bowing and

drawing back towards the door of an inner apartment, till finally enabled to retreat. The moment he had disappeared, lady Mara, throwing herself on the seat she had occasioned him so suddenly to vacate, declared, with a laugh, and an effort to pull Angeline beside her, she quite enjoyed the idea of the surprise she had caused him.

‘It may be very amusing to you,’ said the indignant Angeline, a little recovering from the confusion into which she had been thrown, and which had had the effect of absolutely depriving her, for a minute, of the power of motion; ‘but pardon me for saying it is by no means equally so to me: good Heavens! lady Mara, how could you think of such a thing? depend on it, for this trick you shall never be my *cicerone* again.’

‘Nay, I am sure you wont be so unforgiving,’ said lady Mara, following her out, ‘Upon my honour, what I did was out of real good nature. I had heard, in certain cases, of electricity being serviceable, and so I determined to try its effect upon Hexham.’

‘Well, I request, when you have an inclination to try the experiment again, I may not be made the instrument.’

Oh dear, nothing but a very powerful one would have answered the purpose. Had I made choice of lady Bridget Hardcastle, or any other of the party mamma has now with her, the effect would not, by any means, have been the same on him.’

Angeline with difficulty forbore smiling—‘Nevertheless,’ said she, ‘I shan’t readily forgive you.’

‘Nay, but I know you will,’ in a coaxing voice, and looking in her face, as she rested her arm on her shoulder; ‘yes, I can see, by that lurking smile

at the corner of your mouth, and that beautiful blush, so like the one I could see on the cheek of Hexham, notwithstanding the application of his handkerchief, that you are not so angry as you pretend.'

'Blush,' repeated Angeline, involuntarily extremely confused at the inference she seemed to draw from it; 'how can I help blushing at the idea of what your brother may think?'

Ah! I am convinced he'll never be able to think any thing to your disadvantage; and, ere long, I hope he'll be at your elbow, to tell you so himself.'

'Let the subject drop,' said Angeline, still more confused—confused by the undefinable sensation excited in her mind by the idea of lord Hexham, an idea rendered still more interesting by the likeness she had an opportunity of ascertaining he bore to Villiers; 'all I shall further observe relative to it is, that you really have very much discomposed me, by what you have done.'

'Indeed! well, now that I look at you again, I believe I have, for I see your colour changes; here, take my eau-de-luce, and if that wont do, I'll run and get you some sal volatile—the sovereignest thing on earth,' Mountbrilliant says for the spirits.'

Angeline thanked her; but as she now hastened from the gallery, fearful, if she longer delayed, of some other trick being played her, said there was no necessity.

In the cloisters lady Mara again stopt her, for the purpose of enjoining silence relative to what had passed above in the drawing room; declaring, if mama knew it, it would be the means of occasioning her a lecture, which was, of all things, what she most disliked.

‘And which I am inclined to think now and then very necessary,’ said Angeline, laughingly, ‘for indeed I am tempted to believe your ladyship a very mischievous little girl.’

Lady Mara, in the same strain, as she led the way to the drawing room, assured her to the contrary.

After tea, finding themselves at liberty to amuse themselves as they pleased, they repaired to the piano, accompanied by lord Mountbrilliant, who, indeed, wherever lady Mara was seen, was almost sure of being found moving, like an inferior planet, in her orbit. After playing several delightful duos together, lady Mara, suddenly rising, requested Angeline to favour them with a Spanish air on the guitar. She complied, charming her attentive auditors with the sweetness of her tones: the last cadence was dying away, sweetly mingling with the silvery sound of the vibrating chords, when she was startled by a heavy sigh behind her.—‘Good Heaven!’ she exclaimed, with a look of wildness, and almost starting from her seat, ‘who was it that sighed so?’

‘Sighed!’ repeated the viscount, with a vacant look, as if starting from a delightful trance; ‘here is no visible being but ourselves; it must be some faint echo of your own enchanting strains you heard.’

‘No, no,’ replied Angeline, again glancing behind her, ‘I am positive I was not mistaken; I did not merely hear, but also, I may say, feel the sigh, for it was absolutely breathed upon my very neck.’

‘Hush,’ said lady Mara, in a whisper, as, under the pretext of looking for some music, she stooped down; ‘it was Hexham you heard; immediately

behind your chair is one of those numerous dark passages with which this ancient edifice abounds, and from which I have this instant caught a glimpse of him gliding away.'

Angeline directly rose and moved to another part of the room: trembling with emotion, an emotion heightened by her dread of its being discovered, she threw herself on a window-seat, which commanding a view of the magnificent woods now beautifully chequered by the light of a full-orbed moon, afforded her a pretext for averting her looks. She knew not how to account for the effect lord Hexham's conduct had upon her—his at once appearing to seek and shun her, except by imputing it to some secret presentiment of a more intimate acquaintance with her proving productive of unhappiness to him. The idea subdued her to tears; and throwing up the sash, she bent from the window, in order to conceal them; but a pair of keenly-penetrating eyes was on her—lady Mara, without her being conscious of it, was at her elbow, and now leaning out of the window along with her, declared she must have the flowers in her bosom. Angeline demanded why, as, with seeming carelessness, she slightly touched her eyes with her handkerchief. 'Why, for a present for Hexham,' returned her lively ladyship; 'the tear I saw fall upon them will render them inestimable in his sight; for not even sir Charles Grandison more admired the dew-drops of sensibility, than he does. Come, I must have them;' and ere she could make an effort to prevent her, she snatched them from her bosom.

Confused and agitated by the idea of her emotion being mentioned to lord Hexham, or rather of the surmises it might cause, Angeline tried, but in

vain to recover them, under the hope that if she had nothing to remind her of it, lady Mara would think no more of the circumstance; she persisted in keeping them, declaring they would answer for the peace-offering she must have for her brother against their next meeting.

Good Heavens! how considerably did these words tend to heighten the agitation of Angelina, from the inference they allowed her to draw from them! Had she then been represented in such a manner to lord Hexham as to induce him to set a value on any thing belonging to her? Oh no, she hoped not, she trusted not, for the sake of the happiness, the peace of so interesting a being. Yes, sweet as she felt to her heart would be the idea of possessing his esteem, yet a thousand times rather did she feel she would forego it, than obtain it at the expense of any thing like his tranquillity.

But how faint was the emotion she experienced on this occasion, though such as quickened every throbbing pulse, compared to that she felt the ensuing day, when, on joining her in her dressing-room after a long visit from the marquis in his study, her father, with a flush upon his cheek that gave animation to every feature, and uncommon expression to his eyes, informed her, with a kiss, that the marquis had been with him that morning for the purpose of making an overture of the most interesting nature to him. ‘After saying this, need I enter into any explanation?’ he added, looking with smiling significance in her face; is it necessary to intimate it is for an alliance between our families? lord Hexham empowered him to make known his reciprocal wish for it; and, in the course of a few days, hopes to be able to give utterance to it himself in person.—But what’s the matter, my love,

you look so pale? I fear I have been too abrupt; but this is always the case when I am overjoyed; 'out of the fulness of the heart,' they say 'the mouth speaketh:' when I have any thing pleasant to communicate, I cannot, for the life of me, set about the disclosure in a circuitous manner; yet I am a little surprised at seeing you so agitated, since surely, from all I said, the hints I gave, the manner in which I spoke of lord Hexham, you might have suspected there was something of the kind in contemplation.'

'I tried not to do so,' said the almost petrified Angeline, involuntarily.

'What, for fear of being disappointed?' smiling, and again kissing her cheek; 'well, well, I don't know; but too much humility is nearly as bad as too much vanity; but come, I can see by your looks you would not be sorry to be left a little while to yourself; so I'll intrude no longer for the present, than merely to tell you the Pontefract family dine here to-day.'

Angeline started.—'What, the whole of the family?' she demanded, almost gasping.

'No, no; lord Hexham is not yet sufficiently recovered to dine abroad; but as I was about observing, as I have given the marquis to understand there is but little danger of his overture being declined, pray put on such a countenance against the arrival of our guests, as may tend to strengthen the pleasing hope I have inspired.'

Angeline bowed; to speak at the moment was impossible; and telling her the hour at which she might expect a summons to the drawing-room, he retired.

The moment he was gone, the pent-up anguish of Angeline's distracted bosom burst forth; she

wrung her hands, and raised her eyes despairingly to heaven,—‘ Oh good God !’ she exclaimed, ‘ what will become of me ?—by what means shall I be enabled to extricate myself from the difficulties that surround me ? Am I doomed to the terrible task of dissimulating for ever ! must I act so as to strengthen a hope that never, never can be realized ! Oh my friend—my second father !’ she proceeded, apostrophizing the absent St. Ruth, ‘ would that thou wert now here ! I should not then feel so utterly dismayed—so forlorn as I now do ; for thou, if any one, would be able to guide me through this sea of difficulties, without utter shipwreck. : Yes ; though to obtain thy counsel I must humble myself in thy sight, still would I do so, for the purpose in full confidence, that though the error must be condemned the sufferer would be commiserated. Unhappy father ! ah, how little art thou aware of the galling chain already imposed on the hand so fondly destined by thee for another ! ah, how little that, to thy miserable daughter, every door of domestic happiness and enjoyment is for ever closed ! Oh, Villiers, what have you made me suffer ! but for you, how bright, how felicitous might my prospects, at this moment, be ? but for you, it might be my blessed lot to have become one of this family of harmony and love ! yet Heaven can attest, that if the anguish that now rives my heart was occasioned but by a mere participation with thee in the calamities life is liable to, not a sigh at our union would ever have escaped me. But why cannot I summon sufficient courage to throw myself at the feet of my father, and confess to him the fatal truth—confess to him the secret that throbs in my breast, that robs my cheek of colour, my brow of serenity ?—Yet no, no !’ she wildly added, recoiling a few paces, as

if she actually saw embodied the terrible images her fancy conjured up to her at the idea ; ‘ oh, no ! never could I support the sight of the agonies the confession would occasion—the haggard expression of his countenance, when he should hear what a wretch I was.’

And yet, by withholding it, she was aware she should only be able to save him from greater pain ; for how much must he be hurt, she reflected, by the suspicion which her rejection of lord Hexham must excite, either of her being improperly attached, or else insensible of real merit !

‘ Turn which way I will, therefore,’ she said, ‘ I see no hope of any alleviation of anguish : gloomy and affecting images alone meet my view ; but something must be decided on. With that propensity, however, which we all have to put off a disagreeable decision as long as possible, she resolved on not coming to a determination till there was an absolute necessity for her doing so, which she supposed would not be the case till an introduction had taken place between her and lord Hexham.

Languidly she prepared for the reception of the expected guests. Their looks and manner, kinder and more affectionate than ever—the sly inuendoes and arch smiles of lady Mara, all tended to deepen her dread of being entangled in such a way, with regard to lord Hexham, as would render absolutely necessary the adoption of some painful resolution.

Of the equal wretchedness of his feelings she was little aware—of the conflicts in her bosom being, if possible, surpassed by those of his : such was the case, however ; he could not reflect on having had recourse to artifice—on having acted with deception towards his father, without a feeling of re-

morse—a humiliating sense of degradation, that rendered still more acute his misery. The marquis, at length led to believe, from a variety of circumstances, his secluding himself from society owing to some other cause than mere indisposition, could no longer forbear coming to an explanation with him on the subject; equally grieved and indignant at the idea suggested by this belief, of his being still the slave of an unworthy attachment; or else resolutely bent on still disappointing his views respecting him.

The explicitness with which he revealed his sentiments gave the unhappy Hexham clearly to see there was no means of removing his suspicions, but by a seeming acquiescence in his wishes. Embarrassed beyond description, he paced the room with disordered steps, unknowing how to act, yet shrinking from the thought of incurring the resentment of a parent so truly loved.

At length, as a means of extricating himself from his present dilemma, he suddenly decided on appearing to accede to his wishes, under the firm persuasion of the prompt refusal of Angeline preventing the measure from involving him in any new difficulty; for though it seemed evident to him that she meant carefully to conceal her marriage, he could not for a moment bring himself to believe she ever meant to forget it. But so revolting to a mind of real candour, so humbling, so embarrassing is the idea of a deviation from sincerity, that not the motive to which his departure from it was owing, nor yet the happiness he saw resulting to his father from the false belief he had imposed upon him, could, in any degree, reconcile him to it. He sighed when he declared that he had rendered him the happiest of happy fathers, by his allowing him to make

an overture for the alliance on which his heart was set; and blushed on his adding he should not readily pardon himself for having given way, for a minute, to a suspicion to his prejudice, though so justified by appearances, that to others, perhaps, it might appear excusable. The fact was, he had, at length, discovered that lord Hexham was in the habit of frequently leaving his apartments for hours at a time; and, in consequence, could not forbear considering his indisposition more an ideal than real one, or rather a mere pretext for avoiding the society he wished him introduced to.

A similar suspicion, owing to a similar discovery, was the cause of lady Mara's playing the trick which had occasioned him and Angeline so much confusion and agitation. From knowing he was not always to be found in his apartments, she could not help shrewdly suspecting his appearing to confine himself to them entirely owing to some capricious dislike to the projected alliance between him and Angeline, a dislike which, conceiving it impossible for him to retain if he but once saw her, she determined on devising a plan for secretly introducing them to each other, a determination which, as we have seen, she carried into effect.

But Clanronel was by no means so happy, by no means so satisfied as he affected to be—affected to be for the purpose of trying to impress the mind of Angeline with a belief of his dreading no disappointment, under the hope of such a persuasion being a means of inducing her to acquiesce in his wishes. Her looks, her manner, her broken sentences, on their avowal, all, all inspired apprehensions of the most painful nature—apprehensions he felt himself so utterly unable to endure, that, on the following morning, he resolved on coming to a still

fuller explanation with her; and receiving either an explicit answer relative to the proposal made for her hand, or else an assurance of an immediate deliberation on it.

Hoping for some little respite from agitation, to remain unsolicited on the subject, at least till after the introduction of lord Hexham, how great was the shock sustained by Angeline, on hearing herself suddenly addressed upon it!

Her changing countenance too evidently demonstrated to her father what she felt, not to induce him to remain satisfied with merely entreating her to take the overture into immediate consideration. He would have dreaded indeed urging her for an answer to it at the moment, so inauspicious to his hopes had he every reason, from her looks, to imagine it would have been. Kissing her pale cheek, with an assurance, that, for whatever request he urged, she might rely on it solicitude for her happiness was his motive, he shortly after quitted the room, convinced there was but little chance of her recovering from the emotion she was in, till left to herself.

Angeline no sooner found herself at liberty, than she hurried from the house, as if fearful of restraint or observation if she remained within it. But with no hope of recovering calmness in the solitary shades to which she was repairing, did she hasten forward: her mind was in that tumultuous state in which external objects can have little influence. She found herself in a situation of the cruelest embarrassment—compelled to a decision for which no reason could be assigned, that could, in any degree, justify or excuse it. To positively reject the proposal of lord Hexham, without having seen him, must, she was but too well aware,

subject her to the most unpleasant suspicions, or rather confirm those it was but too evident to her father entertained, of her having a secret attachment; and yet called upon as she was immediately for a conditional answer, how could she avoid declaring her determination to decline it?

In such a case, would not a little evasion be excusable? and yet of what avail any, she reflected, if still the affair must end in her appearing to be the person through whose means the projected alliance was declined? Oh! if lord Hexham knew of her cruel situation—if he knew of the agony of her sinking heart, at the idea of incurring the displeasure of her father, forfeiting his esteem, might he not be induced to save her from what she dreaded—induced to let it appear that to him, not her, was owing the relinquishment of the proposed alliance? But should he disappoint the expectations she had been led to form of him—should he not possess that real nobleness and generosity of nature which could alone propel him to act in the manner she required—oh! what, she reflected, would be her regret, her despair, her confusion, and everlasting shame, at having confided to him her story—at having revealed to him the humiliation, the degradation she had met with! Ere she could decide on so entirely committing herself, she felt she must be assured beyond a doubt that he was the kind of being he had been represented; and yet how was she to receive this assurance?—of whom had she the power of learning?—of whom of inquiring into these minute traits that more fully develop the character, than any one particular action, but of that partial friend who was interested in making him appear all that was amiable in her eyes? With increasing anxiety she pursued her way, be-

traying, by her looks and gestures, the agitating influence of the feelings that alternately swayed her. Sometimes she started, as if a sudden pang had seized her, gazed round her with a sigh, and seemed inclined to stop—then again hurried forwards, with a countenance expressive of terror, as if impelled by some secret dread. Lost in thought, she unconsciously advanced within the shrouding gloom of the Abbey woods, so immediately blended in the distant view with those of Rooksdale, as to appear to form with them but one boundless contiguity of shade. An abrupt opening in the trees causing her, from the stronger light it admitted to the path she was pursuing, to uplift her dejected eyes from the ground, she beheld herself near the edge of a narrow river, winding, in the most picturesque manner, through the woods, with a light bridge thrown over it, which, from the sun shining on it at the moment, gave a brilliance to the water that admirably contrasted with the brownness of the surrounding shades. Immediately opposite to where she stood, an upland lawn overlooked the water, scattered over with trees and shrubs, gradually thickening again into deep masses of shade, with a beautiful cottage on its brow, bespread with luxuriant vines, and from which a steep descent at the side led to a small vale below, where the garden was formed.

The soft touches of nature's pencil, which she here beheld on every side, filled her with admiration; oppressed as she was with anguish, she yet could not forbear gazing with something of delight on this enchanting spot. While doing so, she was startled by hearing her name pronounced; she turned with quickness, and beheld a gentleman of the name of Soleure, who, together with his wife,

she had more than once met at St. Cuthbert's, advancing with a book in his hand, from a gothic bench, in a shady sequestered spot she had not before noticed, overlooking a little picturesque creek of the water. Having politely paid her the compliments of recognition, he gave her to understand, with an earnest entreaty for her to do him and Mrs. Soleure the honour of resting in it, that the cottage she saw was his.

Unfitted at present for conversation, Angeline was on the point of entreating him to have the goodness to excuse her then taking a nearer survey of his charming habitation, when the unexpected appearance of Mrs. Soleure, with her two lovely children, hastening towards them, evidently for the purpose of uniting in his request, prevented her. She could not, after such a proof of politeness, bring herself to act in any way that might appear uncourteous or repelling, and accordingly, crossing the bridge with Mr. Soleure, soon found herself seated in his parlour. Extending through the house, this room, at one end commanded a noble view of the rich woods and winding river, alternately appearing and disappearing amongst them, which Angeline had just been surveying; and from the other, a pleasant one, through the upright boles of the tall trees that shot to an immense height above the building, of the public road, and the scattered village through which it wound, surmounted by cultured fields, enlivened by flocks and herds.

The tasteful simplicity of all within perfectly accorded with the rustic exterior; nothing could be more in character with the style of the building than the furniture and decorations. Still more

pleased, Angeline could not refrain from expressing her admiration of all she saw.

‘Your approbation,’ replied Mr. Soleure, ‘is as pleasing to me as I am sure it would be flattering to those who planned this charming retreat; I have the enjoyment of its beauties, but to the taste of others is due the compliments they merit. This was fitted up for the residence of a noble emigrant the family knew abroad, and from the retirement in which he lived, styled the hermitage. They embellished it in this manner for him. The paradise you behold I found it on being put in possession of it, soon after his decease, through the kindness, the benevolence of lord Hexham.’

Lord Hexham, next to his unexpected appearance, was the sound of his name, just at this precise moment, calculated to agitate Angeline: involuntarily she repeated it, with something like a look of interrogation.

‘Yes,’ added Soleure, comprehending this look; ‘to him am I indebted for being its happy tenant:—its happy tenant! oh more! for still being, in all probability, an inhabitant of this nether scene! yes, to him do I owe both—do I owe obligations of a nature not to be done justice to—such as but even to glance at, excite emotions almost overwhelming.’

‘He is reckoned very amiable, I believe,’ said Angeline, but in a confused and agitated tone, owing to her anxiety to hear more, yet unwillingness to ask any direct question.

‘Amiable!’ repeated the animated Soleure, with emotion; ‘oh, he is the most—’ But what he was about adding was prevented by the sudden re-entrance of Mrs. Soleure at this moment, who, for an instant, had quitted the room to order in refreshments.

Angeline was of too grateful a nature not to force herself to make exertions to appear sensible of this politeness and hospitality—a politeness and hospitality which confirmed the prepossession she had previously conceived in favour of her entertainers: both, indeed, were perfectly calculated to immediately excite one of the kind, being extremely interesting in their appearance, and still more so in their manner.

But even if this had not been the case, nor any particular circumstance had occurred to excite a wish to appear pleased, still would she have lingered with them, from the curiosity excited respecting lord Hexham, or rather the hope she entertained, from what she had already heard, of being here able to obtain the further information relative to him she wished for. In the timid efforts, however, which she made for the purpose of leading the conversation again to him, she did not immediately succeed; at length, becoming still more anxious, or rather fearful, if not more explicit, of being disappointed, she took advantage of a momentary pause in the discourse, to ask Soleure whether they had been long acquainted?

‘About four years since,’ he replied, ‘chance brought us acquainted, or rather, let me say, a lucky Providence, for surely such it was to me; and so I am certain you’ll think it, should my story ever be made known to you, as something tells me it will; for we feel ourselves irresistibly propelled to speak of ourselves to those whose hearts we are aware are capable of general sympathy.’

Angeline bowed to this compliment.—‘Assuredly,’ she replied, ‘I should feel myself highly flattered, and, I make no doubt, equally gratified, by the communication you allude to.’

CHAP. XII.

Oh, let me in the country range!
 'Tis there we breathe, 'tis there we live;
 The beauteous scene of aged mountains,
 Smiling vallies, murm'ring fountains;
 Lambs in flow'ry pastures bleating,
 Echo our complaints repeating;
 Bees with busy sounds delighting,
 Groves to gentle sleep inviting;
 Whispering winds the poplars courting,
 Swains in rustic circles sporting;
 Birds in cheerful notes expressing,
 Nature's bounty, and their blessing:
 These afford a lasting pleasure,
 Without guilt, and without measure. **BROWN.**

'THEN without further preface, to give you my simple story,' said Soleure, 'you must know I am from Switzerland. That both from my accent and name you previously surmised my being a foreigner, I make no doubt; but till now I believe you were unacquainted with the place I belonged to. My father was a native of the canton of Friburgh, and carried on a mercantile concern in its romantic capital, the situation of which, if not the most beautiful, is, at least, the most wild and picturesque in all Helvetia; built partly in a plain, partly on bold acclivities, so hemmed in by circumjacent hills, that a glimpse is hardly caught, till, from an overhanging eminence, the traveller bursts upon a full view of it; the descent, on all sides, to the town is so extremely steep, that in one place the streets actually pass over the roofs of the houses, many of which regularly rise above one another, like the seats of an amphitheatre, while in other places they overhang the edge of precipices, in such a

manner as to make the head giddy; and where it has been observed, that an unfortunate lover, repulsed in his suit, might instantly put an end to his pains, by taking a leap from the parlour-window, without the trouble of a journey to Leucate, or to the rocks of Meillerie.

‘My mother was an Englishwoman, with whom my father had become acquainted in a journey on business to her native kingdom: never were two beings more sincerely attached, or perfectly resembling each other, united. In saying my father possessed all those striking traits that characterize his countrymen, I need add no more in his praise. My mother, like him, to an ardent imagination, united a taste for all that was sublime in nature, or elegant in composition, a noble love of independence, simplicity of manners, frankness of heart, the most genuine hospitality, and universal philanthropy.

‘The union of such similar characters could not fail of being productive of happiness; and the result of that happiness was peace and felicity to all around them.

‘I was their only offspring, and, as may be supposed, the object of their tenderest affection; my father intended me for his business, but this intention did not induce him to curb my genius, or rather, by compelling me to a slavish subjection to it, damp the natural ardour of my feelings.

‘With a quick perception of the beautiful and sublime, that perception by which, as an elegant author observes, ‘misery as well as rapture is produced,’ I was born; and with such a taste, it may readily be believed I could ill have brooked complete restraint. Far from declining by degrees, it gradually, I may say, grew with my growth, and

strengthened with my strength ; but it would have been strange had the case been otherwise, considering the sublime objects by which I was surrounded, the conversations I listened to, the pursuits I was indulged in. My father possessed too much of the national pride of the Swiss, not early to make me acquainted with all that was great and glorious in the annals of my country ; and while he dwelt with enthusiasm on the heroes who immortalized it, did not forget pointing the wild scenes of their exploits. With what rapture did I visit these scenes ! how was all that was ardent and enthusiastic in my nature awakened, as I wandered over the native canton of Tell, and mused upon his actions, amidst the gloom of the steep wood that awfully overhangs his chapel, on the romantic lake of Uri !

‘ The more intimately I became acquainted with my native country, the greater became my national pride ; but can this be wondered at, when, wherever I cast my eyes, I beheld man in his proper state, breathing the invigorating air of liberty, wearing the mien of content and satisfaction, and unostentatiously fulfilling every social duty ?

‘ But not exclusively were my wanderings confined to the scenes rendered interesting by the historian ; there was not a romantic spot or celebrated place within the states which I did not visit ; more than once I pilgrimized to St. Gallen’s and the shrine of our lady at Einsilden, traversed the dreary Grimsel, and contemplated, with mingled awe and admiration, the tremendous cataract of the Rhine, and its magnificent scenery.

‘ The pen was continually laid aside for the spear of the chamois-hunter ; the ledger, to make a sketch of some romantic scene. Beyond the immediate vicinity of Friburgh, I had no occasion to

seek for subjects for the pencil, views at once impressive and interesting: the Moulin de la Motte and the Valley of Goteron have been justly celebrated by all who have seen them; nothing can excel the wild grandeur or picturesque and rich variety of the latter. Good God! even now, at the mental review of it, I feel a glow at my heart—a soothing and delicious sensation. Here my most delightful hours were passed: sometimes almost unconsciously watching the eddying course of the river, fretting, boiling up, and in many places, pouring over them in sheets of foam, amidst the scattered rocks that impede its progress; sometimes supinely stretched within some romantic glade, with time-bleached precipices starting up at one side, their dingy greyness beautifully contrasted by the bright verdure of the pines that shot from amidst their fissures; and on the other, soft undulating hillocks, diversified with trees and thickets, with flocks grazing the tender herb, and ruminating herds and busy peasants enlivening the more distant view.

‘ But these happy days were not to last for ever; my father, by a connexion with a mercantile house that proved unfortunate, became involved in difficulties of the most distressing nature: anxiety of mind brought on a lingering disorder, that terminated fatally, and which, caught by my mother within a few days of his dissolution, shortly also deprived me of her. What I felt at this trying period, your own heart, I am convinced, can better picture than I describe: but exertions were necessary; the indulgence of unrestrained grief was a consolation my situation denied me. Though more painful than the thoughts of death to quit the place of my nativity, the dear and affectionate

friends I possessed there, yet aware there was no other alternative than to do so, or become a mere dependent where I had no natural claim, I resolved on losing no time in preparing for my departure for England, where a relation of my mother's, a merchant in London, had promised to receive and provide for me; and to whom both she and my beloved father, in their last moments, had earnestly conjured me not to delay repairing, immediately after the performance of the last sad duties to them; but,

‘ Good Heav'n ! what sorrows gloom'd that parting day,
That call'd me from my native walks away !
When the poor exile, ev'ry pleasure past,
Hung round the bowers, and fondly look'd his last,
And took a long farewell, and wish'd in vain
For seats like these beyond the distant main !

