

CAVA OF TOLEDO.

A ROMANCE.

Lane, Darling, and Co. Leadenhall-Street.

CAVA OF TOLEDO;

or,

The Gothic Princess.

A ROMANCE.

*IN FIVE VOLUMES*

*BY*

AUGUSTA AMELIA STUART,

AUTHOR OF

LUDOVICO'S TALE; THE ENGLISH BROTHERS; EXILE  
OF PORTUGAL, &c. &c.

Fierce wars, and faithful loves,  
And truth severe, in fairy fiction drest.

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## CAVA DE TOLEDO.

### CHAP. I.

The prostrate obelisk, the shatter'd dome,  
Uprooted pedestal, and yawning tomb,  
On loit'ring steps reflective Taste surveys,  
With folded arms, and sympathetic gaze,  
Charm'd with poetic melancholy, treads,  
O'er ruin'd towns and desolated meads;  
Or rides sublime on Time's expanded wings,  
And views the fate of ever-changing things.

DARWIN.

BEFORE we pursue our journey with Alonzo, or look to the fate of the melancholy Cava, and her brave companion, don Garcia, our readers may wish to be acquainted with the actual state of Spain at this period; having lost sight of that unhappy land, we return to find it, as don Juan reported, in absolute subjection to the Moors. Tariff, their victorious general, put all to fire and sword in Andalusia. It was dreadful to behold cities reduced to ashes, temples overturned, altars prophaned, the country ruined, and its wretched inhabitants running from place to place, and still unable to fly from the fury of the Infidels.

As the Christians had abandoned Grenada and Cordova, to seek shelter elsewhere, Tariff left Jews and Moors to repeople these two famous cities. All yielded to his victorious arm, and he continually advanced as a conqueror. Toledo, situate in the heart of the kingdom of which she was the capital, and the seat of the Gothic kings, was now become the asylum of the Christians. The advantageous situation of the town, almost inaccessible on all sides, environed by the Tagus, and by craggy and steep mountains, added to the strong fortifications the Goths had constructed, rendered it almost impregnable: but the archbishop Urbain, not trusting to the strength of the fortifications, did not think himself or his adherents in safety within its walls; he seemed to have had a foresight of the miseries to which it became a prey: determining to fly into the Asturias<sup>\*</sup>, he carried with him the relics which were supposed to have been brought from Jerusalem, the sacred vases, and the ornaments destined to the ministers of the church, fearing that the enemies of the Christian religion should impiously prophaned them: he also carried away the bible, and all the holy books, with the works of St. Issidore. The pious archbishop valued the scriptures, and the writings of the fathers of the church, beyond all the gold and treasures of Spain; he feared lest the Moors, blind to the truths they contained, should burn them, and that their loss could never be repaired. The prince Palayo accompanied, or rather escorted the archbishop, to defend him in case of an attack. Of this we are informed by the best historians.

The prince, with his followers, and the worthy archbishop, arrived, without molestation, in the north of Spain, where Urbain employed himself in seeking a place of safety for the treasures he prized above his life. A very deep cave at the extremity of Spain, and in the most sequestered part of a high mountain, was chosen as a secure asylum for every thing brought from Toledo; there private property was deposited, as

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\* From the Spanish History.

well as the treasures of the church: this cave is two leagues from where the city of Oviedo now stands, and from that time the place has been called the Holy Mountain. For many hundred years the people of Spain have venerated the spot, and go there in crowds on the feast of Mary Magdalen. The prince don Palayo, and the archbishop, were followed by numbers of the nobility, and many wealthy citizens, who, in the general consternation throughout Spain, sought an asylum from the rapacious and cruel Moors; and they withdrew into the Asturias, determined on making use of every favourable conjuncture to annoy the enemy. The Moorish army had been dispersed in various places throughout the country, but they united to commence the siege of Toledo. It was general Tariff who himself formed and commanded them, for he would yield to no one the glory of this conquest: it was, however, not a difficult one; how could it long resist a numerous army, flushed with victory, and fearless of danger? Tariff soon rendered himself master of the city. Toledo was then the greatest ornament of Spain, and the residence of the Gothic kings. Historians differ as to the manner in which this superb town was taken. As was their custom, the Moors, when they conquered it, put to death the Christians that would not yield, and made slaves of those that submitted.

The submission of all the other cities of Spain followed the fall of Toledo. They fired the town of Astorga, in Galicia; but the walls were too strong to be consumed, and they still exist. Tariff, puffed up with such constant good fortune, carried his victorious army, enriched with the spoils of Spain, back to Toledo, there quietly to enjoy the fruits of his labour and his conquests. It was there he stopped, in the centre of the kingdom, from whence he could send troops wherever they were necessary, and could himself watch over all. These accounts passing into Africa, an infinite number of the Saracens left it, willing to partake with their countrymen the fine pastures and the rich spoils of Spain.

The Spaniards, chased from their country, intimidated by finding no resource in their misfortunes, and unable to make any effort to drive out the Infidels, or to defend themselves, left without a head, without troops, or ammunition, incapable of the least resistance, thought only of submission, and their own private interests—thought but of rendering their own lot the least wretched. While all this passed in Spain, news was brought that Musa meditated vast projects. This Infidel rejoiced to find Spain conquered—the Moors masters of so powerful a kingdom—and their empire extended into Europe, the thing of all others he most wished. On the other hand, he was mortified, that, while he remained idle in Africa, his general had both the honour and profit of so great a conquest. With envy he beheld the splendid victories of Tariff, and sighed that he had not partaken them with him. At length, urged by jealousy, and a desire of sharing with his general the treasures of Spain, he took the resolution of passing the sea; and collecting twelve thousand of his best troops, at their head he entered Spain.

This force was small, considering the vast designs of Musa; but the Spaniards, though, at intervals, they took up arms to oppose their oppressive tyrants, were, in general, so heart-broken and so weakened, that a small well-disciplined army was sufficient to complete their subjugation. Tariff and Musa, both in Spain, both at the head of separate armies, became more dreadful scourges than the country had yet felt, and slaughter shewed its grim visage everywhere. Musa was advised to join his troops to those of general Tariff, that they might act in concert, and finish the conquest of the country. The perfidious Christians, who looked more to their private interest, and the indulgence of their passions, than to their religion and their consciences, willing to make their court to Musa, promised him all the assistance he should stand in need of,

to terminate the war, and secure Spain to himself. This advice, so flattering to his vanity, his jealousy, and his ambition, prevailed. Count Julian early sought the new general, who received him with open arms, and seeming friendship, and appeared to give him his entire confidence. The unfeeling count stifled the voice of conscience, which had often wrung his heart. He now looked forward to a great reward from Musa; and it was believed he had quarrelled with Tariff, and was jealous of his glory. Traitors are ever interested in their conduct, and, in general, governed by their passions.

Musa and his Moors had disembarked at Algeziras, but they remained not long there; their course was like a meteor in the troubled air. They fell upon Medina Sidonia; the place was strong, and the inhabitants made a vigorous defence, but in vain; the town was forced and pillaged. Reeking with gore, flushed with recent conquest, Musa laid siege to Cormona, the strongest town in Andalusia. The siege lasted some days; the Spaniards, who knew they had nothing to hope, fought with a desperate valour not easily conquered. The Moors were astonished, and sometimes recoiled before these brave men; but count Julian availed himself of the most infamous stratagem to put the place in the possession of Musa. Feigning to have received some mortal offence from the Moors, he presented himself before the inhabitants of the town, who, deceived by this traitor, believed his repentance, and received him with extreme joy: he entered by the gate called the gate of Cordova, and the wretch having seized upon it, admitted the Moors. What became of count Julian after this fatal night, was never known. Some suppose that the Infidels whom he had so benefited, suspecting that such a man might, the next night, betray them to the Christians, could he obtain any advantage to himself by so doing, had trampled him under their horses' feet as they entered the town: some say the Christians dispatched him, on discovering his treacherous conduct; his body, however, was never found. His fate was buried in oblivion—not so his character; to latest times will Spain curse the memory of the traitor count Julian; and history will point him out to every country on earth, as an example to mankind. How exalted, how godlike the character of a true patriot! How worse than a fiend of hell the man that can raise his arm, or employ his talents against his country!

Musa rested not; he pursued his sanguine course. Seville was abandoned, and became an easy prey. Some of the towns he allowed the Christians still to occupy, granting them the free use of their religion.

Merida was formerly one of the most celebrated colonies that the Romans had in Spain, and the most considerable town in Lusitania; it had scarcely lost any thing of its ancient grandeur, and every where vestiges of Roman magnificence were visible, notwithstanding what it had suffered in the last battle, lost by the unfortunate king Rodrigo, in which a multitude of its best citizens had perished.

The noble Spaniards that still remained at Merida were again roused to fury by their wrongs; and quitting their walls, marched to meet the Moors, who were advancing to besiege them:—but, alas! though brave, they fought without order, and overpowered by numbers, were obliged to fly for safety within the gates of their town. Musa, accompanied only by four confidential officers, approached to reconnoitre the place. The situation, the grandeur, the beauty of this superb city, struck him with the greatest surprise; he stood in admiration of it, and then exclaimed—“It appears to me that all the nations in the earth have combined in building and embellishing this magnificent city—happy he who can make himself master of it!”

This view of Merida only served still more to animate the Moorish general, and determine him to attempt every possible means to subjugate it. He sat down

before it, and was enraged at the resistance he met with, and the prolongation of the siege. He employed every warlike machine in use. The besieged did not suffer themselves to be subdued by their fears; active and determined, they repaired in the night the damage done to their walls during the day. But soon their numbers began to lessen; their resources and their provisions failed; and those brave men found it expedient to surrender, before they came to the last gasp. They sent deputies to the camp of their enemy, and offered to put the town into the hands of the Moorish general, provided he granted them honourable conditions. Musa, irritated by their resistance, and the length of the siege, with pride and anger rejected their propositions.

The ambassadors returned into the town, unable to soften the hearts of their conquerors. Hearing that Musa was old, infirm, and broken, the inhabitants, hoping he would not long survive, determined on defending themselves and their city to the last extremity. The wily general, well acquainted by his spies of what passed at their councils, and finding that the hopes of his death supported the besieged, resolved to employ finesse to oblige them to surrender. As the town suffered greatly, the inhabitants, notwithstanding the noble spirit by which they were actuated, thought it most prudent to send a second embassy to the Moorish general. Musa being early informed of their intention, made<sup>\*</sup> his attendants paint his hair and beard, and array him in a more youthful habit than he generally wore.

The ambassadors from the town, on entering his tent, were astonished at the change in the person of the general; they saw him, in appearance, infinitely younger than they had imagined him to be; the day before he had walked with a staff—it was now laid aside, and they suspected they had been deceived at their former visit, for they guessed not at his artifice.

On their return within the walls, they related the miracle they had seen, and declared to the people it would be in vain to oppose Musa, who might be said to controul nature. They were then sent a third time to the enemy's camp, and the town submitted to the crafty Moor.

When Musa came into Spain, he brought with him his son Abdalexis. This young prince, animated by a noble ambition, complained one day to his father of his not employing him sufficiently in this war—he burned for a command, where he should have an opportunity of shewing his valour, and acquiring glory. Musa, who fondly loved his son, was charmed to find in him such noble sentiments; he allowed his complaint a just one, and instantly gave him the command of a large body of the finest of his troops.

Abdalexis, at the head of this detachment entered into the province of Valencia; he had many combats with the Spaniards, and was constantly successful. The towns of Devia, Alcansar, and Huesta, opened their gates to him, on condition that the free exercise of their religion should be allowed them, and the Saracens not permitted to prophane their churches; if this should be agreed to, the inhabitants willingly offered to pay a tribute to the Moors. The young conqueror, after so happy an expedition, returned to Seville, covered with glory. He afterwards made himself master of some towns, which he razed to the ground, to intimidate the Christians.

Musa having obtained his dearest wish, in the possession of the noble city of Merida, and the renown of his son, bent his course towards Toledo. General Tariff came out to meet him, and do him honour, and proceeded even to Talavera. The two generals met on the banks of a river; great demonstrations of joy and affection were

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shewn on both sides at this interview, though, in secret, they most cordially hated each other.

Musa, jealous of the glory of Tariff, and the riches he had amassed in the conquests he had made, was determined on his ruin, that he might possess himself of his treasures. Tariff, on his part, well knowing the ambition and avarice of the aged Musa, feared every thing from him, and only studied how to avoid the snares laid to entrap him by his crafty foe.

Musa accused Tariff of not always following his orders during the war, declaring he was more indebted to chance for his conquests, than to his valour or his talents. The people and the army looked on these accusations as unjust. Tariff's numerous victories spoke for him, and fully justified him in the opinion of those who judge of a man's conduct by his success; every one was sensible that Musa regarded general Tariff with envy; but all formed their own schemes, and concealed their real sentiments.

Arrived at Toledo, Musa obliged Tariff to justify his conduct; he demanded an account of the excessive expences of the war, and the immense treasures he had amassed. Tariff lost no time in murmurs or complaints at Musa's injustice; he prudently passed over his ingratitude, and only thought of appeasing the spirit of the old man, by humility, honours, and presents. In a short time the two general's appeared to be perfectly reconciled, and together took the road to Saragossa, designing to reduce that great city, one of the strongest, the most considerable, and the best-peopled in Spain; but, alas! it made no resistance—the spirit of the Christians was fled. Musa and Tariff entered it in triumph, and all yielded to the fortune of the Moors. Some provinces cost not a drop of blood. Spain, in a period of time almost too short to be conceived, was subdued. To the interior of the kingdom only the Moors had not penetrated.

The fugitive Spaniards flew to their inaccessible mountains, their rocks, and their immense forests, where, fortifying themselves, they were joined by those who were unable to support the cruelty and oppression of the Infidels.

The Miomolin Ulit heard with joy the success of his arms, and the conquest of so powerful a kingdom; but he was not ignorant of the hatred that subsisted between his generals, and was willing, at any price, to secure so important a conquest. He dreaded that the Spaniards might rouse from their trance, and profiting by the misunderstanding between their rival enemies, might wrest the country from their grasp, and drive their new masters out of Spain.

The caliph was as crafty as his generals; he commanded them instantly to appear before him, that he might recompense both in the most honourable manner, for the great services they had rendered him and the Mahometan religion. Musa prepared to obey him; but fearful that, during his absence, a counter-revolution might take place, he named his son Abdalesis as the governor of Spain in his stead. This young prince had acquired such glory, his reputation was so high, and he had given such striking proofs of the most undaunted courage, of moderation, and prudence, that the whole army applauded the choice, and publicly swore to acknowledge and obey him as their chief.

Musa and Tariff, their glory at its meridian, (for in a short time they had made the most brilliant conquests,) prepared for their embarkation; and in quitting Spain, these two generals carried with them nearly all the riches of the kingdom, and the immense treasures that the Gothic kings had taken such pains to amass during three hundred years.

So unstable are all human possessions, so soon may sceptres, crowns, and kingdoms, elude the grasp of the first potentates on earth!

As smoke that rises from the kindling fires  
Is seen this moment, and the next expires;  
As empty clouds by rising winds are toss'd,  
Their fleeting forms scarce sooner found than lost—  
So vanishes our state—so pass our days—  
So life but opens now, and now decays:  
The cradle and the tomb, alas! so nigh,  
To live is scarce distinguish'd from to die.

## CHAP. II.

WE have, for some time, quitted the noble Alonzo, to give the reader a clear idea of what was passing in Spain, while he remained in Africa. We must now hasten to him and don Juan; but we see them, with sorrowful hearts and sad forebodings, again set foot on their native land. Alonzo looked around—"Is this Spain?" he cried, "or are we thrown on some dreary, some inhospitable coast?" He advanced inland with hurried steps; don Juan and his attendants followed, sad and silent. Far as the eye could reach, it beheld nothing but devastation; villages burnt—towns razed to the ground—fields wasted and uncultivated—trees torn from their roots, and thrown across the public ways, to stop the flight of the unhappy Christians; here mounds of earth shewed where they had fought and fallen; and, in many places, their half-decayed and half-covered bodies told too plainly the sad fate of Spain.

It was mid day when Alonzo entered his miserable country; they had travelled some leagues, and no Christian met their eye. At length a band of warlike Moors approached, and at their head a Saracen well known to Alonzo, for he had fought in the plains of Xeres under count Julian! with civility he accosted the prince, and finding he had just landed, offered to escort him wherever he chose to go. "Your friends," cried he, "will rejoice to see you again; general Tariff, indeed, cannot welcome you, as he is on his return to Africa; but at Seville you will find the brave Abdalasis, the boast of our country; you will also find many who will receive with pleasure the prince Alonzo."

Alonzo's heart beat quick; the blood rushed to his cheek at this address from the Moor, and tinged it with the deep hue of shame. He saw before him his desolated country, and he could have given worlds, could he have said he was innocent of its destruction; but this was no time to speak his sentiments; disguise, in his situation, was absolutely necessary; should the Moors suspect him, death or a dungeon must be his fate. He must now dissemble; sad necessity! it sunk him in his own opinion—it subdued his gallant spirit—it withered his brave heart; but what could he do? He thanked Ishmael for his attention, and said he should rest at the next town till the rest of his followers could join him; then curbing his feelings, and stifling the rage he felt rising in his bosom, he entered into conversation with the Moor. He anxiously inquired for count Julian—where he was, and how at present employed?