‘ To break the local attachments of the poor and simple, is a task of pain and difficulty; their undissipated thoughts allow not of that wandering of the affections that renders change of residence a matter of slight consideration to the opulent; they cling to the home of their youth—the home where a father's care, a mother's tenderness was theirs, with all that fond idolatry with which the ancients clung to their household gods; they cling to it as to a sheltering friend, from whom it is worse than death to be torn; so, at least, did I feel on quitting mine.

‘ But the feelings with which I left it were not to be indulged; I strove to banish them by agreeable anticipations of the future. The English character had highly interested me; and I tried to hope I should soon be reconciled to a residence among such a people.

‘ But, good Heaven! how did every hope of happiness vanish on my beholding my new home! Never shall I forget the sickening sensation, the o'erpowering disgust I experienced at the moment;

but when I tell you it was situated in a close and gloomy lane, in the very heart of London, where nought but the sickly reflection of the sun was ever seen—where the blessed light of day came strained through small panes, encrusted with dirt, and every countenance wore the pale cadaverous hue of plodding care and anxiety, you will scarcely wonder at its having such an effect upon a being, who had hitherto been accustomed to breathe the purest atmosphere; and, in the midst of business, had but to cast his eyes on the casement, to behold the most stupendous scenery, all that could at once exalt and delight the imagination.

‘The manners of its owner were not by any means adapted to remove the disgust with which it had inspired me; cold and repelling, they at once chilled every feeling. Yet did he not mean any marked unkindness in his first reception of me; it was natural to him to be stiff and constrained; and he was besides so completely immersed in the pursuit of gain, as to have no thought beyond it. His little figure was the prototype of meanness, and his unbending features as contracted as his soul.

‘With such a being, you may believe I soon perceived there was but little chance of any social intercourse—soon perceived there was but little prospect of my being able almost in any degree to assimilate. Oh, how were the pangs of dependence aggravated by the cruel conviction! how by seeing it had subjected me to a person I could never esteem!

‘He soon gave me to understand what he expected from me, and what I might expect from him; in a word, that I was to save him the expence of keeping any other clerk; and might rely on being properly considered, if I conducted myself with propriety.

‘ This my own pride would have influenced me to do, without any incitement from selfishness; but to impose a constant restraint on my feelings—to relinquish all my former tastes and pursuits, which to merit his approbation I saw absolutely essential to do, was indeed a task of difficulty. Unequal at all times to it, notwithstanding my diligence to please him, I from time to time fell under his displeasure; my thoughts would wander at times, in spite of all my efforts to restrain them; and the inadvertencies I was consequently betrayed into, were extremely irritating to a person incapable himself of being abstracted for a minute from selfish considerations.

— ‘ Now an umbrella was lost, then a pair of gloves; sometimes the price of stock forgot to be inquired, though sent to the immediate neighbourhood of the ’Change, till too late for him to profit by the knowledge; and more than once, from a city-feast, to which, either out of kindness, or a motive of economy, he sometimes took me, I brought home, in consequence of not labelling it according to his directions, an old hat in place of a new one.

‘ In short, from being gradually led to consider me as a very careless fellow, my kinsman gradually began to prophesy that I would never, according to the city acceptation of the word, be a good man, and accordingly to regard me with very great contempt.

‘ I, in my turn, viewed him with compassion, as a being excluded from real happiness, from being destitute of all those feelings and perceptions essential to the enjoyment of refined pleasure.

‘ Yet in his own way he was not without enjoyment; he had a very particular relish for feasting, to indulge which he was often tempted to take ex-

cursions in the summer to the neighbouring villages; the asparagus of Battersea and Gravesend, and the wild rabbits of Epping Forest, had particular attractions for him.

‘ I strove to command my feelings—to submit without murmuring to the dreadful drudgery imposed upon me, to the total want of all intellectual enjoyment, but in vain; every day I became more unhappy, every day more heart-sick and disgusted. At length, after passing near two years in this situation, convinced I could never become reconciled to it, I ventured to suggest to my kinsman, that the best thing he could do with me would be to put me in the army: this, however, he positively refused doing, not however on account of any unwillingness to part with me; on the contrary, he plainly intimated, by his manner, there was nothing he more wished than to be fairly rid of me; but entirely on account of the expence that must have attended such a measure. His refusal, however, had no effect in inducing me to relinquish the idea I had conceived of entering it: accordingly, leaving behind me a letter, thanking him for all past favours, and explanatory of my determination of trying, since he had prophecied I never would be a good man, whether it was not possible I might be a great one, I quitted his house one morning by daybreak, and proceeding to Portsmouth, embarked as a volunteer with a regiment then on the point of sailing for Spain.

‘ Oh Heavens! what a mountainous weight seemed removed from my feelings by the change in my situation, by again finding myself associated with beings capable of conversing on something besides mere profit and loss, and feeling an interest for others!

‘ The cause which they were hastening to support was too animating, too interesting to every lover of freedom, not to rouse all that was energetic in my nature ; I exulted in the idea of uniting in it, of aiding in a struggle that reminded me of the noble one made by my immortal ancestors for the restoration of their rights as men. I will not exhaust your patience, by entering into a minute detail of all that occurred after my arrival in Spain ; suffice it to say, that in the course of a few months I obtained a commission ; and shortly after, with the shattered remains of the regiment to which I belonged, was ordered to Ireland. From Cork, where we landed, we proceeded to Galway, where the kindness and hospitality we experienced soon convinced us that the Irish are not famed for virtues which they do not possess : I here met with a warmth, a frankness, a cordiality, that too strongly reminded me of my native country, not to make me feel as if I was at home—a feeling that cannot be experienced without a strong sensation of happiness.

‘ Nor was the wildness of the adjacent country unpleasing ; true, the eye sought here in vain for that richness of vegetation, these glimmering shades and sympathetic glooms on which it loves to repose ; but even in the rude aspect of the uncultured heath, there is something delightful to the real lover of nature.

‘ My excursions here were productive of infinite gratification, from the ample opportunities they afforded me of becoming acquainted with the manners of the inhabitants, manners more distinguished in this part of the kingdom by national traits than any other ; nor is this to be wondered at, when it is recollected that during the usurpation of Crom-

well, all the native Irish were driven into the province of Connaught, and compelled to remain there, on pain of death, until the restoration, when, owing to the difficulty they found in recovering their ancient possessions, all of which had been seized and bestowed on his followers, many of them finally settled in it.

In the course of my rambles, I became acquainted with the descendant of an ancient chieftain of the name of O'Donohue, who, on his being banished from his native inheritance on the pleasant banks of the Shannon, became proprietor of an old castle on the very verge of the vast Atlantic, where, between the spot on which it stood and the mighty continent of America, no other land interposed.

'The very prince of hospitality was Mr. O'Donohue; his house was never empty; but his own family, which was absolutely patriarchal, from its numbers, there seeming to be no end of his half-brothers and cousins, was in itself indeed sufficiently numerous to fill it.

'But still more than either by his kindness or urbanity was I drawn thither, by the unobtrusive charms of his daughter, the darling of his aged heart, and delight of all who knew her.

'Brought up in the very bosom of simplicity, she was just the artless kind of being I early felt I could love; but notwithstanding the natural ardour and impetuosity of my feelings, I suffered my situation to restrict me from giving utterance to the sentiments she had inspired, and might perhaps never have explained them, though agonizing would it have been to practise such self-denial, but for the occurrence of a melancholy circumstance.

'The generous O'Donohue suddenly expired at his festive board; and his expences having unfor-

tunately far exceeded his means, an immediate seizure of his property followed.

‘The consequently destitute situation of his orphan, if with propriety she could be styled destitute, who, on every side, received the kindest offers of protection, wrung every heart with sorrow. Her father had been highly imprudent indeed; but still he had not squandered away his patrimony on parasites; for of his numerous retainers, there was not one who did not more deplore what had happened on account of his daughter than their own, and cheerfully assure her she was welcome to the run of their house, such as it was, as long as she pleased.

But the explanation into which I had been betrayed in my first interview with her, after the irreparable loss she had sustained, induced her to decline availing herself of any of these offers or assurances, and in place of doing so, unite her fate with mine.

‘Conceiving, from my now having actually taken the cares of life upon me, that my kinsman would naturally conclude I must, for my own sake, become an altered man, and, in consequence, might be induced to serve me, I lost no time, after it had taken place, in acquainting him of my marriage, and entreating his assistance, in enabling me to enter some other line of life, better calculated to allow me to support a family than the one I was then in. To this application, in due course of time, I received an answer, in which, after first very severely reprimanding me for omitting to post-pay my letter, he solemnly assured me, that nothing on earth could possibly induce him to trouble himself again about me, and that therefore to write to him again would only be to give myself useless trouble.

‘ Though, from my knowledge of his disposition, I might have been aware I had little to expect from him, yet with the proneness of youth to hope almost impossibilities, I had suffered myself to indulge an expectation of some favourable result from this letter, and was, in consequence, as you may believe, almost overwhelmed by the contents of his.

‘ Bleak and dismal indeed was the prospect the disappointment of this expectation caused me to contemplate—an expectation strengthened by the reflection of his promise to my parents, not to let any little youthful inadvertency cause him to cast me off, and of the claim he must feel I had upon him, from some very important obligations they had conferred on him.

‘ For the sake of the beloved being whose destiny was now blended with mine, I strove to disguise my anguish; but, alas! the encreasing pressure of distress quickly rendered all further attempts at dissimulation unavailing. The fearful consequences I soon began to anticipate from our union, speedily ensued; from the additional expences it occasioned, I soon found myself involved in difficulties that were insurmountable; in consequence, I was compelled to resign my commission, and fly to London with my wife, for the joint purpose of obtaining a shelter from my merciless creditors, and trying to procure a situation.

‘ During my residence with my unfeeling kinsman, I had made a few friends, or, more correctly speaking, acquaintances, and now severally applied to them on the subject of my wishes; but, with the exception of two or three, found myself apparently forgotten by them all.

‘ Still, however, I was prevented sinking into ut-

ter despair, by the promise held out of serving me, by those who condescended to recollect me; but, alas! I soon found those promises were without meaning, or else intended to draw me into such an unreserved disclosure of my situation, as should gratify the curiosity I had excited.

‘Hope deferred,’ says the wise man, ‘maketh the heart sick.’ Oh, Heavens! how faint, how sick did the procrastination of mine render me! At length my circumstances became so deplorable, I could no longer avoid applying for a little pecuniary assistance. This application put an end to all further deception on the part of my pretended friends: good God! in what a state of mind did I turn from their respective doors! Those only who have been in a similar state of desolation can form an adequate idea of what I felt at the moment; though scarcely able to drag my trembling limbs along, I yet shrank from the idea of returning home, destitute as I was of all means of imparting comfort to the sad heart of my unhappy love, then in a situation that rendered more than wonted indulgences requisite.

‘Oh that the sighs that burst from me,’ I inwardly exclaimed, ‘could waft us to my native mountains, even to their bleakest summit, for there, even there, where very desolation reigns, does the benignant spirit of charity hover; but here, in the midst of opulence and luxury, we perish: no,’ I cried, ‘not both; one shall be sacrificed to save the other.’

‘Driven to desperation by the horrors of my situation, I had no longer any hesitation in deciding on self-destruction, and accordingly, bent upon it, hastened towards the Serpentine-River in Hyde-Park, in the neighbourhood of which I happened

to be at the moment of forming this resolution, to rid myself of a miserable existence. Not, however, without some struggles did I force myself to proceed; but still was I impelled forward by the agonizing reflection of not having the power, in any degree, of administering to the wants of my wife, and the hope I entertained, of the publicity my fate would give her forlorn situation, obtaining her the succour of some generous heart.

‘ Arrived at the fatal spot, I took out my pocket-book, and having written my address in it, with a few incoherent lines, meant to explain the rash act I was about committing, threw it on the bank, and was about plunging in, when my guardian angel, in the form of lord Hexham, rushed between me and destruction.

‘ He had quitted his house, for the purpose of walking with some ladies, and at the moment I was hastening towards the river, was returning to the place where his groom waited for him. Struck by my disordered gestures, he determined on following me, and seized my arm just in time to prevent the dreadful act I meditated: I struggled to disengage myself, but he held me too firmly to allow me to succeed in my effort for the purpose— ‘ Unhappy man,’ he exclaimed, ‘ have mercy upon yourself! Remember no circumstances are so desperate which Providence may not relieve! Reveal your situation, and rely on it, if it be within human means to assist you, you shall no longer have cause to despair.’

‘ Good God! what did I not experience at these words! the sudden revolution of my feelings overcame me, and for a minute I was compelled to lean against his shoulder for support. Recovering a little, I tried to explain what he wished, but my

accents were scarce articulate, through emotion; in consequence, my preserver proposed the desired communication being deferred till we had procured a carriage, more especially as by this time some people were collecting about us: accordingly we hastened to Picadilly, where, obtaining one, he desired me to give my direction to the coachman: A little more collected, I now proceeded to give, as briefly and coherently as agitation would permit, the explanation he required: his looks testified the feelings it excited. By the time I had concluded, we had reached the miserable habitation where I lodged: as the carriage-step was letting down, he slipped his purse into my hand, and, with a pressure of it that spoke volumes to my heart, assured me I might depend on seeing him before that hour the ensuing day; and in the interim, entreated me to let the conviction of the worst being past aid me in my efforts to regain composure.

‘With what eagerness did I now hasten to my Anna! with what wild transport did I fold her to my heart, as starting from the miserable pallet on which in terror at my long absence she had thrown herself, she threw herself into my arms!

‘Oh, at length, at length,’ I exclaimed, as I held her to it, ‘it is given me to see thee without regret or remorse! At length I behold a prospect of being enabled to recompense thee for giving up the protection of friends and kindred for my sake.’

‘Her look of wild inquiry was resistless—Involuntarily I sunk at her feet, and in the attitude of contrition and gratitude, gave the demanded explanation. On the scene that ensued I shall not dwell; to do so in the present instance, would, I am convinced, be unnecessary. Oh, with what lightened hearts did we forsake our couch the next

morning! no longer sorrowful and dismayed at the return of day, from our dread of its exposing us to new persecutions.

‘ At the expected time my preserver made his appearance; and every requisite particular being now fully made known to him, immediately made the necessary arrangements for relieving me from my present difficulties. Not satisfied, however, with this, he resolved on settling me in such a manner as should prevent my ever being involved in similar ones again; to raise the tree, prostrated by the storm, he did not think sufficient; to fully satisfy himself, it was necessary he should secure it perpetual shelter.

‘ To be brief, he proposed my becoming the tenant of this charming place, to which a small farm is annexed; and on my involuntarily shrinking back for a minute from the acceptance of an offer laying me under such an additional obligation, tried to lessen my sense of it, by declaring my acceding to his proposal would be to confer an obligation on him and his family, as they had long wished, for the sake of having a neighbour there, to see the house occupied, though determined, out of respect and affection for the memory of its recent possessor, never to resign it to any one not worthy of succeeding him in it.

‘ In a word, I suffered my scruples to be overruled—I recollected the observation, that those who too fastidiously shrink from obligations are sometimes suspected of being those who would have a hesitation in conferring them, and accordingly permitted myself to be rendered completely happy.

‘ Four years have now elapsed since our taking up our abode here, four years of enviable bliss, of,

if possible, daily increasing felicity: in the beautiful language of the poet, I may indeed with truth say,

‘ The seasons,
As ceaseless round a jarring world they roll,
Still find us happy, and consenting Spring,
Sheds her own rosy garland on our heads.’

‘ Oh Heavens! when we review past scenes, how exquisite is our enjoyment of every present blessing! When we think of the period in which we were denied almost the cheering light of day—pent up and immersed within a noisome and forlorn abode—harassed and perplexed on every side, how do we luxuriate in the change!—with what delicious sensations inhale the sweetness of these fields—gaze on the varied grandeur of the wide-extended horizon, and stray amidst the embowered walks of these delightful woods!

‘ Oh God! benevolent as wise in all thy dispensations, thou chastenest man, not merely to amend his heart, but to give a higher relish to his enjoyments; for those who have never been in trouble scarcely know what it is to be really happy, so calculated is the most trivial circumstance to impart pleasure, to afford delight, to him who has for any time experienced severe privations: that delicious feast which Nature spreads for all, by how many is it overlooked or scorned! but, as the poet says,

‘ He does not scorn it, who, imprison’d long
In some unwholesome dungeon, and a prey
To sallow sickness, which the vapours, dank
And clammy, of his dark abode have bred,
Escapes at last to liberty and light;
His cheek recovers soon its healthful hue,
His eye relumines its extinguish’d fires;
He walks, he leaps, he runs—is wing’d with joy,
And riots in the sweets of ev’ry breeze:
He does not scorn it, who has long endur’d
A fever’s agonies, and fed on drugs;

Nor yet the mariner, his blood inflam'd
 With acrid salts, his very heart athirst
 To gaze at Nature in her green array?

‘ In the soft delights we here enjoy, there is something that surpasses what the sensualists call pleasure; quiet and health accompany every step, and the path is open to every virtue.

‘ Again, as in the days of early youth, I find myself possessed of the power of tracing the strokes of Nature’s pencil—Heavens! how delightful to behold the rising sun! to watch the descending luminary—to mark the varieties of the revolving seasons—to trace the first buds of the leafy spring—to see the hawthorn swell with its vernal treasures—the rough elm burst into floods of verdure—the knotted oak thrust out its vast bud—the slow ash push forward its winged leaves to add to the scene of beauty—to mark the opening of the lively primrose—to see the yellow crowfoot spread its gilded coat over acres of the higher grounds—or trace the blushing tints of the humble daisy that enamels the surface of the plain—to follow along the hedge-rows the wild herbs as they spring, and mark their wonderful and curious forms; the hyacinth bending its stalk with fragrance, the young fruit in the opening blossom, the violet in its shade, and the meek lily perfuming the path!

‘ But think not, in the enjoyment of these contemplations, I ever forget the generous being to whom I am indebted for my happiness! Oh, no; next to Him who has given me perceptions to derive pleasure from such pursuits, do I hold my preserver in love and reverence. What indeed do I not owe him! the preservation of a life infinitely dearer to me than my own—the bliss of being able, in some little degree, to benefit others. Great, however, as is the felicity he has been the means of confer-

ring on me, yet I doubt whether it be not surpassed by that he experiences in the contemplation of the happiness he has bestowed. Like the glorious attribute mercy, surely we may say of charity,

‘It is twice bless’d ;
It blesseth him that gives, and him that takes.’

‘Much I fear, however, I have fatigued you ; but in speaking of my benefactor, I know not how to restrain or check myself.’

‘Oh pay me not so bad a compliment,’ said Angeline, the greatly-agitated Angeline, ‘as to imagine a thing of the kind ; think not that such a story, or such a theme could ever fatigue me. I cannot express to you how much I have been affected by your narrative—by the manner,’ she more hesitatingly added, and with a faint blush mantling over her cheek, ‘in which you have spoken of lord Hexham.’

‘Were I to have spoken of him in any other, I were unworthy of what he has done for me,’ said the animated Soleure, rising as he spoke, for the purpose of seeking his wife, who, on his approaching that part of his story in which she was concerned, softly retired from the room.

He quickly returned with her, and Angeline now no longer delayed taking her leave : she did not depart, however, without again expressing her grateful sense of the politeness and hospitality she had met with, and her hope of being henceforth allowed to consider the amiable inmates of the Hermitage as more than mere slight acquaintances.

CHAP. XIII.

She reigns more fully in my soul than ever ;
She garrisons my breast, and mans against me
E'en my own rebel thoughts, with thousand graces,
Ten thousand charms, and new-discovered beauties.

LEE.

MR. Seleure would see her part of the way back : as they proceeded, the conversation still, from time to time, reverted to lord Hexham. Something still continually met the eye of Soleure to remind him of him, and one anecdote still brought on another, and still was the last more interesting than the one that had immediately preceded it ; at length he took his leave.

Left again to the indulgence of her own thoughts, how grateful was Angelina to Heaven for the relief afforded to her distracted mind ! The narrative of Soleure had decided her on revealing her story to lord Hexham ; and the consequences she anticipated from the communication had an immediate effect upon her harassed spirits—'Yes,' she said, 'I need not fear being disappointed in making an appeal to feelings like his ; eagerly will his generous heart impel him to step forward to my relief—eagerly to extricate me from the difficulties that so augment my wretchedness. Secretly he may condemn the imprudence to which this wretchedness is owing ; but with his condemnation of it, will, I am convinced, be mingled, from now knowing him to be in reality what he was represented to me, pity and compassion. Oh ! how soothing, how delightful, in the midst of what we are told of the degeneracy of the times, to hear of such characters.

as his! to find there are hearts still to be met with, glowing with all the sensibilities of nature, open as day to melting charity!—and to this noble, this generous, this interesting being,' she cried, 'it might have been my happy, my blessed fate to have been allied, but for the rash act I suffered myself to be persuaded to. Oh Heavens! how enviable the lot of her who shall share his affections, who shall have such a being for her guide and protector through the thorny path of life!—Yet not more enviable,' with a burst of tears, she added, 'than I credulously, fondly imagined mine would have proved in becoming the wife of Villiers—of him whose countenance bears the stamp of all those virtues which are in reality inherent in the nature of lord Hexham.'

A party of gentlemen this day to dinner at Rooksdale, precluded all conversation of a particular nature between her and her father till the ensuing morning, by which time she had her letter written to lord Hexham, and which, in the course of the day, she contrived to convey herself to the post-office in the adjacent village. Dictated as was every expression in it by her heart, nothing could be more affecting, nothing more energetic, than her appeal to his feelings. Its effect upon them was of the most agitating, the most tumultuous, nature; it at once caused him to reproach himself with cruelty and weakness, with having too inhumanly resented his wrongs, yet not sufficiently remembered them. The terms in which she unconsciously spoke of him melted his very soul, and so completely disarmed him of resentment, that had she suddenly appeared before him at the moment, he would probably have found it a difficult matter to have forborne clasping her to the heart from

which she so pathetically represented herself thrown, or prostrating himself at her feet, to implore her forgiveness for the manner in which he had spurned her from his. More than once a tear fell from him; and involuntarily he kissed the lines which bore evident marks of hers having been dropped on them. All that he had originally felt for her was revived: every tender, every ardent sentiment. He could no longer bring himself to consider her as a creature debased by disposition—no longer hesitate to give way to the belief which had gradually been excited by every thing that had come to his knowledge respecting her since her arrival at Rooksdale—the meekness with which she bore her sudden elevation—her eager readiness to relieve distress—the sweetness and simplicity that characterized her on every occasion—that she was infinitely more to be commiserated than condemned; in a word, that to some diabolical villany was alone owing her ever having been led astray. The more he revolved her character, as now presented to his view, the longer he dwelt on the sentiments that breathed throughout her letter, the more he was confirmed in this belief. Her hesitation in consenting to become his, and which he had at first been led to consider as a mere artifice to shield her from his indignation, should the discovery that had taken place ever occur, he now viewed in the light of a generous struggle between honour and a partiality for him, which might ultimately have proved successful, but for his own arguments and impetuosity.

The indignation he had felt against her was now entirely transferred to Roscrea, whom he believed the seducer to whose arts she had fallen a victim—‘Villain!’ he exclaimed, ‘how shall I ever be able

to endure your sight again, doomed as I am, through your means, your marring the fairest work of nature, to lasting misery!—Unhappy Angeline! oh! would to God we had never met, since not destined to meet while yet thou wert all that nature formed thee, pure, innocent, and lovely in mind and thought, as even now thy countenance bespeaks thee! but since our unhappy destinies are linked, as much as possible will I strive to mitigate the bitterness of thine. Yes, in secret will I watch over thee—in secret try to guard thee from the experience of any future sorrow.

His impassioned answer excited emotions scarcely less tumultuous in the bosom of Angeline; after thanking her, in his character of lord Hexham, for the high honour conferred on him by the confidence she had reposed in him, he proceeded to assure her, that as far as he was concerned in any affair that related to her, she might set her heart at ease; he never would permit it to be the source of pain or inquietude to her.

She tried to believe it was only gratitude she felt; but her excessive agitation, the kind of thrilling pleasure she experienced in reperusing his letter, in dwelling on each impassioned sentence, would not allow her to indulge in such a belief; she became alarmed, and hastily putting up the precious paper, endeavoured to divert her thoughts from him, but in vain. A variety of circumstances, the features with which her fancy had painted him to her, the obligation he had conferred upon her, the conviction his letter afforded of his possessing all those amiable, those noble qualities ascribed to him, had conspired to render him too interesting to her imagination to permit her efforts for the purpose to succeed.

The light of a sufferer, in which she was soon

led to regard him, on her account, did not tend, by any means, to lessen this powerful interest he had excited; on the contrary, it so strengthened, so confirmed it, that from the moment she became aware of being the cause of unhappiness to him, his idea almost superseded every other in her mind.

On her father's receiving her equivocal promise to accept his addresses, should he persevere in paying them, a promise that was neither uttered nor thought of without regret and confusion, so repugnant, so revolting to her feelings was every species of deception, he hurried to the abbey, to acquaint the marquis with her perfect acquiescence in his wishes; and that in consequence they might consider the proposed alliance between their families a settled matter.

This information imparted no slight degree of pleasure to the marquis, there being nothing, as already intimated, he was more solicitous for. But what a revolution did his feelings experience—how was all that was irritable, that was indignant in his nature roused, when, on the departure of Clanronel, hastening to the apartment of lord Hexham, to communicate to him what he conceived would be the joyful intelligence, he heard him, after a little hesitation, declare he was sorry matters had proceeded so far, as, from the state of health he was now convinced he was in, he felt it impossible to think of persevering in his suit to Miss Clanronel.—Good God! after allowing him to make an overture for her hand, to draw back, to reject it! reject it under a false, a frivolous, a contemptible pretence! for there was nothing in his appearance that bore testimony to the truth of his assertion: in what a situation did it place him! what a mortifying, what a heart wounding conviction did such

conduct afford, of his being still the slave, the voluntary slave of an unworthy attachment! for to no other cause could he assign his acting in a manner at once so degrading to himself and insulting to others, insulting to the friend whom of all others he knew he most loved and esteemed, and his amiable, his interesting daughter.

‘Oh, good God!’ in agony burst from him, ‘have I lived to regret being a father! Have I lived to feel a blush on my cheek for the son in whom I so prided myself—in whom I so gloried! Is this the realization of all my golden hopes concerning him! Is it thus my predictions respecting him are fulfilled! Is it thus, by becoming the imbecile slave of passion, he realizes the promises of his early youth! Is it thus, by disappointing every expectation, he recompenses all my anxieties for him!’

The vulnerable heart of Hexham was almost rived by these reproaches; nothing could have enabled him to sustain them, but the idea of the pain they inflicted being endured for the sake of Angeline, of Angeline, become, by a strange perverseness, more interesting than ever to his imagination—‘Could you look into my heart, my dear father,’ he replied, with calmness, ‘you would be convinced I did not altogether merit these reproaches; but I am too well aware of appearances being against me, believe me, to feel any resentment at their bitterness. I know there is no sacrifice which you have not a right to exact of me, and Heaven can attest there is nothing in my power which I would not cheerfully do to render you happy.’

‘Good God, that words and actions should be at such variance!’ impatiently exclaimed the marquis, ‘What avail these professions, unsupported

as they are by your conduct? You tell me you wish to contribute to my happiness, yet refuse the proof I require of your sincerity; but I shall no longer importune you on the subject; we must separate, for voluntarily never yet did I associate with the man whom I could not esteem.'

'My promptness in removing hence shall convince you,' said the unhappy Hexham, in a tone of sorrowful bitterness, 'that whenever in my power to obey you, I can have no hesitation. Would to God that it were in my power to give a more pleasing proof of my readiness to do so!'

'In your power!' repeated the marquis, turning back from the door, which he was in the act of opening; 'explain yourself; something mysterious seems couched under that expression. Only convince me you have a justifiable reason for declining the proposed alliance, and I swear never to speak of it again!'

'Impossible, impossible!' cried lord Hexham, shrinking back; 'I have nothing to explain, nothing to reveal, but that I am wretched!'

'Wretched!' almost contemptuously repeated the marquis. 'Yes, that I can well believe; but the struggle that occasions your wretchedness will soon be over, the struggle between passion and a lingering sense of propriety, and I shall have completely lost my son.' Uttering these words, he rushed from the room.

To conceal what had passed was utterly impossible, owing to the necessity there was for coming to an immediate explanation with Clanronel. The marchioness received his communication with equal astonishment and dismay, led by it, like him, to fear lord Hexham still persevered in his unworthy attachment. The apprehension excited equal pain

and indignation, so much had she expected from him, and so little could she forgive the disappointment of the expectations he had raised.

Nothing could surpass the agitation and distress of the marquis's mind, at the idea of the explanation he had to make to Clanronel; but although he shrunk from it, yet convinced that the longer it was delayed, the more embarrassing he should feel it, he forced himself to repair, at length, to Rookdale, with a determination of being candid with his friend, persuaded that his feelings would be less likely to be wounded by having a positive reason assigned for his alliance being declined, than merely a vague one; but with difficulty could he enter on the subject of his visit—with difficulty collect himself sufficiently to introduce it: at length the effect he saw his agitation had upon his friend, induced him to be more explicit. That Clanronel was at once surprised, disappointed, and irritated, by what he heard, may readily be imagined, from what has been already stated. Naturally warm in his temper, and incapable himself of any thing of trifling or disingenuity, he could not meet with so great an indignity, without sensibly feeling it; but notwithstanding the warmth just alluded to, he, on the present occasion, curbed his feelings, from consideration for those of his unhappy friend; his looks, his manner, all tended to prove how deeply he was wounded by the conduct of lord Hexham; he should therefore have considered himself not merely cruel, but inexcusable, had he suffered himself to be betrayed into any resentful expressions. Anguish like that the marquis was experiencing—that anguish which the paternal heart must endure, at the destruction of its fond, its flattering expectations, he was now

perfectly qualified to judge of, and in consequence, to be aware it needed not aggravation. But though in the sorrow and sympathy it inspired he checked his feelings, he could not bring himself to forgive the conduct of lord Hexham, nor avoid resolving to absent himself from the Abbey, till he had quitted it. If doubtful of being able to subdue the unfortunate attachment he had again the weakness to allow himself to form, he justly conceived he should not have allowed himself to be prevailed on to make the overture he had done; it evinced, in his opinion, a want of candour, feeling, and delicacy, not to be forgiven.

‘But come, come, my dear lord,’ he cried, suddenly grasping the hand of his friend, and giving it a cordial shake, ‘we are both sufficiently advanced in life to know, that what is wished cannot always be effected, and that consequently disappointments, to which all are liable, should be patiently borne. Perhaps, after all, this union, for which we were so desirous, might not have been productive of the happiness expected; at all events, the wisest way is to agree with the poet in thinking, that ‘whatever is, is best.’ Our children did not lay the foundation for our friendship, neither, through their means, will it ever, I hope, be interrupted.’

‘Neither by theirs, nor any other, I trust,’ said the marquis, but in a voice scarcely articulate through emotion. ‘The regard of a friend whose character rises upon me every moment, I must be anxious to preserve; but how cruel is the disappointment this unhappy young man has been the means of inflicting on me!’

‘Well, well,’ in persuasive tones; ‘but consider how much worse it might have been—consider,

entangled as he was, he might have formed a connexion that could not have been dissolved with this Miss De Burgh.'

'Certainly; but,' his cheek flushing with indignation at the bare idea, 'had he done so, after the solemn promise he plighted me, never would I have admitted him again to my presence—no, not even though she had proved the very reverse of what she is now represented. I can make great allowances for the impetuosity of youthful passion; but the conscious violation of a solemn obligation is amongst the offences I cannot pardon.' Then, after a little further conversation, he abruptly took his leave, unfitted at present, from the extreme agitation of his mind, for the enjoyment of any.

Almost equal to the embarrassment which the marquis had felt in communicating to him the conduct of lord Hexham, was Clanronel's, in revealing it to Angeline, owing to the suspicion inspired by recent circumstances, the agitation she latterly began to manifest, whenever his name was introduced, of her having at length been led to entertain those sentiments for him that had once been wished. The emotion she betrayed while listening to his present explanation, did not tend to lessen this apprehension, and, in consequence, occasioned him to speak with a bitterness of lord Hexham, he would once have believed it impossible for any circumstance to have induced him to express himself with concerning him: yet still, from a lingering feeling of regard, a latent hope, perhaps, that what he had once so ardently wished for might yet be effected, if concealed, he forbore from being too explicit, refrained from assigning the cause to which his conduct towards her had been imputed by the marquis.

But he had said sufficient to let Angeline perceive lord Hexham was seriously injured with his family on her account, and her agony at the idea was nearly insupportable—her agony at the reflection of being the cause of unhappiness to a character so amiable, so interesting, so truly noble as his; more than once she was almost impelled by it to throw herself at the feet of her father, and avow to him the truth; but still, as the secret trembled on her lips, was she prevented giving utterance to it, by the consideration of the probably mortal blow its disclosure would be to his happiness. Yes, she felt persuaded nothing could console him under the conviction of hers being lost for ever, and shrunk, in consequence, from revealing the fatal truth; but how, how, she asked herself, should she be able to encounter the looks of the marquis and marchioness; how to receive their attentions, conscious as she was of their domestic happiness being interrupted through her means! Oh Heavens! how at this trying juncture was the misery she endured aggravated by the reflections that suggested themselves to her! more than once did she involuntarily wish that the confession which had occasioned her restoration to her father had never taken place, so dreadful did she feel the restraint which her present situation compelled her to impose on her feelings, and so much did she fear being yet a greater source of misery to him than any he had previously experienced. Yes, even though her unhappy fate should never be revealed to him, still, in her fading cheek, her languid eye, she dreaded there would be but too sufficient cause for sorrow, for well was she aware of the probable injury her constitution was likely to sustain from the incessant struggles of her mind. Time had in

some degree, she reflected, reconciled him to her supposed death; but greatly she apprehended it would fail reconciling him to her loss, after her unexpected restoration to him; and in anticipating what he might yet be doomed to suffer on her account, her very heart was wrung.

Oppressed beyond the power of supporting conversation, or bearing observation, she watched for an opportunity of quitting the house, and immediately bent her steps towards a romantic building amidst the rocks at the water side. The day was one of those delightful ones that sometimes occur in the latter end of autumn—

‘ Light shadowing all, a sober calm
Fleeces unbounded ether, whose least wave
Stands tremulous, uncertain where to turn
The gentle current, while illumin’d wide,
The dewy-skirted clouds imbibe the sun,
And through their lucid veil his soften’d force
Shed o’er the peaceful world ;’

and all, from its tranquillity, is calculated to sooth the throbbing passions into peace; but often, in proportion as they are calmed, is melancholy deepened; such, in the present instance, was the case. In any frame of mind, the languid stillness that prevailed around would have been calculated to excite pensive sensations in the bosom of Angelina; now therefore it had merely an effect upon the wild anguish of her feelings. The profound melancholy it was adapted to promote was not lessened by the dying sound of water that met her ear, amidst rocks and woods wildly intermingled, and which, with the magnitude and variety of the surrounding objects, concurred to render the scene at once awful and picturesque in a high degree. The retreat to which she repaired was a pavilion in

the Turkish style, on the brow of a stupendous cliff above the river, just where it fell in cascades through a rocky channel; the steep declivities on each side thickly covered with trees, forming a noble avenue of hanging woods, terminated by St. Cuthbert's Abbey, half-embowered within the solemn shade of deep groves of oaks and sycamores; and as it crowned the cliffs that overhung the river, in many parts covered with ivy, presenting a grand and awful aspect to the view. From expatiating over the diversified prospect, where the sight of many a sweet sequestered cottage in the more distant view, amongst the green inclosures of the upper hills, imparted, notwithstanding her deep dejection, a momentary glow to her feelings—that glow which benevolence experiences at the sight of any object calculated to convey an idea of the happiness and comfort of others, the eyes of Angeline became fastened on the Abbey; but she could not long contemplate it, without emotions being awakened too insupportable to be calmly endured. In every object round it, there appeared an unusual air of tranquillity; the herds were at rest, and the sheep, that with them grouped the sequestered meads immediately at the foot of the cliffs it overhung, cropt undisturbed the luxuriant herbage, while the umbrageous woods were scarcely seen to move. This tranquillity formed too striking a contrast to the anxiety, the unhappiness, Angeline pictured to herself, now prevailing within it, not forcibly to affect her feelings, especially accusing herself as she did of being the cause of both. In agony at the reflection, she retreated to the interior of the pavilion, where throwing herself upon a couch, she abandoned herself to tears; but tears could not relieve anguish like hers; to try and di-

vert her thoughts, she took up a book, but she knew not what she read; the heaviness of her heart had communicated itself to her senses; long want of rest, united to the lulling sounds that here met the ear, and a kind of oppressive closeness in the atmosphere, gradually occasioned a drowsiness to steal over her, the book dropped from her hand, and her head sunk back on the arm of the couch. Sleep had no sooner seized her faculties, than her fancy, free to roam, transported her to the delightful gardens of what she had so long considered her native home at Loxa; she felt herself delighted by the review of the lovely scenes; and yielding to their powerful influence, seated herself beneath a cypress bending over the Genil, and taking up a mandolin she found lying on the ground, again awakened the wild echoes she recollected she had so often listened to with rapture: while thus engaged, she suddenly beheld an elegant figure in a moorish dress, descending a neighbouring declivity; she started upon his approach, but was prevented retreating, by his avowing himself lord Hexham, and seizing her hand, which he carried to his lips.

In her imaginary struggle to free it, she waked, but with almost a conviction of having in reality felt kisses impressed on it. Starting from her recumbent posture, she hastily advanced to the door, but no receding form there met her view; that, however, she was not mistaken, in fancying what she imagined something more than a dream, she was soon convinced, by perceiving a gentleman's glove on the floor, as she was about resuming her seat; that it was lord Hexham who had been there instantly struck her; to describe what she experienced at the thought—the emotions excited by the

idea of his having perhaps voluntarily traced her—the motive to which his having done so might be imputed, were impossible; now she blushed to think of being discovered by him in so supine a state—now bitterly regretted not having awoke in time to express the sense of obligation she felt towards him, and entreat he might not let his generosity carry him too great lengths on her account; yet notwithstanding this regret, when she thought he might yet perhaps be lingering in the vicinity of the place, with an intention of returning, she felt a kind of dread, that induced her to determine on immediately retreating. Almost unconsciously she had taken up the glove, and was descending the steps with it, when, suddenly recollecting herself, she threw it back into the pavilion, not, however, without a soft sigh, as if she had considered it in the light of a precious relic.

Starting at every sound, from the apprehension she was under, she proceeded towards home, but without encountering any one; and in the course of the evening, from learning lord Hexham's departure, found she need not be under a similar one again.

He was gone indeed—gone without any certain hope of seeing his native home again! having departed, in consequence of what happened, with a determination of immediately effecting an exchange from the Life-Guards, in which he had a commission, to a regiment that should afford him a chance of being speedily ordered on actual service. This was a determination, however, for the present, he resolved to conceal, convinced its disclosure would be an aggravation of the unhappiness he was but too painfully aware of the marchioness experiencing at this crisis: neither did he choose to

avow his intention of so directly quitting the Abbey, unequal as he felt himself, from the state of mind he was then in, to any particular conversation with any of the family, such as a parting interview was naturally calculated to lead to. The precautions he adopted, for the purpose of concealing it, had the intended effect, that of preventing its being suspected; ordering the carriage to meet him at a particular place, he quitted the Abbey on foot, and took his way through the woods; in proceeding, he suddenly found himself near the retreat in which Angeline had taken refuge, and after a momentary hesitation, impelled by an impulse he almost felt resistless, a faint hope perhaps of catching a farewell glimpse of her, or discovering something that might aid him in ascertaining what was then passing in her mind, he ascended to it; what he felt when, on looking in, he actually beheld her, may easier be conceived than described; he started back with something of dismay, and for a moment stood irresolute, whether instantly to retreat or not, when, perceiving his precipitate movement had not had the effect of disturbing her, he was again tempted to come forward, and gradually drawn towards the couch on which she slumbered, his emotions, as he gazed upon her, were almost overwhelming—love, commiseration, and indignation, each were alternately experienced in their fullest force, and each alternately triumphed over every other feeling in his mind; but tenderness remained the predominant sensation, and through its influence he was almost tempted to suddenly clasp her to his bosom, and, resigning his original intention, make her the partner of his flight to some distant country.

Fearful of himself if he lingered long near her, he suddenly stooped down, and involuntarily impressing a passionate kiss on her hand, tore himself away.

CHAP. XIV.

Men's eyes are not so subtle to perceive
My inward misery. I bear my grief
Hid from the world.

BEAUMONT.

EVERY new proof of esteem she now received from the family at the Abbey was like a dagger to the sensitive heart of Angeline, so conscious was she of being the occasion of the interruption their domestic happiness had so evidently received, so aware of the light in which she should be regarded by them, did they ever attain a knowledge of the truth. Gladly, from this consciousness, would she have avoided their society, could she possibly have invented any pretext for the purpose; but without appearing equally hurt by the conduct of lord Hexham, and consequently heightening their resentment at it, she knew she could not do so. To prevent an idea of the kind, her father kept up a more constant intercourse than ever at the Abbey, accepting the marchioness's offer of introducing her into life, and agreeing to accompany the family, for the purpose, after Christmas, to town.

To their mutual arrangements Angeline listened, not merely with indifference, but a sensation of terror, not merely from the continued restraint they were calculated to impose on her feelings, but a dismaying apprehension that now pervaded her mind, of being in a situation that would render it impossible for her to appear much longer in company, without risking a discovery she dreaded, that would doom her to hide herself for the remainder of her life in obscurity, should she be unable

to substantiate her claim to the title of a wife.—Yielding to it, she resolved on writing still more urgently than before to Miss Roscrea, for whatever information she could give her concerning Villiers; with a determination of confiding in St. Ruth, should she not hear by the expected time from her, or receive a satisfactory answer; and imploring him to hasten to her, for the purpose of aiding her with his advice, and supporting her in the trying scenes that must then ensue with her father.

The silence of Mrs. Dillon to the letter she had addressed to her, expressive of a wish for a certificate of her marriage, almost confirmed her worst fears. As to Miss Roscrea's, relative to her silence, the letter which, about the same time, she had sent her, she concluded it owing either to her being unable to give her the information she required, or else being too much engrossed with company to be able to think of attending to it; but the still more urgent manner in which she now addressed her, would have the desired effect, she trusted; if not, the idea of the decision she had come to was some little relief to her tortured mind. On the aid, the counsel, the tenderness of St. Ruth, she fondly knew she might rely; and assured of the support of such a friend, she could not abandon herself to utter despair.

With a degree of agonizing impatience, however, she counted the days that must intervene ere she could hope to receive an answer from Miss Roscrea. The period did not arrive without realizing the expectation she had suffered herself to indulge: at the expected time a letter came, but not, as she had flattered herself would be the case, an explicit one; still, however, it was sufficiently so to prevent her carrying her resolution relative

to St. Ruth immediately into effect, Miss Roscrea informing her, that the prospect she beheld of an almost immediate meeting, being, at the moment of writing, almost on the eve of accompanying lady Rosamond on a visit to the Abbey, induced her to decide on deferring till then giving her the information she desired, from the conviction of being then able to give it in a much more satisfactory manner.

But the hope she thus suggested was of a delusive nature, intended for the purpose of obtaining the full confidence of Angeline, from the agitated and urgent style of whose second letter, she was convinced something more than she was yet aware of had occurred respecting lord Hexham. Her silence to her previous one was owing to her being too wise, or rather too wary, to commit herself to paper. In the imaginary proof it afforded of his desertion, she exultingly triumphed; but she could no longer do so on the receipt of her second, from the information it contained, or rather the alarm excited by that information. Till then she was in ignorance of the change that had taken place in the prospects of Angeline, owing to the distracted state of mind in which her first letter was written, rendering her unable to touch on any subject but that which it was immediately essential to her to address her on, and her besides deeming it unnecessary, from being in expectation of an answer from her, ere she should be obliged to depart; but now, on many accounts, she considered an explanation requisite; and not without equal envy and dismay could Miss Roscrea hear of the rank to which she was elevated, and her being not merely in the immediate vicinity of lord Hexham, but habits of the strictest intimacy with his family. True, her letter was an evidence of his still re-

maining prepossessed with a belief of her unworthiness; but ardent in his feelings, exposed again to her attractions, beholding her still more than ever entitled to admiration, was it not more than possible that it might yet fail of influencing his conduct? at the bare surmise, the remote suggestion, her very brain became heated; and again she resolved on having recourse to plotting, to try and prevent what she dreaded.

After a little deliberation, the best plan that could be devised for the purpose, she conceived, would be to apprise the marquis and marchioness of Angeline's being the identical individual whom they had such reason to deem unworthy of the regard of their son, persuaded, if once enlightened on the subject, they would take effectual measures for preventing the realization of the apprehension she could not now avoid giving way to.

Angeline had candidly informed her, that owing to her uncertainty of the manner in which her ladyship might speak of her, she had forborne mentioning to the family her having any acquaintance with lady Rosamond; and of her acknowledged silence on this head, Miss Roscrea resolved to take the basest advantage—resolved to manage matters so as to make it appear the effect of conscious guilt and apprehension.

The ascendancy which her affecting to espouse her cause against Roscrea had given her over lady Rosamond, induced her to believe she should find no difficulty in rendering her instrumental to the furtherance of her schemes. The hope was not an erroneous one; consciously, lady Rosamond would not have suffered resentment to betray her into baseness; but the moment we give up our minds to the guidance of others, the moment we cease

appealing to our own reason, from that moment we render ourselves liable to deceit and treachery.

Ere lady Rosamond in any degree recovered from the agony into which she was thrown by the confirmation of her suspicions on seeing Angeline at Clontarf, a considerable time elapsed; at length the friendly soothing of the colonel, and the artful ones of Miss Roscrea, had the intended effect, that of restoring her to some degree of composure; or rather the positive assurance given her by the former, of entering into such an immediate expostulation with Roscrea, relative to the impropriety of his conduct, as would, he doubted not, succeed in making him at once sensible and repentant of it.

This was a promise, however, which Miss Roscrea, was determined he should not fulfil, if in her power to prevent him, aware that an explanation could not be entered into with Roscrea, without the complete frustration, if not development, of her plots being risked, from the opportunity it would afford him of vindicating his innocence. Accordingly, when, on their return to Leixlip, she had the power of speaking alone to the colonel on the subject, she used such arguments to dissuade him from adhering to it, as, at length, had the effect of inducing him to relinquish it, representing to him, from the warmth of Roscrea's temper, the extreme probability there was of his resenting his interference, in a manner that might lead to the most fatal consequences; and imploring him, therefore, for her sake, and on account of the person for whom he was so deeply interested, to let her be the person to admonish him of his error. But to impose silence to him on the subject was not sufficient, without also obtaining an assurance of it from lady Rosamond; this she found much greater difficulty in doing; the indignation of her mind, at her imagined injuries, being

too great not to render her impatient for an opportunity of giving utterance to her irritated feelings; but at length her art again triumphed here, as in the preceding instance. She so completely succeeded in persuading lady Rosamond, that leaving Roscrea to the upbraidings of his own guilty mind, without deigning to come to any explanation with him, would have a more immediate and severe effect upon him than any she could possibly have recourse to, as to induce her to promise what she required. She attempted not, however, to oppose her avowed determination of letting him perceive, by her manner, she was not quite so easily deceived as she concluded he conceived; on the contrary she rather strengthened her in this resolution, from a hope, by its offending him, which she was perfectly aware of its being calculated to do, of its occasioning a temporary separation between them, a circumstance she was now particularly anxious for, in order to be relieved from the agitating apprehension she should otherwise continue under, of a premature explanation taking place between them, and to have a pretext for postponing her marriage with the colonel, should he become importunate for its celebration, ere the termination of her incertitude with regard to lord Hexham; for from the unsettled state in which, in that case, the family would appear, he would not conceive it surprising, she conceived, her deeming the whole of her attention required by lady Rosamond.

Every thing succeeded as she wished: the first inquiry of Roscrea, on his returning from the place to which, as may be recollected, for the purpose of getting him out of the way, she had been the means of sending him, was after lady Rosamond, on not finding her, as he expected, in the dining-room.

With a negligent air, in order to keep up appearances before the colonel, with whom she had dined *tête-à-tête*, Miss Roscrea replied, that, complaining of a headache, she was gone to lie down. To her chamber, without pausing to take any refreshment, Roscrea hastened on hearing this: in the dressing-room, through which he was obliged to pass to it, he found her woman sitting with a book; she started up on seeing him, and on his approaching the door, hastily stepped before him, declaring he must not enter.

Roscrea, stopping short, involuntarily repeated her words, and intently surveying her, demanded why?

Because her lady had given orders to that effect, she replied.

‘Oh yes, I know,’ Roscrea returned, ‘being indisposed, to the exclusion of every one but me.’

No, she pertly replied, he was mistaken; it was not to the exclusion of any one but him, and pass therefore he should not.

Again Roscrea repeated her words, with something like a look of admiration at her manner; then, not very ceremoniously, taking her by the shoulder, he attempted to pass her; but she resisted—a struggle ensued—and in the midst of it, the door opened, and lady Rosamond came forth. Instantly dismissing her abigail, she turned with an assumed air of disdainful calmness to Roscrea, for her heart throbbed wildly at the moment, and every nerve was in a state of agitation, and expressed a wish that he had suffered himself to attend to the message she had left for him.

‘Your woman was correct then?’ said Roscrea, beginning to survey her as he had a minute before her attendant.

‘Perfectly,’ in the same affected tone she had just spoken; ‘she but obeyed my orders in the manner in which she acted: and further, I desired her to inform you, what you did not afford her an opportunity of doing, that I had directed another chamber to be prepared for you.’

‘Indeed! and pray,’ endeavouring to curb his rising passion, his inability to account for her behaviour rendering it still more calculated to irritate, ‘may I ask to what your being so condescending was owing?’

‘I do not deem it necessary to explain. The age is past in which wives conceived it requisite to account to husbands for every whim; besides, to give you room for conjecture, will be to find amusement for your imagination.’

‘How vastly kind!’ again said Roscrea ironically: ‘in return, to shew you what a complaisant husband I am, I shall not press the inquiry further; but presuming the directions you have avowed owing to a fear of sometimes being unseasonably intruded on, in order to releave you from it, I shall immediately depart hence; not without carrying with me a pleased recollection of your present conduct, and reflecting on the happiness it would afford the marchioness to find, by it, how much you had profited by her precepts and example.’

‘Cruel, insolent!’ exclaimed lady Rosamond, no longer able to control herself; but the expressions were lost upon him, having abruptly quitted the room as he concluded the last sentence, ‘is this the way, by irony and reproach, he attempts to disarm me of resentment, and extenuate his conduct? but he shall find I know, in every instance what is due to me—shall find that I have not only penetration sufficient to discover his perfidy, but

spirit to resent it—shall find I am not one of those tame acquiescent fools that are to be neglected and insulted with impunity ; no, never till I behold him humbled, as well as contrite, shall my present tone be varied to him ; if I cannot awaken to remorse, I will, at least, have the gratification of wounding by contempt.’

But notwithstanding these resolves, acute was the pang she experienced when she in reality found him gone. Hitherto accustomed to have every little pettish humour soothed, to see him unhappy if she manifested any thing like coolness towards him, she had no idea that he would have carried his threat into effect—no idea that he would not have afforded her the exquisite pleasure of seeing him quickly return to sue for and implore a reconciliation.

This he would most readily have done, had he been conscious of having offended, had any thing like self-condemnation mingled with the indignation she excited ; but perfectly acquitted by his own feelings, he could not tamely brook her conduct—could not think of submitting to what, in consequence, appeared the mere tyranny of caprice, an effort to subjugate his reason to her control.

In hurrying from the apartment, to give orders for his immediate departure, he encountered Miss Roscrea. Pretending not to notice his agitated air, she inquired whether he was not coming to join her and the colonel in the parlour?—‘ No,’ he replied ; ‘ you must make my excuses to him, for I am under a necessity of directly setting off for town.’

‘ Good Heavens!’ she now exclaimed, with an air of well counterfeited surprise, conceiving she might safely avail herself of this opening to follow up her plans, ‘ what is the matter? Now that I

look more attentively at you, it seems to me as if something had happened to disturb you.'

'Rather let me ask of you what is the matter,' he returned with forced calmness; 'for you may perhaps be able to account for the humour in which I have found lady Rosamond?'

His allusion to this was what Miss Roscrea required. Shrugging her shoulders, and shaking her head—'Some new whim relative to Miss De Burgh, I am afraid,' she said.

Roscrea started. 'Good God!' he indignantly exclaimed, 'does she then persevere in her unjustifiable suspicions respecting her?'

Again Miss Roscrea significantly shook her head.—'Then, by Heavens!' he resumed, still more irritated, 'nothing shall induce me to return here, till convinced she has subdued them. I will not degrade Miss De Burgh nor myself by any attempt to convince her of their injustice; nor submit to be the slave of a person who chooses to follow the changes of the moon with fresh surmises.'

'I certainly cannot wonder at your being irritated,' artfully returned Miss Roscrea; 'neither attempt to dissuade you from persevering in the determination you have avowed, since I am not without hopes that some little appearance of resentment will have a happy effect on lady Rosamond; not immediately, however, I rather apprehend, so rooted are the prejudices to which she has given way; but rely on it, my arguments shall not be wanting to convince her of her error; and these, united to the unhappiness your absence must occasion her, the consequences she may anticipate from a lengthened separation, will gradually, I trust, restore her to reflection.'

'Most fervently I hope so,' returned Roscrea;

'since assuredly while my domestic happiness continues interrupted, I must remain a stranger to real tranquillity. Exclusive of every feeling for her; the continuance of any thing unpleasant would fill me with regret, on account of her amiable family, to whom I know the knowledge of it would be a source of real unhappiness. Nothing, I trust, will transpire to occasion them uneasiness. In order to avoid giving lady Rosamond any additional cause for disquiet, or exciting a suspicion of any misunderstanding between us, I shall not pause in town, but hasten through it, to my friend Rochfort's house, at the Curragh, where, in my name, you may assure her, the slightest intimation of her wish for my return will find me anxious for it.'