"Alas!" cried the Saracen, "I grieve to tell you that the alarm for his safety is still great. We know not what has befallen the count; since the glorious night in which we took Cormona, he has been missing; the count led us into the town; from that hour no one has been able to give the smallest intelligence respecting him. Our generals had strict search made for him among the slain, fearing he might have fallen in the gate, where he was last seen; but the search has been ineffectual, and we supposed him returned to Africa, to his own palace and family. A rumour prevailed that the countess Julian was dead; and his friends believe that grief on that account may have been the cause of his quitting Spain so abruptly."

"Oh, no!" cried Alonzo, endeavouring to stifle a deep sigh that was issuing from his breast—"Oh, no! the count did not return to Africa—too surely he is no more!" and he thought within himself—"Unfortunate count Julian! how soon have you paid your forfeit life to your betrayed country!" here Alonzo hung his head, and inwardly mourned the fate of one he had loved, though so unworthy. Don Juan, too, was silent; all that presented itself to his view foretold the future fate of the Christians, and shocked his very soul.

Ishmael, however, continued to talk; he was a good-humoured loquacious man; he cared little whether the Christian religion or Mahometanism prevailed, so he could rank high in the army, and live well; he was profuse and good-natured, even to his enemies. He now changed his route, to accompany Alonzo and his friend to the next town. During their journey, he informed them of almost all the particulars mentioned in the last chapter—talked very freely of his generals and their disputes—laughed at the crafty Musa, and the trick that he had practised on the ambassadors from Merida, and then ran out in encomiums on the gallant Abdalesis.—“How much you would be pleased,” said the Moor, turning towards Alonzo, “with the brave friend of Abdalesis! they are inseparable, and no wonder—Africa could not produce two more such men.”

“Who is it you speak so highly of?” asked Alonzo, scarcely knowing or caring what he said, for his thoughts were gloomy, and dwelt on his country’s woes.

“Who do I mean!” answered the Infidel; “I can mean no one but Aleanzar, the bravest, noblest, best of Moors.”

At the mention of Aleanzar, a thousand different passions shook the soul of Alonzo; he remembered the outrage he had committed in carrying off Cava; he remembered also the kindness with which she spoke of him, notwithstanding that outrage, and when he heard him so praised by Ishmael, jealousy rose in his mind; it was but instantaneous; he was ashamed of such a feeling, and was going to ask some question respecting the Moor, when Ishmael interrupted him by saying—“When you go to Seville, you must contrive to see one of the most beautiful women in the world, who accompanied Aleanzar into Spain; I do not know her name, but I had a transient glimpse of her, and was enchanted.”

Alonzo started; was it possible Cava could again be in the hands of the Moor? surely she was the most lovely of human beings; and trembling with apprehension, he asked Ishmael—was the beauty he spoke of Moor or Christian?

The Saracen answered he knew not which, but that she certainly had the air of a Spaniard. Alonzo dared not mention Cava, although her name trembled on his lips; but he inquired if Garcia, who was well known as a follower of count Julian’s, had returned to Spain? and in what place he was most likely to be heard of? He then mentioned that, some months since, he had left Africa, with dispatches for the count. While he spoke, he fixed his anxious eyes on the Moor, as if his life depended on his answer: but here Alonzo was fated to get no information that could throw the least light on the course that Cava and Garcia had pursued;—Ishmael assured him that nothing had been heard of Garcia since he left Spain—that some days since he had seen his wife at Toledo, who was under great anxiety of mind on his account; she had long expected him, but neither having heard from him, or of him, she was determined on going to Seville for information.—“Poor soul!” cried he, “I pitied her, for she also hoped to find count Julian there, and I fear she will meet double disappointment.”

This was a new affliction to Alonzo; what could have become of Cava and Garcia? where should he now trace them? They sailed for Spain; was it possible they should not have arrived there? Cava might conceal herself till she found the asylum she wished; but Garcia could have no reason to do so; nor would he, if he was in Spain, have deserted his wife.

Oppressed with many an anxious thought, Alonzo, at length, arrived at the town, where he was determined to remain for the night. Ishmael having attended him, and seen him well lodged, bade him a kind adieu, and putting his horse to his full speed, was out of sight in a few moments. Alonzo looked after him, grateful for the attention he had shewn him, and mentally saying—“A kind heart is of no particular

country—it is born with the man, and is a blessing to whoever possesses it; this Moor has scarcely any thing else to recommend him, yet it polishes his rough outside, and covers all his faults.”

Alonzo and don Juan took up their abode in the house of a Christian whom they knew; he had, with a large sum, bought his freedom, and was allowed to live in peace in his own habitation. On seeing the prince, his heart swelled, and tears rolled down his cheeks; till the Moor was gone, he had not the power to express the delight he felt at once more beholding him; he entreated Alonzo to remain with him for a time, or, at least, till he could form some plan—“For, believe me,” said don Remirez, “in Spain you can only chuse one of two evils—perfect submission, or open war; half of my fortune I have given to save my family from destruction; to save my country, I would willingly give the other half, was I to die a beggar.”

Delighted with the old patriot, Alonzo pressed his hand in silent agony. When more composed, he entreated the good Spaniard to give him an exact account of the present state of Spain, particularly how don Palayo supported himself in the Asturias, and if many still flocked to his standard?

“All,” cried the worthy Remirez, “that can do so, with any safety to their families; but, like me, many tremble, lest, in attempting to fly, they should risk, not only all they are worth in the world, but the lives of their wives and children; slavery and dishonour would be their portion, were we to rise against our cruel oppressors, and fail in the attempt. Cursed Rodrigo!” cried the old Spaniard; “the hour of his birth was fatal to his country.”

Alonzo could never hear Rodrigo’s name without shuddering, and feeling a rage not to be curbed take possession of his soul: he had seen him swallowed by the fierce waters of the Guadaleta—he had seen him deprived, not only of life but of empire, and every thing he wished to possess; yet still Alonzo felt he had escaped his sword, and his revenge remained unsatisfied.

With don Remirez the friends remained some time. Alonzo made every inquiry possible respecting count Julian and Garcia, and from all they could learn, it was almost certain count Julian was no more; and that he had died either by the hands of the Christians, in vengeance for the woes he had brought on them, or by the Moors, who might fear his power, and the changes likely to take place in the mind of so bad a man, whom they knew would stop at nothing to carry into execution any scheme he chose to form.

Garcia had certainly not entered Spain, at least he had not entered it by the south; and hopeless of finding Cava, who now had succeeded in eluding his search, Alonzo determined on making his way as quickly as possible to the north of Spain, and still hoped to repair his past errors, and render himself of use to his country, when he should be able to join don Palayo; his heart panted for that moment; he imparted to his worthy host his intentions, who blessed him, with uplifted hands and streaming eyes, and offered him money and jewels, to assist him in his schemes; but Alonzo had brought with him treasure from Africa, which, if he could reach don Palayo in safety, would be of use in the prosecution of the war; and sincerely thanking don Remirez for his generosity, and promising he would call upon him, should he ever have occasion to do so, he set himself seriously to consider his route, with don Remirez, who was capable of giving him the best advice, having travelled much—was well acquainted with every corner of Spain—knew all the passes of the mountains, and the shortest way through them, and the very heart of the country, into the Asturias.

Alonzo wished not to be recognised by any of the Moors he had known when with count Julian. He desired not to see the glory of Abdalesis, who, he was told,

reigned as a king in Seville; and though he had heard the praises of Aleanzar, even from Cava, he rather wished to avoid than seek his acquaintance. Yet one idea was near carrying him to Seville; could it be possible that Cava was that beautiful woman of whom Ishmael had spoken? the idea tortured him; nor could his good sense, or his confidence in Cava, give ease to his heart: accident, however, relieved him, in some degree.

In conversation, don Remirez mentioned that Abdalasis, with his friend Aleanzar, had passed through the town they were now in, on their way to Seville.—“They stopped opposite to this habitation,” said Remirez, “for some minutes; I myself presented a cup of water to the most lovely woman I ever beheld, who accompanied the prince Aleanzar.”

“Who was she?” cried Alonzo; “tell me quickly, who was she? and ease my tortured heart!”

Remirez stared at his guest; he feared for his senses, for his disorder seemed extreme.—“I know not what she was called,” answered the Spaniard; “but they told me she was a young Moor, beloved by the prince; she was faint with the heat of the day, and stopped here to assuage her thirst; and of this I am persuaded, she was not a Christian, for a crescent glittered on her forehead—I saw the brightness of the jewels, and her still brighter eyes, as she drew her veil aside to drink. I could long have gazed at her with delight, but I dreaded giving offence.”

This account tranquillized the soul of Alonzo; he was satisfied Cava would sooner die than abjure her religion; and he lost his fear and hatred of Aleanzar, in finding he had transferred to another the affection he had once borne to Cava.

Alonzo’s little troop were now arrived, and with them the treasure he had brought from Africa. He consulted with his friend don Juan, and don Remirez settled the plan for their crossing the mountains, so as to bring them in safety to the north.

Their kind host entreated them to remain a day or two longer, to recruit their strength and spirits, and promised, in that time, to procure them a faithful guide, who knew every pass in the mountains—every sheep-track unknown but to the simple shepherd, through which they might safely travel, and reach their destined point unsuspected by the Moors. Alonzo, always docile, listened with patience to Remirez, and determined to follow his advice: he and don Juan remained with the old patriot till all was ready for their departure; when, flushed with hope, and flattering themselves with happier days than those they had passed, and sanguine in their expectation of expelling the Moors from Spain, they took a tender leave of the good old Remirez; and before the sun had enlivened the earth with his bright beams, the friends, with their attached and brave band, were on the road that led to the north of Spain; soon they forsook the beaten path, to pass through forests, deep rivers, and over horrid and tremendous precipices, from whence the steadiest could scarcely venture to look down, where goats only could hang, and where often the path was so narrow, that even the smallest animal passing might have proved fatal to the passenger. Sometimes their faithful guide carried them to little hamlets, situated on the skirts of the forests, or in sweet retired vallies, in the centre of the mountains, where the rapacious foe had not penetrated, and where the poverty, the simplicity of the inhabitants, and the solitary situation of their abode, was their shield against rude violence: they heard, indeed, of the wretched fate of their unhappy country; but tyranny had not yet laid its iron grasp on them; and the din of arms, as yet, resounded not through their distant silent abodes. Often, as Alonzo and his friends have ascended a mountain, or passed down a declivity into the vallies where stood their peaceful huts, have those harmless shepherds been terrified by the glittering of their armour in the sunbeams, and flying

with horror from their supposed enemies, could only be brought back by the well-known voice of the guide whom Remirez had procured for the prince.

This faithful creature led them safely through this labyrinth, and easily procured from the guileless shepherds all their poverty could bestow: they gazed with delight on the youthful warrior—they prayed for blessings on the head of one so young, and yet so ready to succour the distressed; they spread before him their cleanly homely meal—they pressed him to partake of the roots they had dressed—of the purple grape that hung in clusters round their habitations—of milk fresh from their goats, and delicious honey from their rocks; dry leaves, and the best coverings they possessed, were spread for his bed, and when, after a long day's march, Alonzo and don Juan have reposed in safety their weary limbs upon their humble couch, they acknowledged to each other, there was more real happiness, more safety in the shepherd's cot, than in the treacherous court.—“Here,” said Alonzo, “we may sleep, free from the fear of the murderous dagger, or, what is worse, the shafts of calumny. Here, in the repast prepared for us, no poison lurks—no bitter remains in the cup raised to our lips; temperance and sobriety ensure us peaceful slumbers, and we rise with fresh strength both of mind and body. The sun awakes us not shining through gilt lattices but it darts its first beams through the vivid foliage of surrounding trees; it revives us by perfumes exhaled from the wild flowers scattered in profusion over these hills and valleys; and the native warblers of these woods delight our senses more with their untaught harmony, than the most studied strains could do in peopled cities.—Oh, don Juan!” continued the prince, “could I partake this blessed life with my beloved Cava—could I, in these wilds, enjoy her dear society, all my wishes would then be bounded by the circle of these mountains; never should I wish to set my foot beyond them; here would be my rest on earth—here my paradise.”

Don Juan allowed the prince to finish his rhapsody, and then calmly said—“Noble Alonzo, no man pities your sorrows and your hopeless love, more than I do; but I hope your mind is too strong to sink into weakness. Men like you are born to be of use to society; to protect, revenge, or reform their country; not to sink indolently into the lap of pleasure or of love. Remember that don Palayo is rising in fame, while you lose yourself in vain desires. We have still far to travel; other thoughts must employ your mind during our course. You must be sensible, my friend, that your task is arduous; we have not only to join don Palayo—we must convince him of our sincerity in the cause of Spain, before we can expect him to receive us as friends. He may suppose we come to betray him into the hands of the Moors; and notwithstanding his former friendship with you at the court of Toledo, knowing you espoused the cause of count Julian, he may doubt the sincerity of your present actions, without you can give him undeniable proof that you will join him heart and hand, for the deliverance of your common country.”

“Unfortunate as I am,” answered the prince, “what proof shall I give him that will satisfy his prudent and cautious nature?” then musing for some minutes, he proceeded—“Don Palayo is just, is noble; he knew me well; we lived in as much intimacy as the bustle of a court would allow: he also was acquainted with my love for Cava—Favilla, his charming sister, was our mutual confidant; to her I will first make myself known—she will stand between me and her brother—she will be the pledge of my honour: love, revenge, raised my arm, unwillingly, against my country; her gentle nature will pity and excuse the deed—she will not suffer her brother to look upon me as a traitor.”

“With all my soul,” replied don Juan, “I hope we may again behold the charming Favilla; but where she is I know not; I doubt her being with her brother, and

I am certain she did not remain with the unhappy queen. Don Palayo, fearing that her extreme beauty might prove fatal to her, by rendering her an object of attention to the Moors, carried her with him in his flight; but what has become of her since is uncertain: many rumours have gone abroad respecting her; some say she is married to a noble Moor—others, to a Christian of inferior rank; and some believe that her brother has hid her in a cave in Biscay, to secure her for the duke Alphonso, her lover and his friend. Nothing of all this, however, may be true; false rumours are every where abroad, and I have seen no one who could give me any certain account of her since she left Toledo; at all events, it was happy for her to have left that ill-fated town; for an old shepherd, who has just returned to the mountains, assured me last night, that Egilone the queen, and all her ladies, have been made prisoners by Abdalesis, the son of Musa, and of course they are his slaves.”

Alonzo started at the name of Egilone; he thought of her many charming qualities—of her friendship—her kindness—her love for him and Cava; and a shower of tears fell from his eyes at her unhappy fate.

Many weeks were Alonzo and don Juan in the mountains with their little band; their course was circuitous; and often were they under the necessity of returning for leagues over those tracts they had already passed, to avoid falling in with the Moors, and becoming subject to their inspection; for now the Infidels watched, as carefully as they were able, all those Spaniards who appeared to travel towards the north, and whom they could suspect of a wish to join don Palayo. The Moors feared nothing in Spain but that prince, for they found themselves under the necessity of leaving him and his adherents, for the present, unmolested in the Asturias. It was now the only part of that delicious country not subject to the Moors.

Alonzo and his followers having wandered about in various directions for a great length of time, and living, as we have said, with the quiet inhabitants of the woods and mountains, and adding many a brave youth to their little troop, they still advanced towards the Asturias, and looked forward to join, in a few days, the gallant don Palayo.

One fine evening, after a painful march of many hours, they arrived, weary and half-famished, at a cot on the mountains, where they had hoped to rest for the night. The sun had not yet sunk beneath the western hills—it still tinged their tops with its bright beams, when a young Spaniard entered the humble abode—terror and distress were visible in his countenance; and on seeing an armed party occupy his father’s dwelling, he appeared still in more violent agitation, and wringing his hands, he exclaimed—“Then it is all over with us! not even these wilds can protect their miserable inhabitants!” He looked anxiously around, and prepared to fly; Alonzo saw the motion, and laying his hand on his arm, arrested his course, assuring him he had nothing to fear—that they were Christians, and his friends—that they intended to repose that night under his father’s roof, and would protect them, at every hazard, from any danger that might threaten them: the young man, assured also by his father of the truth of Alonzo’s words, grew more composed; and being much exhausted, begged to be allowed some refreshment, before he informed them of what had so greatly alarmed him. Having, with those in the cot, partaken of the simple fare the old shepherd had spread before his guests, he was soon in a condition to relate what he had been a witness to.

“I was,” said the young man, “this morning, some leagues from hence, driving to their pasture cattle belonging to my father, when I was alarmed by warlike sounds coming from the other side of the hill on which I stood: desirous of knowing the cause of so dreadful a din in these peaceful regions, I stopt not till I gained the top of the

hill;—judge of my surprise, when I saw a dreadful conflict was going on between two parties of armed men. I at first took them to be Moors and Christians; I soon perceived there were but few Infidels, and they belonged only to one of the parties, both of which appeared to me to be commanded by Christians. A brave and gallant gentleman commanded the smallest party. Almost double his number was headed by a hideous monster, who seemed scarcely human; he fought with the strength and savageness of a brute, and was, unfortunately, conqueror—he left the brave young nobleman (for such I believe he was that headed the adverse party) dead on the field of battle: the conflict was short, but violent while it lasted, and many fell on both sides: at last, the brute whom I have already mentioned seized on a lovely young female, for whom he seemed to have fought, and placing her on a horse before one of his men, pointed the road he was to take, and prepared with those of his party who had survived to follow him. His antagonists had all fled when their leader fell. The lady, who seemed, during the battle, to suffer the most violent agonies, was now insensible to every thing; she neither sighed nor lamented; had not the man into whose care she was given supported her, she must have fallen from the horse.”