Miss Roscrea faithfully promised to say all that he wished, but, as may be surmised, from what has been previously stated, without the slightest intention of fulfilling her word; to have adhered to it, indeed, would have been like Penelope, to have undone in one hour the work of the preceding, since to have brought about an immediate reconciliation between the offended pair, would have been to prevent the final accomplishment of her plans.

Her anxiety for their present separation was occasioned not merely by a dread of an immediate explanation between them, but a hope that it might be a means of inducing lady Rosamond to repair to St. Cuthbert's, and thus affording her a fair opportunity of trying the effect of her attractions on lord Hexham! for without her she was convinced she would not go, in consequence of the ascendancy she had now obtained over her, from being her sole confidant and adviser.

To persuade her to this, she however found

rather a difficult matter, so much did she sigh for a reconciliation with Roscrea, and so unwilling was she that her family should participate in the unhappiness his imagined culpability occasioned her; but she was at length brought to decide on the measure. The alarm excited in the mind of Miss Roscrea by the receipt of Angeline's letter, rendering her still more solicitous than ever to prevail on her to do so, she had recourse to falsehood for the purpose; after acquainting her with the unexpected change in the situation of Angeline, the knowledge of which she pretended she obtained by chance, she proceeded to inform her, that by the same means she had discovered it was the intention of Roscrea to pay an immediate visit to England on her account — 'In order, therefore, to prevent this, or rather the renewal of an intercourse so inimical to your happiness, 'tis my advice to you,' she added, 'immediately to proceed thither yourself, and in the letter you address to the marchioness, to acquaint her with your intention, candidly inform her who the daughter of her old friend really was, a circumstance, rely upon it, the family at the Abbey are ignorant of, from the manner in which her ladyship has mentioned her to you; for from some certain ones, not necessary now to explain, I am firmly persuaded, did they know she was the Miss De Burgh who was once your guest, their sentiments respecting her would be of a very different nature. To disclose your having any particular cause for prejudice against her, must, I am perfectly aware, be unpleasant, from the inquiries it will naturally excite; but, notwithstanding, you must do so, lest in some chance visit to the Abbey hereafter by himself, Roscrea should take advantage of their ignorance on the subject, to profit by his vicinity

to her. Be assured it is with equal reluctance and regret I advise you to any measure calculated to lessen him in the esteem of his friends; but I should conceive myself unworthy of the confidence you have reposed in me, did I suffer any consideration for him to influence me with regard to you; besides, I am not without hopes, that a hint of what has passed to your family may be attended with pleasing consequences—may lead to some gentle remonstrance, that may have a happy effect.'

Thus artfully she argued and persuaded, until at length she obtained the promise she required—a promise that was no sooner granted, than, to relieve herself from all apprehension of its being retracted, she made lady Rosamond write the letter she had previously dictated.

She was not without some little dread of her meditated journey being objected to by the colonel; but on announcing it to him, was pleased to find she had disquieted herself without cause; it was to him, indeed, from the revolution in his sentiments, a matter of joy instead of regret. As to O'Roon, she had, by this time, entangled him in a flirtation with her friend Mrs. Ogle, so that from him she had nothing to apprehend.

She was not, however, without an apprehension of some attempt from Roscrea to prevent it, if aware of it; and took care therefore to keep him in ignorance on the subject, till too late for him to make the effort she feared.

The astonishment excited at the Abbey by the information contained in lady Rosamond's letter, may easily be conceived—the astonishment occasioned by learning that Angeline, apparently so amiable, so interestingly lovely, so universally admired, was the identical being whom there was such just grounds for deeming unworthy

of the alliance of an honourable house; but a simple emotion was not all the discovery excited; it led to the elucidation of various circumstances which had previously seemed equally strange and reprehensible, and which could not be explained without awakening complicated feelings. All that had recently appeared perplexing and censurable in the conduct of lord Hexham, was now accounted for—accounted for in a way that rendered him more estimable than ever in the eyes of his family. Nothing could surpass their admiration of it, ascribing it, as they did, to real generosity and refinement. Again the marquis gloried in the title of his father—again his heart swelled with parental joy and transport—‘And on account of such a being,’ he suddenly exclaimed, alluding to the unhappy Angeline, ‘have I exiled my noble boy his paternal roof—have I driven him from the bosom of his family! Oh, how do I long to make amends for the past!—how to press him again to my heart!—how to apologize for all I uttered! What delicacy, what feeling, to prefer incurring reproaches himself, to betraying the object he once thought deserving of his tenderness, the daughter of his friend, to censure! Oh! may he yet meet with a heart sufficiently rich in virtue to recompense him for all he has recently gone through! But, poor Clanronel, unhappy friend, the exultation I now feel but augments my sympathy for you. Alas! truly has it indeed been said, that we know not what we wish for; how incessant were your prayers for the restoration of your child!—how pure the happiness you conceived you must enjoy, should she ever be restored to you! your wishes have been accomplished; but what misery have you yet experienced equal to the misery you may yet be destined to endure,

through the circumstance, depending, as your peace now does, through her means, on a very breath! one word, and your fabric of felicity sinks in the dust.' But although the idea of any further association with her was now painful in the extreme, yet in order to prevent a suspicion of the truth in the mind of the unfortunate father, it was decided the same intercourse as usual should be kept up at Rooksdale; that is, if the feelings of lady Rosamond, during her stay at the Abbey, would permit it; for though she had not been explicit, yet the terms in which she expressed herself, relative to Angeline, united to the circumstance of her not being accompanied in her present visit by Roscrea, had strongly tended to excite the belief Miss Roscrea wished to inspire, a belief that could not be yielded to without a pang sufficiently acute to lessen the transport of the preceding moment—' But thus is human happiness chequered,' said the marquis, with a sigh, at the imagined infelicity of his beloved child; ' the cup of bliss is seldom without alloy.'

The reflection of the probable estrangement of lord Hexham from the Abbey on her account, suggested another motive of regret, for the necessity they deemed themselves under of keeping up the usual appearance of friendliness at Rooksdale; but notwithstanding this, they persevered in their determination of doing so, lest any alteration in their manner should lead to a suspicion that must be fatal to the repose of their valued friend.

Lady Rosamond's letter and Miss Roscrea's arrived at the same time; and though somewhat cheered by the hope suggested by the latter, yet not without a strong feeling of disquietude, could Angeline reflect on the whole of its contents, so

agitating was the idea of lady Rosamond's approaching visit to the Abbey, from the indignant resentment she still experienced towards her, and the construction she began to reflect might be put on the concealment she had hitherto observed relative to their acquaintance, a circumstance so natural for her to have mentioned, on such terms of intimacy as she was with her family, that she could not help dreading her silence concerning it being interpreted to her disadvantage, and consequently wishing she had been explicit in the first instance: but as she had not been so, she now conceived her most advisable plan would be still to maintain the silence she regretted, until she had an opportunity of consulting with Miss Roscrea on the subject, who, if any one could, would, she believed, be able to extricate her from the dilemma in which she found herself.

With her father she was engaged this day to dinner at the Abbey. They found a select party there; and while at table, Angeline had no opportunity of making any painful observations; but scarcely did she find herself again in the drawing-room, ere she was struck by an air of constraint and coldness in the manner of both the marchioness and lady Mara; a certain consciousness made her instantly take alarm at the circumstance; trembling and dismayed, she shrunk almost within herself, wishing, vainly wishing for a pretext for immediately departing. Had they then a suspicion of the truth? Had the keen penetration of the marchioness enabled her to develop her secret? Oh, how did her heart sink at the idea—how did her cheek alternately fade and flush at the surmise! and how, but for the hope inspired by Miss Roscrea's letter, how but for her firm reliance on the

exertions of St. Ruth, if at length compelled to apply to him, would she have been able to have supported herself beneath it! The more critical were her observations, the more she was confirmed in the persuasion of some idea to her prejudice having arisen in the minds of the marchioness and her daughter; all their wonted warmth was gone: true, they were still attentive, even more strictly so than ever; but, alas! this was a circumstance that only tended still more to strengthen her agonizing belief; for well she remembered at the moment these lines of Shakspeare, that when friendship is on the decline, it ever used an enforced ceremony—‘But should I lose their regard,’ she mentally demanded; ‘were the exact truth known to them, oh! would not their kindness be rather augmented than diminished by a knowledge of it? Why not reveal to them then my unhappy situation? Why not entrust to their keeping the secret that weighs upon my heart? Yet should I be mistaken—should the marchioness doubt my sincerity—or should she deem my confession a partial one, from the natural proneness we all have to palliate our errors, how cruelly would then my wretchedness be aggravated! besides, she might deem it incumbent on her to communicate such a confession to my father; and how could I support his knowledge of my situation, while in such a state of ignorance and incertitude respecting Villiers!’ On silence, therefore, for the present, on the subject, she still persevered in determining, to all but Miss Roscrea.

Of the additional cause for unhappiness they afforded her, the marchioness nor lady Mara were perfectly conscious; they could not prevail on themselves to treat her with their wonted warmth;

but they flattered themselves increased attention would veil the alteration in their sentiments. Conceiving this, they were led to believe, from remaining in ignorance of the real cause of it, that her too evident agitation was occasioned by her dread of encountering lady Rosamond, from the particulars it was in her power to impart respecting her, and the suspicious light in which they concluded she must be conscious her having concealed their acquaintance must place her. The emotion she could not avoid betraying at the mention of her name, which, from the public announcement of her intended visit, was more than once introduced in the course of the evening, did not tend to lessen this belief; on the contrary, it had the effect of completely confirming it.

On joining the party in the drawing-room, with the rest of the gentlemen, Clanronel was instantly struck by the deep dejection of Angeline's looks, and still more, if possible, by seeing her sitting with an appearance of total neglect, by herself. She had been ceremoniously asked to take a seat at the piano, but declined it, and rejoiced at a pretext for avoiding even a moment's conversation with her; the marchioness and lady Mara took their stations there, under the pretence of wishing to pay particular attention to a young lady, who was esteemed an excellent performer.

'Why, how comes this, my love?' said the fond father, taking her hand as he seated himself beside her. 'Why do I not see you among yonder group?'

Angeline could not suppress a sigh—'The marchioness asked me to play,' she replied, half meeting, half shunning his eye, 'but I was not inclined.'

'Well, but that is no reason why you should sit

in this manner by yourself. You can't think how forsaken you looked when I entered the room. Come, come, you must appear more cheerful. Am I not right, my lord,' appealing to the marquis, who accidentally approached at the moment, 'in insisting that she should do so?'

The marquis assentingly bowed and smiled, but attempted not to enter into conversation with her, as Clanronel had expected, from the pleasure he had hitherto manifested in availing himself of every opportunity to do so.

He could not help being struck by his passing on in this manner; but quickly subduing the emotion it occasioned, he led Angeline to the piano; but instead of hearing her importuned to take the seat that was just then vacated at it, he quickly beheld her left standing there by herself. Again was he surprised; but again speedily checked himself from trying to believe this also was not a premeditated circumstance. Yet he could not entirely recover himself; a kind of vague uneasiness was excited, that led to observations tending to confirm it; his pride took the alarm—he was jealous in whatever related to Angeline, after the slight she had met with from lord Hexham, the indignity with which he had treated her; he conceived the family could not be too particular in their attentions, and, in consequence, now perceived, with equal surprise and irritation, an appearance of neglect in their manner towards her. Yes, notwithstanding their previous resolve, the prejudice they had been led to conceive against her was too strong to permit them to act in the manner they had in reality wished and intended.

The result of Clanronel's observations was, his hastening his departure: he was now able to ac-

count for the melancholy that had appeared in the countenance of Angeline on his joining her; and the idea of her having felt the altered conduct she experienced, heightened his resentment at it.

Deeply musing on it, with a degree of perplexity, from being unable in any way to surmise to what it was owing, but little conversation ensued between him and Angeline on their way back to Rooksdale; and shortly after their return there they separated, perhaps almost equally unhappy at the moment; for not without sensations of the most acute nature could Clanronel contemplate the possibility of a coolness occurring between him and his long tried friends at the Abbey.

CHAP. XV.

Could I but see to th' end of woe
 There were some comfort; but eternal torment
 Is ever insupportable to thought. OTWAY.

THE cool and formal farewell which Clanronel took of the marquis had the effect of convincing him his conduct on this evening was not such as his friendship for him should have permitted; in consequence he bitterly reproached himself; and at an early hour the ensuing day, proceeded to Rooksdale, to try whether it were possible to make him forget it.

Clanronel received him with a slight cloud on his brow; but the restoration of the marquis to his usual manner had soon the effect of also restoring him to his. A friendship like theirs, indeed, was not easily to be shaken. The mind of real steadiness and feeling will not readily relinquish the long-tried friend of its adoption.

Clanronel now began to think he was mistaken in all he had imagined the preceding night; that his jealousy about Angeline rendered him too tenacious and petulant; and that knowing, as he did, the dispositions of his friends at the Abbey, it was astonishing he could ever have yielded to the surmise he did. These reflections rendered him not only as displeased with himself as the marquis had previously been, but induced him to readily accept the invitation given to him and Angeline to also pass that evening at the Abbey.

Angeline did not learn this, or rather his acceptance of it, without extreme pain, so repugnant to her feelings, from the observations of the preceding evening, was the idea of going there again, more particularly as she was uncertain of the moment at which lady Rosamond might arrive, whom she not only wished, but determined, if possible, to avoid meeting, until after she had seen Miss Roscrea — Not knowing, however, what excuse to make for not accompanying him, she consented, but in a manner that allowed him to perceive her extreme reluctance to do so.

Two gentlemen dined with him this day, but who proposed making but a short stay, she was given to understand. Soon after dinner she withdrew to her dressing-room, and taking up a book, was engaged with it, when her maid abruptly entered with a letter; a glance at the superscription sufficed to let her see it came from Miss Roscrea; and accordingly, all agitation, she dismissed her attendant, and, eagerly opening it, read as follows:

‘ MY DEAR MISS CLANRONEL

‘ About two minutes ago I reached your neighbourhood; but my anxiety to acquaint you with my arrival, owing to the purport of your last

letter, is too great to permit me to delay apprizing you of the circumstance. I am told you are expected here this evening, which I regret, as this is no place for the conference we require; and had you remained at home, I am sure I should have been able to have contrived obtaining an interview with you; but perhaps you may be able to invent some excuse for not coming. My maid will be in waiting for an answer to this; if such as I wish for, rely on it it shall not be my fault, if, ere the day closes, we do not meet. I cannot conclude without adding, that, on more accounts than one, I could wish you not to come, as I much fear your abrupt appearance before lady Rosamond, who still remains ignorant of your being her imaginary rival, might be productive of something very unpleasant; but, of course, act as your own discretion and inclination suggest. I should have deemed myself inexcusable, not to have given you this hint; but whether necessary or not to avail yourself of it, you must best know.'

The perusal of this billet did not by any means tend to lessen the agitation with which Angeline had opened it. She could not reflect, that in the course of a few hours her suspense relative to Villiers might be at an end, or rather, how it might be terminated without a tremor in every nerve, nor of the consequences that might have resulted from not having been thus early apprized of the arrival of lady Rosamond.

But how, after consenting to go—how, after being actually prepared for the purpose—how could she refuse accompanying her father to the Abbey? She knew of no other method of excusing herself, than by pleading indisposition.

Accordingly, on his sending to let her know he

waited for her, she ordered her maid to inform him, that a severe headache had compelled her to lie down, and put it entirely out of her power to attend him to the Abbey that evening; but, at the same time to add, that he need be under no uneasiness, as she felt confident a little rest would restore her, and should therefore feel unhappy, if, on her account, he thought of staying at home.

But the fond father was not to be prevailed on to go out, till he had previously assured himself there was nothing to fear; having done this, he then forced himself to keep his engagement, but only from an apprehension, that an apology might be imputed to a lingering feeling of resentment.

Angeline was no sooner assured of his being gone, than she dispatched the expected answer to Miss Roscrea, and shortly after repaired to a parlour, communicating with a private door to which she had directed her. Of the wished for interview she was not disappointed; Miss Roscrea was herself too anxious for it, to permit her to be so. Making excessive fatigue a pretext for retiring from the drawing-room, she hastily muffled herself up, and, with the assistance of her maid, succeeded in quitting the Abbey unobserved, and reaching the apartment where Angeline waited to receive her. For a minute after she saw her, Angeline was scarcely able to bid her welcome, so violent was the agitation excited by her presence, or rather the idea of the information she might receive from her; it seemed to her as if the very crisis of her fate was at hand, and she could not feel so, without a sensation of dismay; but ere Miss Roscrea would reply to any of her anxious interrogations, she determined on having her own answered: it was only, indeed, by what she heard she could be guided what to

say; for, as may already be understood, she had not the remotest idea of dealing ingenuously with Angeline. Her subtle questions soon succeeded in obtaining from her all the information she required; wavering whether or not to repose unlimited confidence in her, Angeline was gradually betrayed into the latter.

To decide which, for the first few minutes after the disclosure of her marriage, was most agitated, would have been impossible; all, for some moments after hearing it, was rage and despair in the bosom of Miss Roscrea; the recollection then of the separation she had already effected, and the final one she might yet be able to accomplish, had the effect, in some degree, of enabling her to subdue her emotion.

A vague plan for the purpose of preventing all chance, or even possibility, of a re union between them, was not long in suggesting itself to her.—Smoothing her brow accordingly, she endeavoured to persuade her that the emotion she had just betrayed was entirely owing to the shock she experienced, at learning the unhappy predicament in which she had placed herself.—‘But we must hope,’ she artfully continued, ‘that all will end well; that the conduct of Villiers has been owing to some mistake or misrepresentation, not any deliberate determination; and consequently, that the interference of a friend will be a means of effecting all that can be desired. On my exertions for the purpose rely; be assured nothing shall be wanting on my part to restore you to happiness.’

‘You know then where he is?’ exclaimed Angeline, eagerly grasping her arm.

‘Why not exactly,’ replied Miss Roscrea, but in pursuance of her plan; ‘I have a friend in the

neighbourhood, who is perfectly acquainted with him, and to her I shall immediately apply for the requisite information.'

'Good God,' emphatically said Angeline, clasping her hands, 'how grateful am I to you! In the course of the ensuing day then, perhaps, I may have the happiness of obtaining what I have so many reasons for being solicitous for.'

'Assuredly: compose yourself therefore, lest the appearance of any uncommon emotion should lead to suspicion; for till you have ascertained to what the conduct of Villiers was owing, or rather how he ultimately decides to act, it is advisable, in my opinion, that you should carefully conceal what has occurred, lest the violent measures your friends would naturally be led to have recourse to, if acquainted with it, should have an injurious effect.'

Angeline, repeating her ardent acknowledgments for the interest she evinced for her, assured her she only advised what she had previously resolved on; but added, though she could not immediately let her know where Villiers then was, she could at least let her know whether she thought him the amiable character he appeared, and also, she hoped, some particulars of his family.

Miss Roscrea replied, she had but little doubt, from the estimation in which she knew him held by Roscrea, of his being what he appeared; but with regard to his connexions, she knew nothing—'However, you will not long, I dare say, remain in ignorance on that head,' she added; 'before this hour to-morrow, I should not be surprised if your anxiety on the subject was fully gratified—if, ere then, you found yourself in his arms; for I have a shrewd suspicion, though why or wherefore I shall not now explain, that he is not at an immense

distance; and therefore, from the letter I propose addressing to him, through the medium of my friend, deem an immediate meeting not improbable.'

'Oh, Heavens! what happiness do you communicate to my heart, by the hope you inspire! how has my conference with you relieved it! how lightened the anguish that has long oppressed it, long corroded my peace!' said the credulous Angeline. 'Never shall I be able to evince, as I wish, what I feel for your kindness—the grateful sense I entertain of your friendship. Oh, what will be my happiness to be again at liberty to act with the sincerity natural to me—to be divested of the apprehension that has so tortured me, of being a source of misery to my father!'

In a word, she was completely deceived by her self-interested confidant, lulled into that quiescent state that lays us entirely open to the designs of the flagitious. Not a doubt of the integrity of Miss Roscrea, the least suspicion of her truth, the remotest idea of her practising any deception, once occurred, and, in consequence, all that remained for her to do, to get her completely entangled in her toils, was to spread the snare she was now weaving for her.

But what her object could be, hearing what she had, to prosecute any further designs against her, may be demanded. The fact was, she was not still without a hope of being able to accomplish her own views, with regard to lord Hexham, could she prevent their reunion; and, at all events, felt, that to prevent Angeline's restoration to happiness, would be a gratification of the most exquisite description to her.

The particulars she drew from Angeline were the means of suggesting to her the plan she adopt-

ed for this purpose. The concealment she avowed her observing, relative to her intimacy with lady Rosamond, and ignorance of the connexion she had really formed, allowed her to see she might safely venture to contrive her removal from the neighbourhood; and once conveyed from it, a rumour of her death might easily be spread, which, from the light in which circumstances must make her appear, would, she made no doubt, be considered too welcome a one, by her friends, to permit them to inquire minutely into its truth. Her impatience to digest and finally arrange her meditated plan, was too great to allow her to think of prolonging the interview; a particular hour and place were appointed for another the succeeding day, for the purpose, she pretended, of communicating the result of her letter to her friend. She then departed, but not without again admonishing Angeline of the prudence of keeping concealed all that she had revealed to her, till after their next meeting at least.

Scarcely was she gone, ere Angeline heard some one tapping at the parlour door, which, lest of a surprise, she had bolted. She hastened to open it, and admitted her father. Had a spectre presented itself to her view, she could scarcely have evinced greater emotion than she did at his unexpected appearance; so strange, she was aware, must the circumstance of her having fastened herself in appear to him. Too much confused to be able immediately to recollect herself, she stood for a minute trembling and irresolute, with the door in her hand. Her emotion seemed contagious; almost drawing back—‘I seem to have alarmed you,’ said her father, with an air of agitation, and a look of wild inquiry.

‘Yes—a—a little—that is, surprised me, I

mean,' she replied. 'I did not expect you from the Abbey quite so soon.'

'The idea of your indisposition would not allow me to continue longer absent. Your being here, however, instead of in your chamber, as I almost expected, gives me reason to think I need not have been so uneasy. What study, pray, may I ask, with a forced smile, and glancing round the room as he spoke, 'were you engaged in, that you were so unwilling to be abruptly intruded on?'

'No—no—particular one,' again faltered out Angeline, unable to utter a falsehood, and besides, aware that, in the present instance, to have done so could answer no other end, than that of exposing her to additional confusion, there being nothing in the apartment to corroborate a contrary assertion, neither books, materials for writing, nor a musical instrument—'but I thought'—what, she was unable to say, so completely was she overwhelmed by confusion, on perceiving her father had discovered the door by which she had admitted Miss Roscrea, and which a small kind of hall divided from the parlour, lying open. Never had she felt herself in so cruel a dilemma, never so oppressed by the consciousness of appearing in a suspicious light; his look, his manner, on this discovery, his total silence relative to it, all left her no room to doubt this being the case: agonized by the idea, she was almost on the point of throwing herself at his feet, and fully opening her tortured heart to his view, when, with evidently forced calmness, he told her he would no longer prevent her retiring, as he clearly saw he had agitated her by his unexpected appearance, and wished besides to be left alone. But being allowed to withdraw afforded her but little relief; doubt, it was too evident, had taken

possession of her father's mind, and the conviction agitated her beyond expression; such indeed was the misery it occasioned, that but for the insidious advice of Miss Roscrea, she would scarcely have been able to have prevented herself from coming to an immediate explanation with him. She left him, indeed, as she had surmised, in a state of alarm and dismay; he could no longer deceive himself, no longer avoid seeing she had some concealment from him—a belief he had hitherto steadily resisted, notwithstanding the sufficient grounds he had previously for yielding to it, from the conviction of its being one that could not fail of destroying his newly-restored happiness; but the incidents of this evening would no longer permit him to refuse admission to it. The agitation it occasioned was heightened by his indecision how to act; whether, at once, to tax her with disingenuity, or endeavour to ascertain what he wished by becoming a silent observer on her actions: at length he resolved on the latter, in hopes of her being led by the ingenuousness he could not divest himself of the fond idea of being inherent in her nature, to, at length, make the required confession of her own accord; but, at all events, whether voluntarily or not, there was an end of all those high raised hopes of happiness he had recently indulged.

But not entirely to anxiety about her was his shortened visit at the Abbey owing. The matter of indifference which, to his extreme surprise, her not accompanying him there appeared to be, by reviving all the angry emotions of the preceding evening, induced him to hasten his exit. He had looked forward to a thousand affectionate congratulations from lady Rosamond, on the recent discovery, instead of which she had never opened

her lips on the subject. Her silence on one so interesting to him, considering her having always appeared to participate in the regard her family honoured him with, seemed most strange, most extraordinary to him—a circumstance he could not avoid dwelling on; and as he sat musing on it, after the retiring of Angeline, it suddenly suggested to him the possibility of something to her prejudice having been heard at the Abbey: he started at the surmise, as if a dagger had been planted in his breast at the moment; but though, from the exquisite torture it inflicted, he strove to banish it, he could not succeed; the more he reflected on the character of the marquis and marchioness, the more he was convinced of the little probability there was of their being ever swayed by caprice, and, of consequence, confirmed in it.

Again he became irresolute how to act; but at length decided on avoiding all explanation on the subject with the marquis, till he had endeavoured to ascertain what it was that could have been asserted to the injury of Angeline.

To that natural indignation which characters of real honour and delicacy involuntarily feel at the disclosure of any baseness, was again owing the conduct at the Abbey, that had excited this torturing persuasion in the mind of Clanronel.

Lady Rosamond could not sufficiently command herself to avoid being explicit with her family; she could not find herself with those whose affection would lead them to redress her imagined wrongs, without revealing them, so great is the relief imparted to the surcharged heart, by opening itself to those of whose sympathy it is certain; and, in consequence, Angeline was regarded with heightened indignation.

In proportion as she was lowered by the representations of lady Rosamond in their estimation, Miss Roscrea was elevated in it: there seemed something so truly generous, so truly noble, in her espousing the cause of the injured, contrary to the supposed impulse of natural affection, that terms were found inadequate to express what was thought of her conduct on the occasion. Such indeed were the sentiments she was permitted to see she had inspired, that she could scarcely bring herself to doubt, from the influence she conceived they must have upon him, that if lord Hexham was led to believe himself again free, her wishes respecting him might at length be crowned with success. But in condemning Roscrea, the marchioness did not altogether acquit her daughter; her conduct in quitting her residence, without consulting him, she conceived highly censurable. The pain their difference occasioned was augmented by the impossibility of at present taking any effectual step for adjusting it, owing to Angeline. On her account, too, lord Hexham could not be immediately recalled to the Abbey, a reflection that did not tend to weaken the resentment which had been excited against her.

Before the ensuing day, Miss Roscrea had finally arranged her plans respecting her; for the facility with which she was enabled to do so, she was, in some measure, indebted to her woman, her confident on many previous important occasions as well as this.

At the appointed hour she hastened to the place of meeting with Angeline. Her looks, her manner, all intended to deceive, instantly inspired hope—‘I see,’ said Angeline, involuntarily grasping her arm to support her frame, trembling with

joyful emotion, 'that you have pleasant tidings to impart; your countenance tells me so.'