“And who is she? and where have they carried her?” cried Alonzo, starting from the bench on which he had thrown himself, to listen to the shepherd’s tale.

“I know not who the lady is,” answered the young man, “but from her appearance and dress, she must be some high and great lady; and I am sure she is the most beautiful creature my eyes ever saw; for they rode near where I was standing, and although I had a dread of the soldiers, I could not but stop to look at her; her veil had fallen to the ground—her beautiful head hung over the Moor’s arm that carried her—she looked quite dead—her eyes were shut—her fine long hair had got loose, and hung down almost to the ground—her arm, as it lay on the horse’s neck, appeared to me like marble; I cried for very pity of the sweet creature, and I could not help thinking if the fine young man that was killed was her lover, she would be happy never to open her eyes again.”

The shepherd was proceeding in his story, when Alonzo (whose thoughts for ever ran on Cava, and who was now perfectly convinced this unfortunate lady was no other than her, and that Garcia was the person killed in her defence,) demanded, with vehemence, where they had carried the lady, for he would follow the monsters to the end of the world, and sacrifice them to his fury?

The young countryman answered, he knew not the name of the castle where the lady was confined, but he had made himself acquainted with its situation, for pity and curiosity had led him to follow the troop that carried her off, and that some leagues from where they now were, they had entered a wild and inhospitable dell, between two rugged mountains, in which was a strong old castle, half of it in decay, the part that remained entire well secured by a drawbridge, and strong iron gates: “Into this melancholy place,” said the shepherd, “they carried the lady; and two or three remaining to close the heavy gates, observed me following, and gazing at them in astonishment—I heartily pitied the poor lady, and I suppose they suspected me for marking their abode, and feared I might make a discovery of their wicked actions—for one of the men, who had not dismounted, abused me violently for prying into what I had no concern with, and rode out of the castle-court in order to pursue me; but aware of his design, I took to flight, and being swift of foot, I soon got into a track on the mountains, where it was impossible for a horse to follow me; in this manner I made my escape; and for some hours, I may with truth say, I have scarcely stopped to take a breath; it appeared to me that the whole gang were at my heels; and, pardon me, noble signor, that when I entered here, I took you and your comrades for some of the

party: thank Heaven that I was mistaken, and that I find a protector where I feared an enemy.”

Don Alonzo and don Juan were much pleased with the good sense and natural politeness of the young shepherd; and Alonzo, who had determined to release the fair unknown from her captivity, (for he was still possessed with the idea that she was Cava,) asked the shepherd to accompany him to the mountain he had mentioned, from whence they could see the situation of the castle.

The young rustic gladly undertook to be his guide, but advised their delaying their journey till the moon rose.—“We have,” said he, “a long way to get to the top of the mountain, from whence we can have a view of the castle, and the dreary valley in which it is built. If you have a wish to attack it,” added the youth, “you cannot well do it by force—stratagem only will succeed; and if you are anxious to rescue the unhappy lady confined there, I can shew you some caverns in the mountains near the castle, where you may conceal yourselves during the day, and lay your plans in what manner to surprise the fortress. I saw them mount a strong guard before I left the place.”

Alonzo, charmed with the youth, entreated the old shepherd, as he had more sons, to spare him this one; he promised to protect him; and if he was himself successful, to make the boy’s fortune. Old Pedro, delighted with the kindness and condescension of his noble guest, could not refuse to the entreaties of his son his leave to follow such a master.

Don Juan, though he much doubted the fair unknown being Cava, was unwilling to thwart Alonzo in his wish of rescuing one in distress; stopping in their journey for a few days was of little consequence; he might, by doing so, relieve the unhappy; and to a good mind, even the chance was gratifying. Don Juan also wished to inure the little troop under their command to the dangers of war, and prove their courage, before they should join don Palayo. He therefore readily acquiesced in Alonzo’s proposal; and handsomely rewarding the old shepherd for their entertainment, as soon as the moon was sufficiently risen to light them through the intricate paths of the mountains, escorted by their youthful guide, Alonzo and don Juan, with their followers, took their way towards the melancholy valley; and before the dawn, they beheld from the hills the towers of the castle in which was confined the fair unknown—it was “a dreary habitation, waste and wild.”

### CHAP. III.

GENTLE reader, if you feel the smallest anxiety for the heroine of this true history—if I have been able, in any degree, to interest you for the innocent victim of the base and tyrannical Rodrigo, I am fearful of your displeasure for our having so long lost sight of her: I hear you say—“Why does this compiler of scraps of history—this story-teller—this inventor of stuff and nonsense, take so many round-about ways to tell her tale? We have scarcely got acquainted with her heroes and heroines, when she sends them rambling all over the face of the globe, and renders it extremely troublesome to follow them; and as to Cava, she certainly has been drowned: we have as little hope of finding her as Alonzo has; so lay aside the book—it is not worth finishing.”

Stop, my good friends; I smile at your displeasure; your anger gratifies me—you flatter my vanity: was my tale as dull as I dreaded your finding, you would not have wished to know any thing more of my heroine, but, with a yawn, have desired the footman to take those stupid volumes back to the circulating library, and bring something more entertaining. Not having hurt the very sensitive and delicate feelings of an author by such conduct as this, she assures you she will gratify your curiosity to the utmost of her power—make the most diligent search for her heroine—and, in as laconic a manner as is consistent with the gravity of history, bring you to the sequel of her story, provided you can defy the power with Morpheus while you peruse the following pages.

It has already been related, that the princess Cava, and Garcia, her faithful friend and servant, left Africa on a fine night, with a fair wind, and every prospect of a quick and happy voyage. Seated in the most commodious part of the galley, and surrounded with all that could render her stay on board it comfortable, Cava, after the first shock was sustained of quitting a country for ever, so endeared to her as Africa was, turned her thoughts to the faint hope she yet had of again embracing her father; this was the only joy she anxiously looked to on this side heaven—“And yet,” she mentally said, “the meeting cannot be without alloy;—I must tear myself even from this dear father, and seclude myself from the world: in perfect retirement only can my mind recover its lost peace.”

Many hours of the night had passed, not only in repose, but contemplation sometimes so profound, that the princess heeded not the noise that, towards morning, proceeded from every part of the gallery, or the confusion and hurry that prevailed among the mariners. At length roused by the violent motion of the vessel, and the bellowing of the winds, she sent for Garcia, to know how soon they might hope to land in Spain?

“Alas, my princess,” cried the faithful Garcia, “the wished-for coast of Spain is flying from us; the gale is so tremendous, it has, in spite of all our efforts, blown us through the pillars of Hercules; it was impossible to make the coast either of Spain or Africa; and now we have only to yield to the violence of this dreadful hurricane, and as we are in the open sea, we must run before the wind, and trust in Heaven for our safety.”

“Alas! Garcia,” replied the princess, “misfortune pursues me; yet I fear not for myself—death will, at any time, be welcome to me; but I grieve to have involved you in my unhappy fate.”

Garcia appeared deeply distressed, and ever terrified by the danger they were in: he started in horror as the sails were rent asunder—as the galley laboured through the waves, he expected it to go to pieces. Cava perceived the terror and anxiety of his countenance, and cried—“You, Garcia, are happy; you have something to live for—an affectionate wife, a lovely child, render this earth to you a blessed abode—you dread to quit a world they render delightful; and this, Garcia, enervates your mind, and sinks your brave heart to cowardice. Garcia, you behold me a woman, and a weak one; I am wretched; I have bid adieu to happiness here; and a removal from this world of misery has no terrors for me; I can hear the tempest unmoved—the raging of these billows appals me not; I have nothing to lose—nothing to hope; and my courage increases with danger. Let us, Garcia, endeavour to inspire the mariners with hope, let us endeavour to save the vessel, and all the unfortunate creatures that are on board: should they see you in despair, their courage will fail, and that may be fatal.”

Garcia, as she spoke, stood in amaze at the fearless soul which inhabited so frail and delicate a form; he himself felt her superior genius, and the truth of her words; he followed her to the deck, where she stood encouraging the crew, and promising rewards to every man who should exert himself, and do his duty to the utmost. Three days and three nights they were tossed on the enraged deep; dreadful peals of thunder broke over the galley—the vivid lightning flashed across the deck, and more plainly showed the horrors with which they were surrounded. The crew had not a moment for repose; often, overcome by fatigue, they would willingly have abandoned their ungovernable vessel to the fury of the winds and waves, when the presence and the words of Cava has brought them back to their labour. She herself administered to their wants—assisted to prepare refreshment for the exhausted mariners—enchanted them by her humility, and consoled them by her words; they looked on her as their guardian angel, and hope whispered to their hearts that for her sake their lives would be spared.

At length their prayers were heard—their efforts succeeded—the dreadful hurricane subsided; the waves no longer tossed the galley to the clouds, and then sent her almost to the bottom of the deep; the swell gradually lessened, and the motion of the vessel became more steady; the thick fog, which had so long surrounded them, began to clear—the dark and heavy clouds rolled far away, and the blue face of heaven again appeared. Every heart was filled with joy;—but where were they? and to what unknown country might they be driven? As yet the horizon was too much overcast for any thing to be distinctly discerned; but a calm night succeeded; the stars were visible—the moon shewed her silver horns; the grey morning came; the rosy hours unbarred the gates of heaven, and light, celestial light, overspread the dark bosom of the deep; grateful to the wearied mariner was the promise of a glorious day!—even Cava’s heart dilated with pleasure; she saw those around her happy, and she rejoiced in the felicity of her fellow-creatures. Misfortunes had had a salutary effort on her mind—it had not been able to sour it: she was devoid of envy, and the woe that she had felt had softened her heart, strengthened her mind, exalted her understanding, and was gradually raising her to a level with angels.

A cursory view of the griefs, the miseries, the misfortunes that “flesh is heir to,” is sufficient to strike with horror the boldest adventurer on the stage of life: the human mind sickens at the sad survey, and recoils in terror from the path that an earthly being is doomed to tread;—yet my fair, my young readers, still uncorrupted by the world, still new to its enchantments and its sorrows, be not dismayed by the ills that you may meet; start not at the gloomy path you are too sure to tread; where sunshine is momentary—where the brightest prospects soonest fade—where, as your

steps sometimes lead you through a delicious valley, and your feet press the fragrant flowers, whose perfume charms you, concealed adders sting you to the soul, and poison all your joy: reflection will tell you (but can a young mind reflect?) that it is good to be afflicted—that a human being, living a life only of continued happiness, would sink almost to the level of brutes: an uninterrupted tide of prosperity, the complete gratification of every desire, would render him proud, unfeeling, selfish, to the utmost degree. How could the being who never suffered sorrow feel for the griefs of others? apathy would soon succeed to perpetual pleasure, and every enjoyment would pall the sickly appetite: like stagnant waters that become corrupt for want of a tempest to sweep their surface, with an enervated mind and a palsied understanding, regretting life and unfit to die, he would sink into the grave, useless in life, and in death leaving no bright example of one bearing with patience and humility the woes which an all-wise and all-powerful Being has imposed on the greatest part of mankind, that he may reward them with eternal happiness hereafter. A celebrated divine has said, in one of his excellent discourses—“It is not altogether unworthy of observation, that afflictions have a tendency to improve, not only a man’s moral disposition, but his natural abilities, his sentiments, his expressions, his thoughts, and his style: when afflictions produce such effects, they change their nature; and whatever we may suffer, we must look upon them ultimately as blessings; for is not that a blessing to man, that can mend the genius and improve the heart?”

Let the reader excuse me if this digression tires. The gay, the thoughtless, and the happy, will, perhaps, pass over these pages, confident they shall escape those sorrows not yet fallen to their lot: the unhappy will, we trust, confess—“It is good for me that I have been afflicted.”

But we must now look towards the galley that carries Cava, Garcia, and their wearied crew, through an unknown sea, for then little was known of the vast Atlantic, on which they were now forced. Their pilot was unacquainted with his course, or where, or to what port he should be able to steer. At length mid-day brought comfort; the sea ceased to roar—the winds gently filled their sails—and as the mists cleared from off the horizon, they saw, with delight, that they were not many leagues from land; but no mariner on board could give it any name; they had never even heard of the Fortunate Islands, and towards them they were now steering.

Evening was fast coming on, when the galley safely anchored in a small and commodious bay, on the western coast of a beautiful island. After their hardships on the ocean, they were gratified with the sight of a picturesque country, verdant even to the sandy beach, and, in many places, wooded to the very edge of the water; gently rising hills were covered with the habitations of men; and magnificent mountains rose in the centre of this terrestrial paradise; the setting sun, glowing with its brightest tints, illumined every object; and as Cava viewed from the deck of the galley the enchanting scene that presented itself, she raised her heart, in praise and admiration, to that Almighty Power who had formed his works so wondrous fair.—“Man,” she mentally said, “perverts those blessings that are so amply bestowed upon him;—he turns them all to curses, and fills this beautiful, this wondrous world, with rapine, murder, and devastation: formed in the likeness of angels, he treads only in the steps of fallen ones, and surpasses them in ingratitude and disobedience to his great Creator.”

Cava had no long time allowed her to continue her reflections; many of the natives of the country flocked to the shore, on the galley’s casting anchor; and their gestures expressed that they would oppose their landing. This was a great distress to the Spaniards; they were in want of many things—of water in particular, and their

provisions were very scanty; they also feared the vessel was leaky; and if they were not permitted to land and refit, their chance of getting safely back to Spain was uncertain. As the natives approached, every lure was held out to them to tempt them to the ship, from which the crew could almost step upon the beach. Some of the islanders, more curious than the rest, plunged into the water, and swimming round the vessel, seemed pleased that they were unmolested by the crew. The savages, for such they were when compared with the Spaniards, appeared a harmless unoffending race, and more afraid of ill-treatment from the new-comers, than willing to shew them any; and on a little skiff approaching the galley, with two men in it, Garcia calling to them to come near, and offering them some trifles to allure them, they came under the head of the galley, and shewing some surprise when the men on board spoke to them, they instantly bore away for the land; but in a short time returned with a third man, and getting as close as possible to the vessel, the stranger asked, in good Spanish, who they were, and from what country they had come?

The amazement of the crew was great on hearing their own language spoken on this distant coast; and entreating him who spoke to come on board, he willingly obeyed them; and though in a rude and uncouth dress, and greatly darkened in his complexion by a hot climate, they instantly perceived he was a Spaniard; and don Garcia coming towards him, informed him from whence they came, who they were, and in what manner they had been driven on that island: he then requested leave to land, and refit his galley.

The stranger stood with his eyes rivetted on Garcia while he spoke. He seemed much agitated, and, for some moments, as if he doubted what his answer should be; his countenance expressed pleasure and astonishment, but he seemed afraid to give utterance to his thoughts. Cava approached him to second Garcia's request; but on coming near the stranger, she started, and exclaimed—"Is Alvarez alive, and in this unknown region!"

"Oh, lovely princess!" cried the stranger, throwing himself at Cava's feet, "you do indeed see before you the banished, cruelly-used Alvarez, the victim of Rodrigo's hatred, driven from my native home by the fury of the tyrant, because I saved from his gripe an amiable family he had sworn to ruin. Flying from Spain, accompanied by my wife, like you I was forced by shipwreck on this island, and for four years it has been my happy abode. I am rejoiced, my princess, that I am now enabled to render you some service; I have great power over the islanders; and here you shall have every comfort that this uncivilized country can give: here, lady, if you find not a court, neither will you find deceit; your welcome to my hut will be sincere; and if I know the heart of the princess Cava, she will not despise Alvarez, because the cruelty of an ungrateful king stript him of his titles and his fortune, and sent him to inhabit a distant land, and mix with savages."

Alvarez, irritated by the remembrance of the past, would, for a longer time, have continued his abuse of Rodrigo; but Cava, who shuddered at the sound of his name, stopt him short by taking his hand, and expressing her pleasure at again beholding one she much esteemed, and had believed dead. She presented Garcia to him as her friend; they had never been acquainted; but Alvarez knew who he was, and had recognised his person when he first entered the galley.

Every thing was soon adjusted between the crew and the islanders: these innocent people seemed to be completely under the controul of Alvarez. The vessel was soon supplied with all the island could afford to satisfy its wants; and every thing that could be spared on board, was, by Garcia's orders, freely given to the islanders. A friendly compact was immediately entered into, and never infringed.

Cava and Garcia followed Alvarez to his habitation, where they found his charming wife, and his little son, of three years old. Fulvia, a lovely woman, descended from a Roman family, had been married to Alvarez about six years, and had followed his fortunes, without a murmur at her wayward and singular fate; her health was good, her sprightliness unabated, and her manners charming, notwithstanding that both she and Alvarez, by living so long among an uncultivated and savage people, had contracted a little degree of wildness, both in their manners and conversation; it even rendered them more interesting.