'It does not flatter,' returned Miss Roscrea; 'I have indeed information to communicate, that must rejoice you. Villiers, as I surmised, is not far distant, and has, in consequence of my letter, appointed an interview with you this evening, at a place a few miles off. Don't look so perplexed; my woman shall accompany you in a chaise that I will take care to have provided for you. Doubtless, after the manner in which I wrote to him, Villiers would have hastened hither at once himself, instead of requiring you to take the trouble of going to any distance to meet him, but for the circumstances he is at present under; the fact is, he has recently been engaged in an affair of honour, that renders caution necessary, till the fate of his antagonist is one way or other decided.'

Angeline clasped her hands in agony—'Good God!' she exclaimed, 'how could you say you had intelligence to communicate that would rejoice me?'

'Because I really thought so. As your fame, and the peace of your father, must be your first considerations, I could not possibly avoid imagining that the prospect of being extricated from a situation calculated to injure both, would not afford you sincere pleasure. Human happiness is seldom without alloy; and though I do not pretend to much philosophy, yet this I certainly think, that unrepiningly we should take the evil with the good: Villiers may soon be relieved from the unpleasant predicament in which he at present stands; at all events, an explanation with him must, I should conceive, be a means of restoring you to comparative tranquillity. The result of my letter

proves, that he is not less anxious for this than you are: make up your mind therefore to meet him this evening, as he has desired, and, rely on it, you will have reason to rejoice at the circumstance.'

'I at once did that,' returned Angeline; 'duty and inclination alike impel me to the measure; and my obligations to you are heightened by your promised aid on the occasion.' Almost involuntarily then she expressed a wish to know who the person was whose interference relative to Villiers Miss Roscrea had obtained?

Miss Roscrea evaded a direct reply to this question, by pretending she had a particular reason for not informing her at present.—'Besides, it can be of no consequence to you to know,' she added; 'and at all events, you should at present think of nothing but the approaching interview, in order that you may be sufficiently collected to obtain the explanation so essential to your peace. About eight my woman shall be in waiting for you at a little distance from the entrance to the avenue; and as you will not have above a few miles to go, you will be back, I dare say, before your father rises from table.'

Every thing being settled, she would have departed, but, still anxious and agitated, Angeline a few minutes longer detained her, and now proceeded to mention the embarrassing incident of the preceding evening, and the additional unhappiness she experienced, from the too evident suspicion it had inspired her father with.

Miss Roscrea was rejoiced at what she heard; since distrust once introduced, there was little difficulty, she was aware, in making the worst believed. Not to chance, however, had she determined

leaving the irreparable injury of Angeline with her father; it was her intention to apprise him of the name she had borne at the castle, a circumstance that, from what she understood he had heard from the marquis, could not fail, she conceived, of making him consider her all she desired her to be imagined, and her disappearance from Rooksdale a voluntary act.

How finally to dispose of her, she had not yet decided; for the present, it was her intention to have her conveyed to Ireland, where, through means of her woman, she knew she could be safely secreted for some time. In short, her arrangements were such, as to permit her to entertain no doubt of the final accomplishment of her plans—an accomplishment to which she looked forward without the slightest remorse for the misery she was perfectly aware it must occasion.

A brother of her woman's was the owner of a vessel at Whitehaven; and of her knowledge of this circumstance, or rather his being on the point of sailing thence for Dublin, she resolved to avail herself, to have Angeline conveyed to Dublin in his vessel.

 CHAP. XVI.

Griev'd I, I had but one?
 Chid I for that at frugal nature's frame?
 Oh one too much by thee! Why had I one?
 Why ever wast thou lovely in my eyes?
 Why had I not, with charitable hand,
 Took up a beggar's issue at my gates,
 Who smirched thus, and mir'd with infamy,
 I might have said, *no part of it is mine*;
 This shame derives itself from unknown loins.

* * * * *
 But mine, and mine I lov'd, and mine I prais'd,
 And mine that I was proud on; mine so much,
 That I myself was to myself not mine,
 Valuing of her; why, she, oh! she is fallen
 Into a pit of ink! that the wide sea
 Hath drops too few to wash her clean again;
 And salt too little, which may season give
 To her foul-tainted flesh!

SHAKSPEARE.

At the appointed hour Angeline stole through the avenue, but in a state of trepidation that gave her scarce power to reach the chaise, which as expected, she found waiting at a little distance from it: but though it proceeded with rapidity, it did not stop quite so soon as she expected. At length she found herself at the place where she had been led to believe she should find Villiers waiting to receive her, and for a moment her agitation at the idea of being on the point of seeing him, completely overcame her.

Her tremour was so great, as to render her unable to alight without assistance, and for an instant after she entered the house, which was a little obscure inn by the road's side, she felt scarcely able to breathe. A little recovered, she looked towards

the door, with something like a sensation of mingled dread and anxiety, for the entrance of Villiers ; but he appeared not. She was not long, however, kept in a state of suspense ; the woman who had ushered her into the apartment quickly returned, and presenting her with a letter, again withdrew ; with a chilling presentiment of disappointment, Angelina tremblingly broke the seal, and read as follows :—

‘ After giving you the trouble of coming from home, my regret at being unable to meet you is indispensible, more especially as I am aware of the alarm you will feel at the circumstance, owing to the motive to which you will naturally impute it, from the communication you have doubtless received from Miss Roserea. A circumstance has indeed occurred to convince me, that, consistent with safety, I can neither venture to the place appointed for our interview, nor yet delay longer in this kingdom, in consequence of which I am on the point of proceeding to Whitehaven, for the purpose of embarking thence to Ireland. Could you be induced to follow my receding steps, how great would my transport and gratitude be, at such a proof of your affection and forgiveness ! That, after what has occurred, I have no right whatever to demand such a one, I am perfectly aware ; but perhaps you will not deem me too presumptuous for doing so, when I solemnly avow the cruel conduct I can never pardon myself for, however the gentleness of your nature may lead you to do so, was alone occasioned by misrepresentations. That I should have closely questioned ere I allowed myself to condemn, I acknowledge ; but who is there that, at some period or other, is not liable to err ? and, alas ! ardent passions are but too apt to lead

us astray : if suffering be considered an atonement for error, mine I may surely flatter myself with being in some degree extenuated ; for with truth I can affirm, that for every pang I occasioned you, I inflicted a correspondent one on myself. Never, never, till I have a personal opportunity of imploring your forgiveness for these, shall I know ought of tranquillity. Oh, could you be prevailed on to quickly grant me this, how great, I repeat, would be my gratitude ! That in urging you to do so, I must appear inconsistent, as well as unreasonable, I am fully sensible ; inconsistent, after regretting your having the slight trouble of coming a trifling distance, to immediately require you to incur the fatigue of a long journey ; but with feelings at variance, how can we be otherwise ? Perhaps it may be a means of inducing you to attend to my wishes, to know, that ere the receipt of this, your father will be fully apprized of the connexion between us ; a hope that you might be prevailed on to act as I implore, induced me to commission Miss Roscrea to acquaint him with the circumstance, in order that your departure might be properly accounted for ; and sure I am, from what I have heard respecting him, he will not be displeased at your hearkening to my request, or, as might be considered, obeying the dictates of your duty. Disappoint not, therefore, oh, my love, I implore you, my high-raised expectations—yes, I repeat, the expectations I have permitted myself to yield to, from my conviction of the sincerity of your regard, of an almost immediate meeting. Under the ecstatic hope of your joining me there, I shall linger a day at Whitehaven. Adieu ! I am impatient to be gone, from the idea that the sooner I depart, the sooner I may see you.

The perusal of this letter had an effect of the most agitating nature on the feelings of Angeline, so great was the struggle, so violent the conflict it excited in her mind, between inclination and fear. Propelled by the powerful impulse of the former to follow the steps of Villiers, yet she shrunk from the thought, lest of offending her father; but at length as the wily fabricator of the letter had conceived would be the case, it triumphed. To the idea of the disappointment her refusing to accede to the wishes of Villiers—Villiers now more interesting than ever to her imagination, from the persuasion of his contrition and distress, his needing the consolations of tenderness and affection, every other consideration yielded, more especially as she could not bring herself to believe her father would condemn her on cool reflection. Had she indeed been led to think that it was intended he should remain in ignorance of the tie that called her from him, nothing then, indeed, could possibly have succeeded in inducing her to depart, nothing to forfeit for a moment her claim to his esteem, nothing for an instant to give that interruption to his happiness which she was perfectly aware a belief of her unworthiness must occasion; but apprized as he would immediately be of the motive of her conduct, or rather, prepared in a degree for the announcement of her departure, by the previous communication of Miss Roscrea, she could not allow herself to think it would either be a serious shock, or cause of resentment to him; and accordingly, with all the eagerness of impatience, re-entered the chaise, unhesitatingly accepting the artful offer of her companion to attend her the remainder of the way, and with a determination of availing herself of the first opportunity to address a let-

ter to him, a letter which, from the now-expected explicitness of Villiers, she trusted she should be enabled to render particularly satisfactory to him. She proceeded without stopping; and on reaching Whitehaven, directly drove to the obscure inn to which in the postscript of the fabricated letter she had been directed: but with spirits now entirely exhausted by fatigue and agitation, she was but ill gratified to bear the disappointment that here again awaited her; again, instead of beholding Villiers, she was presented with a letter, stating the necessity he found himself under, contrary to his first intention, of immediately embarking, and conjuring her in the most earnest terms not to hesitate following. This, after proceeding so far, she could not allow herself to do; but with a sinking heart, from the disappointments she had already experienced, she made up her mind to the measure. Besides, she was alarmed by the idea of the close pursuit his abrupt departure announced, or rather the dangerous state it implied his antagonist being in: some tears fell from her at the clouded prospect she was again in consequence compelled to contemplate; her thoughts involuntary reverted to her father, and with a pang of the most acute nature, she reflected on what, after all, he might be yet destined to endure on her account.—But this was not a moment to give herself up to the supine indulgence of melancholy—immediately acquainting her companion with the purport of the letter, she entreated her exertions to procure her a passage to the other side.

This the artful Esther readily promised; informing her she was not without hopes of being readily enabled to obtain her what she required, owing to her having a relation in business there, to whom she

should immediately proceed, for the purpose of procuring his assistance.

Accordingly she left her; and having ascertained her brother's being ready to sail, and arranged every matter with him, returned in the course of an hour, with the welcome information of having succeeded—'But I am sorry to acquaint you, madam,' she answered, 'that no time will be given you for repose, after the fatigue of your journey, for the vessel is about getting under weigh; and besides that, it is nothing better than a collier.'

'Oh, no matter,' returned Angeline; 'as for rest, I am not in a state of mind that would have permitted me to enjoy any; and for the vessel, it signifies not what it is, so that it is equal to bear me in safety over the waves.'

A carriage was immediately sent for; and after stopping for a few minutes in their way to it, to purchase a few necessaries that were indispensable, they proceeded, without further delay, to the place of embarkation, and directly went on board. But notwithstanding what had been said, Angeline was not sufficiently prepared for what she now saw, to be able to avoid experiencing a sensation of disgust and dismay at it. Hastening to the wretched cabin, she threw herself on the still more wretched pallet, with a hope of soon being lost to external objects; but thought, busy thought, rendered ineffectual every effort for repose; her brain was heated, her mind tortured with apprehension and anxiety; she trembled to think what her situation would be, should she be again disappointed of meeting Villiers, and still more at what her father would suffer, should she be destined, through the connexion she had formed, to become a wanderer in a foreign land.

But these fears were soon lost in fears for her personal safety. The vessel had not been many hours under weigh, when a storm arose, that, from its violence, filled even the uncouth crew with dismay; but great as was her terror, Angeline never for an instant lost her self-recollection: not so, however, her companion; conscious guilt augmented her alarm to a degree that soon rendered her unable to maintain any control over herself—the inevitable fate that seemed approaching, was rendered still more dreadful to her imagination by the offences of which she had to accuse herself—the terrible consciousness of having been prevailed on, from interested motives, to aid in ensnaring innocence. In an agony of remorse and contrition, she was at length impelled to betray herself—impelled to open to the view of the dismayed Angeline her tortured soul—impelled to reveal the complicated stratagems practised on her, by a hope of the confession being considered some extenuation of her guilt in the sight of Heaven—obtaining her some remission of her sins at that awful tribunal to which she believed herself on the point of being summoned.

What Angeline felt at her communication, may easier be conceived than described; no language could do justice to the astonishment excited by the disclosure of such treachery; in the feelings it inspired, every other feeling was for a time lost—she became insensible for a few minutes of the terrific pealing of the thunder, the raging of the wind shivering the sails into a thousand pieces, the heaving of the mountain billows; at length, a little recovering from its stupifying effect, her aspirations became more fervent than ever for the preservation of her life, in order that an opportunity might be afforded her of vindicating her innocence. At

length, as if spent by its own violence, the storm gradually began to die away, permitting the nearly-exhausted crew to recover tranquillity.

The necessity there was for being fully enlightened on the subject of the contrivances against her, occasioned Angeline to take advantage of this circumstance, in despite of sickness and languor, to renew the interrogations to which it had given birth, and in consequence of which she at length became possessed of all the required particulars, that is, of Miss Roscrea's motives for acting as she had done; for of Villiers Esther knew nothing, Miss Roscrea politely making it a rule never to impart more to her confidants than was absolutely essential to the furtherance of her schemes. Still under the influence of the feelings that had impelled her to betray herself, she readily promised Angeline to render herself subservient, in any way she should desire, to her acquittal: in consequence, Angeline could not admit a doubt of all not yet ending happily, of speedily finding her relieved from the anxiety that had so long embittered her peace. With what grateful transport did her heart swell at the idea! how exquisite her rapture—how pure her happiness, at the smiling prospect that again began to open to her view! she resolved on an immediate return to her father; and trusted, from the unreserved communication she now intended, he would easily be enabled to discover Villiers.

At the expiration of three days, the vessel entered the harbour of Dublin; and towards evening, Angeline and her companion were landed on one of the quays, and immediately proceeded to a contiguous house of public resort, but of such a description, as revived the sensation she had expe-

rienced on entering the vessel, and occasioned her to determine on repairing, without delay, to another. To her utter consternation and amazement, however, on avowing this determination, her companion very abruptly declared, it was one she could not think of acquiescing in; conceiving the place quite good enough for their accommodation for one night; and besides, having appointed a person to meet her there.

Penitence is seldom more than short-lived where there is no fixed principle; with the dissipation of her terrors, at finding herself once more on *terra firma*; had vanished all Mrs. Esther's late contrition; and to atone for the weakness to which she considered it owing, she more firmly than ever resolved on the fulfilment of her promises to Miss Roscrea: her altered tone and manner at once sufficed to let Angeline perceive the change her sentiments had undergone; but though alarmed beyond expression by the conviction, she yet had sufficient command of herself to veil her terror; she knew she was at the instant completely in her power, and conceived, therefore, her only plan was to try and throw her off her guard, which she was aware she could only hope to do by appearing unsuspecting of her; accordingly she forced herself to assume an air of unconcern, as to her stay or removal; but after tea, pleading extreme fatigue, expressed a wish to lie down till supper. This was a wish which her companion had no objection to complying with, from the opportunity her doing so would afford her of having a little conversation with the people of the house, with whom she was well acquainted: accordingly she conducted her to a chamber, and then left her. Angeline softly opened the door on her retiring; and having assured

herself, by listening for a few minutes, that she was engaged in conversation at the bar, hastily made up the few necessaries she had purchased at Whitehaven into a parcel, and descending the creaking stairs with a palpitating heart, quickly found herself in the street.

She hurried forward as chance directed until she had got to some distance from the house, when she ventured to pause, for the purpose of inquiring of a decent-looking woman, whom she met at the moment, the way to a stand of coaches; the woman civilly directed her; and obeying her instructions, she presently found herself in College Green, where she readily procured one; and on entering it, desired the man to proceed to the nearest inn where carriages for travelling were to be hired; for instead of persevering in her original intention of returning immediately to Rooksdale, she now decided on directly repairing to St. Ruth, feeling without the support his presence would afford her, his testimony of her truth, his expostulations in her favour, she could not have courage to face her father, impressed as she knew he must be, from what had happened; with a terrible belief of her unworthiness, or rather from her inability, owing to the sudden revolution the feelings of Miss Roscrea's unprincipled confidant had undergone, to bring forward any positive proof of her innocence; but oh, Heavens! what was the anguish of her soul at the idea, that, even with him to advocate her cause, she might fail of vindicating herself, in any degree fail of regaining the esteem, the affection of those whose regard strong attachment rendered absolutely essential to her peace! in bitterness of spirit at the possibility, she raised her trembling hands to heaven, with a fervent hope, that, if such proved

the case, she might not be long spared to weep over the misery entailed on her.

Alas! her fluctuations between hope and fear evinced her being not yet perfectly aware of the lengths to which ardent passions, the sudden impulse of strong resentment in a mind of warm feelings, are capable of carrying us. To punish her supposed degeneracy, her father had resolved on punishing himself: to this resolution he was incited by the letter fabricated in her name by Miss Roscrea, and delivered to him on her being missed, in which, after avowing her being the Miss De Burgh of whom he had heard from the marquis, she proceeded to declare her elopement occasioned by the arrival of lady Rosamond at the Abbey, a circumstance that, rendering any longer concealment of her former conduct impossible, made her deem any further restraint on herself unnecessary; and concluding by avowing, that should his forgiveness to it be refused, she should endeavour to console herself under his displeasure, by the reflection, that his resentment could not be manifested by any alienation of his property.

This indeed was true, his estate being an entailed one; but though he could not alter the settlement, still an expedient might be found for disappointing her expectations; marriage, of course, was the only one that could be devised for the purpose, and accordingly he resolved on a second one; not, however, without the most terrible struggles, so repugnant to his feelings was the idea of forming new connexions, of swerving in any degree from his ancient habits, of violating the vow of unalterable constancy he had uttered on the early tomb of her whom a cruel fate so soon deprived him of. But there was no alternative between either de-

ceding on a measure to which every feeling was averse, or else allowing a shameless child to triumph in the idea of being able to insult him with impunity. Good God! and was she capable of a thing of the kind? capable of voluntarily insulting the feelings of any one, and then triumphing at the idea? she whose looks, whose sentiments, were all so indicative of tenderness and sensibility! whose manners were so truly feminine! whose elegance appeared so evidently inherent! Oh, scarce could he believe it possible! scarce that it was not too monstrous a contradiction to be credited! but the proofs of its being the case were too positive to permit it to be doubted; the corroborations of her guilt too strong and well connected to allow the admission of a doubt in her favour—‘And this was the creature,’ in bitterness of spirit he cried, ‘for whose restoration I was so solicitous! Oh, blind to fate indeed, how little do we know what we desire! how little that the attainment of our wishes may be the termination of our felicity!—Ah, what a proof that we should resignedly submit every event to the will of Heaven! that our aspirations should be not for what we wish, but what, in its infinite wisdom, it may deem best for us.’

Than death a thousand times more terrible was the idea of letting the family at the Abbey know his dreadful humiliation, though well aware, in the feelings it would there excite, nothing of the triumph of exultation would mingle; accordingly, resolving on concealing it as long as possible, he issued the necessary instructions to his steward for the purpose, desiring him to account in some plausible way for his sudden departure from Rookdale, and the disappearance of Angeline. Con-

vinced, however, that to pay a farewell visit at St. Cuthbert's would be to betray, or at least excite a suspicion of what he wished to conceal, from the little command he was aware he could yet maintain over himself, he decided on the omission of this ceremony; and the day after Angeline's supposed elopement, quitted Rooksdale for Bath.

There was something too sudden in his departure, too singular in his not calling to take leave at the Abbey ere it took place, not to excite those suspicions there which he wished to prevent—suspicions strengthened by the vague manner in which every inquiry relative to Angeline was answered by the steward, who was the person deputed by Clanronel to wait on the marquis, with intelligence of his departure; in short, they began to fear he had discovered the truth; that the state of confusion and terror into which they concluded the arrival of lady Rosamond at St. Cuthbert's had thrown Angeline, had occasioned her to betray herself, and, in consequence, that he had precipitately quitted the neighbourhood, with an intention of no more returning to it. The heart of the marquis was wrung by the supposition; and in the unhappiness it excited, the marchioness sincerely participated; lady Rosamond too, in commiseration for the unhappy father, losing her resentment against the daughter, began bitterly to deplore having been instrumental to the hastening a discovery so fatal to his peace.

Miss Roscrea, an adept at dissimulation, appeared to feel for all parties; but while her countenance wore an expression of sympathy, her heart was the seat of joy and exultation; nothing now remained for her to do, but to circulate a rumour of Angeline's death; and this, from the storm that

succeeded her departure, she was not without a hope of being safely enabled to do. To complete her triumph, she learnt that lord Hexham was to be entreated to immediately return to the Abbey, where, from the high estimation in which she was held, and there being no dangerous competitor to fear, she flattered herself with at length succeeding in making that impression on him she had so long ardently desired.

CHAP. XVII.

Forlorn and lost I tread,
 With fainting steps and slow,
 Where wilds, immeasurably spread,
 Seem length'ning as I go.

GOLDSMITH.

ANGELINE'S anxiety to find herself on her way to St. Ruth was so great, as to induce her to determine, notwithstanding the lateness of the hour, and consequent risks to which she should be exposed, on immediately commencing her journey, could she procure a carriage for the purpose; this, however, was not to be done at the inn to which she was driven; they positively refused letting her have one till morning; accordingly she was compelled to pass the night there, though not without terror and confusion, from the unfavourable surmises she was aware her unprotected appearance calculated to excite. Whether or not she was right in her conjecture, nothing occurred to alarm her: by the hour she had mentioned, a chaise was ready for her; and on a cold hazy morning in October, ere the busy population of the town was again alive, she commenced another jour-

ney to St. Columb's; but under what different circumstances to the former one! then accompanied by the dearest of human beings, with a glowing prospect before her, now solitary and dejected, dismayed by the past, and trembling for the future.

Amidst the anguish she felt, however, a transient sensation of pleasure was now and then experienced, at the idea of the conduct of Villiers being owing to no premeditation—of her having been as dear as ever to his heart, at the moment he had thrown her from it. How, at this reflection, did her soul dissolve in tenderness—how did she feel, that to be restored to his regard, to find herself again enfolded to his bosom, would compensate for every pang!

By travelling without intermission, never allowing herself to pause but while the carriage was changing, she reached the end of her fatiguing journey a little after nightfall. The kind of vague terror that had pervaded her mind throughout the whole of the preceding part of the day instantly vanished, such was the feeling of security imparted by the idea of being in the vicinity of a friend; such a friend too as St. Ruth—as him who had promised no circumstance should alienate his regard—that with him she should ever find a home, a sanctuary.—‘Alas! how little, when he plighted this promise,’ she said within herself, ‘how little did he then imagine I should so soon put his sincerity to the test! how little that I should again return to his loved protection! again be thrown on his kindness! Dear, inestimable friend, how mingled will be your emotions at our meeting! how will the joy it occasions be checked by the circumstance to which it is owing.’

She alighted at the ferry-house, and from the welcome she received from its mistress, almost felt

as if it was a home she was entering : how soothing, how delightful to her harassed spirits was this feeling !—how almost delicious the tears it caused her to shed !

On the subsiding of her emotion, an emotion that for an instant deprived her of voice, she eagerly inquired concerning St. Ruth, by his assumed name, asking when she had seen him ?

‘ Not for some time,’ the landlady replied ; ‘ neither his friend, father Cormac, whose growing infirmities now seldom permitted him to come abroad.’

Angeline was not alarmed by what she heard relative to St. Ruth, knowing he at present wished, as much as possible, to remain in seclusion : she declined the landlady’s offer of sending the next morning to acquaint him with her arrival, preferring to announce it herself in person ; and after taking some slight refreshment, retired to the repose her exhausted frame so much needed.

But her anxiety to behold St. Ruth, her anxiety to make an effort for the redress of her injuries, was too great to permit her to court repose longer than was absolutely necessary ; accordingly she arose at an early hour, and immediately after breakfast proceeded to St. Columb’s. How did her heart palpitate at the idea of the anticipated meeting, when, through the bushy trees, she at length caught a glimpse of its grey walls and ivy-covered battlements !—how, when she at length found herself within its ancient portal ! yet all was calculated to still the wild emotions of the heart, for all was silence and solitude ; not a sound was to be heard, nor did any gliding figure meet the eye in the distant perspective of the receding arches ; it seemed as if the holy inmates of the pile had at

length resigned it to the ruin that had already overtaken it. Angeline, however, continued to advance up the lonely hall, chequered at the moment with the varied light admitted through the stained windows; but just as she had reached a distant door, opening to the interior of the building, one of the monks made his appearance; Angeline bowed her head as his eyes fell on her, and in trembling accents inquired for De Burgh.

Almost starting at the inquiry, he looked earnestly at her for a moment, and then informed her De Burgh was gone.

‘Gone!’ she repeated with wildness; ‘gone!’ in a tone of agony.

‘Yes,’ he repeated; ‘he departed hence a week ago for Cork, for the purpose of embarking thence for Spain, whither he has been summoned by a letter.’

Angeline clasped her hands despairingly, her head became giddy from disappointment, and staggering back a few paces, she would have fallen, but for the timely interposition of the friar.

‘Endeavour to collect yourself,’ he said, on seeing her a little revive; ‘if so absolutely essential to you to have a meeting with your friend, perhaps you may succeed in obtaining it, for there is a possibility that he might not have been able to sail immediately.’

Angeline felt rescued from despair by this suggestion—‘Oh, good God, may it prove so!’ she exclaimed; ‘I will instantly pursue his route, and shall consider myself amply compensated for all I have gone through, if so fortunate as to arrive ere he is gone.’

Although circumstances might render it impossible for him to delay his voyage, she should still,

by seeing him, obtain his advice, his interference perhaps in a degree.

Precipitately she was departing, for the purpose of immediately setting out, when recollecting the letter that had been mentioned as the occasion of his voyage, she involuntarily paused, for the purpose of making some inquiries concerning it.

The friar replied, it was not in his power to give her any information on the subject ; father Cormac might perhaps be able to do so, he said—‘ But I cannot say whether you can see him, as it is not every day his feebleness will now permit him to rise ; I will try, however, whether you can do so.’

He accordingly retired, but was not absent above a few minutes ; and on returning, informed her father Cormac was up, and would be happy to see her.

She accordingly followed to his cell, at the entrance to which her conductor left her. She found the venerable father seated on a little couch, enjoying, with a placid countenance, the mild sunshine his small casement admitted into the apartment. He received her with an air of kindness, and motioned for her to take a seat beside him ; but she excused herself—‘ My impatience to follow our mutual friend will not permit me to linger,’ she said ; ‘ but ere I go, I could wish to ascertain whether the letter that calls him away comes from count Tirconnel ?’

‘ It does, my child,’ replied the venerable father.

‘ And expressive of contrition, I hope ?’

He shook his aged head—‘ The count was ill,’ he replied, ‘ when he wrote, and therefore expressed some regret for the past ; but the penitence that is only experienced in the hour of sickness is sel-

dom permanent. Let us not despair, however; there is no heart so hardened that it may not be touched with real remorse. Should you have the happiness of seeing your friend ere his embarkation, bear him my best wishes—bear him too my last farewell, for in this world I feel we shall no more meet: the lamp burns now too feebly to permit me to imagine it will not be extinguished ere his return; but I depart hence with the cheering hope of a reunion in the other world with those I love, amongst the happy and rejoicing spirits of good men made perfect.'