Fulvia was the delight, the comfort, the happiness of her husband; his wishes were a law to her; to gratify him, to render his home a paradise, was her continual study: and their home was a paradise; nature had been lavish in her bounty—never was there a more beautiful solitude. At some distance from the coast, but in view of the vast Atlantic, Alvarez had erected his spacious and rural mansion; it was composed of rustic materials, such as the country afforded, and he could procure. It was a low wooden building, all on the ground, and divided into several chambers. A mountain, covered with trees of various sorts, mixed with the olive and the vine, rose behind, and gave shelter and coolness to the habitation of Alvarez. To the right a broad stream rolled its pure waters to the sea; and to the left a lovely valley, where flocks and herds seemed to roam at large, lay in view; all around was beautiful, was wild, was enchanting; no words can give so true an idea of the spot, as those which Rousseau has thought worthy to quote:—

“Qui non palazzi, non teatro o loggia,  
Ma'n lor vace un abeto, un faggio, un pino,  
Tra'l erba verde e'l bel monte vicino,  
Levan di terra al ciel nostr' intelletto.”

Almost hid by the orange tree, the citron, and the myrtle, that grew in wild luxuriance round it, lay the mansion of Alvarez, to which he led the princess and Garcia: Cava trod the path that wound to it in silent amazement, and she thought that “paradise was opened in the wild.” Alvarez smiled at her surprise, and turning towards her, said—“Princess, no treachery dwells here; if we are banished the pleasures of a court, we have also bid adieu to its vices: sincerity is in our hearts—truth on our lips—and peace and security dwell in our woods. Welcome, dearest lady,” cried he, with ardour; “could you be tempted to remain with true friends, in this delightful solitude, you would, perhaps, not long remember the beauties of Toledo. Here you will, at every step, trace the unnumbered beauties of nature through all its variations: your mind, expanded and exalted by such a study, will only remember with pity the creatures of a court, and rejoice in emancipation from the splendid slavery.”

Alvarez, warmed by the subject, and severely feeling the injustice that had thrown him at a distance from civilized society, continued to expatiate eloquently on the pleasures to be found in his beautiful solitude. Cava listened with attention; the remembrance of Toledo was sad; and she began to consider whether she should not do wisely in accepting the invitation of the friendly Alvarez.

Just as they arrived at the rural mansion, Fulvia had flown to meet her husband, as was her custom, when he was long absent from home; tenderness, anxiety, and surprise, were painted in her charming face, as she approached, and beheld two strangers. Alvarez soon explained who they were, and how they had been driven on the island. With the utmost courtesy and sweetness, Fulvia received and welcomed her new guests; and taking Cava by the hand, led her to the house,

saying—“Accept, I beseech you, dearest lady, all that this humble roof can afford. I should rejoice at the accident that has thrown you on these shores, did I not see you look so weary and so unhappy: you must take some refreshment, and then try to find repose.”

Cava gazed on Fulvia; the tears streamed down her cheeks; she had seen her often in Rodrigo’s court, though they were not acquainted; and the remembrance of the past struck so forcibly on her heart, that she could not suppress her feelings; but throwing herself on Fulvia’s neck, she tenderly embraced her, crying—“And do we meet thus, Fulvia? is the happiness we both enjoyed at Toledo fled for ever?”

“No,” answered Fulvia; “happiness can never entirely forsake the virtuous;—but we will discuss this topic another time, my princess—now you stand in need of sleep and quiet.”

Cava, ashamed of the weakness that had overcome her, smiled through her tears, pressed the kind hand that offered her refreshment; and soon, in the apartment of Fulvia, sunk to rest on a luxurious couch prepared for her by her charming hostess.

While all this passed in the inner apartment, Alvarez and Garcia, left to themselves, conversed unrestrained. Alvarez heard with wonder the transactions in Spain since his departure, for he was ignorant of the war, of the defeat and death of Rodrigo, and the conquest of the Moors: the heart of Alvarez was good, his nature mild; he triumphed not over a fallen enemy, though he thought he well deserved his fate; and he entreated Garcia to relate to him every circumstance within his recollection that had occurred since his exile. Fulvia soon joined them, and heard with wonder all that Garcia told. Many were the friends whose fate they had to deplore; and Garcia was ignorant of what had befallen many whose situation they anxiously wished to ascertain. Don Palayo was well known to them; he was distantly related to Fulvia; and she and her husband rejoiced at his safety, and that he had placed himself at the head of the Christians who were determined to oppose the Moors.—“If I ever,” cried Alvarez, “revisit Spain, it shall be to join my brave countryman in his endeavours to wrest our native land from the Infidels.”

Garcia, highly pleased with his enthusiasm, and anxious to draw Alvarez and his family from the solitude he seemed attached to, gave him hopes that all would yet be well; and as Rodrigo was now no more, advised him to return with him and the princess to his native country, assuring him that their intention was to repair to don Palayo, and share his fate, let it be what it would.

Alvarez was thoughtful; he had lived in the world; he knew it well: sorrow and misfortune had overtaken him: he had been persecuted by those he thought his friends; he had escaped their snares; he saw himself happy; a beloved wife—a lovely infant partook this happiness. He might be said to reign over an innocent though uncivilized people, in a country where bounteous Nature had given almost all that was necessary to man. He looked around, and saw scarcely a wish ungratified; the ship which had stranded him on the coast, had not left him there desolate; a male and female attendant were also saved; and every thing which the vessel contained had been secured for his use by the harmless natives, who, expert at swimming and diving, let nothing of the wreck be lost, not even the planks of the vessel, which were afterwards of the utmost use to Alvarez in the construction of his house. Some time after his landing, in the middle of the night, a vessel was driven on the coast, without a soul on board; it appeared to have been from Italy, and was laden with almost every thing Alvarez or Fulvia could have desired; different articles of furniture, wearing apparel, utensils of various sorts, and a quantity of provisions, some that would keep for years. Alvarez and the charming Fulvia thanked, with grateful hearts, that

Providence who dropped manna in their wilderness; and from that moment no word of discontent ever escaped their lips.

Having chosen the most commodious and lovely spot in the island for their habitation, assisted by their domestics and some of the islanders, whom they found extremely docile, they constructed a simple and completely comfortable abode: Fortune had thrown riches and luxuries on their shores; and they secured from both the wrecks, to fit up the inside of the dwelling, with a comfort and elegance almost unknown in populous towns. Little trouble was necessary for their support; every thing was in profusion; the rivers and the sea supplied them with the finest fish—the natives brought it in abundance; and almost every thing the earth and air could produce was at their command. The lemon, the orange, the citron, and the most luscious grapes, loaded their board: every perfume that such a climate produces, scattered by gentle zephyrs, regaled their senses; the glowing flowering shrubs that surrounded their dwelling, the verdant meadows, enamelled with wild flowers, charmed them with their beauty; and the cheerful carrol of the birds, that from “morn till dewy eve,” poured their wood-notes wild, was a finer concert than art could produce: nothing here was wanting but the society of civilized man; and in what region under heaven can a sensible and refined being long enjoy solitary happiness? deprived of sense soon fail to please; the paradise before him by degrees appears a desert; he hears no more the music of the groves—the flowers scattered in his path shed their fragrance unheeded—the brilliant day brings no delight—the close of evening fills his heart with despondency; the mind flies back to lost society—to those hours that gave happiness in a less beautiful country, under, perhaps, a frowning sky, and in a rugged soil; for there, assembled round the blazing hearth, or at the social board, mind met mind, thoughts, feelings, hopes and fears, were all communicated; and the interest that the society of human beings like himself, inspired, added zest to pleasure, and soothed the sorrows that human nature is doomed to feel. Oh! sweet society of kindred minds! how delightful the reflection on thy pleasures long gone by! how fascinating those of the present hour!—how fondly looked to those of the future day! May he who can truly feel the gratification thou givest, never be driven from the society of man, by misfortune, or penury! Alas! how vain the wish! how many perish unknown, and unregarded! how sink unnoticed into obscurity, who would adorn the highest ranks in life—who, did not fortune frown, would scatter blessings round, and be themselves the charm of refined society!

“Full many a gem, of purest ray serene,  
The dark unfathom’d caves of ocean bear;  
Full many a flow’r was born to blush unseen.  
And waste its sweetness on the desert air.”

So lost in their beautiful island was Alvarez and Fulvia; they had already felt that though happy in each other, so solitary a life was irksome; and at the time of Cava’s arrival, they cast many an anxious thought towards Spain. So truly were they attached, so fondly did they love, that their surprise would have been great, had any one told them they had a wish unsatisfied; and though they sighed to return to their native country, the desire was almost unknown to themselves.

With transport they received their guests, and instantly formed the wish of detaining them in their new world. Novelty is ever seductive; and the princess and Garcia were astonished and delighted at all they beheld in this unknown region. A day or two of repose was sufficient to restore them to health. The fine climate had a

visible effect on Cava; and her friend Garcia saw with joy the roses again faintly appear on her lovely cheeks.

Fulvia watched, with incessant care, her new friend; her fine blue eyes sparkled with pleasure when she saw the princess smile, or when she saw her caress her infant son. This beautiful boy interested Cava; and with him in her hand, or in her arms, she would for hours wander through the charming wilderness that surrounded the habitation of Alvarez. Under a spreading cedar, Fulvia had placed a rustic seat, from whence was seen much of the landscape round; it also had a noble view of the Atlantic: to this spot Cava frequently resorted; here, while the child, playing with the wild flowers she had gathered for him, sat at her feet, would she give every thought of her soul to her Alonzo, and mentally say—"Had fate permitted me to enjoy with my beloved Alonzo the happiness that Fulvia enjoys with her Alvarez, what more could I have desired? thrown on this distant coast, with him it would have been a heaven: crowns and empires would have appeared as nothing in my eyes—'his love my empire, and his heart my throne.'

Thus would Cava spend hours, uninterrupted only by the playfulness of her young companion, who, often quitting his infantine amusement to gaze on her, would, as he beheld a tear steal down her cheek, start from the ground, and throwing himself into her arms, entreat her not to cry so; he would give her all his flowers—he would pull more for her—she should have his bird, the little dog he played with, if she would not cry; then surrounding her ivory neck with his little arms, he would kiss her cheek, and sob himself till she smiled; and often was she obliged to turn comforter, to pacify this charming child, who forced her, by his tenderness and innocent prattle, to forget for a time her sorrows.

Fulvia had household cares to occupy her, and could not always give the time she wished to her interesting guest. The mornings were employed by Alvarez and Garcia in refitting and storing the galley; and Garcia used every argument he believed would avail, to persuade his host to accompany him to Spain. The ruin that had befallen that unhappy country—the loss of friends, of fortune, deterred Alvarez from revisiting it, without he could hope to render it some service; and he meditated writing to don Palayo on the subject, offering to return, could he be useful; and carrying with him all that now remained to him in the universe, his wife and child. Garcia did not combat his intentions, but told him truly that his arm and his counsel would be of the utmost consequence to his prince and to his country.

"Should don Palayo think so," answered Alvarez with dignity, "nothing earthly shall detain me here: assure him I shall obey his orders."

Pleased with this declaration, Garcia was anxious to be again at sea; but he found some time must elapse before all was in readiness for their departure. Alvarez and Fulvia rejoiced at every delay, and only dreaded the losing friends who had rendered the days so delightful that had passed since their arrival. Fulvia was so captivated by the princess, that she felt parting with her would be a real misfortune; and Cava, finding she was recovering some serenity of mind in this delightful retirement, and in the company of beings whose dispositions and understanding suited hers, began seriously to think of bidding adieu for ever to her native country, and remaining on the island with her new friends:—"Here, at least," said she, "I may hope to find some repose; here, if I am distant from those I most love, I shall yet be spared the misery of being a witness of their sorrows, and of the woes I have been unfortunately, though innocently, the cause of bringing on my country." Here she paused; the good Anselmo, the friend of her early youth—her dear Favilla—the kind, the lovely Zamora—her father—her ever loved Alonzo, rose to view—"And can I

leave you all," she cried, "in a distant land? How have the bands of affection bound you round my heart! can I now tear them asunder? can I willingly relinquish ever seeing you more? what have I not hoped of consolation from the pious converse of Anselmo? How would friendship still glow in my bosom, while I strained to it my Favilla, of whose fate I am ignorant! how would even my sad heart rejoice, could I behold the dear Zamora happy with her noble Moor! My father too, my dear, my honoured father, what balm, what consolation would be poured into my soul, could he once more bless his child! And last, my faithful, my still tenderly remembered Alonzo, though I wish not again to behold you, yet to know that you exist, to live in the country you inhabit, to hear of your virtues and your welfare, is so essential to my peace of mind, that I cannot resist the impulse which draws me back to Spain."

Many were the combats in the mind of the princess, and often did her opinions change; too unhappy to hope for comfort any where, she laid aside all thoughts of continuing on the island. Alonzo, unknown to herself, drew her back to a world at which her heart sickened; he was the magnet that attracted her from the peaceful and charming asylum where her days might have rolled tranquilly on; love, which she vainly imagined she had conquered, was still the tyrant of her fate, still governed her actions, and now determined her return to Spain.

Fulvia heard this determination with sorrow, and was only comforted in the hope that Alvarez would be summoned there by don Palayo. Three months had glided away at the cottage of Alvarez; he and Fulvia had exerted themselves to amuse the princess; their own spirits were exhilarated by again enjoying the society of beings like themselves. Many hours of the morning were given to the inspection of every thing worthy of notice in their beautiful island; and their evenings were spent in sweet and social converse.

But now the day arrived when they were to bid each other adieu; the galley was ready—the wind was fair for Spain; and Garcia announced to the princess that the crew were all on board, and only awaited her arrival to set sail. Fulvia, drowned in tears, embraced her friend, who, grateful for the tender welcome she had found, returned all her affection; and pressing the little Alvarez to her bosom, and imprinting a thousand kisses on his smiling face, would not part with him till she ascended the vessel. Alvarez attended her to the shore; he committed a letter to Garcia's care for don Palayo, and in sorrowful silence assisting the princess on board, and receiving from her arms his infant son, he and Fulvia remained on the shore, their eyes fixed on the galley, and making signs to their friends, till it was impossible to discern the figures on the deck.

"Farewell, dear Fulvia," cried Cava, as she leaned over the side of the vessel that bore her from the island; "farewell, noble and ill-used Alvarez! you have found a happy asylum from the power of a tyrant: I must find mine in the peaceful grave."

We must now leave our amiable islanders to return to their home, sorrowful for the loss of the society they had enjoyed, and meditating their own departure for Spain, should don Palayo wish their return.

Cava, again launched on the bosom of the deep, turned her thoughts to all she held most dear. Wishing her a prosperous voyage, we shall put an end to this chapter, hoping the reader will not find it as great a labour to get to the end as we have done: should it so happen, we fear he will not take the trouble of inquiring what may befall our heroine on her return to Spain.

#### CHAP. IV.

BEFORE we proceed further in our story, we think it our duty, as our aim is instruction, to apprise our fair readers of what perhaps they may be ignorant of, that all those of our calling, that is, all romance and novel-writers, have a familiar, or an attendant spirit, invisible to every one but themselves; and this spirit is as much under the command of the writer, as if he or she was in possession of Solomon's seal; it flies at a nod from north to south, from east to west; at a bidding it darkens the day, or illumines the night; builds castles in a trice, where no human art could raise one, and demolishes them as soon; secures a prison, or opens it at command; raises a tempest; rolls the thunder over your head, or fans you with a gentle zephyr wafted from the spicy groves of Arabia: but its chief business is to keep ready saddled and accoutred, a horse more wonderful than the wondrous horse of brass which the enchanter brought to the court of king Cambuscan; this horse, Chaucer tells us, would not stir a step, without you turned a peg that was stuck in his forehead, though by directing the peg, he would carry you to the world's end if you pleased. Now our horse gives no such trouble; our familiar has him ready in the twinkling of an eye—we mount and dismount at our pleasure, and without the trouble of speaking or acting—we just think what we wish him to do, and he does it, and without the smallest fatigue carries us not only to and fro on the earth, and round about it, but out of it, if so be our pleasure. We have known him, after a long and wearisome day's journey, gallop to the moon and back again before bedtime, just to indulge us with a near view of that beautiful planet; for what romance-writer does not wish an intimate acquaintance with her, as she makes so conspicuous a figure in their works?

I see my wondrous horse on the island from whence the Gothic princess has just departed. No vessel now remains on the coast to convey me to Spain; so wishing my heroine a prosperous voyage, as I did in the last chapter, I shall mount my horse, and get as fast as I can to the northern mountains of Spain, and see how Alonzo and his friends have passed the night there, and if they have yet got admittance to the ruined castle. Let my readers be ever so impatient, they shall not accuse me of delay. Here we are in Spain, and yonder is Alonzo and his friends on the barren mountain that overlooks the castle, and it is not yet clear day. On the barren mountain! Yes, there the prince stands, talking to the young shepherd, and reconnoitring the castle, don Juan and the faithful Velasquez at his side, and his little troop, composed of brave spirits, impatient to be employed.—“There,” cried the shepherd, “is the cursed old ruin under that horrible mountain; they say all the fiends of hell dance through it the whole night, and that their music is their own hideous yells, which I have been assured, can, in a gloomy winter's night, be heard three leagues off, if not further: what a place to confine the sweet lady in! if she should see a ghost there, she will certainly die of the fright.”

Alonzo, though sad, could not help smiling at the simple youth's fear of spirits; and told him he would stake his life, nothing but what was flesh and blood was to be found in that castle.

“May be so,” answered Pedro; “you are wiser than I am; but this I know, I would not enter it alone for the whole world.”

“Were you ever there in company?” asked don Juan.

“Yes, I was there one fine bright scorching day, with two or three of the shepherds; we went to sell some fowls to the old witch that keeps it.”

“And what did you see in it?” asked Alonzo.

“Passages as dark and gloomy as the way to hell; a great old wild chapel, hung round with saints, who, from what we are told, cannot prevent the devil shewing his cloven foot there. In the back part of the castle,” continued he, “there are some fine rooms, with rich strange-fashioned furniture in them; the old witch brought us through them, as she led us into the garden which lies at the back of the building, and where she chose to keep the fine fowl she had bought of us: but for all the grandeur of these rooms, I would sooner live in my father’s poor cot, than in so gloomy a place.”

It now struck Alonzo that he might be able to gain admission through the garden to the apartments Pedro spoke of, and where he supposed the lady that had been carried off was confined. He inquired how he could reach the garden?

“No way, I believe,” answered Pedro, “but through the accursed mansion; for there is a very high wall all round the garden, and a deep river runs between it and the mountain yonder, that looks as if it was going to tumble on the old castle, and finish it; and if all good Christians were fairly out of it, I wish the mountain would come down and crush it to atoms.”

“It would not destroy the beauty of the country, should it do so,” replied Velasquez: “but I think,” said he to Alonzo, “we had best examine the place before the daylight exposes us to the view of the guard;—perhaps we may find some weak part which we can attack, and be able to carry the castle, sword in hand, before they suspect an enemy near.”

“That you will not be able to do,” answered Pedro; “I promise you, that ruined as the castle appears, the walls and gates are much too strong to be forced by the handful of men that you have with you; besides, there is within the castle double your number—I saw them enter it: and the fear of torture from their wicked leader, should they suffer themselves to be surprised, will cause them to defend it to the last gasp: if you would take the advice of such a fool as I am, you would conceal yourselves in these mountains, till you see and consider what is best to do.”

“You give no proof of folly in your advice, Pedro,” replied Alonzo; “and I will certainly adopt your plan, if we can find any place in these rugged mountains to shelter us.”

“As for that matter, you need not seek long,” said Pedro; “I can shew you a large cavern near the castle, that would contain ten times as many as you have with you;—will you there be free from all danger, if you keep close during the day; at night you may come out of your hole, and prowl about to see what is best to be done. I will bring you food, for I can drive a flock of my father’s sheep about the mountains, without any one noticing me—if they do, I shall just give them a silly answer, talk to my sheep, and play on my pipe as I go along; they will think me a fool, but I hope the tables will be turned, and that we shall make fools of them in the end—indeed it would go well nigh to break my heart, if we cannot get that sweet lady out of the clutches of those live devils, and dead devils, that inhabit the castle.”

Thus Pedro went on; he had natural good sense, great compassion and kindness in his composition; but his superstition was excessive, and he would rather have faced twenty men in battle, than have run the chance of meeting a ghost or evil spirit within the precincts of the castle, where he was persuaded they kept their nightly revels. Alonzo, seeing his understanding was of a superior sort, and his simplicity proceeding only from a contracted education, foresaw he might be of the greatest use to them, and desired he would lead the way to the cavern he had mentioned.

“Then you must march in silence and with caution,” said Pedro, “for you have to go almost round the castle, and very near it also, before you can get to the cavern: I see the day peeping, so make haste.”

He then led the little troop down the mountain and they concealing their arms, and going in very small parties, passed in front, and nearly round the castle, without being noticed by the sleepy guard. Alonzo and his two friends came last, and as they fronted the drawbridge, they perceived that the sentinel was asleep on his post.—“This would be a good time to surprise these vagabonds,” cried Valasquez: “shall I dispatch this fellow, and let down the drawbridge?—what say you, my prince?”

“Not for the world,” cried Alonzo, “would I kill a sleeping wretch; besides we must not be rash; from what Pedro tells us of the strength of this place, and the numbers it contains, I think we cannot be too prudent.”

Don Juan was of the same opinion, and they slowly and quietly passed the castle, carefully examining its outside; part of it was in complete ruin, notwithstanding it was most strongly fortified all round; and it appeared to them impossible it could be reduced but by a large force, were there only a handful of troops within, so easily could it be defended. As they turned round an angle to reach the cavern, they heard the night guard relieved; they soon overtook Pedro and the rest, and congratulated themselves on having passed the fortress unperceived.

On the back of the castle there was no guard; the natural protection was so great, that it was looked on as unnecessary. The garden, as Pedro had said, lay behind, if garden it could be called, which was a flat and melancholy piece of ground, where there still remained some fruit trees, mixed with tall half-blighted forest trees. The walks through the grounds could scarcely now be traced; some parterres, that had once been filled with flowers, looked now like miserable dunghills; and the gloom and dreariness of the place were unparalleled; they could view it through a large iron grating in the wall, which was exceedingly high all round; and close under it, at the back of the garden, ran a rapid river, with scarcely a pathway discernible between it and the wall, which, in many places, the river washed, and appeared a complete defence against an armed force. A huge and rugged mountain rose behind the river, and not many paces from it.

“Did you ever see any thing more horrid and melancholy?” exclaimed Pedro; “we must turn to the right, to get at the cavern I told you of; but I just led you this way,” speaking to Alonzo, “that you might see with your own eyes it is a place certainly inhabited by evil spirits: I think now you wont laugh at me for telling you truth.”

“My good Pedro,” answered Alonzo, “we do not laugh at you; it would be impossible to be merry in such a place as this; I think with you that we have got to the mouth of hell, and that this is absolutely the river Styx; I should scarcely wonder if Charon with his boat appeared ready to ferry us across.”

“I know nothing of Charon or his boat, or whether he carries *sticks* across or not; I only know I never saw a boat on this muddy river in my life; it would be a great deal would tempt me either to sail or swim on it; but, good lord! here is broad daylight—let us get to the rock as fast as we can.”

Alonzo still smiled at Pedro, but took his advice; and all following him, they wound round the base of the mountain they had descended, and at about a quarter of a league from the castle, found the cavern they were in search of; and found it, as Pedro had described it, fit to contain more than their number with the greatest ease: they descended steps, which seemed to have been made by art in the rock; the entrance was not visible, for it was much sunk, and surrounded with cork trees and a great deal of underwood. Pedro desired them to enter, to kindle a fire, and he would soon be back with provisions.

While the soldiers were procuring fuel and lighting a fire, Alonzo, don Juan, and Valasquez, examined the cavern, in which they found many recesses, and in one of them, a number of articles heaped together in confusion.—“This cavern must have been inhabited,” said Alonzo; “here are traces of human beings;” and he drew forth tables, benches, and various utensils, also some carpets, and a number of dark cloaks made in the Spanish fashion.

“Oh,” cried Valasquez, “this must have been the habitation of banditti—here are sabres, and many warlike instruments.”

Glad at what they had discovered, they dragged them all forth, lit their fire, placed their tables, and were not sorry to see Pedro return in about an hour, with two goats and a sheep.

“Here I am,” cried the honest shepherd; “I fancy you are all main hungry; this sheep will satisfy us for this morning—kill and dress it as soon as you can,” addressing some of the troop; “if you are all as hungry as I am, with the labour I have had in driving these poor things over the mountains, you will not be sorry to have your breakfast; but, la!” added he, seeing the different articles they had found in the recess, “what have we here? have the ghosts been so civil to furnish our cavern?”

“No,” said don Juan, “we might have gone without conveniences, had we waited for the ghosts to bring them to us. You don’t consider, Pedro, that ghosts never come in daylight, and it is now an hour past sunrise.”

“I had forgotten that,” answered Pedro; “since it cannot now be a ghost, it must be one of the infernal spirits from the old castle. I fear the evil one has done this, to draw us into some scrape,” and he crossed himself, and began an *Ave Maria*.

“Fear nothing, honest Pedro,” said Alonzo; “while your heart continues as good as it now is, I will secure you against ghosts and hobgoblins: but tell me where you got these goats and the sheep—we must not rob the poor shepherds: I am sorry I did not give you money to pay for our provisions.”

“Money purchase provisions!” cried Pedro; “money is of little use in these mountains: I could have purchased nothing without going some leagues, and I think you would not have liked fasting so long. These goats, that will serve to give us milk, if we take care of them, and that poor sheep, which I hope will soon be ready to satisfy our hunger, belong to my father; you may remember, I told you, last night, he had some flocks and herds in these mountains, of which I had the care, when I saw the sweet lady carried off after the battle; now you know I ran home as if I was mad, for I really thought all the devils in hell were at my heels:” then crossing himself—“but why should I talk of them? they will most certainly appear, if I make so free with them. But to make an end of my story; I must tell you you have no occasion to talk of robbery, or to give me money to pay for these poor things. Just as I was leaving our cot last night, my father called me back, to bid me make use, if you should want them, of every beast belonging to him in these mountains, and said you had paid him ten times the value—that you were a most noble cavalier—and he only prayed he might live to see you once more: so, my good lord, set your heart at rest; you shall have victuals enough while you remain in the mountains; and the most fortunate thing of all is, that I can bring you the provisions you can want, without causing the least suspicion.”

Alonzo was delighted with Pedro; the more he saw of him, the more he admired his understanding and his heart; he shewed no weakness in any thing but his fear of ghosts. “Alas,” said Alonzo, mentally, “how sad a consideration is it, that often, when man is most cultivated, he is most worthless! give him knowledge—refine him—draw forth his talents—let him mix with the world—let him pass

through, for a little, without misfortune treading on his heels, and what does he become? indolent, hard-hearted, unfeeling to all around him, and entirely engrossed by himself, his intercourse with the world gradually shuts his heart to his fellow-creatures; he smiles, indeed, on those he cares not for; he sometimes offers consolation in sweet words, when he sees those distressed to whom he has vainly given the appellation of friends: but touch the man of the world in the least—draw on his feelings—draw on his purse—is it necessary for him to use any exertion to serve you, his energy is gone—he shrinks within his contracted self—you are no longer pleasing to him—ice surrounds him—he freezes you with his looks and polished manners—he tacitly tells you, you annoy him—that the feeling you give him is troublesome, is uncomfortable—and at last he shakes you off entirely: finesse, deceit, and selfishness, are the attendants and the pests of polished society:—how truly is that heart to be valued, which is pure enough to escape their baleful influence! and how much more worthy of my friendship, of my admiration,” cried Alonzo, half aloud, “is this simple guileless shepherd, with his rusticity, and his honest, open, generous heart, than all the polished minions of a court!”

Alonzo’s reflections were interrupted by a summons to breakfast; it was willingly attended to; and he and his friends made an excellent repast, and acknowledged their obligations to Pedro. A pure stream of water, that fell from the mountains close to the cavern, supplied them with a wholesome beverage, and the milk of their goats was by no means unacceptable. During the day, they talked of a thousand schemes to surprise the castle, or to enter it by stealth, but none appeared feasible. Pedro had left the party, to pick up what news he could in the neighbouring mountains and to drive to the cavern some cattle to supply their wants; he had many to feed, and they were not inclined to make slender meals.

The troop had thrown themselves on the ground to take some repose, as they marched all night. Don Juan and Valasquez, rolling round them some of the cloaks they had found in the cavern, followed the example of the men. Alonzo had no inclination to sleep, and, tired of waiting the return of Pedro, he flung a dark mantle over him, which completely concealed his face and person, and issuing from the cavern, near sunset, he ranged the mountains in the direction he knew Pedro would take: he looked towards the castle, and saw the battlements and drawbridge well guarded, and gave a sigh to the impossibility he was certain there must be of forcing the place.

Having walked a good way, he perceived Pedro at some distance, with his supply of provision, seemingly in great haste, and as if he had had a fatiguing day.—“Where have you been, Pedro?” asked the prince.

“An immense way off,” answered the shepherd. “I thought I never should get back in time with these sheep; but I can’t regret any trouble or fatigue that may help to save a good Christian’s life. Let me take breath, noble cavalier, and then I will tell you what I have been about; and if I know you at all, I think you will not be angry at the delay of the sheep.”

Alonzo assured him he never need fear his anger; and the shepherd, nodding his head, and smiling, proceeded thus—“You must know, cavalier, that it came across my mind that, after that sad battle I saw in the valley, some poor creature might be left there for dead that was not quite gone, and I said within myself, ‘I will do as I would be done by, and go and see if I can be of any use.’ I prayed heartily to the saints to protect me from evil spirits; and when I left the cavern, I run as fast across the mountains as my feet would carry me, and as my hearty breakfast would allow me; indeed, I may say I scarcely touched the ground till I was in the valley, though it is

some leagues off. Well, when I got there, I must confess it was a sad sight; some dead bodies were lying above ground, though I saw a great hole where many had been thrown—numbers also had been carried off by their comrades. Well, when I got near the poor souls that lay unburied, behold you, I could not find the least life in any of them—they were all as stiff as a poker, and looking so ghastly, that I almost repented coming among them; but then I thought again, if I did a good action, it would perhaps open the gates of heaven to myself; so I took courage and went on: some lay on their backs and some on their faces, all cut and slashed, and so disfigured, that to see them, my hair stood on end; there were at least a dozen of them (rest their souls!) remaining above ground. Well, when I found I had my journey for nothing, I was hurrying away, when who should I meet but Lopez, a good worthy old shepherd as ever lived, a great friend of my father's; he comes, every year of his life, to spend a week at our cot, and it is always a joyful day when he comes; he is so pleasant, and so jolly, and tells us such merry stories, we are ready to split our sides with laughing."

"Do proceed with your own story, good Pedro," cried the impatient Alonzo, "and tell me if you found life in any of the poor souls; or if the old shepherd gave you any information respecting the unhappy lady that has been carried to the castle—does he know her name, or where she came from?"

Alonzo could not endure the length of the shepherd's tale; he was still prepossessed with the belief that the imprisoned lady was Cava, and the cavalier that had been killed Garcia. Pedro having been stopped in his story, lost the thread of it; he stood stock still for some moments, and then proceeded—"You are right enough; it does not signify to you, cavalier, what sort of humour old Lopez is of, though if you knew him, you would allow you never saw any one half so pleasant, that is, of a poor shepherd—though he is not poor neither; he has a good neat cottage, and a wondrous sight of fine sheep: but to cut my tale short; meeting old Lopez in such a place, was a great comfort to me; I made up to him and told him what I was about.

'I thought so, my good Pedro,' said he, 'but no one here wants our care now, except to hide their poor bodies from the wolves, for who would let a Christian be devoured by them, if they could help it? Two or three good shepherds have promised to assist me to put them, before night, into the ground; will you also stay and assist us?'

'That I cannot do,' cried I; 'I have business for my father that must be done tonight, and that business will carry me far enough off.'

'I am very sorry for it,' answered the old man, 'for I cannot be long from home, and should have been glad of your help tonight. I have a cavalier at my cot that requires all my attention; he alone, of all that remained, has outlived yesterday's sad work: I found him almost breathless, got him carried to my cot, and his wounds bound up. You know,' said the old man, 'I am not a bad doctor, and I think he will do well; for I have excellent herbs and salves to cure him with; so I hope he will not die of his wounds; but, poor gentleman, he has not his senses, so I cannot make out what place he came from, who he is, or how he fell in with the adverse party. He is always raving of the lady he has lost—calls her a princess—and talks to her of their journey and flight; but I can make nothing of what he says: it is a pity of his state, for he is a fine cavalier.'

"Oh!" thought Alonzo, "this must certainly be Garcia; and the princess he raves of is my adored Cava."

Pedro continued.—"Having this from old Lopez, I was very curious to know whether the cavalier who fought so well, and whom I saw fall, was the same that the good-natured Lopez had taken to his cot. I begged him to leave the dead till he could

find time to bury them, and come with me to the cavalier. He did so; and we travelled as fast as his old legs would let him, to that part of the mountain where lies his cot, (as snug a habitation as there is in all Spain—that is, for a shepherd;) there I saw the poor gentleman, not in his senses indeed, and quiet as a lamb, except muttering now and then, between his teeth, words I could not, for the life of me, understand: Lopez's daughter was watching him, and right good care she took of him; and while I was there, they poured some good stuff down his throat, and Dorcas said he had slept a good deal while her father was away; and the old shepherd, examining him, thought he seemed better; for my part, I should have thought him dead, for he looked as pale as a ghost, and seemed to me to have scarcely life in him; but Lopez knows more than I do about murdered folks, so I hope he is not deceived, for most certainly the cavalier is the same that fought so bravely for the lady, and whom I left for dead; I knew him again, the moment I saw him in Lopez's cot."

"Describe him then, for the sake of Heaven!" cried Alonzo.

"I cannot describe him exactly," answered Pedro; "but this I can say, he is a tall handsome man, rather thin, with dark eyes and hair."

"It is certainly Garcia, and my adored Cava is enclosed within these cursed walls! Cannot we go, my good Pedro, to the old shepherd's cottage, and see poor Garcia? perhaps he may recollect me, and be able to tell me all I wish to know."