'Cheering hope indeed!' repeated Angeline emphatically, and involuntarily raising her humid eyes to heaven; 'oh, never may my heart lose the consolation it imparts! Oh, father, but for it, how, with any fortitude, could we support the dissolution of our earthly ties!'

'How indeed!' returned the aged father; 'but the God that chastens, remembering what we are, enables us to support affliction by his divine suggestions; he bids us look beyond this vale of tears, and doing so, we derive comfort.'

Angeline listened with reverence to him; his appearance indeed was calculated to fix attention; he looked indeed so like a thing already enskyed and sainted—already so elevated above all the gross concerns—so completely disentangled from them of this nether scene, that as, at the moment of taking leave, she kissed his hand, pale as the marble of the tomb, and already cold as its clay, she would have knelt to implore his blessing, but for a dread, as the tender Perdita says, of being deemed superstitious.

Hastening back to the ferry-house, she directly ordered a chaise, and in the course of a few minutes

was on her way to Cork; again she travelled without pausing, and, in consequence, found herself at the end of her journey by an early hour the next morning, just as, through its dispersing mists, the ocean was beginning to gleam upon the sight.—Alighting at the house to which she was directed to inquire for St. Ruth, she eagerly asked for him; but oh! how impossible to declare the pang of that moment—how impossible to describe her wild agony, on being informed that he had sailed about an hour before!—‘In that very vessel,’ cried the hostess, throwing up a sash, and directing her look towards it, ‘that now appears just like a spot in the horizon.’

Angeline almost shrieked with despair—‘But an hour ago, you say! But an hour ago he sailed!’ she exclaimed. ‘Oh God, my God, what will become of me? Would that I could follow him!’

‘Follow him!’ repeated the landlady, eyeing her askance; ‘a likely thing truly! No, no; there’s no posting at sea.’

‘Oh, I know it! I know it!’ replied Angeline, wringing her hands, as she still kept her almost starting eyes strained upon the vessel; ‘oh I know it!’ she cried, scarcely conscious of what she said, ‘and resign myself to despair.’

This was indeed the case; she had persuaded herself to believe her restoration to fame impracticable without his interference, and, in consequence, finding him gone had filled her with dismay.

Ah! little at the moment, was he aware of the wild anguish his departure had excited; ah! little of the streaming eyes that followed his receding course; ah! little of the trembling hands that were extended in hopeless supplication towards him. Oh, had he been—had he known that the

daughter of his affection, the child of his adoption, required his aid, what would have prevented his making an effort to return? But he was spared the pang that would have attended the perhaps useless knowledge—spared the pang of knowing they were destined to meet no more in this life. Yes, St. Ruth, the generous and the brave, he whose noble heart had so early breathed the sigh of sympathy for others—so early learned that from affliction there is no exemption, he was doomed to find a grave in the element on which he now floated, a resting-place amidst the wild waters of the deep.

The violence of Angeline's emotions at length began to subside, her wild transports to give way to the reflection of the necessity there was for her endeavouring to collect herself: a little recovering from the shock she had experienced, she could not avoid acknowledging, that she should indeed justly lose the protection of Providence, if capable of abandoning herself to despair, because deprived of mortal aid; yet so essential did she consider St. Ruth's, that until his return, which, from the interrogations she addressed to the landlady when a little recovered, she understood might be soon, she resolved on making no effort for the redress of her injuries, no attempt to enter into an explanation with her father; and to which resolve she was still further incited, by a dread of the new machinations to which she might be exposed, should she afford any clue whereby she might be traced, and which, she was aware, she could scarcely avoid doing, if she addressed a letter to Rooksdale.

On silence and concealment, therefore, she for the present decided, though not without the most

agonizing conflicts, from the conviction of what she was suffering, in the opinion of those she regarded.

She had no sooner decided how to act, than she applied to the landlady to know whether she could assist her in procuring a lodging, where she might with safety await the return of her friend?

She was answered in the affirmative; and as soon as she had recruited her exhausted frame, by a little rest and refreshment, it was settled that she should proceed thither. But her heart sunk at the thought, that if not a place of a very plain description, she must avoid becoming its inmate, the money she had brought with her from Rooksdale being by this time nearly exhausted.

The anxiety and agitation of her mind rendered ineffectual her efforts for repose, and accordingly she very soon expressed a wish to depart. The house to which she was referred was in Cork, a few miles from the Cove; just as she alighted, and was entering it, a female voice, calling to her by the familiar name of De Burgh, occasioned her to turn, and to her extreme surprise she beheld Miss Elmere.—‘My dear creature,’ cried this young lady, with every appearance of ecstasy, hastening to meet her, and eagerly grasping her hands, ‘how enraptured am I at beholding you! from what cloud did you drop thus unexpectedly before me? Heavens! how ardently have I sought to learn your residence, that if I enjoyed not your converse, I might, at least, have the felicity of corresponding with you! But I wish, by accompanying me to my lodgings, which are near this, you would afford me an opportunity of conversing a little with you.’

Angeline could not bring herself to decline complying with this wish; so forlorn, so desolate indeed did she feel herself, that she could not help

experiencing something of joy at the meeting, even the semblance of regard being grateful to the forsaken.

The result of the conversation that ensued was a warm invitation from Miss Elmere to accompany her to her villa near Dublin; an invitation which, after a little hesitation, Angeline decided on accepting, led by the terror she experienced at the idea of remaining without protection in a strange place, and a dread of her finances being exhausted ere the return of St. Ruth, should she incur any heavy expense. Uncertain of the length of time which she might be destined to remain the guest of Miss Elmere, she deemed the avowal of her marriage absolutely essential to her fame: not, however, without an extreme degree of embarrassment did she reveal it, owing to the circumstances under which she was met, or rather the reflection of the unpleasant surmises they were calculated to excite. In fearing, however, they might be a means of injuring her with Miss Elmere, she was utterly mistaken; there was a charm in mystery to that young lady, that rendered those involved in it infinitely more interesting to her; she quickly perceived that Angeline had some concealment—was under some embarrassment, a circumstance that rendered her still more anxious for her company.

For being in this part of the kingdom she accounted, by saying, she had been on a visit to the Lakes of Killarney, partly for the purpose of ascertaining whether their romantic beauties could furnish her with a hint for the embellishment of her villa, and partly the pleasure of seeing the friend of poor Brillanté, who was stationed at Ross Castle, and now, she confessed, her avowed lover.

The ensuing day was the one fixed for her departure, a circumstance that was extremely agreeable to Angeline, from the wish she felt to be again settled for a little while. She did not depart, however, without leaving a letter for St. Ruth with the landlady at the Cove.

After an easy journey of some days, they at length reached the residence of Miss Elmere, on the road to Wicklow, a place, as she herself said, of great capabilities, but which she had so torn, through her whims, as to render it, at present, the very reverse of a pleasant dwelling; but Angeline did not feel any dissatisfaction at this, on understanding, that, till fitted up according to the taste of its mistress, she did not propose seeing any company, as nothing could possibly have been more distressing to her, than being compelled to mix in society, situated as she was.

She availed herself of her vicinity to town, to make inquiries concerning Mr. and Mrs. Dillon; the result of these tended not a little to heighten her uneasiness, from discovering to her their departure for the continent; and thus putting it out of her power to procure their testimony of her marriage, should it prove necessary.

That this, however, would not prove the case, she was led to flatter herself from her revived opinion of the honour of Villiers; but felt, while under a doubt on the subject, the experience of tranquillity, in any degree, impossible. The idea of what her father must be suffering on her account haunted her imagination continually, impelling her almost, at times, for the purpose of endeavouring to relieve him from it, to an immediate explanation; but still, as often as she meditated this, she was induced to relinquish the idea, by a dread of

its proving ineffectual, without some other testimony in her favour than her own. In a word, she resolved on adhering to her original determination of remaining passive under her wrongs, till the return of St. Ruth, which, from what she had heard, she concluded would be about the expiration of three months, and to the termination of which period she accordingly looked with all the impatience of anxiety; it was just at hand, when the lover of Miss Ethere arrived, for the purpose of being present at a grand fête, with which she meant to open her villa to company.

In the course of conversation, after dinner, he began to speak of the general grief and consternation excited in Cork, by the loss of a vessel belonging to it, with a number of its inhabitants on board, off the coast of Spain.

Angeline tremblingly inquired its name, and the part of the coast on which it had foundered? He explicitly informed her; and was beginning to give some particulars of the melancholy catastrophe, when her dropping from her chair prevented him—it was the vessel in which St. Ruth had embarked, and who, with every other soul on board, had perished. Several hours elapsed ere Angeline was restored to her senses; and when she was, the wild agony she betrayed almost occasioned those who had assisted in recovering her to reproach themselves for having done so; now indeed she felt herself forlorn—now indeed bewildered by the contemplation of her situation. Her grief and horror, at the disastrous fate of her more than father, received the only augmentation they were capable of receiving, in the belief of there being now nothing, in consequence, to hope for. But independently of every selfish consideration, her af-

fliction for his loss was so great, so overwhelming, that but for the sake of her unborn infant, she probably would have submitted, without a further struggle, to fate. But again was she so situated, as to forbid the supine indulgence of grief; all hope of the interference of another person being now at an end, she had no excuse for longer delaying her vindication, and accordingly decided on embarking the ensuing day for England. The concern Miss Elmere's lover manifested for her had excited feelings in the mind of that young lady, that prevented any opposition on her part to this decision; and accordingly, in the inclement month of January, Angeline once more commenced a long journey by herself; but although, from the exhaustion of her frame, a little rest, on her arrival at the Head, was almost essential to her, she yet feared to grant herself this indulgence, from the almost equal exhaustion of her finances: in consequence of the apprehension their low state excited, she proceeded as expeditiously as possible towards Rooksdale.

Her first resolve was to enter at once the presence of her father; but as she drew near the termination of her journey, her courage utterly failed her; and instead of persevering in this, she decided on addressing an explanatory letter to him.

Accordingly she stopped at a little obscure inn, about five miles from the mansion, and thence, in the course of an hour, dispatched a letter to him.

'To Mr. Clanronel,' read the landlady, casting her eyes on the superscription, as she handed it to a messenger without the parlour. 'You don't know, ma'am, perhaps,' returning to the fireplace, and beginning to eye Angeline suspiciously, 'that the 'squire is married again?'

Angeline almost started from her seat—'Married!' she repeated with a look of wildness. 'Good God, is it possible!'

'Yes, indeed, it is very possible, ma'am; he was married some months ago, to the great surprise of all in these parts; for, from his remaining a widower many years, and continually declaring he never meant to change his state again, no one expected a thing of the kind; more especially as his finding a daughter that had been a long time lost, did not let him want an heir to his estate; but what we wish to do, we never want excuses to do; and as I say to my husband, says I, there's no dependance to be placed on the promises of men—they are all given to fickleness and changing. But, to be sure, there's something odd in the business about Miss; and perhaps, after all, to something she has done may his having married so hastily be owing; for 'tis shrewdly suspected, owing to nobody knowing where she is, that she has done something to displease him; and if so, he was right, to be sure, in what he did; though, poor gentleman, whether he rejoices at it, is another guess matter; and indeed 'tis thought he does not, and that his present illness is owing to his vexation at it.'

Angeline clasped her hands despairingly; she at once surmised to what her father's precipitate marriage was owing; and the idea of his repenting it heightened the agony occasioned by the reflection of the resentment it manifested—'Oh, why—why,' she mentally exclaimed, 'why was I ever restored to him! But for that unhappy circumstance, how tranquilly might the remainder of his days have passed! but, oh, my God! though I have to deplore being the cause of misery to him, grant that I may not have to lament being the

means of entailing it on him—grant that the new tie he has formed may at length prove a source of felicity to him! at length—ah! perhaps it had already done so,’ she reflected—‘already occasioned the complete estrangement of his affections from her—already such a revolution in his sentiments, as might cause her appearance within his gates to be deemed an intrusion.’

She sunk beneath the overwhelming thought—the agonizing anticipation of forlornness it excited; and desiring to be informed when her messenger returned, begged to be conducted to a chamber.

CHAP. XVIII.

The ills I've borne ev'n o'er my slumbers reign,
And in sad dreams torment me o'er again.

OTWAY.

BUT in forming such a surmise, Angeline greatly wronged her father; no circumstance could destroy his regard—no new tie estrange his affections; even the violence of his indignation evinced the strength of his attachment; for had he loved her less, less gloried, less prided himself in her, he would less have resented her supposed dereliction.

Bath, to which he proceeded from Rooksdale, was a place where he found no great difficulty in fulfilling the intention that carried him thither: amongst the intimacies he formed, there was one with lady Hilmore and her three daughters, all still at liberty to receive matrimonial overtures; and which ended in his shortly leading to the Hymeneal altar the eldest of the young ladies; but the irrevocable vow was scarcely plighted, ere remorse

and regret for the precipitancy of the measure took possession of his heart, convincing him, that, in every instance.

‘ Revenge, though sweet at first,
Bitter ere long, back on itself recoils.’

He shrunk from the idea of the new engagement he had formed—the idea of launching anew into life, with a heart torn with conflicting feelings, incapable of any transfer of its affections: in any way, he conceived himself still doomed to misery; but now felt convinced, that to have allowed himself the melancholy privilege of brooding over it in secret, would have been no small alleviation of it. To recal the past, however, was impossible, and he therefore endeavoured to conceal the repentance that was unavailing; but ill at dissembling, his countenance betrayed his feelings, convincing the world that he was not, at least, an object of envy.

But his cup of misery was not yet full. He would gladly have delayed returning immediately to Rooksdale, but his lady was too impatient to behold the noble mansion of which she had so unexpectedly become mistress, to permit any excuse he could suggest for the purpose to avail; accordingly, in less than a week after his regretted nuptials, he again found himself there. The pain and confusion of announcing these, the public prints had spared him; but they could not save him from the pain and confusion he experienced, at hearing, on every side, of the surprise they had excited—a surprise, the avowal of which seemed a tacit reproach to him for folly.

Of the motive to which his precipitate marriage was owing, the family at the Abbey, like Angeline,

scarcely doubted, and, in consequence, felt infinitely more inclined to compassionate than condemn him for it. To be out of suspense, however, as to this, was absolutely essential to their domestic tranquillity, owing to the belief they had been led to entertain of the attachment of Roscrea to Angelina; the marquis accordingly did not long delay obtaining an opportunity of conversing alone with him, for the express purpose of introducing her name. Clanronel started at the sound, and hastily retreated to a window. The marquis hesitated for a moment how to act, then approaching him—‘Pardon me,’ he cried, ‘for being the occasion of the painful emotion I see you under; and do me the justice to believe, that the inquiry to which it is owing was caused by no idle curiosity; your returning unaccompanied by Miss Clanronel—your silence respecting her—the uneasiness you are so evidently under, all tended to excite apprehensions that led to this inquiry.’

Clanronel suddenly turned round, and with something of fierceness in his look—‘Rather,’ he exclaimed, ‘confess, that to your previous knowledge of her they were owing. Be candid; depart not from your native ingenuousness, but confess such fears would never have been experienced, but for the secret communication you received respecting her.’

The marquis, equally embarrassed and distressed by finding his surmises just, knew not what to say. Ere he had at all recovered from his confusion, Clanronel, grasping his hand, implored his forgiveness, in a subdued tone, for the manner in which he had just spoke—‘But I am aware I need scarcely ask you to pardon it,’ he added, ‘from the allowances your nature will ever incline you to

make for the irritations of a wounded spirit, the perfect comprehension you must have of my feelings—the feelings of a father, as a parent yourself, for the loss, in such a way as I have lost mine, of a child.’ His voice faltered as he spoke; and gushing into tears, he covered his face, and again turned from the marquis.

But in the midst of the anguish he endured, he felt some degree of ease from being no longer under a necessity of imposing a dreadful restraint on his tortured feelings, owing to the disclosure that had taken place.

The relief he felt it to his overcharged heart, to unbosom himself to such a friend as the marquis, led him, by degrees, to an unreserved communication of all that had occurred relative to Angeline; in consequence, the marquis was confirmed in his fear of Roscrea having again forgot his solemn engagement to another, and accordingly determined on an immediate journey to Ireland, for the purpose of endeavouring to awaken him to a sense of his error, in which, by succeeding, he trusted he should be enabled to restore Angeline, in a degree, to her unhappy father, who had declared his arms should readily again be extended to receive her, if once assured of her penitence, and every thing in his power done to render the seclusion to which error had doomed her pleasing.

This determination, however, was most unexpectedly prevented being carried into effect, by the sudden arrival of Roscrea at St. Cuthbert’s, on the very eve of his intended departure. But though in his appearance there was nothing of the confusion of conscious guilt—those shrinking looks that are inseparably attendant on it, still so powerful was the impression of it, that had he had no other

testimonies of his innocence, than those afforded by unagitated looks and manner, he probably would have failed of substantiating it; but he came fully enabled to enter upon his justification—fully enabled to prove, that ‘he was a man more sinned against, than sinning.’

In the hurry of pursuit, on missing Angeline, the unprincipled accomplice of Miss Roscrea was precipitated down the steep and narrow staircase, leading to the chamber in which she imagined she should have found their intended victim. She was taken up in a state that precluded all hopes of her recovery: her senses, however, were soon restored; and convinced, from what she felt, as well as her observations on the looks of those around her, that there was but little hopes of her life being prolonged, remorse again seized her; and in consequence a messenger was dispatched to the elder Mr. Roscrea, to request his immediate presence, for the purpose of receiving a most important communication from her; by confiding to him the particulars relative to Angeline, she conceived she should best atone for her offences against her; since, though nothing could be more repulsive, more repelling than his manners, still his integrity was of a nature to allow her to entertain no apprehension of his not having justice done her, though at the expence of those he was connected with, and in consequence of which she resolved on making the confession to him. Her summons filled him with amazement; it was of a nature, however, that would not allow him to have any hesitation in obeying it.

Although, with regard to his daughter, a stranger to those feelings that rendered so poignant the anguish of Clanronel, at the supposed degeneracy

of Angeline, still he could not hear of such baseness in a person so nearly allied to him, without being greatly shocked ; but had Miss Roscrea been dear to his heart as ever child was to a doating father's, still would his determination have been the same, that of making all the atonement possible for her perfidy, by an explicit disclosure of it.

The idea of the person against whom her arts had been practised, heightened, if possible, his anxiety for this disclosure ; could any thing have rendered more indignant his feelings at her conduct, it would have been the reflection, that it was the daughter of Clanronel it had been the means of injuring.

Hastening back to his residence, he directly summoned his supposed son, as a party concerned in the affair, a sufferer also through the vile machinations of his daughter, to a conference. His communication occasioned equal astonishment, distress, and perplexity to Roscrea ; he saw himself reduced by it to the dreadful alternative of either allowing Angeline to remain the victim of slander, or else exposing St. Ruth to danger. At length he decided risking something for the sake of injured innocence ; and accordingly, after a little preparation, briefly revealed to his amazed and agitated auditor the statement he had received in Spain, concluding with an earnest entreaty to be allowed, for the sake of justice and humanity, to explain the imagined connexion once existing between him and Angeline, as the only means in his power of accounting in such a way for the regard his actions manifested for her, as should prove it originated in feelings not deserving of condemnation.

' Oh ! could you look into my heart,' said his astonished kinsman, after an agitating pause of some

minutes, but a pause not occasioned by any irresolution how to act, but entirely the violence of his emotions, 'that heart to which you are still, and will ever continue, as dear, because rendered so by your virtues, as when I imagined a closer tie connected us, you would then find how unnecessary the apprehension your urgent entreaty implies. Your anxiety to have justice done to the injured cannot be greater than mine; dread not, therefore, that I shall attempt to prevent the explanation necessary for the purpose. I should mock Heaven by pretended repentance, did I suffer Clanronel to remain under the pressure of any affliction I had the power of relieving him from. All further concealment is now at an end; long since should I have been explicit with you, but for a fear of shocking you by the particulars I had to reveal. Your partial knowledge of them, through the communication of St. Ruth, by relieving me from this fear, permits an unreserved confession, or rather, let me say, convinces me too forcibly of the necessity of it, to allow me to have any further hesitation on the subject; for I cannot flatter myself that what you have previously heard will prevent your feeling shocked by what is to follow.

' I will not agitate you, by prolonging your suspense: you are acquainted with the means to which the restoration of Angeline to her father was owing. The guilty wretch who was so instrumental to his sufferings now stands before you! An unfortunate entanglement with the unhappy woman who once bore a title she never was deserving of, led to this. You start with horror at the confession; but recollect what I have solemnly protested, that the death of Mrs. Clanronel, through my means, was not intentional; and though at the tribunal of erring

man, erring because ever judging from appearances, I might be condemned for it, yet in the sight of Heaven I must be acquitted. Should you recollect, however, without believing, be assured I shall use no argument to try and dissuade you from acting as in that case a sense of justice must dictate. Already have I said, that regard for your feelings alone occasioned the silence I have so long imposed upon myself, with regard to my former actions, and shall therefore calmly acquiescence in any measure they may allow you to pursue.'

Fergus started at the terrible idea suggested by these words—the terrible idea of exposing to a dreadful fate, the man who had so long borne the title of his father; he shrunk from it with horror, as from one of sacrilege; and not faint was his gratitude to Heaven, for being saved, by believing in his assertions, from the excruciating struggle that might otherwise have taken place in his mind between justice and feeling.

To dwell on the scene that followed the explanation of his feelings, is unnecessary; suffice it to say, that on mutual composure being a little restored, his uncle proceeded to give what further particulars were necessary for the elucidation of what he avowed; concluding by declaring his determination of immediately resigning to him the full possession of his paternal inheritance, and withdrawing to some place of seclusion in another kingdom, where, removed to a distance from all that was calculated to keep alive worldly concerns in his heart, he should have nothing more to do, than to devote the remainder of his life to preparation for the next.

The particulars he communicated were brief; the unhappy woman he had attached himself to

accompanied him to the mansion of his kinsman, the father of Roscrea, from which, at that time, all decorum was banished, and by happening to be in an apartment communicating with the one where he was surprised slumbering by the count, became a witness of the subsequent scene with St. Ruth, and thus possessed of a secret that enabled her, from a dread of its being betrayed, to force him into any measure she chose to pursue—a terrible proof, he added, of the consequences of departing from integrity, that one deviation from it almost ever leads to another.

The necessary arrangements for the fulfilment of his intentions were immediately made; and as soon as completed, Roscrea, taking an affecting leave of him, affecting, from the conviction that they should meet no more in this world, a conviction the light in which he had been long led to consider him would not permit him to feel without emotion, departed in quest of Angeline. That she had hastened to St. Ruth, was too natural a surmise to permit him to hesitate as to the course he should pursue; his anxiety, too, to reveal to St. Ruth the recent explanation, as one that freed him from all further necessity for concealment, was an additional motive for his directly taking the road to St. Columb's. Anticipating the happiness and joy he so naturally concluded the particulars he had to reveal must excite, how great was his disappointment at the information he received on arriving there! Like Angeline, however, flattering himself, by using expedition, he should succeed in obtaining a meeting with him ere his embarkation, he lost no time in proceeding to it, impelled alike by solicitude for this, and anxiety about her. But here again disappointment awaited him—disappointment too of

an aggravated nature ; for from what he heard, he was led to believe she had embarked with him. He was led into the error, from having no opportunity of making inquiries concerning her, from the only person who had the power of answering them, namely, the proprietor of the house where she had alighted, owing to an equally sudden and dangerous illness that confined her at the moment to her chamber, and by a young woman, who perfectly answered the description he gave of her, happening to have sailed in the vessel, apparently under the protection of St. Ruth.

Not suffering himself, however, to doubt it was her intention to return with him, and at all events, reflecting that whatever this might be, it equally behoved him to vindicate her fame, he lost no further time in departing for England. He arrived at the exact period in which the discovery he had to make was most calculated to overwhelm Miss Roscrea with confusion—at the very moment which, from the arrival of lord Hexham, malice would have chosen for the purpose. This arrival was owing to the alarm occasioned by the vague information of the marquis concerning Angeline ; he came with a determination of ascertaining to what her disappearance from Rooksdale was owing ; but had not time to enter on the subject ere Roscrea was announced. The agitation excited by his unexpected appearance was not diminished by an apprehension of the consequences that might result from this meeting between him and lord Hexham, a dread the indignant glances of the latter contributed to heighten ; they were perceived by Roscrea ; and his consequent reflection of what he should have continued to suffer, in the estimation of those

he regarded, through the conduct of lady Rosamond, but for the recent explanation, augmented the resentment it had excited.

With a proud expression of this feeling, he entered upon the particulars he had to give. The mingled sensation they excited may easier be conceived than described. Miss Roscrea at length began to tremble—at length to fear the contempt she had been so long provoking, was about overtaking her: more than once she felt impelled to rush from the room, but was still detained in it, by the conscious guilt such a procedure would betray; yet not without difficulty could she resist the impulse that urged her to do so, so terrible to her were the wrathful glances directed towards her by the indignant Hexham, as Roscrea proceeded, the expression she read in the countenances of all present. Roscrea concluded his statement by addressing her—‘Unhappy woman,’ he said, ‘notwithstanding the just cause I have to reproach you, both on my own account, and that of another person, yet I cannot reflect on what you must suffer, from your conscious degradation, without a feeling of commiseration—a feeling that induces me to assure you, should your subsequent conduct evince contrition for the past, your dependence on me, through your father’s wish, shall not be rendered an unhappy one,’

Miss Roscrea could no longer command herself at this humiliating assurance; bursting into a torrent of invective, she accused him of duplicity and falsehood, and darting a scornful glance round the apartment, hastened from it; and commencing immediate preparations for her departure, was some way from the Abbey in the course of another hour.

Not entirely, however, to the confusion of detected guilt was the precipitancy of her departure owing; a stranger to all delicacy of feeling, she no sooner beheld the complete annihilation of her hopes, relative to lord Hexham, than she decided on an immediate return to Ireland, in hopes of preventing, by such a measure, any injury being done her in the estimation of colonel Dunsaney; but in entertaining such, she wronged the integrity of Roscrea; he would have considered himself highly culpable, had he allowed him to remain ignorant of the little claim she had to esteem, and accordingly, ere he departed from the metropolis, sought a meeting with him, for the express purpose of entering into a full explanation with him, on the subject of recent occurrences. To decide whether Dunsaney was most affected by the nobleness of mind that dictated the disclosure, or joy at his unexpected release from an engagement he had long repented, would be impossible. Yet was this joy not unchastened; he could not think of the circumstance to which his restoration to liberty was owing, without a mingled sensation, from the unhappiness he was aware it must have occasioned to the proudly-susceptible heart of Roscrea.

On parting, however, every other feeling, for a while, gave way to rapture, at the idea of the meeting he now looked forward to, with the interesting object of his real regard; his impatience for it was too great not to induce him to hasten back to Greymount; and the result of it rendered him one of the happiest of men.

The merry bells had just announced the celebration of his nuptials, as Miss Roscrea, nearly exhausted with fatigue and apprehension, alighted at the house of her friend, Mrs. Ogle, in the neigh-

bourhood, now on the eve of matrimony with her *ci-devant* lover, O'Roon, the arrangement of his affairs, through the scrupulous honour and kindness of Roscrea, having removed the only obstacle to his wishes. A suspicion of having the power of inflicting mortification on her, by the intelligence she had to announce, rendered Mrs. Ogle quite as delighted to see her, as if the professions of regard she had so often made to her were sincere.

Miss Roscrea placed too little dependence on these, to have been induced by any thing, but being absolutely at a loss, at the moment, for another residence equally agreeable to go to, to have repaired to hers; but after what had occurred in the recent meeting with Roscrea, she could not possibly think of proceeding to a house of his; and was prevented, by her knowledge of the colonel's rigid sense of propriety, from going to Greymount, without a previous announcement of her return to the kingdom.

Mrs. Ogle having ascertained her being totally unsuspecting of the event that had just taken place there being even in contemplation, lost no time in intimating it to her.—‘Well,’ she began, ‘from your resignation of your old conquest, I suppose I have to congratulate you on a still more important one. After so long giving the poor colonel the lover's staff, Hope, to lean upon, I presume you would not have discarded him, had not the possession of your heart been disputed by some more interesting competitor?’

‘Psha, nonsense!’ returned Miss Roscrea: ‘how can you suppose I could possibly think of acting in such a manner? that after matters had proceeded so far between us, I could possibly think myself at liberty to receive the addresses of any other person?’

‘ Indeed, then, if you are serious, the colonel must incur an imputation I thought he never could have merited, for——but really, after what you have just said, I scarcely know how to proceed, lest of affecting you too much.

‘ Oh, don’t let any apprehension of that occasion you to hesitate,’ said Miss Roscrea; ‘ for I trust,’ she added, but with a change of countenance that excited a doubt to the contrary, ‘ I have philosophy enough to bear with fortitude any thing you can tell me.’

‘ Well, I hope so,’ cried her companion, with a smile of malicious anticipation; ‘ and not to keep you any longer in suspense, know then, that the merry peal you now hear is in honour of the nuptials of your false swain, and the friend of his aunt; this morning witnessed the ratification of their mutual vows.’

Adept as was Miss Roscrea in the art of dissembling, she was, in the present instance, too completely taken by surprise, too deeply concerned in what she heard, to be able to maintain that command over herself, essential for the purpose of deception; rage and despair took possession of her soul at the information of Mrs. Ogle; every flattering prospect was annihilated by it; and the humiliating sensations it occasioned, aggravated by the confession she had been betrayed into making. The motive for this was too obvious to allow of any longer disguise towards Mrs. Ogle; she burst into invective against her, upbraided her with insincerity, and, in a paroxysm of indignation, ordering a chaise from a neighbouring inn, immediately quitted her dwelling. Her course was bent to town; but she had nearly reached it, ere her mind was made up as to that she should pursue on arriving

there: at length the conviction of something to her prejudice having transpired, for to no other circumstance could she ascribe the conduct of the colonel, induced her to decide on betaking herself to another kingdom. Spain was the one she fixed on, in consequence of having relatives there, although its distracted state might well have deterred her from a thought of repairing to it; but to her haughty spirit, nothing was so terrible as the idea of remaining where she had experienced such humiliation, and, in consequence, apprehended still greater. She had soon an opportunity of carrying her resolve into effect, and which relieving us from all further necessity of mentioning her, we shall now bid her a final farewell, persuaded that the most rigid must be sufficiently satisfied with the severe punishment previously inflicted on her, by the detection of her perfidy, to be prevented having any desire to ascertain whether any further befel her.

But the mischief she had effected was not immediately repaired. Although Roscrea quickly perceived himself re-established in the esteem of his friends at the Abbey, yet neither this, nor yet the regret it implied, for the injustice they had been betrayed into doing him, had the effect of subduing his resentment towards lady Rosamond; he could not prevail on himself readily to forgive her unjustifiable suspicion, the consequences to which it had led, the unhappiness it had been instrumental to occasioning Angeline, and the dangers to which it had perhaps been the means of exposing her. In consequence, he firmly resisted the entreaties to which the marquis and marchioness had recourse, for the purpose of endeavouring to prevail on him to prolong his visit, on hearing

him announce his intention of directly departing from the Abbey: but in his resolution to do so, he nearly faltered, when at the moment of taking leave, he encountered the eyes of lady Rosamond, whom pride prevented from uniting in the supplications of the rest of the family, swimming in tears, and the next instant, in stooping to kiss the soft cheek of his infant son, as he lay slumbering on a couch, felt upon them those tears. Had he obeyed the impulse of his heart, he would instantly have clasped the lovely and equally beloved mourner to it; but he was enabled to resist his feelings, from the reflection of the salutary effect which a little longer keeping up the appearance of resentment might have, justly conceiving that the more acutely she now suffered from the doubts she had yielded to, the less probability there would be of her ever giving way to similar ones again.

Not less did lord Hexham resent her conduct relative to Angeline; yet when he reflected on his own, he felt he could not, with any degree of justice, give utterance to the reproaches his resentment at it excited.

What he felt at the development of the arts that had led to this, at finding she was all that he had originally imagined, may easier be conceived than described. Yet was his rapture not unchastened: the tumult of his spirits a little subsided, and the reflection of the disclosure he had to make, or rather what he had to apprehend from it, threw a sudden damp upon them. From what had occurred, he saw it would be impossible to conceal their marriage having already taken place, as he had originally intended, and could not, without the most painful emotion, think of the light in which his consequently revealed breach of promise must

occasion him to be regarded by his father. At the idea of the indignation, still more dreadful, more humiliating, the contempt it could not fail of exciting, he was but too well aware, his cheek glowed with the burning blush of shame; and could the past have been recalled, he felt persuaded that nothing earthly could have induced him to forfeit that ennobling consciousness of proud integrity, which he had lost by hearkening to the voice of passion.

When he reflected, but for this, how very different his feelings at this juncture would have been, how bitter were his regrets, for having allowed himself to yield to its suggestions! and how forcibly was he convinced of the impossibility of avoiding regret for a deviation from rectitude!

So humiliating were the consequences he anticipated from the avowal, as at length, after a little deliberation, to be induced to decide on remaining silent on the subject, till compelled to explicitness by the return of Angeline, partly from the natural propensity we all have to put off an hour we dread as long as possible, and partly, perhaps, from a fond persuasion, that she could not actually be seen without his offence in some degree being deemed excusable.

Like the rest of her friends, he concluded terror had induced her to embark with St. Ruth, and, of course, looked forward to her returning with him. When he thought of all she had recently gone through—the conflicts she must have experienced—the dangers to which she had been exposed—the anguish which even then there was every reason to suppose her enduring, how alternately did his soul melt with tenderness, and tremble with indignation—how alternately did he reproach himself

and others—and how ardently, how passionately did he long for the moment of again meeting—the ecstatic moment which should give to him the rapture of again enfolding her to his heart, and reading in her dear eyes the sweet assurance of forgiveness and continued love!

The marquis took upon himself to reveal to Clanronel the communication of Roscrea, not, however, without something like a sensation of dismay, from the heightened regret with which he feared it would make him view his recent conduct. The result proved he had not yielded to a groundless apprehension. The joy, the gratitude of Clanronel, at the vindication of his child's innocence, may easily be conceived; but to form an adequate idea of what he endured, at the sudden reflection of having acted in a manner to probably prevent her finding her paternal home any longer a happy one, would perhaps be a more difficult matter.

In anguish of soul, in bitterness of spirit at the idea, he covered his face with his hands, and throwing himself upon a seat—‘Oh God!’ he groaned, ‘how do I suffer for the act into which passion hurried me! but I confess myself properly punished by the misery it inflicts: the voice of vindictive resentment is one that never should be hearkened to. Had I controlled the wild transports of indignation, I should not now experience the wretchedness I do, because I should not then have been betrayed into any measure I could have regretted. Oh! how excruciating is the idea, that through my means, my unhappy child may still be denied the repose and rest she so much requires—may be doomed to consider herself an unwelcome inmate in her own real home.’

‘My dearest friend,’ said the marquis, eagerly

grasping his hand, 'endeavour to compose yourself; allow not your feelings to obtain such a mastery over you. What you intimate a fear of, may not prove the case; or rather, you may be prevented having any opportunity of ascertaining whether it was likely to do so, by the speedy celebration of that event we have both been so anxious for. Miss Clanronel's return may soon be expected; and, in consequence, ere long, I confidently look forward to the happiness of also embracing her as a daughter.'

'Heaven grant!' emphatically added his agitated friend; to see her united to lord Hexham, secure of the tenderness, the protection of such a family as yours, would be indeed to relieve my heart of an oppressive burthen on her account; but on my own, nothing can again ever render me happy. I loath the very idea of the connexion I have formed; and, in consequence, feel that I have entailed perpetual disgust and regret upon myself. I see you are inclined to argue on the subject with me; but my present feelings are not to be subdued; they are of such a nature as to make me consider myself, with regard so happiness, something in the light of a captive wretch, who, in his dungeon, beholds gleams of sunshine, without a hope of ever being allowed a full participation of its blessings.'

'This is being gloomy indeed,' said the marquis; 'but I do not despair of yet hearing you converse in a very different strain; when you reflect that you have nothing in reality to accuse yourself of, I must hope and believe that your cheerfulness will be recovered.'

'Nothing to accuse myself of!' cried Clanronel; 'oh that I could unite with you in thinking so! but 'tis the part of a friend to hope; admonition comes

too late, to endeavour to sooth the anguish it might have prevented.'

The marquis tried to encourage the hope he had avowed; but the deepening melancholy of his unhappy friend gradually destroyed it. With the most acute sensations, he beheld him shrinking from society, and abandoning himself to useless regrets; he endeavoured to prevent his sinking into gloom, but his efforts for the purpose proved unavailing; and greatly he feared, should the restoration of his daughter be long delayed, he would be for ever lost to the social circle.

Lord Hexham uniting in this fear, became, in consequence, still more solicitous, if possible, for her return; but he had soon an additional cause of uneasiness; contrary to his expectations, the exchange which, through the machinations practised against his peace, he had been tempted to decide on, was effected just at this juncture, and in consequence of which he beheld a probability of being disappointed of the meeting he had so fondly anticipated. His regret at the circumstance was heightened by the unhappiness it occasioned his family; he sighed to think he should be such a perpetual source of inquietude to them; but in the present instance they could not condemn the feelings that had caused him to be so, and tried to reconcile themselves to what had happened, by a hope that what they apprehended might not take place. The regiment to which he was gazetted was quartered in another part of the kingdom, and to which he was shortly under a necessity of repairing; but he trusted he should soon obtain leave of absence. He departed without being able to summon courage to disclose the secret so long confined in his breast, so terrible to his imagination

was the idea, so overwhelming the thought, of lessening himself in the esteem of his father—of losing, even for a moment, his regard and confidence. He had been about a fortnight with his regiment, when hope and happiness were annihilated, by meeting in a paper, over which his eye was carelessly wandering, with an account of the loss of the vessel in which it was supposed Angelina had embarked; all, for some hours after its perusal, was distraction in his soul; locked up in his chamber, there was nothing to check, nothing to prevent the wild ravings of despair; remote from every relative—no sympathizing friend at hand, with kind, though to the tortured mourner unwelcome, officiousness to break in upon his sorrows, grief had here its full indulgence: to its first transports a gloomy sadness gradually succeeded; he apostrophized her whom he believed no longer an inhabitant of this sublunary scene—he vowed perpetual constancy to her memory, and fervently prayed, ere long, his spirit might be allowed to mingle with hers in endless bliss.

The submission due to the will of Heaven might have induced him to struggle with his feelings, but for the cruel reflection of his conduct towards her: the idea of its being now beyond his power to make any atonement for it, totally subdued him. Desolate and forlorn, truly widowed indeed, did he feel at the thought, did he feel at the relinquishment of all the fond, the flattering hopes he had lately indulged in. What he had recently dreaded, he now fervently hoped might be the case, namely, his regiment being ordered on foreign service; this was a wish which, even sooner than he expected, was gratified; at the very moment of its utterance, the route for Spain was about being received.

To reveal his marriage he now deemed unnecessary; and, in consequence, finally decided on its lasting concealment; yet not so much, he tried to persuade himself, for the purpose of avoiding the humiliation it must still subject him to, as of saving the marquis and marchioness the additional pang of deeming him unworthy of their confidence and affection. On many accounts, he now dreaded a meeting with any of his family, and accordingly exerted himself to prevent it; in his efforts for the purpose he succeeded. Tempted by the manner in which he wrote, to believe he would be able to pay a farewell visit at the Abbey, the marquis and lord George did not think of setting out for Portsmouth till too late; but no personal concerns for an instant interrupted the attentions of the former to his sorrowing friend.

Through means of one of the public prints, the family of St Cuthbert's had also obtained information of the foundering of the vessel in which Angelina was supposed to be a passenger. As soon as the marquis had a little recovered from the shock imparted by the tidings, he hastened to Røksdale, in hopes of preventing a similar one there; but he arrived too late for the purpose; the same post had brought the same paper there, and, with it still grasped in his hand, he found the unhappy father in a state of insensibility. Involuntarily he aided in recovering him; yet he scarcely knew how to wish for it—how for the prolongation of an existence, on which he beheld such hopeless wretchedness entailed. Too dear, however, to his regard was the friend of his adoption, to permit him to endure with calmness the prospect he speedily beheld of losing him; although convinced, from what had happened, his exchanging this life for the next

must be a happiness. Beside his restless couch he took his almost constant station—that couch from which he was soon incapacitated from rising, by the effects of grief. His strength gradually declined, and at the period of Angeline's arrival in the neighbourhood, but very little hopes were entertained of his recovery. Had his lady, in other instances, exhibited as much philosophy as she did in this, she might have been considered something of a dignified character. If she betrayed any thing like impatience or anxiety, it was only when the physicians now and then wavered a little in their opinion: in short, the idea of the pleasures she should have the power of enjoying as his widow, so perfectly reconciled her to the thoughts of becoming so, as to prevent her experiencing any regret at the prospect of the event that would free her. Equally influenced by personal considerations, her family were nearly as impatient for it: they had accompanied her from Bath, and were by this time so completely tired of Rooksdale, that nothing but the freedom they there enjoyed from expence, could possibly have induced them to remain another hour within it; this they flattered themselves with still enjoying with her, with every opportunity besides, they could possibly desire, of partaking of the amusements they delighted in, was she released from her present bondage; and accordingly could not avoid wishing the period of her emancipation might be near.

Aware, however, of the disgust which the manifestation of such a wish would excite, they tried to assume the semblance of feelings very different to their real ones; but their efforts at deception, were unavailing; those they most wished to deceive, namely, the family at St. Cuthbert's, were

those they were least qualified to impose on; and but for his conviction of the fidelity of his friend's domestics, the marquis would have feared, from his insight into their characters, to have quitted him for a moment.

CHAP. XIX.

Alas! where am I?

Methinks I read distraction in your face:

You shake and tremble too; your blood runs cold;

Heavens guard my love!

OTWAY.

ANGELINE awaited the return of her messenger with trembling anxiety; too much depended on the result of her application, to permit her to enjoy a moment's repose while in a state of suspense concerning it. At length he returned with the following answer:—

' To Mrs. Villiers.

' MADAM,

' The illness of Mr. Clanronel incapacitating him from any immediate attention to business, I have been deputed by him to express the astonishment he feels at your conduct, in returning to a neighbourhood where it has already given such room for speculation; and to assure you, that should you not immediately quit it, he will not have any hesitation in having recourse to unpleasant measures for compelling you to do so, as he cannot submit to the thought of having his domestic peace, now an object of greater importance than ever to him, from the connexion he has recently formed, again interrupted, through your

unworthiness. Having voluntarily withdrawn yourself from his protection, nothing, he declares, shall again induce him to extend it to you, or consider you in any other light than that of an enemy to his repose. Perhaps, however, by a prompt obedience in the present instance to his will, he may hereafter be brought a little to relent. Sincerely wishing this may be case, I remain, madam, with regret at your having done any thing to offend so good a father,

‘ Your obedient servant,

‘ M. CLANRONEL.

‘ *Rooksdale, January.*’

Several minutes elapsed ere Angeline in any degree recovered from the shock imparted to her feelings by this cruel fabrication; for that it was a fabrication, must at once be obvious to the reader, from what has been previously stated. Its effect upon her convinced her she had given greater latitude to hope than she was at first aware of, else her disappointment could not have been of so overwhelming a nature. Good God! and was she abandoned of her father? Was she literally a houseless wanderer? Was she destitute, at the moment, of a friend to look to? How did her bosom swell with anguish at the thought—how did the tears course one another down her pale cheeks—how, in agony, did she raise her trembling hands to Heaven, to implore that of its protection she might still at least continue to be assured! Convinced that any further application to her father, without the interference of some friend, would be unavailing, she suddenly determined on endeavouring to obtain lord Hexham’s, and which, from the confidence previously reposed in him, she conceived she had some little right to solicit; but as she

might not be able to see him immediately, she conceived it absolutely necessary to depart directly from the place where she then was, lest her appearing to act contrary to the wishes of her father, as by remaining there would, she concluded, be the case, should have the effect of exasperating him still more against her. But whither to betake herself, she knew not—where to seek for a dwelling sufficiently obscure to prevent his ascertaining her lingering in the neighbourhood. At length the solitary cottage of a poor woman, whom she had greatly befriended, occurred to her recollection, and thither she resolved to bend her steps, in hopes of there procuring a temporary asylum, such as she required. To prevent being traced, however, she deemed some little precaution necessary, and accordingly again entered the chaise which had brought her hither, and which, having come but half a stage, still waited for her. Having proceeded another mile, she again alighted from it, and directing the postillion to proceed to a village a little further on, struck herself into a bye-road, leading to the dwelling of dame Goodman, situated on a little common, bounded, at the side on which it stood, by the park-paling of Rooksdale; she believed it about a mile distant, and had she taken the direct road, would not have found it more; but through the agitation of her mind, she took the wrong one, and, in consequence, shortly began to think the distance interminable, or as poor Imogene says—‘*That foundations fly from the unhappy.*’ The heaviness of the road, and extreme fatigue she had lately undergone, rendered it indeed an exhausting effort to proceed—an effort rendered still more painful, by the chilling sensations excited by the bleak aspect of all around, the mournful

sighing of the wintry wind through the leafless trees; all seemed indeed as changed from what it had lately been as her own prospects—‘ But the return of the genial season will restore these to their primeval beauty!’ she exclaimed, ‘ but the dreariness of mine, alas! I have no certain hope of seeing removed. Seasons may return and pass away, perhaps without any alteration being effected in them, their forlornness being reversed, their darkness dissipated.’ At length she found herself at the termination of the road, but without perceiving the dwelling she sought. It was now evident that she had either mistaken the way, or else that the cottage was pulled down, and her uncertainty of which being the case rendered her irresolute what to do. Something, however, she saw she must quickly decide on, the approach of darkness being already announced by the gloom of closing day; faint, weary, wildered, she leant for a minute against the park-paling, and as tears gushed from her at the forlornness of her situation, she could almost have fancied she read compassion in the innocent faces of the deer, that seemed staring at her from within it; and that the tall trees, as swayed to and fro by the wind, were inviting her to the shelter of their shades—‘ But, ah! did I seek it,’ she cried, ‘ I should not be allowed to retain it—for me there’s no longer a shelter within these rustling woods—for me no longer a resting place in the house of my father—for me no present home! Yet, oh Heavens! did he know exactly what I am now suffering—did he know that, like a wretched outcast, I stand tremblingly gazing on the dwelling from which he has banished me, would not his heart soften to compassion—his arms be again opened to receive me? Oh, no! can I flatter myself that such would be

the case, after the reception my letter has met with, a letter so explanatory of my feelings, so descriptive of my desolate situation? To another are transferred the affections I once possessed, and much, much I fear, from him I have nothing more to hope.'

An approaching step making her withdraw her clasped hands from her eyes, against which they were pressed in agony, she beheld an old woodman tottering towards her, beneath a weight of faggots: conceiving she might obtain from him the information she required, she hastened to meet him, and had the satisfaction of learning that dame Goodman's cottage was not only still in existence, but very little further off. Observing his directions of keeping close to the paling, she soon found herself at it, and, tapping at the door, was desired to come in. Raising the latch, she beheld the old dame at her wheel, before a cheerful wood fire, with her grandchild, a little girl of eight years old, sitting reading beside her; not hearing any one speak, she turned to see who had entered, and hastily rose on perceiving Angeline, but with a look indicative of her conceiving her a stranger.

Angeline, throwing up her veil, advanced to her, and with a languid smile, but one of ineffable sweetness—'I am sure you cannot have quite forgot me?' she cried, involuntarily laying her fair cold hand upon her withered one.

'Forgot you!' she repeated; 'oh, dear heart, no, to be sure; forgot my benefactress—the preserver of me and mine! No, no, that could never be: but your face was so covered, and besides I so little thought it could be you I saw, in such a plight, that I did not directly know you.'

Angeline's starting tears could no longer be re-

strained—‘This is a world of changes,’ she said, in a voice scarcely articulate. ‘Of my having left Rooksdale some time since, you know, I dare say; also, perhaps, of my having been so unfortunate as to incur the displeasure of my father. A secret marriage,’ she added, deeming it requisite to account in some way for her present situation, ‘has been the cause; but I trust, through the interference of a friend, to whom I mean to apply, I may yet be restored to his favour; in the meanwhile, I wish him to remain in ignorance of my being in the neighbourhood, and accordingly have come hither, convinced I might safely repose confidence in you; and that, if in your power, you would give me the temporary refuge I require.’

‘Give!’ cried the good dame; ‘yes, and with it the welcome of a mother. Oh, my dear young lady, you have at once made me sorry and glad; sorry that you should have met with any thing to trouble you, yet glad that you have given me the power of serving you—you for whose happiness these aged knees,’ suddenly throwing herself at her feet, and clasping her arms round her, ‘have never been bent in supplication to the throne of Heaven, since the experience I have had of your goodness, without a prayer being offered up for it—you, but for whom I and mine would now, in all likelihood, have been poor outcasts—but for you, my poor deluded son, when tempted to enlist, must have been torn from his family—you, through whose bounty a substitute was provided for him, and who rested not till you had seen him re-established in his little farm, and every thing again smiling round him; and after this kindness, could you doubt, dear lady, being welcome to my poor novel—being welcome to my poor services? Yet,

oh! sorely it grieves me that you should need them: but cheer up, sweet lady; a cloud cannot long rest on the prospects of one so good, so feeling.'

'You overrate what I did for you,' said the deeply affected Angeline; the affluent but perform an incumbent duty when they succour the distressed; yet pleasing, I confess, are the accents of gratitude. Yes, I will, as you advise, endeavour to hope; on the goodness of a Benevolent Being, I will rely for being restored to happiness—a being who, I now clearly perceive, still retributes our every action—'Cast thy bread upon the waters, and thou shalt find it after many days,' says the book of inspiration; and how graciously has that assurance been fulfilled to me this day, when beneath the roof of her I had the felicity of serving, I have found so ready a shelter.'

Her full heart a little relieved by the tears she shed, she soon recovered a sufficient degree of composure to enable her to make every arrangement she deemed requisite for remaining where she was; a person on whose silence she could depend was dispatched by dame Goodman to discharge the chaise, and a strict injunction of secrecy, as to what she had heard, laid upon the child, which she assured Angeline there was no danger of her disregarding.

Soothed by the kindness she experienced, and assured of being in a place where she had nothing to apprehend, Angeline soon began to feel herself in a state of comparative tranquillity; the neatness of the place, and its look of cheerfulness, had a happy effect on her spirits; the grateful warmth of the fire diffused a kindly glow through her chilled frame; and the refreshment of which her host-

ess quickly made her partake, recruited her exhausted strength. The rising of the wind, and groaning of the woods in the savage blast, rendered still more delectable the comforts she was now enjoying; still as the casements rattled in the storm, and she heard the hail drifting against them, she congratulated herself on her present situation: but, alas! she was not destined to experience more than a gleam of cheerfulness; leading the discourse gradually to the family at the Abbey, she at length ventured to mention lord Hexham, and, to her inexpressible consternation, heard of his departure to Spain: involuntarily she raised her hands, and clasped them in agony, on hearing it—‘Oh, good God!’ she exclaimed, ‘to what successive disappointments have I been fated!’

The strange inquiring look of her companion made her almost immediately recollect herself; but she had said too much not to deem it requisite to say more; and accordingly she frankly confessed to her, that he was the friend whose interference with her father she hoped to have obtained, in consequence of the influence she knew he possessed over him.

‘Ay, no doubt,’ cried the good dame; ‘for I believe the squire has ever loved him as dearly as if his own son; and no wonder, for he was ever a lovely youth. Ah! should any thing happen to him, I much fear my lord or lady will never more hold up their heads.’

‘Oh! may an especial Providence watch over him,’ said Angeline, emphatically, ‘and in safety restore him to their longing arms!’

‘Heaven grant!’ cried her companion devoutly. ‘His going abroad, I believe, was a sudden

thing; some say it was owing to his being crossed in love.'

Angeline started at the surmise, or rather the apprehension now excited, of his exchange to a regiment rendering him liable to foreign service, being owing to the domestic unhappiness she had been the means of occasioning him. The thought was torture—the thought that through her means he was exposed to danger—through hers perhaps doomed to an early grave.

Sinking beneath it, she gladly acceded to the dame's proposal, to retire immediately to rest; and was accordingly conducted by her to a little neat chamber, looking upon the deep woods of Rookdale.

The perturbation of her spirits calmed by a night of repose, she began seriously to reflect on the absolute necessity there was for endeavouring to maintain a greater command over her feelings than had hitherto been the case, if she wished to retain any self-possession; and accordingly resolved it should henceforth be her study to do so; to avow a trust in Heaven, and yet allow every circumstance to agitate and alarm, was, she could not avoid acknowledging, a contradiction such as she determined, for the future, to try to avoid having to accuse herself of.

But in striving to acquire a command over her feelings, she strove not to subdue the sensibility of her nature. Her soul was agonized by the accounts she daily received of her father; she believed herself thrown from his heart, but still hers fondly clung to him; the cause of his illness, of course, it must be apparent, remained unexplained. Aware of the inquiries, or rather conjectures, the disclosure of her supposed embarkation for Spain

would probably occasion, it was decided between him and the marquis that it should be concealed; in consequence of which decision, her imagined death still remained a secret in the neighbourhood: had not this been the case, dame Goodman would have felt something more than surprise at her unexpected appearance in her cottage; Angeline thought not of procuring more than a temporary refuge in it; but the quietness, the tranquillity she enjoyed within it, its vicinity to scenes endeared to her by innumerable circumstances, all tended to excite a wish for remaining its inmate, till, one way or other, her fate was decided. She was spared the necessity of hinting this, by the good-natured dame explicitly declaring a similar one; and thus relieved from all immediate anxiety for the present, she resigned herself to the calm indulgence of the melancholy that was now become habitual to her; but this was not always of a tranquil nature; reflections obtruded at moments, that rendered her feelings scarcely controllable: destitute of all her usual resources, she had but little means of diverting them—but little of preventing her thoughts from incessantly dwelling on her situation. At times her incertitude was so agonizing, as almost to tempt her to address a letter to Roscrea, for the purpose of endeavouring to obtain some information relative to Villiers, but still was withheld, lest any present renewal of her former correspondence with him should render still more difficult the vindication she sighed for. Fearful, however, as she was of this, she yet decided, should she not, in the course of a few months, obtain an opportunity of soliciting the interference of lord Hexham, to reveal to him the necessity she stood in for some further exertion of that friendship she had already

had such experience of. Sometimes she thought of imparting her situation to the marquis and marchioness; but when she reflected on the estrangement of her father's regard, she could not flatter herself with having retained theirs, and was still therefore deterred from persevering in the idea.