"It is impossible," replied Pedro, "to venture, at this hour, so far from the cavern; we might miss our way through the mountains; it is very intricate, I assure you, and you would have your labour for your pains. We had best consult how the poor lady can be delivered from her prison."

Alonzo acknowledged Pedro's cool sense and judgment, and walked by his side in silence; when turning a part of the mountain that jutted out, they suddenly met one of the guards of the castle. Pedro retained his presence of mind, and began talking to his sheep; fortunately for Alonzo, the coarse dark cloak he had found in the cavern covered him from head to foot, and muffled him in such a manner, that he did not appear the noble cavalier he was, but a common countryman.

"Good evening," cried the guard; "where are you going, shepherds, at this late hour? the day declines—are you far from home?"

"Farther than I wish," replied Pedro; "I have a league or two yet to get to my cot, and I wish I was there. My brother and I came to look for these wild things, that strayed away from us: he is taken very ill, and I don't know how I shall get them all home."

Alonzo took the hint; he hung his head, and walked heavily on.

"Come to the castle," said the guard, "and we'll buy your sheep, and give your brother a cordial."

"Thank you," cried Pedro, "we cannot stop now; my poor father is at home alone, and will think we are lost in the mountains. These sheep are not fit for you; if you want any, I will bring you better and fatter in the morning."

"Do so," answered the guard; "and if we don't pay you at the time, the governor shall when he comes. The Virgin keep you!" and he passed on.

"Oh you rogue!" cried Pedro, in a whisper; "neither you nor the infamous governor would pay a mite for any thing we could bring you; but, by Saint Issidore! I will be with you to-morrow morning, and try if I can spy out what is going on among you. Could I but see the imprisoned lady, how I should be able to comfort her!" By this time he had got close to Alonzo, and taking him by the arm, he said in a low voice—"Let us direct our course from the cavern, and deceive this fellow—look at him yonder, he has stopt to see what road we take;" then laying hold of the prince, as

if he was assisting him to walk, he drove his sheep on before, and descending the mountain, took a quite contrary direction from their secret abode.

The guard, who was prowling about to watch whoever should approach the castle, gazing after them for a long time, obliged them to go quite out of their course; but they had at last the satisfaction of seeing him bend his steps towards the castle, and passing the drawbridge, enter it.

“Thank the Virgin!” cried Pedro, “the wolf has got at last into his den. You thought to catch us, did you? No, no, my fine fellow; I hope my poor brains will outwit you yet.” Then turning to Alonzo—“We may now safely go back to our fortress, sheep and all; for let the fellow watch us ever so much from the castle, it is now too dark for him to have a glimpse of us, and the moon will not appear till she can be of some use to us.”

Alonzo now mended his pace, praising the adroitness of his companion. He had not till then perceived that Pedro was heavily laden, and that he had something very large strapped to his back.—“What a load you carry, Pedro!” cried Alonzo; “in the name of Heaven, what is all that on your back? I was so wrapt up in my sad thoughts, that I did not see it till this moment.”

The shepherd smiled.—“I hope,” said he, “to make a good use of this for your service; after we have eat something, I will tell you all about it: but we are now near our underground castle—I hope we shall find all well at home.”

Alonzo was obliged to postpone his curiosity; they were at the entrance of the cave; the signal was given, Pedro’s whistle, and in security they entered, sheep and all. They found the little troop in fear and anxious expectation on their account; they were well armed, and ready, with don Juan and Valasquez at their head, to issue forth on the least alarm, to protect Alonzo; and their joy was great at seeing him return in safety.

Don Juan informed him that he and Valasquez had seen through a chasm in the rock that concealed them, some of the castle-guard prowling the mountains, as if they suspected a hidden enemy.—“They were within a few paces,” said Valasquez, “of the cavern; and we heard them plainly say, they supposed, by the delay of the governor’s coming to the castle, he had had hot work on his hands. ‘We shall have it too,’ cried the other, ‘if don Palayo can get at us’—‘What a coward you are!’ said the first who spoke; ‘how will he hear the matter in any time to be of use to him? the old fellow will make the lady his wife, long before he can get to the castle.’—‘More’s the pity,’ answered the other; ‘he is an old wicked monster, and she is a beautiful unhappy creature: I wish she was safe at Toledo, or any where from him.’ ‘Is this your fidelity to your governor?’ said the first speaker; ‘I will report you, Fillipo, that I will: why you may, some night, let the enemy into the castle, and cut all our throats in our sleep. I will tell the governor of you—you shall be put into the dungeons.’ ‘For that matter,’ replied the other, ‘I would, I believe, rather be there than employed in this bad business: but, comrade, you need not be so angry; let me think what I will, I never flinch in my duty. No! I scorn to betray my trust, and you know it; so you may spare your threats; I am as brave as yourself, though for my misfortune, my conscience is a little tenderer—so shake hands and be friends.’ ‘With all my heart, Fillipo—here is my hand; my conscience was once tender too, but time and all I have seen have made it a little tougher. We are soldiers; those that are bound must obey. Guilt be on the heads of our masters! cry I: if they order us to commit bad actions, they must answer for it, not us. I wash my hands of the sin, and that is all that is necessary for me.’ I could hear no more,” said Valasquez, “for now they turned from the cavern, traced their way back to the castle, and I saw them enter it.”

Alonzo listened attentively to this discourse, and was more convinced than ever that Cava was the fair prisoner. The soldier had mentioned his wish that she was at Toledo: she, in her letter on her flight from Africa, had informed Alonzo that she would visit Toledo, in the hope of there finding the pious Anselmo, who, she intended, should regulate her future life.—“Yes,” sighed Alonzo, “it must be so; this monster, whoever he is, has torn her from Toledo, and brought her here; and the brave Garcia, having collected his friends to rescue her, has nobly fallen in her cause.”

The prince communicated his thoughts to his friends, who agreed with him in supposing Cava the fair captive.

As Pedro had expected, the troops were not displeased at a fresh supply of provisions, and soon prepared their evening repast. When it was over, Alonzo called the shepherd aside, and desired to know what it was he had carried on his back, and which he said might be of use hereafter? Pedro pointed to a recess in the cavern, where he had deposited his burden, saying—“That, noble cavalier, is a little boat belonging to me, chiefly made of the hides of my beasts; and the use I have for it is to put me across a stream that I am not able to ford: it is so light, I can contrive to carry it, and I know well enough the time I shall want to use it: when the snow, coming from the tops of the mountains, swells the streams into rivers, the little cockle-shell, as it may be called, is of the utmost service to me; I had left it, some time since, in old Lopez’s cottage, and this day seeing it there, a thought came into my head, that if you would sit quiet and steady in it, I could carry you safely down the river to the back of the castle, and we might, perhaps, discover some entrance to the dreary abode.”

Alonzo, charmed with the idea of making any experiment that might facilitate his entrance to the castle, told the shepherd he would willingly attend him at the hour he should appoint.

“We must go alone,” said Pedro; “the little machine will scarcely hold us; and if we do not make a proper balance, we may both get a good ducking in the river.”

“Let us run the chance,” said Alonzo.

Pedro then left him to strap the boat again upon his shoulders, and the prince, calling to him don Juan and Valasquez, told them the expedition he was going on. His two friends were anxious to follow him; but they were soon convinced of the impossibility of doing so; and it was agreed among them, that the most prudent conduct was for them to remain in the cave with the soldiers, and to keep a good lookout for fear of a surprise, and all to be prepared to sally forth, in case of any alarm from the castle.

Pedro was now ready; Alonzo took leave of his friends, recommended obedience to the soldiers till his return, and followed him down the mountain. The moon shone strong upon the castle, but they took care to keep in the darkest paths they could find, and being wrapped in their dingy cloaks, they were not discernible. Under his cloak Alonzo was well armed; but he had left in the cavern every part of his dress that could betray his rank, should he be discovered, and had helped himself to a coarse vest, which he had found in the recess along with the cloaks.

Silently they approached the river, and launched their little skiff in the most obscure spot they could find. Pedro, who knew its trim, placed Alonzo at one end; he then took his seat at the other, and thrust some ropes, coiled up, between them at the bottom; and using his little paddles most dexterously, he pushed the boat from the bank, and the current soon carried them into the middle of the river; it was then smooth as glass, and the water was somewhat lit by the moon, though the high wall on one side, and the dark, barren, rugged mountain that rose nearly perpendicularly on the other, gave it a most dismal and melancholy appearance.

Pedro said, in a whisper—"Cavalier, we must go nearer the wall, and see if there happens to be a hole in it large enough to admit us; I know the garden is behind this wall, and a colonnade opens into it, and I dare say, in their wisdom, they have left this spot to guard itself."

The prince sat astonished at the cleverness and sagacity of Pedro, and thought what an extraordinary man he might have made, with a better education, and in a higher rank of life; and the generous Alonzo vowed within himself to do every thing possible hereafter for the poor shepherd, to make his fortune, and bring forth his talents. Pedro minded not the silence or reverie of his companion; he had full employment to steer his little boat, and get as close to the wall as he judged prudent. The signal for the relief of the guard at the midnight hour was now given from the castle; and Alonzo and Pedro found, with pleasure, that the sound was far distant, and that there was no danger of a soldier's being stationed near the wall or the river.

"The day is our own!" exclaimed the shepherd, and he paddled on his boat at a quicker rate: they gazed intently on the wall, but the height was so great, it precluded all possibility of entrance. On they went; the stream was against them, the labour great, and they made little way; but Pedro did not flinch; and in about half an hour they had got beyond the middle of the garden, when Pedro cried out—"There it is! that will do!"

"What will do?" asked Alonzo.

"Don't you see a huge iron gate fixed in the wall, and shining on the water?—mayhap it is not locked, and that we may get in at it."

He now paddled faster than ever; and at length, to Alonzo's great delight, they got close to the gate; and Pedro, snatching up a rope, threw it dexterously on a projecting hook, and stopping his little machine, fastened it to the gate. He and Alonzo now tried to open it, but found it impossible; thick iron bars secured it on the inside; it was not to be forced, and could they have done so, the noise must have alarmed the castle, and have discovered them.

The prince looked disconsolate; he saw his expectations at an end—"Come," said the shepherd, "be not so dismayed; we that scour the mountains the whole year round make nothing of getting over worse places than this. My noble master, help me to uncoil this rope, and you will see the use it will be of to you." Alonzo obeyed the youth, who now strongly fastened the rope to a bar of the gate, saying to the prince—"Do you think you can possibly clamber up to the top of the wall by this gate? I can help you a great deal, and so will the iron bars, though they go the wrong way; let the rope lay over your shoulders; when you get to the top, throw it down on the other side, and descend by it; I will answer for its strength."

Alonzo examined the gate, the rope, and the wall, and had little doubt he could answer his active companion's expectations. While they were fixing the rope, they discovered through the gate a pale glimmering light from the castle; it seemed very low, and near the ground: Alonzo first perceived it; he pointed it out to Pedro, who, for some time, fixing a steady eye upon it, cried—"By all the saints, it must be there that the sweet lady is confined! I am sure, if I can be sure of any thing, those are the very rooms I saw! Yes, yes! it must be so, and you will find her there, I promise you. Poor thing, how I pity her!"

Alonzo judged this might be the case; and his heart beat quick at only beholding the walls that he fancied contained his Cava. Pedro now assisted him to mount the wall by the gate, telling him he would wait on the river for him till near the dawn; but beseeching him neither to stay longer than the first streaks of light should appear in the east, nor to venture to bring away the lady that night, should he be

fortunate enough to find her.—“If she is there,” said he, “we must lay our plan for another night, without we wish to be surprised and murdered.”

Alonzo assured him he would not act rashly, but should consider their mutual safety; and desiring he would wait till the hour appointed, said—“Should I not come then, you may be assured I am prevented by the enemy, and you must give information of it to my friends—they will either rescue or revenge me.”

“May you have better luck than to look for revenge!—may all the saints protect you!” answered Pedro; “I will not close my eyes till you return.”

By this time Alonzo had gained the very top of the wall; he had secured the rope, and with some trouble let himself down on the other side. The garden was wild, dreary, and extensive, filled with entangled shrubs and barren withered trees. Alonzo beheld the light at a distance, and though dim, it served as a cynosure to guide him through the pathless waste. As soon as Pedro saw Alonzo in safety on the other side of the wall, he hauled his boat under the projecting branches of an old tree as close to the wall and as near the gate as he could bring it. He fastened it to the tree, and then getting into it, he began most fervently to pray for the cavalier’s safety, and his speedy return: he reckoned his beads, and repeated his prayers to the Virgin with great fervor. Here we shall leave the honest shepherd watching the morning light, and anxiously waiting the return of his friend, and follow that faithful lover through the dark alleys and tangled mazes of the wild he had to pass.

Still keeping the light in view, and at times stumbling over the ruins with which the ground was spread, and forcing through almost inaccessible thickets, at last Alonzo arrived at the colonnade that opened on this gloomy wilderness. The castle was in tolerable preservation on this side, and entering the colonnade, he saw the light still glimmering through a window, the bottom of which was walled up, so that nothing could be seen in the room it belonged to, and a strong iron grating covered the upper part. Cautiously walking through the colonnade, and examining every part of it, both with his hands and eyes, as well as he could in the gloom that surrounded him, he at last discovered a low door which led into a dark and long passage. The door was fastened, but not strongly; and gently removing the iron bars, for he was fearful of making the least noise, he left the door open to admit what light a moonbeam might chance to yield him; and unsheathing his sabre, and wrapping his dark cloak more closely round him, he walked on. Soon even the uncertain light from the moon (for she laboured through dark clouds,) was denied him, and he had to grope his way. He believed the passage would never end, and it appeared to him to lead to the middle of the castle: he stopped; he considered whether it was wise still to pursue it: he was certain it must lead him to the inhabited part, for he had not ascended, nor was he under ground.

A loud noise now sounded from the interior of the building; it appeared to come from a great distance; doors clapped, and he heard rough voices, and peals of laughter; but it died away, and at every moment seemed more distant. Alonzo had, on the first noise, placed himself in a posture of defence; but as the sounds diminished, he thanked Providence for his safety; had he been assailed in that dark and narrow passage, he could not have escaped from the host of enemies which the castle contained. He listened attentively for many minutes; all was not quiet, and he ventured to proceed. He found the passage widened: the rattling of chains startled him; he heard it repeated, but it was not violent; and soon after he heard low and heavy moans; he imagined some person was lamenting and talking aloud, but he could not distinguish the words; the tones were low and sweet, and went to the very soul; he fancied he had heard the voice before—it strongly affected him, but he could

not be certain it was Cava's; yet he thought it must be hers—"She is, without doubt, confined in some chamber not far distant: my beating hearts tells me I am near an object dear to it." He then spread his hands upon the walls in search of a door: another moan! another lamentation! the most plaintive sounds struck upon his ear—they were low indeed, but he thought them near.

"How pitiable," cried he, "these lamentations! they rack my soul, but they lead me to my love;" then scarcely drawing his breath, and listening with the utmost attention, he bent his steps towards the sound, and still groping by the wall, something gave way under the pressure of his hand; it was a narrow door; it opened into a large vestibule surrounded with pillars of black marble; a lamp, whose blaze was nearly extinguished, hung from the roof, and though it scarcely served to show the extent of the place, Alonzo could distinctly discern that between many of the pillars there were large doors, seemingly entrances to the lower chambers of the castle: but what door could he venture to open? he should run on certain destruction, should any one belonging to the castle surprise him. He stood some time uncertain what to do; he marked the spot he had entered at, in case of surprise: he looked at the lamp—he feared it would soon leave him in utter darkness; presently he heard in his own language, these words—"He died to save me! can I endure to live?"

Alonzo's eyes, instructed by his ears, turned towards a large door between the nearest pillars: he was now confused; he knew not if the voice was or was not Cava's—he only knew that was it hers, she was lamenting the loss of a lover, and the blood forsook his heart; he leaned for support against the pillars, but he soon recovered his presence of mind, and approaching the door from whence the sounds proceeded, he gently opened it. The apartment was large and dimly lighted; the furniture was heavy, old, and magnificent; four pillars at the opposite side of the room fronted the door, and behind them was the large window, which Alonzo had viewed when he entered the colonnade, and from whence the lamp threw a faint light into the garden. Near the pillars, a sofa was placed, and on the floor sat a lady richly habited; her back was to the door, her arms were spread upon the sofa, her head rested on it, and she appeared lost in the deepest sorrow. Prepossessed with the idea of Cava, and seeing a figure similar to hers, Alonzo rushed into the room, and was approaching the lady, crying—"My love, be not alarmed—I am come to rescue you!" when she, starting from the ground, shrieked aloud: what was the prince's astonishment to behold, not Cava, but Favilla! the charming Favilla—the friend, the confidant of Cava and himself! Terrified at her shrieks, and fearful of their alarming the castle, he retreated to the door by which he had entered, and had only time to say—"Favilla, do not fear me! I am Alonzo, your friend, your adopted brother."

Favilla gave no credit to these words; she saw before her a man wrapt in a dark cloak, for the purpose of concealment, with a naked sabre in his hand, and she deemed him a midnight assassin, come to take her life, or perhaps for a more fatal purpose. Again she shrieked aloud; she wrung her hands in agony, and clung to one of the pillars, as if she thought it could protect her.

In despair of being heard, and dreading the alarm Favilla's shrieks might cause, Alonzo still retreated; the sound of steps, and the opening of a door, told him there was no time to lose, and quitting the apartment, he glided behind the first pillar he could reach in the vestibule. How glad would he have been had the lamp which hung from the roof expired! but it was not yet extinguished, and by its faint glimmerings he perceived a female figure, scarcely human, enter the vestibule, at a door opposite to where he stood.—"This," thought he, "is the witch that Pedro told me of; I suppose she has the care of poor Favilla."

The old woman, in a squalid nightdress, hurried, as fast as lameness would allow her, to the room Alonzo had just left, and pushing the door open with violence, she cried—"Heyday! what is the matter now? have you got into your fits again? in the name of the Virgin, why don't you lie down, and get some rest? a pretty bride you will be for my good master, when he comes to the castle, and does you the honour of taking you to wife!" Poor Favilla shook in every limb, as the old woman added—"You may tremble if you will—you are an ungrateful girl; the governor might get as fine and as handsome a lady as you are, any day in the year, and thanks for asking. Have done with your wailing and piping, and lie down, I say, and don't disturb people in this manner."

The old woman was quitting the room, when Favilla flung herself on her knees, and entreated her not to leave her.—"Oh!" cried she, "I have indeed been terrified to death! my senses will forsake me if you go! A man was in my chamber; he must be here on some bad purpose; he left me as you entered, and I fear he only waits your absence to return."

Ursula gave a fiend-like laugh—"A man, quotha! No, no! you need not fear disturbance from any man, till my brave master comes. No man could get into this part of the castle—it is too well guarded for that. A man, indeed! I would be glad to see any man so brave or so rash—he would soon be cut in piece-meal. Go to bed, I say, and have done with your noise. You have given me more plague, the short time you have been in the castle, than I ever had in my life; my old bones ache with running to you whenever you squall: thank Heaven, you can't run for yourself!"

Favilla sighed deeply, and said, in the softest tone of voice—"Good Ursula, don't be so angry: I am sorry to have disturbed you, but indeed I tell you truth; an assassin, for he can be nothing else, was here, wrapt in a long dark mantle, and he had a naked sabre in his hand; I could not see his face, but I dare say it was dreadful to look at."

"I dare say it was," said Ursula, sitting down, and again laughing like a fiend: "well, I can set your foolish heart at rest—it is no man you saw but a spirit—the ghost of Fernando the robber; I know it by the description you give of his dress: he lived in the mountains, and a good noble fellow he was; and often and often did he come to this castle, and many a fine present did he make me; he had a great liking for me—I was very well-looking, I assure you; and many a happy summer's day and long winter's night have we spent together. Well, every body must go, and he went at last. Poor soul! he was whipped off one night, and the governor of Toledo, I believe it was, murdered him: he had got at some money belonging to a noble of the place, (he spent money himself like any nobleman;) I don't know the exact truth of it, but I believe one of his men (for he lived hard by here, in a great cave,) discovered of him, and he, poor soul, suffered: but as he loved this place while he lived, so he does now that he is in another world; it seems he can no more rest quiet in it, than he did in this; for here he often comes at night, and walks through the colonnade, and down the long passages, and even into the halls hereabouts; I could swear by St. Jerome, I have seen him with my own eyes, just as you did, with his long dark cloak and his dagger; and I thought I had a glimpse of him just as I entered here, near one of the black pillars. Poor soul, it would glad my heart to have a full view of him I was once so fond of! I warrant you, he will do you no harm, so don't be frightened if he comes again, and pray don't squall," said Ursula, "nor make such a noise; the guard is far enough off and can't hear you; and as to me, I will come no more, should you roar the whole night, now that I know its only the ghost of the poor good Fernando that you have seen. Good night to you, and pray have more manners than to disturb your betters. I

have been the lady of this castle these thirty years, and am determined to be so as long as I live; all my subjects shall do as I order—so get to rest.”

Favilla was so thunderstruck at the old woman’s insolence, that she had no longer the power of speech. Ursula flung the door after her, as if she would have torn it off the hinges, and limping through the hall, she quitted it at the door she had entered.

Not a word she had said was lost on Alonzo; she had spoken in a loud key, and the door of the chamber being open, he had distinctly heard all she uttered. He now congratulated himself on his good fortune in being taken for the ghost of the robber Fernando. Favilla’s shrieks would no more rouse the old fiend from her bed, and he would have full time to discover himself, and settle with her some scheme for her emancipation. At first he was woefully disappointed at not finding Cava, but he soon felt happy that she had escaped the sufferings Favilla had endured; and he felt the strongest interest rise in his bosom, for the woman he had ever looked on with the affection of a brother.

He continued in the vestibule for some time after Ursula had retired, fearful of her return, should she hear any noise. He hoped, when once in her bed, she would not again be tempted to leave it.

All now was quiet. Favilla, lost in astonishment at the cruelty of her keeper, and the story of Fernando, to which she gave not the smallest credit, placed herself on the sofa, and fixed her eyes on the door, dreading the return of the man she had seen.

Alonzo, in the mean time, placing his sabre in the scabbard, throwing back his cloak, and uncovering his head that Favilla might recognise him, hastily entered her apartment, and carefully closing the door, cried—“My friend, my dear Favilla, be not terrified; it is Alonzo you see before you, come to carry you from this horrid prison.”

He might long have continued to talk to her without interruption; on seeing him enter, she had started from her seat in agony, certain it must be the person who had fled at the approach of Ursula; she wrung her hands, but now had no power to shriek: the lamp gave too faint a light for her to discover, at the distance he was at, the features of Alonzo; but hearing the name, and knowing the voice of her friend, she believed it was his ghost, and sinking again on the spot she had risen from, she fell fainting on the sofa. Happy that she gave no alarm to Ursula, Alonzo ran towards her, and raising her in his arms, endeavoured to restore animation to the lovely form that now bore all the appearance of death. It was long before he could bring her to herself—she recovered—she looked in his face with astonishment, and again fainted. This was repeated more than once, and terrified the prince so exceedingly, lest it should end in her dissolution, that he meditated calling Ursula to her assistance, at the risk of his own life.

At that moment, fortunately for both, she opened her eyes, sighed heavily, and looking earnestly at the prince, and taking hold of his arm, she said faintly—“Then you are really my dear kind friend Alonzo, and not his spirit?”

Alonzo, supporting her in his arms, cried—“I am, I am, my dear Favilla, your friend Alonzo, fear nothing now—I am come to set you free, to carry you from this horrid castle.”

She spoke not—she leaned her head on the shoulder of the prince, and burst into tears—he soothed her—he entreated her to be calm—he told her that time was precious, and they had much to consult about.

She could not answer him—she was exhausted. Alonzo perceived a table near him, on which there appeared to be some viands left for the poor captive’s use. He drew it towards him, for it was placed not far from where she sat, and filling out some

wine, he besought her to drink it. He now had an opportunity to examine her, and was shocked to see the ravage that grief had made in her fine form: she was thin, and deadly pale; her eyes were wild, and either wandered round the apartment, or were fixed on one object with gloomy despair. Her dress, which was uncommonly splendid, was all disordered, and her fine long hair hung loose on her shoulders; and large ringlets, which had escaped from the rich band of jewels that had bound them, shaded half her pale and sorrowful visage, and gave her the most interesting, as well as the most melancholy appearance.

Alonzo was surprised and shocked at beholding her in such a state; again he assured her he was come to release her; and (forgetting what the shepherd had told him, that the boat could not hold the three, and if he attempted to bring her away that night, they might all be discovered, and made prisoners), he urged her to rise, and follow him through the garden belonging to the castle. "I have now a faithful friend in waiting," said Alonzo, "who will assist me to remove you from this fatal spot; and soon, very soon, I shall have the delight of restoring you in safety to your brother, the great and gallant Palayo."

"Alas!" answered Favilla, "see you not my sad state? Behold how firmly I am bound to the nearest pillar; my chain indeed is long, but it is strong and massy, and so secure, that I fear all your strength would not avail to loose me."

Shocked to death, Alonzo perceived what he had not seen before, as he was so much occupied with his charming friend. A chain encircled her waist, and firmly bound her, as she said, to the nearest pillar; its length was ten feet, so that she could move so far, and reach the table, where refreshments had been deposited. She could also sit or lay down on the sofa when she pleased. It was the sound of this chain the prince had heard as he entered the vestibule; he now examined it with the utmost care, hoping to find a single link which he could rend asunder; it was in vain; a strong staple fastened it to the pillar, and round Favilla's waist—it was a gordian knot; but, alas! Alonzo had no sword capable of cutting it asunder. He made every effort to force the staple, or break the chain; all his strength was useless, and he found, after repeated efforts, that he must for the present relinquish the task, and wait till he had proper instruments to file the chain.

He was miserable when he saw poor Favilla must still remain in captivity; but he comforted her with the assurance that the next night, if he lived, he would release her from her prison. "I will, with my handful of men," cried he, "storm the castle, rather than leave you twenty-four hours longer in the power of the brute it contains. Who could be the barbarian that has used you thus?"

"Musad," replied Favilla; "the wretch wants to force me to be his wife. I fled from him, under the protection of my beloved Alphonso, the duke of Biscay. He pursued us, murdered my guards, and my dear ill-fated Alphonso, who died defending me, and left the wretched faithful Favilla to lament his loss, while memory lasts; but I shall not have long to mourn; I trust my prayers will be heard, and that I shall soon reach his blest abode. I have nothing now to live for," cried she, redoubling her tears; "my country is enslaved, my friends destroyed, or removed far distant from me, and my only love, my affianced husband, murdered before my eyes."

Sighs and groans followed this exclamation, and Alonzo beheld her with the utmost pity, when, like a ray of light, it darted across his mind, that the cavalier at old Lopez's cottage, whom he had supposed to be Garcia, was now no other than the duke Alphonso. Unwilling to give Favilla false hopes, yet anxious to soften the bitterness of her affliction, he gently took her hand, saying—"Let me speak comfort to you; my

friend Alphonso, I trust, is not yet numbered with the dead; you may yet see him; happiness may yet be yours.”

“Oh! do not deceive me,” answered Favilla; “I saw him covered with wounds—I saw him fall—my head grew giddy—my blood congealed—I remember no more till I was restored to life and misery, by the inhuman monster that attends me, for I cannot give her the name of woman. She assured me, that not one belonging to me was left alive on the field of battle; and it must be so; was my Alphonso living, I should not now be a prisoner.”

“My dear Favilla,” said the prince, “there is a cavalier, supposed to be the head of your party, lying at a shepherd’s cot in these mountains; he is much wounded, but certainly in a convalescent state, and well taken care of by old Lopez and his daughter. I have not seen him, but one, on whose truth I can depend, has given me this information, and I make little doubt it is the duke of Biscay.”

Alonzo had spoken to Favilla with the utmost caution; yet now he feared that hope and joy would have a more violent effect on her than all her sufferings. Speechless, she gazed on him—she was almost suffocated—she pressed her hands on her breast, as if to suppress the palpitation of her heart. With something angelic in her countenance, she looked up to heaven, and seemed lost in prayer and thanksgiving; her lips moved, and a seraphic smile played round them; but Alonzo heard not a word; soon tears rolled down her wan cheek; and, like a soft shower to the parched earth, they restored her to life and animation. The prince was standing before her, watching her every motion, fearful of the effect his words might have. She perceived it, and rising from the sofa, she tenderly embraced him, calling him her friend, her brother, her comforter, entreating he would instantly go, and ascertain the truth of the wounded cavalier’s being the duke of Biscay.

“I will do all you wish,” replied Alonzo; “I will bring you certain intelligence, if it be possible to obtain it, provided you will promise me to take some nourishment, and try to compose yourself to rest. To-morrow night you shall see me again; now I can no longer remain—the dawn is approaching—daylight would betray me to the guard, and ruin all. I cannot even stay, Favilla, to ask a thousand questions I wish to be resolved—your being carried off thus—confined here by a Christian governor—your splendid dress—and the harsh treatment you receive in this castle, is all an enigma to me.”

“Dear Alonzo,” answered the amiable Favilla, “your safety is at stake; I will no longer detain you; I will explain all when we next meet. To-morrow night, dear Alonzo, to-morrow night, endeavour to release me; the dreadful monster, Musad, comes the next day, to drag me to the altar. Forsake me not, Alonzo; you have raised a hope in my bosom that renders me anxious to live, and to escape the fiend that pursues me.”

“If Alonzo lives another day, you shall be free,” returned the prince; “for a few hours, I must bid you farewell; it is full time for me to be gone.”

“Stay one moment, Alonzo;” here she took his hand—she hesitated—and then said, in a faltering accent—“Can you tell me any thing of my dear, my beloved, my lamented Cava? does she still live?—does she remember there is such a being upon earth as Favilla?”

“Remember you! yes, Favilla, with the most tender friendship; she is the same angelic Cava you knew and loved at the court of Toledo; time only renders her a more perfect being. To-morrow, Favilla, you shall hear all; fate, I hope, will yet allow us to devote many of our days to friendship. But I see the dawn—it warns me of danger—my stay would undo us all.”

Favilla dropt his hand, saying—"You have comforted my sad heart; away, may Heaven bless you!"

The prince now hurried out of the apartment; the lamp was extinguished in the vestibule, but he knew his way, and groping by the pillars and the wall, found the door that led into the passage; he passed through in safety, and had advanced several paces, when he heard voices near him; it was plain the wall was between, but still he heard them, though to distinguish the words was impossible. He unsheathed his dagger—he stopped—he heard a bolt drawn—he then knew he must be close to a door—and applying his ear to the wall, he was convinced that more than one person was endeavouring to open a door into the passage. At first he thought by flight to secure his own safety, but considering they might be ruffians seeking the apartment of Favilla, he could not endure the thought of leaving her exposed to danger; and he determined, should they force the door, he would oppose their entrance to the castle while he could hold his sword. For a few moments the noise subsided, but was again renewed; the door however remained firm; he passed his hand across the wall, and discovering it, and hearing the same voices, he placed his ear again to the door, and distinctly heard these words—"We may return; this door seems strongly barred on the other side; at present we must give up the point; it is impossible to enter without giving an alarm."

Alonzo soon found that those who had attempted the passage had now retired, and anxious to pass the garden unseen, he hurried as fast as he could into the colonnade, and as he remembered exactly the path he had made for himself through the wilderness, he got back to the gate on the river much sooner than he expected. He found Pedro, under extreme anxiety, looking through the bars of the gate, and watching his return. As he approached, the good shepherd said—"For Heaven's sake, and the blessed Virgin's, make all the haste possible; it will soon be day."

Alonzo answered not, but seizing the rope he had left hanging to the wall, and fortunately finding some projecting stones, notwithstanding the great height, he was over it in a minute; and, with the help of Pedro, descended as quickly. The boat was ready, the rope soon drawn over, coiled up, and again placed between them in their little skiff; all was done in silence—Pedro put his finger to his lips to preclude speech—the stream was in their favour; and Pedro managed his paddles so dexterously, that they were round the castle, and carried down the river very quickly, and found themselves at their landing-place before the grey morning rose. The little boat was soon packed upon Pedro's shoulders, and they took their accustomed secret path to the cavern.

When they were out of sight of the castle, "Thanks be to St. Jerome," cried Pedro, "we are out of that den of lions, for never was Daniel in greater jeopardy than we were in this night; it was very good luck that I took my situation under the tree, and concealed myself and this dear little machine as I did, or I should have been murdered, and you too, for they would have searched for you from one end of the castle to the other."

"What do you mean?" asked Alonzo.

"Why, the guard of the castle," answered Pedro; "I believed there was no care taken of the back part of the building, but I was mistaken; you were not gone half an hour, when I heard steps very near me; but, thank Heaven, the wall was between me and two men, that I found were walking the rounds of the castle, as they call it.—'All is well here,' says one of them, 'not even a bat to be seen.'—'So dismal a place as this is,' says the other, 'my eyes never beheld.' Then coming to the gate, he looked through it, but fortunately it was straight forward; he looked just against the mountain,

or Pedro and his boat would have been discovered, though there was not much light in the heavens. 'How terribly that mountain frowns before us!' says the first; 'and the river just below looks as black as hell;—'Come away,' cried his companion; 'there is nothing here to molest us for this night; and the morning after to-morrow the governor comes to carry off his bride, so we shall be well paid, and soon out of this dungeon.' Away they then went, and I heard nothing more of them during the night. I trembled for your safety, but, thanks to St. Jerome! you are for the present out of harm's reach."

By the time Pedro had finished his discourse, he had his noble friend were in sight of the cavern, and reached it unmolested before the sun had got above the mountains.

Here we must allow them to repose, and take breath ourselves, before we enter upon what will be found in the next chapter.