But in the midst of affliction, still, to the truly innocent, innumerable avenues of delight are open: Angeline could not behold the revolving weeks bringing about the season of vernal delight and joy—could not feel its soft gales blowing in on her fair face at the little casement she loved to sit at—could not mark its genial influence—see the woods again bursting into floods of verdure, the fairest flowerets of the year progressively succeeding each other, or hear again the thrilling melody of Nature's choir, without a rapturous sensation; she hailed its return, too, from the opportunity it afforded her of again enjoying a little exercise. At the fall of day she now no longer dreaded venturing forth; but at length her approaching confinement compelled her to forego this indulgence. The hour she had so long been expecting at last arrived, and she beheld herself the mother of an infant son. To dwell on the new feelings awakened by his sight, must be unnecessary; but, alas! how was the rapture with which she folded him to her heart chastened by the reflection of the circumstances under which he was born!—the soul-subduing reflection, that on her feeble protection it might perhaps be his hapless fate to be entirely thrown—'But I will not despair,' she cried; 'still will I rely on the goodness of that Being who supported me through so many dangers and difficulties—who has brought me in safety through this hour of peril.'

Alas! she was soon relieved from the additional anxiety he excited; convulsive spasms terminated his little being on the third day. The good dame was all grief and consternation at his death, from the consequences she apprehended from it to the tender mother; she wished, but feared it would be impossible, to conceal it till she was better enabled to bear the shock it must occasion, and, as she surmised, soon found her inquiries were not to be baffled; the vague manner in which she replied to them led to a suspicion of the truth, that obliged her to be sincere. Angelina, for some minutes after hearing it, could not command her feelings; then a little recovering herself, she insisted on seeing the little remains; in vain her careful attendant expostulated; she would not be denied this sad indulgence; and accordingly, extended on her arms like a waxen image, the little body was at length brought to her by the dame. Involuntarily she extended her feeble ones to receive it, and for some minutes held it to her anguished heart, as if she hoped to have warmed it into life again; then passionately gazing on its innocent face, to which the tranquillity of death imparted a still greater expression of innocence—‘Oh! my babe,’ she cried, pressing her quivering lips to its cold ones, ‘I could have wished thee spared; but still I bow submissively to the will of Heaven, whose chastisements are often those of mercy, and which in calling thee thus early hence, may have saved thee from the evil that was to come. Short was thy sojourn here, but endless is the bliss to which it has been the means of leading thee; convinced of this, selfish, I confess, are my regrets, but nature must have its tribute.’

Grief retarded her recovery; and her slow

amendment might have been still slower, but for the sudden turn given to her feelings by the announcement of lord Hexham's arrival from Spain; but though her heart throbbed with anxiety for an interview with him, she could not think, after his long absence from his family, of immediately attempting to engross him with her concerns: but like human joy in general, hers was not without alloy on this occasion; she understood he had suffered severely in a recent engagement, and felt deep regret at the information. As a counterbalance, however, to the pain it occasioned, hopes were now inspired of the recovery of her father, from his being again able to rise, and enjoy abroad the balmy breezes of the season; but though she sighed to catch a view of his loved features, her dread of appearing prematurely in his presence was too great not to make her still confine herself to the house, except at the hour of dusk, and then she seldom ventured beyond the solitary church-yard where her child was interred.

Lord Hexham had indeed been a sufferer in the affair of Salamanca, insomuch that his immediate return to his native country was deemed absolutely expedient. That he had escaped with life was almost a matter of astonishment to those who had seen him in the engagement; but the god of battles was pleased to preserve him to his friends. By the time he arrived, his wounds were tolerably healed, all but those that defied the power of human skill; still with unmitigated anguish he deplored the imagined loss of Angeline—still apostrophized her spirit, with all the passionate fondness of despairing love. His countenance was too expressive of what he felt—of incurable sadness—of consuming melancholy, not to occasion his friends

to be shocked by his appearance; the youthful spirit of his eyes extinguished, pale, drooping, languid, but the shadow of what he once was, they saw, with equal grief and consternation, that if something was not speedily done to compel him to exert himself, there was but little probability of his remaining much longer an inhabitant of this sphere. To hearts like theirs, how agonizing the idea! Yet ere they had recourse to expostulation, they determined to try what efforts to divert his thoughts would do; but they failed in their attempts; nothing could detach them from the contemplation of his loss: he forced himself, it is true, to converse, but the wandering of his looks, and his broken sentences, proclaimed the deep abstraction of his mind; and at each opportunity, he hastened to those lonely scenes that restored the dear idea of her he believed long since departed from this world of woe: yet a gleam of pleasure pervaded his sad breast, at hearing of the expected recovery of Clanronel; his return was cautiously broke to him; and an interview soon after took place. He tried to support it with composure; but the recollections revived by it completely overcame him; and the sorrowing father, from the same cause, was equally affected; he had imagined it impossible for any circumstance to attach him more to him; but the grief he evinced for the loss of her he mourned, had the effect of convincing him he erred in thinking so. Nothing indeed is so calculated to attach the afflicted heart, as a participation in its sorrows. But the marquis could not long remain passive under the apprehensions excited by his conduct—could not tamely brook beholding him resign himself to the unrestrained indulgence of grief: having fully deliberated how to act, he at length addressed

him on the subject—‘ I had hoped,’ he said, as he closed the door of the library, to which he had desired him to follow, from the breakfast parlour, ‘ that consideration for the feelings of your family would have rendered unnecessary my reminding you of what is due to them ; but with regret I perceive, that that of a recent affliction has rendered you utterly forgetful of it—that in mourning the dead, you disregard the living.’

There was something of severity in this reproach, that could ill be borne by the unhappy Hexham; his cheek alternately flushed and faded—‘ You wrong me,’ he cried with emotion, ‘ Heaven is my witness : the anguish inflicted by the circumstance you have alluded to, is aggravated by the unhappiness I am aware it must occasion to others; but to subdue my feelings I find to be impossible.’

‘ Tell me not so,’ almost sternly returned the marquis ; ‘ whatever is a duty, we are all enabled to accomplish ; and it is the duty of every rational being to bend submissively to the will of Heaven. Be the dead forgot, if they can only be remembered to the injury of the claims of the living: ’tis time for you to shake off this enervating sadness—to rouse yourself from this selfish, this absorbing indulgence of grief; the claims of society, the duty you owe your family, render it absolutely requisite you should do so. To render the effort successful, you must form new ties, new connexions ; ’tis only by doing so you can hope to completely subdue the recollections that now corrode your peace. To behold you in possession of domestic felicity, has long been the first wish of my heart, you must be aware: at this very moment, there is a lady beneath my roof, with whom I think it so impossible you could avoid enjoying it, that I have absolutely

decided on effecting an union between you. Nay, do not look so startled; surely you must have supposed I would yet suggest a thing of the kind.'

'Pardon me,' returned the greatly-agitated Hexham; 'I did not permit myself to entertain so distressing an apprehension; at least, I did not allow myself to think, that while the loss of her I loved was so recent, a thing of the kind could have been suggested.'

'If it appears precipitate, the expediency of the measure furnishes an excuse for its being so. I have already said, 'tis only by forming new ties, new connexions, there is any chance of your being roused to those exertions requisite to enable you to throw off the weight that now oppresses you; and thinking so, you may readily believe I shall not be easily induced to relinquish the point in view; and surely, at liberty as you now are to form a new engagement, when you reflect on the acquiescence your wishes met from me, you should, in return, be led to evince some little complaisance to mine.'

'Oh Heavens!' exclaimed the embarrassed, and still more agitated Hexham, 'in any other instance, how great would be my happiness in paying obedience to them!'

'This is the only one in which I deem it requisite to urge you; my heart is set upon this union; and should you persist in objecting to it, I must believe that my happiness is but a secondary consideration with you.'

'Good God! how would you wrong me by such a supposition! But allow me at least some little time to deliberate respecting it—some little time to try and reconcile myself to the thoughts of what I had resolutely vowed against ever entertaining an idea of again.'

‘Impossible; exclusive of my unwillingness, on your account, to allow of any delay, there are circumstances that put it out of my power to do so. You have heard me speak of Miss Frazer; she is the lady in question; her mother, the intimate friend of the marchioness, you know, was compelled to decline accompanying colonel Frazer to the East Indies, owing to his extreme barbarity to her and her child: she died a few months ago, just time enough to avoid being again subjected to his tyranny, as last week his return home was publicly announced in the papers. Miss Frazer’s consternation at the circumstance was so great, as to occasion her to immediately hasten hither, there being nothing she so much dreads as finding herself again in his power: to relieve herself from this apprehension, since, though of age, and consequently in some degree her own mistress, the delicacy of her feelings would not permit her openly to resist his will, I laughingly advised her immediately vesting some one with a legal right to protect her; and gradually becoming more serious, proposed an alliance with the son of her lamented mother’s most beloved friend. The proposal was acceded to; and beyond this day the ceremony must not be delayed, intimation having been received of her father being on his way hither, for the express purpose of forcing her hence, the fortune she inherits, in right of her deceased parent rendering him anxious to have her under his immediate control.’

‘Good Heaven, how am I agonized!’ exclaimed lord Hexham. ‘The idea of the hasty connexion I am thus required to form, is revolting to every feeling of my heart; incapable as I feel it of change, how, in honour, in humanity, can I think of it?’

‘Did I entertain a similar belief, I should not urge

it,' returned the marquis; 'but I have not the smallest doubt of a happy alteration being effected in your sentiments, by an union with a person of such amiable manners and refined accomplishments, of your speedily being restored, through it, to all your former relish for the social joys of life.'

'But our mutual friend, Clanronel, what will he say to the intimation, which my consenting to it must be considered, of having ceased to think of his Angeline? will he not be wounded by the idea of her being so soon forgotten? will he be able to pardon her memory being so soon apparently consigned to the gloomy oblivion of her early grave? Oh! even when they slumber in the dust, are we not still jealous for those whom we have regarded?'

'The mind of our friend is too noble,' replied the marquis, 'to permit of his sensibility ever degenerating into selfishness. That he should wish his departed child still to live in the recollection of those she esteemed, is but natural; but he by no means desires others to participate in the lasting grief her loss has entailed on him: he knows the claims society has upon you—he knows how greatly the happiness of your connexions depends on yours; and he, in consequence, fervently unites with me in wishing for the union I have planned, from concurring in opinion with me, as to the happy effects that may be expected from it. That you can doubt what I have asserted, I cannot readily imagine; should I be mistaken, however, an interview with him will convince you I have not deceived you; although I acknowledge, from the agitation it must necessarily occasion him, I could wish one on the subject avoided.'

Thus urged, thus importuned, his reason and feelings alike appealed to—compelled to reflect on

all he owed his family for their former indulgence to his wishes, and as an atonement for the extreme unhappiness he had been the means of occasioning them, his resolution began to falter; and at length a reluctant acquiescence to the wishes of the marquis was wrung from him.

The feelings evinced at the moment were of a nature to excite such an apprehension in the mind of the marquis, as induced him to determine on giving him no time for reflection, or rather power to retract.

But to disappoint the expectations he had raised, nothing perhaps could voluntarily have induced the unhappy Hexham; he felt wretched at the idea of the promise extorted from him, but still felt he could better endure the misery it inflicted, than the reflection of occasioning another pang to his father by shrinking from it.

Considering it irrevocable, he endeavoured to collect himself, nor declined an immediate introduction to Miss Frazer; but when he found himself actually in her presence, his agitation became so great, as scarcely to allow of his articulating the grateful acknowledgment he deemed requisite for the honour she had done him. Either his emotion was contagious, or else some secret disapproval of the precipitancy of the proceeding, gave an almost equal appearance of embarrassment to her manner; this was too evident to the marquis, not to occasion him to shorten the interview, from a consequent conviction, that to do so must be agreeable to her, and to which he was still further induced, by the little time that remained for the necessary arrangements, the ensuing evening being fixed on for the performance of the ceremony. What a torturing interval was that passed by the unhappy Hexham!

yet it was some relief to him, to find he was not to meet Miss Frazer again, till summoned to receive her hand, owing to the wish expressed to have her residence at the Abbey remain unannounced, till freed from the apprehension that occasioned her so readily to accede to the proposition of the marquis. He wished to see Clanronel, in order that he might be assured, beyond a doubt, the measure into which he was hurried would not be a means of alienating his regard from him, but feared to desire an interview, lest it should render still more difficult his maintaining a command over himself; but with the irritableness of a mind rendered sore by affliction, he could ill brook the manifestations of the joy that was experienced at the approaching event; he wondered his feelings could be so little understood, as to permit a sensation of the kind to be felt.

But though perhaps aware of the effect it might have upon him, the marquis and marchioness could not dissemble the pleasure it afforded them: never indeed had they felt themselves in the enjoyment of purer happiness than at this juncture, of so many anxious cares did they suddenly find themselves divested; of these, the least embittering were not those they experienced on lady Rosamond's account, between whom and Roscrea a happy reconciliation was just at this period effected.

At length the hour fixed for the plighting of his vows to another, those vows he imagined death had cancelled to his lamented Angeline, arrived, and, accompanied by his brother, lord Hexham repaired to the chapel, where, as expected, he found the bride, with his father and the rest of the family. It was by this time nearly dark; he was not a little surprised, therefore, at its remaining unlit, its

gloom, in consequence, rendering objects, at a distance scarcely discernible. Without commenting on the circumstance, however, he took the hand of the bride, and led her to the altar, where the chaplain stood waiting to perform the ceremony. Miss Frazer's name was also Clora, like hers in reality whom he lamented; and when called upon to pronounce this loved name—when, in return, he heard it uttered in low trembling accents by her, with difficulty could he prevent a groan of torturing recollection from escaping him; endeavouring, however, to recollect himself, when the ceremony was over, he made a faint effort to raise the veil which shaded, or rather completely concealed her features; but almost snatching her from his intended embrace, the marquis hurried her towards an adjacent door, desiring him to repair to the draw-room, and they would speedily follow. Lord Hexham instinctively obeyed, but not without deeming this procedure strange; altogether, indeed, there appeared a something of mystery, of abruptness, in the affair, that filled him with equal surprise and perplexity. Musing on it, he threw himself on a seat on entering the apartment, unconscious of having been followed thither, till roused to perception by Roscrea's exclaiming, as he slapped him on the shoulder—'Do, pray, my dear fellow, for Heaven's sake, do recollect yourself, and try to assume the air of what you really are.'

'Oh pray do!' cried lady Mara; 'for as you now look, you really accord more with the idea one has formed of a monk of La Trappe than of a bridegroom.'

'Assurement!' cried lord Mountbrilliant, who was again an inmate at the Abbey, and now looked forward to speedily becoming one himself, prefer-

ring to become a Benedict, rather than resign the lovely little Mara, to which alternative he had been reduced, by the positive declaration of the marquis, to permit no longer the continuance of his dangling attentions to her: yet had the fond father believed his vanity incorrigible, nothing could possibly have induced him to accede to the overture which this declaration induced him to immediately make; but with all his eccentric follies, he conceived him possessed both of a sufficient portion of understanding and sensibility to be able to correct his errors, and do justice to the virtues of an amiable woman, and consequently, that in entrusting the happiness of his beloved child to his care, he allowed it to run no risk.

The disconsolate Hexham tried to make the required exertion, but never did he feel it so painful to feign what he did not feel. They were presently joined by the rest of the party; lord George first entered, conducting the bride, and was followed by the marquis, marchioness, and lady Rosamond; from the looks of the former, he might well have been mistaken for the bridegroom, the animating glow that flushed his cheek, the ardour that sparkled in his eyes; lord Hexham advanced to meet them as they entered, and tenderly saluted her: but lord George retained her hand, nor did he attempt to make room for his brother on the sofa to which he led her: lord Hexham felt rather surprised at this conduct—rather surprised at his acting as if he wished entirely to engross her attention; immediately, however, he could not bring himself to assert his superior claim to it, although he could not avoid secretly acknowledging, as he gazed on her, observed the soft expression of her countenance, and fugitive blushes that imparted additional charms to it, she was equally

deserving of love and admiration, an object too interesting to be contemplated with impunity by a disengaged heart: the approach of the rest of the party to offer congratulations, again obliged him to shake off his inclination to thoughtfulness, and at the same moment the village bells ringing out, proclaimed the announcement of his marriage; he sighed at the thought—sighed as if till then he had not been perfectly sensible of it, or rather of the reflection suggested by it, of the necessity of henceforth endeavouring to banish the idea of Angelina; oh, Heavens! of her to whom his vows had been so recently plighted—of her for whom he should still have been wrapt in the weeds of sorrow, of her who, on many accounts, had a right to live for ever in his memory—‘Oh, had I explained the tie that bound us to my father,’ he internally exclaimed, ‘never, I am convinced, would he have urged my present engagement! but then to have avoided it, what should I have incurred? the loss of his esteem, his confidence, by the acknowledged violation of my promise.’

He strove to subdue the weakness of regret, and counterfeit something of the joy that now seemed to pervade the mansion; the pealing of the bells—the splendid illumination of the apartments—the pleasure that sparkled in every eye, and the kind of joyous bustle of the domestics, all indicated indeed the celebration of some happy festival: at length an opportunity for addressing himself to the bride occurred, and he availed himself of it. Taking the seat lord George had occupied, he softly expressed the gratitude her condescension had excited, and was proceeding to assure her of the happiness he should derive from endeavouring to evince it to her, when a servant, with a mysterious

air, suddenly beckoned him from the apartment—‘I hope your lordship will forgive me,’ he cried, as he led the way into an antichamber, ‘for letting you be troubled about any business at this moment; but indeed I could not help it, the old woman was so urgent.’

‘What woman?’ demanded lord Hexham, impatiently, and looking rather wildly.

‘Why, the woman who brought this.’ presenting him with a letter; ‘an old cottager, please your lordship, belonging to Rooksdale.’

Lord Hexham hastily ran his eye over the superscription—the hand seemed not unknown to him—he tore open the envelope, and glancing at the signature, would instantly after have fallen, but for the timely support of the equally astonished and affrighted attendant, who seeing him change colour and stagger, extended his arms to catch him. The cry he uttered at the moment was heard in the drawing-room, and brought out the party there.

‘Good God! what is the matter?’ exclaimed the marquis. ‘What has happened to occasion this disorder?’

Raising himself from the shoulder of the servant, against which he had sunk, lord Hexham looked wildly at him for a moment, but without speaking; then again glancing at the letter, which he still held grasped in his hand—‘My wife—my beloved,’ in accents scarce articulate, he cried.

‘Speak to him, my dear,’ said the marquis, turning to the bride, as if he concluded it was her he meant.

Timidly approaching him—‘My dear lord,’ she said, gently taking his hand, ‘you alarm me! What is the cause of this emotion?’

Lord Hexham shook her from him like something loathsome, and striking his forehead with an air of distraction, would have rushed from the room, but for the interposition of the marquis: dismissing the attendant, he requested all but the chaplain, the marchioness, and lady Rosamond, to retire, and no sooner found himself obeyed, than he demanded an explanation of the distress he witnessed.

‘Oh, inquire not!’ returned lord Hexham, with the wildest emotion; ‘detain me not!—she calls for me!—she expects me! Yet, oh Heavens! is it possible!—may I indeed believe that it is her hand has traced these lines!—that she lives!—that I shall again behold her!’

‘This is madness,’ cried the marquis; ‘or at least I must think so, if you cannot explain the meaning of those incoherent sentences.’

‘Oh God, how can I!’ said the anguished Hexham, again striking his forehead; ‘and yet it must be done—yes, at length I must have the torture of proving myself unworthy of the affection that has been lavished on me—of the confidence I have so long experienced; but perhaps the bursting agony of my heart may have some effect in softening the indignation my confession must inspire. Oh, my father! oh, my mother! what have I not previously made you suffer! What am I not destined still to make you feel! Would to God, to have prevented this, that, where so many of my gallant countrymen fell, I now slept silent, though but too probably not forgotten.’ For a few minutes he covered his face with his hands, and then, a little recollecting himself, proceeded to relate all that is already known to the reader.

‘Unhappy young man,’ said the marquis, on his concluding, ‘in what a terrible predicament have

you placed yourself, by suffering the voice of passion to tempt you to a violation of your word—of that which a noble mind can never forfeit without remorse, nor which, in any instance, can be broken without a retributive punishment! for in what a labyrinth of difficulties are we involved by a departure from integrity, one deviation from it almost invariably occasioning another! I pity you so much, for the misery you have been the means of entailing on yourself, by the forfeiture of your word, that, oh, how humiliating must the declaration be to you! I know not how to upbraid you; and yet surely never father had a juster right to upbraid a son than I have you. With shame, with contrition, you must acknowledge this, when you reflect on my conduct towards you—when you reflect on what I forgave, what I acceded to, on condition of the promise which you have now, I find, violated. Had you adhered to it, how different would have been your present feelings! You would not then have had to reproach yourself as the probable cause of the unhappiness of two amiable women.

‘Oh God! how can I sustain the idea?’ cried the agonized Hexham. ‘Oh, my father, aid me, assist me, in this trying hour; without your advice, your support, I sink beneath it.’ He threw himself on a seat, and covering his face with his hands, appeared to resign himself to despair.

Some one bending over him caused him suddenly to uncover his eyes; he started—scarce could he believe their evidence—scarce that it was her indeed he saw—scarce that it was Angeline. Involuntarily recoiling, for a moment he gazed at her with a look of wild dismay, then clasping her to his heart, forgot, in that ecstatic moment, all that

he had recently been suffering—all that he had yet reason to dread.

The unexpected sound of Clanronel's voice, hardly articulate through emotion, first recalled him to recollection, and with truth it might be said, from bliss he again awoke to anguish; he shuddered at the idea of the communication they had to receive, as one that might perhaps be a means of depriving him again of her who had so lately been restored to him, of robbing him of her affection, her esteem. Under the torturing apprehension, that perhaps another minute might not elapse ere she struggled to disengage herself from them, he suddenly withdrew his arms from her, and again throwing himself on a seat, covered his face.

'Come, come, my lord,' cried the greatly-agitated Clanronel, addressing the marquis, 'these conflicts must be terminated; I cannot consent to their prolongation.'

'Nor I, indeed,' said the equally-affected marchioness; 'my lord,' smiling through her tears, she added, 'must recollect, that by prolonging them, he would be punishing the innocent as well as the guilty.'

'Those who know me, must, I believe, be assured, that to inflict pain on those I love, is to inflict it on myself,' returned the marquis; 'but if we wish to satisfy our reason, we must sometimes act contrary to our feelings. Never may I have the torture of again deeming it necessary to do so; what has been experienced this night—the terrible consequences that might have resulted from disingenuousness, will, I trust, have the effect of ever preventing any thing similar from being incurred again.' He then proceeded to explain the deception that had been practised on lord Hexham.

Angeline, as already stated, was in the habit of venturing, in the dusk, from the cottage. In one of her lonely visits to the little grave of her child, over which she felt a melancholy pleasure in weeping, she was surprised by the marquis, in his way through the churchyard to Rooksdale: when the first emotions of astonishment were over, the kind of awe with which surprise was mingled had subsided, a mutual explanation ensued, that solved all that had hitherto appeared mysterious to each. In breaking to the sorrowing father the agitating discovery, the marquis lost no time; but all his caution was necessary to prevent his sinking beneath the feelings it excited; those of joy and gratitude, however, were not the only ones it inspired; with rapture at her unexpected restoration, was mingled indignation at the conduct that might have prevented it—the cruel selfishness of Mrs. Clanronel, in having recourse to imposition to prevent not merely their reconciliation, but ever meeting again. Yielding to its dictates, he decided on an immediate separation, a decision in which she readily acquiesced, by the advice of her mother, in consequence of her being perfectly satisfied with the instructions he proposed giving his lawyer on the subject; and accordingly, without further delay, she departed, with her ladyship and her sisters, for the delightful scenes from which she had been so long, according to her computation, sequestered. But the pleasure of the marquis at finding, by the explanation of Angeline, there was no further cause for anxiety relative to the happiness of lord Hexham, could not immediately induce him to forgive the violation of the promise he had plighted to him, and, in consequence, deeming it, on many accounts, expedient to hasten the marriage of Angeline.

solemnized again, he resolved to take advantage of the circumstance, to practise such a deception on him as should, in some degree, inflict on him the punishment he conceived it merited. From his abstracted state of mind, he found no great difficulty in being enabled to carry this determination into effect, more especially as what he had stated with regard to Miss Frazer was really the fact, with this difference, that it was for lord George, who had for some time been enamoured of her, he had made an overture for her hand: she suffered herself to be persuaded to aid in his design; but it was not without extreme reluctance Angeline allowed herself to be so. Immediately after the departure of lord Hexham from the chapel, the marriage of Miss Frazer took place, a marriage that gave to the amiable family of St. Cuthbert's a daughter truly worthy of being allied to them. The moment of elucidation was to Angeline a moment that fully compensated for every past sorrow, but that inflicted by the disastrous fate of the lamented St. Ruth; still with agonizing regret she dwelt on this, but with such a conviction of the blessedness of his translated spirit, as was well calculated to gradually soften it into a tender melancholy.

When she reflected on her recent sufferings, on the feelings of forlornness, of desolation she had experienced, how pure was her gratitude, how lively her transports, at the contrast she drew between the present and the past—at finding herself the acknowledged daughter of the exalted beings she so much revered—restored to the affections of her father, and again enfolded to the heart of him for whom even resentment had not been able to sub-

due or weaken, in any degree, her regard—for whom so unconsciously she had been interested!

‘Pon my honour,’ cried lord Mountbrilliant, whispering lady Mara, on all being at length satisfactorily explained, ‘I quite rejoice at the *denouement* being over, for the idea of it quite agitated me; positively the marquis has an admirable idea of contrivances; when our nuptials are solemnized, I shall, in consequence of this conviction, take care there’s neither veil nor darkness, lest, as a punishment for my follies, he should attempt to impose some other than his lovely Mara on me.’

‘Nay,’ returned lady Mara, a little archly, ‘those who are best acquainted with your follies are those who are best qualified to animadvert on them; therefore perhaps to give you any other than the person he has promised, might not perhaps be so great a punishment as you imagine.’

‘How cruel! and do you really think I am guilty of any that merit punishment? but when I am blest with you, ’tis impossible I should retain them, you whom I love and admire beyond all created beings.’

‘Nay, I doubt, or rather deny that; there is one in the creation that I am convinced at least shares, or rather rivals me in your admiration.’

The viscount looked a little alarmed—‘I must importune you to name the person you mean,’ he cried.

‘It is unnecessary,’ she returned; ‘for if you take the trouble of casting your eyes on the opposite mirror, you will there see who I mean.’

‘Oh, abominable severity! I shall endure it no longer, but directly go and flirt, or at least endea-

vour to do so, with one or other of your new sisters; upon my honour, they are both very lovely creatures, but I still think I give the preference to lady Hexham; how beautiful does the soft glow of happiness make her appear! I would say lord Hexham was an enviable being, but that I am one myself; the particulars I have heard bring to my mind the following lines of the poet:—

‘ The cloud of jealousy’s dispell’d,
And the bright sun of innocence reveal’d;
With what strange raptures is he blest,
Raptures too great to be express’d;
Tho’ hard the torments to endure,
Who would not have the sickness for the cure?’

THE END.













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