## CHAP. V.

WHEN Favilla bade the prince farewell—when the door of her apartment closed on him—when the sound of his step was lost in distance, she felt her spirits sink, her frame trembled, and she cried—“I am again forlorn;” but soon hope visited her sad heart—Alonzo had declared his belief of the duke of Biscay’s being still in existence, and the bare idea had a magic power, that rendered all her past sufferings light; and while she persuaded herself that she should again be restored to Alphonso—should be snatched from the power of Musad, and soon with him, and her gallant friend Alonzo, reach the abode of her brother, the brave Palayo, sleep, the wretch’s friend, waved over her his ebony wand, and as she lay reclined upon the sofa where Alonzo had left her, presented to her imagination the most delightful visions: for many hours the potent god had chained her senses, but it was in flowery bands; and when Ursula arrived, rather late, with the breakfast she had prepared for her, she found her still asleep. The bustle, however, which the old woman made in the apartment, soon awoke her; but she awoke refreshed—her haggard look was gone—her deathlike paleness was changed to an appearance of returning health, and her dim eye was brightened with the delightful hope uppermost in her bosom. On her rising from the sofa, Ursula was not a little surprised to see the placidity of her countenance, and her beautiful eyes free from tears—“Heyday,” cried she, “so you have been asleep, for the first time, I believe, since you entered the castle. After a storm comes a calm—I was in the right not to indulge your whims—scolding agrees better with you than kindness, I think. It is always so with proud conceited damsels, that think highly of themselves; for my part, I don’t know what you would have—if so great a man as the governor can’t please, no one can; he will be soon here, however, and relieve me from the care of you; I have not been so plagued these forty years, the Virgin help me! Here is your breakfast, and a good one it is; sit up and eat it; it will kill you to fast as you have done.” Then seating herself opposite to her prisoner, she continued—“Well, did you see poor Fernando last night, after I left you? did he pay you a second visit?”

“No, good Ursula,” answered Favilla, mildly, “I saw nothing I did not wish to see after you retired to rest, and I felt very sorry for having disturbed you. I suppose I had awoke from a terrifying dream when I alarmed you so.”

“Not at all, not at all,” answered the old dragon, “I am persuaded it was my old sweetheart, poor Fernando, you saw in this room; it was here that he and I used to sit many a winter’s night, and enjoy ourselves with a good fire, and an excellent flask of wine; and here he used to present me with the fine things he had taken from many a traveller. And how he did entertain me with stories of the cavaliers he had encountered, many of whom he sent to the next world, and of the damsels he had carried to his cave, and detained there as long as he chose, and then sent a-packing, when he was tired of them. But, a-lack-a-day! Ursula is old now, yet still she remembers the joys of her youth.”

Saying this, with a heavy sigh she rose, and placed poor Favilla’s breakfast before her, who trembled when she looked at the hideous brute, so hardened in wickedness. She disdained to enter into conversation with such a wretch when she could avoid it, and was therefore silent.

The old woman now limped to the door—“I shall see you but once again to-day; I will not forget your dinner, now that you seem not inclined to starve yourself; but you must be your own keeper for the rest of the day. I am very particularly engaged to a feast in the round tower, at the far end of the castle; the guard are

determined to have a pleasant night of it, as the governor comes to-morrow, and then you all quit the castle. Now, when there is pleasure going on, it never shall be said of Ursula that she flinched; and as your strong chain will save me the fear of your running away. I shall take my fling; and, after dark, should you scream ever so loud, you need not expect me to come to you.”

Favilla cast her eyes to the ground, to conceal from her cruel keeper the expression of satisfaction she must have discovered in them, at hearing she was to be unmolested for the night.

When the wicked old woman had got to the door, Favilla said, in an accent that would have charmed any one but her—“I wish you an agreeable evening Ursula, and pray don’t trouble yourself any more about me.”

“I don’t thank you for your good wishes, for they don’t come from your heart; and as to trouble, you need not believe I will give myself any I can help on your account.” Then flinging the door after her, this merciless jailor went to prepare for the debauch of the evening. The soldiers had invited her to drink with them, that they might entertain themselves with the account she could give them of Fernando, who was a famous robber, that had performed many wonderful exploits, and had been the terror of the country for years; he was at last, as she told Favilla, taken and put to the torture, at Toledo, under which he expired, without confessing a single crime. He and his gang had inhabited the cavern now occupied by Alonzo and his friends, and all that was found in the recesses had belonged to him. He had made, or discovered a secret passage from the cavern to the castle, and it was through that passage that he got to the apartments now occupied by Favilla. He was enamoured of Ursula, who was then young, and, as she said herself, well-looking; and he found little difficulty in making her as wicked as himself. To speak truly of this female fiend, she might be said to outstrip him in vice; and so little shame had she of her conduct, that her whole life after, she boasted of her connection with him, and the love they bore each other; and her distempered fancy often persuaded her, that she saw him at night in the passages and galleries belonging to the castle; and so hardened was her mind, that she feared neither the living nor the dead; neither saint nor devil would have appalled her, nor would she have been converted, “though one rose from the dead.”

She had the night before got a glimpse of Alonzo, as he glided behind the pillars in the vestibule to avoid her. She firmly believed that the spirit of her paramour hovered near the place she inhabited. She told the story in the morning to the guard. They intending to entertain themselves with this strange being, gave her the invitation she mentioned to Favilla, who now felt truly grateful to Providence for the security she had of seeing Alonzo without interruption.

The charming princess, in her gloomy apartment, unable to move beyond the length of her chain, and surrounded by guards, ready to obey the vile orders of their commander, and watched by a woman worse than a fury, and on whom nothing could make the smallest impression, felt that she was protected by a superior power, who looks on innocence and virtue with compassion; and who, though he had severely tried her, would not forsake her in the hour of peril. Favilla’s heart was pure, and her perfect dependence on her God enabled her to support with patience every ill to which she was subjugated. With Cava, she had been the pupil of the good father Anselmo, and his precepts had sunk into her heart.

Happy, trice happy is the lot of that female who has been early taught, by a wise, a good, and a learned divine, the great truths of the Christian religion. Once properly inculcated in the mind of youth, they can never be eradicated; the world may seduce, vice may allure, but the new philosophy, the scourge of the present age, that

fiend, that in broad day walks the earth, can never obtain a decided influence over a mind early impressed with the true religion of Christ.

And here, my fair readers, I must for a moment pause in the story I am endeavouring to amuse you with, and may I be so daring to say, in which I aim at your instruction. On a trifle often depends the greatest events in life. A tale in which amiable characters are portrayed, may, perhaps, inspire young minds with a love of virtue, and may be drawn to contemplate their own characters, and root out the tares, which they find spring up with the good seed. Youth should also have vicious and bad characters placed before them, not to render them familiar with vice, but to shew them its deformity—to warn them to shun all that can even sully the mind. What exquisite and refined happiness is theirs, who, struggling with the miseries incident to human life, can look back to the days that are past, and say—“Ye are gone by, but ye are not lost; I have not spent you in vain; faith, hope, and charity, have led me through the stormy world—the holy scriptures have been my guide—I have not dared to exalt the limited understanding of man above the word of God. The atheist, the deist, the propagator of the new philosophy, my soul had held in abhorrence; I have fled from them, as from death and hell, for destruction is in their paths. I bear, O Lord, with patience, what thou imposest—I gratefully enjoy the good thou givest—and lay my cares on him who says—‘Come unto me, all ye that are weary and heavy laden, and I will give you rest.’ I well know, that however great my afflictions may be, that thy yoke is easy, and thy burden light, when the happiness thou hast promised us in thy kingdom will reward our well-doing here.”

Think, my young readers, reflect a little, and then say, would you not wish, ardently wish, whenever your life comes near a close, to be able to speak thus, to look back with so clear a conscience to the past? You do not answer—you smile—you shake your heads—you shrug your shoulders, and seem to say—“All this is so difficult to attain, human nature is prone to error, and we cannot be expected to pass through life without faults; perfect characters are only found in novels; there is no such thing in the world: I am sure I am as good as I can be, but I can’t help doing wrong now and then. How tiresome all this is!—it does not belong to the story—I wish that would go on—I am anxious to know how Favilla gets out of the castle, or if the old governor makes her marry him.” Fair and softly, ladies; I am not in a humour to get on with the story, and I am in one for moralizing; besides, my horse stands as stock still as did Don Quixote’s Rosinante at the fulling-mills, when Sancho tied his legs, and while he does so, I must preach a little; and pray do not laugh at the old sybil.

You lovely females of the present day, I tell you, and I speak the truth, you are born in a dangerous age—in general your education is abominable—living in the metropolis, the hotbed of vice is your destruction; you are not always to blame for those follies that “grow with your growth, and strengthen with your strength.” You are vain, proud, capricious, whimsical, and selfish, because your parents are too dissipated, too careless, or too ignorant, to attend to the education of their children. Entrusted to the care of a mercenary governess, (and not one in a hundred of these creatures but are a pest in any family), you are taught only trifling and shewy accomplishments, to fit you for appearing in a public assembly, sometimes for shining there. Alas! how fatal the wish to do so!—young, inexperienced, panting for the world, you enter it with joy, you “tread on air.” You believe every man that shews you attention enamoured of you—you are yourselves enamoured of all you see—you are dazzled—you distinguish nothing clearly—you choose a husband, or he is chosen for you; if young, handsome, and fashionable, no matter for his character, it is of little

consequence; the match is excellent; you are a charming couple, and must be happy. If old, ugly, and profligate, no matter; riches, title, the power of being first in all fashionable follies, will gild the pill; and that too is an excellent and happy match.

O ye fair, inconsiderate, and deluded females, rush not thus willingly, thus blindly, on misery. If you have ever read those lines of Pope, let them be a warning to you—

The gods, to curse Pamela with her prayers,  
Gave a gilt coach, and dappled Flanders mares;  
The shining robes, rich jewels, beds of state,  
And, to complete her bliss, a fool for mate.  
She glares at balls, front boxes, and the ring,  
A vain, unquiet, wretched, glitt'ring thing.  
Pride, pomp, and state, but reach her outward part;  
She sighs, and is no duchess at her heart.

How many are at present a sad example that truth dictated these lines to the charming poet! How many females do we see in this dissolute age, who, on entering the world, appeared bright as the stars of heaven, pure as the driven snow—their looks expressing innocence, their words persuading all that surrounded them, that they were born for love, for pure conjugal love, for friendship the most refined—for all sweet domestic cares of life! Yet how many of these captivating creatures are fallen, low as the unfortunate being that lives by the wages of sin! Be not indignant, my fair readers; I write not to flatter, to deceive you; I hold up to your view the mirror of truth, what all good men, in all ages, have agreed on, that a woman lost to virtue is stript of all that can render her truly charming in the eyes of man. Who can trust a woman who betrays a husband—who stamps a child with infamy—who, lost to the shame of the present hour, to the fear of a future, can stand unblushing against the condemnation of the world; and having been exposed in a public court, can think, and also attempt to impose the belief on others, that having burst the bands of a first marriage by her crimes, she can recover her character, and her place in society, by a second marriage—with who?—why, with her paramour, with the man who had drawn her into guilt, and who will, most surely, at some future day, when passion has lost its influence, see her in her true light, and if he cannot hate, will certainly despise her. Nothing can wash the Ethiopian white. Hear this, ye young females of fashion—attend, ye that have understanding, avoid the first steps in vice, they are the easiest to shun—take your conscience, your religion, for your guides, even in what you may deem trifling; if care has not been taken to instill into your hearts the true principles of Christianity, seek to know them. Your best friend, the bible, is at hand; it will instruct you—it will lead you in the path you ought to tread—it will shew you the enormity of vice, and all its dangers—it will point out the beauty of virtue, the comfort it will bring to every hour of your life—you will there see that “the price of the virtuous woman is above rubies.”—“How delightful to be such a character!” I hear you all exclaim. If so delightful, if your own consciences tell you it is what every woman should endeavour to be, what God and man must approve, why do you not use your utmost endeavours to attain such perfection? Alas! the world, the fashionable world, with its witchery, its deceit, its loose principles, draws you within its vortex, and you are lost. Yet amid that region of vice and folly, there is a friend ready to give you her supporting arm; lean on her—suffer her not to forsake you for a moment—let her words sink into your heart—follow her with close steps, and she will place you above

the influence of folly, vice, and fashion, and save you from the contagion of the times. Religion is this friend—she will brighten every hour of your existence—give a zest to your enjoyments, and mitigate your sorrows—she will render you the delight of your husband, the comfort of your family and friends—even the profligate will respect you—your actions, guided by her, will all lead to good—and, in a corrupted world, you will be a bright example to your sex—your influence will be, not that only of a short-lived beauty, but of a perfect and pure mind, whose power is inconceivable, and unbounded over those who approach it. That my fair readers may obtain that influence over their husbands that a perfect heart alone obtains, is our anxious wish, for the old sybil feels interested in the fate of those females that may peruse these pages; and having said quite enough for the present, she wishes them a good-night, and agreeable visions; and to-morrow, with the first light, she will resume the thread of her story, and gratify the curiosity of her readers respecting Favilla's enfranchisement; at present we must leave her in her gloomy prison, where—

“Thro' one dim lattice, fring'd with ivy round,  
Successive suns a languid radiance throw,  
To paint how fierce her angry keeper frown'd,  
To mark how fast her waning beauty flow.”

## CHAP. VI.

ARRIVED at the cavern, Alonzo and his honest Pedro, finding none but the centinel awake, and knowing from him that all within was well, laid themselves down almost at the entrance, to take an hour's repose; they were weary, and sleep exerted its influence; but Alonzo's mind was too busy to allow him much rest; and the sun had scarcely cleared the mists from the mountain tops, and exhaled the dews that hung on the scanty herbage in the valleys, than he rose, and sought don Juan and Valasquez.

The cavern was of great extent, and had many apartments; and these brave soldiers had been for some time employed in exercising their little troop, and preparing for attacking the castle, should Alonzo think it advisable to do so. They knew of his safe return, and received him with joy. He related the adventures of the night, and desired their opinion as to their future operations. “I fear,” cried he, “we are too few to storm the castle; I dread the cruelty the brutes that inhabit it may exercise on the princess Favilla, should we attack it while she remains within; but we must decide, and that quickly; the base Musad comes to-morrow to make her his wife.”

“Fear nothing, Alonzo,” answered don Juan, “we have joyful news for you. Chance has discovered a method of rescuing the princess, unattended with any danger to her; when she is in safety, we can fight her battles.”

“What do you mean, don Juan? I have told you she is chained to a pillar in her apartment, and that my utmost force had not power to break one link.”

“We did not,” replied don Juan, “when you left us last night, sit in idle expectation of your return; we lit torches, and explored every chamber, every recess, and every passage of this extensive cavern. We have found treasure in abundance, which will assist the war, beside piles of arms, habits, and a thousand different things, that in future may turn to a vast account: but we have discovered what is of still more consequence, a secret passage, that leads to the castle; it is long, but safe and easy,

and has been made with incredible care and art. It was Valasquez and myself, Alonzo, that alarmed you last night, as you passed from the chamber where you say Favilla is confined; the words you heard were uttered by Valasquez. We should have forced the secret door at the time, but as it appeared to be strongly barred inside, we feared, should we follow our own inclinations, we might by the noise alarm the guard, and perhaps run the chance of having you taken prisoner, if you were then within the castle. We were also unattended; Valasquez and I alone had explored the passage; we have been fortunate, and must seize the lucky moment—to-night we can deliver Favilla, provided you return to the fortress in the same way you reached it last night. You, Alonzo, must unbar the door, and we shall be there to enter with our men.”

“My gallant friends,” cried Alonzo, “what do I not owe you! this, indeed, is a discovery, as fortunate as unexpected; I augur well from it, and trust to Heaven for success.”

It was then determined, that at night Alonzo should return with Pedro by the river as before, taking with him an instrument to break Favilla’s chain.

Pedro was summoned to their council, and to explore with them every part of the cavern, and all the passages belonging to it. It was not the work of a moment; the whole of the day was fully occupied—they fortunately found Fernando’s cellar, which he had not exhausted; so that Alonzo was enabled, by the provisions Pedro had laid in, and the wine he found, to regale his little troop, and exhilarate the spirits of his men, before they were called to action.

Evening came, and with joy Pedro again strapped his boat upon his shoulders; and Alonzo, leaving to don Juan and Valasquez the leading of his men through the secret passage, charged them, if at such an hour they should not find the door of the castle unbarred, to force it, and make their way to Favilla’s chamber. Then bidding his brave friends adieu, with Pedro he took the road to the river.

The princess Favilla had sat almost the whole day on her couch, reflecting on the strange events of her past life—dreading that Ursula might not keep her engagement with the guard, and anxiously wishing the return of night, that she might again see Alonzo, and hear from him the fate of her beloved Alphonso. Slow rolled the moments to the expectant sufferer—she thought the day a double length, and that the sun would never sink beneath the rude and horrid mountain, whose wild and craggy summit she beheld from her grated window. At length she heard the clapping of a door—her heart throbbed in her bosom—perhaps it was Alonzo. She was soon undeceived by the appearance of Ursula, and such an appearance! had not Favilla been a captive, trembling for the crisis of her fate, which was now at hand, her mirth must have been excited by the figure of the old woman as she entered, with a basket of refreshments in her hand; for she had not forgot that Favilla might stand in need of them before the morning, and she had determined that nothing should prevent her visit to the tower.

Ursula’s person was short, and enormously fat; she was lame, from an accident that had dislocated her hip; her face had once been comely, but it was now most hideous, red, and bloated; her eyes were sore, her forehead bald, and her coarse dark hair, now half grey, was matted and greasy, through neglect; her eyebrows were rough, and hanging over her fiery and malignant eyes, gave her the look of a fury; gluttony and drunkenness was written in her countenance; and the violence of her looks and manner made the gentle Favilla tremble whenever she approached her. Now her appearance was ludicrous in the extreme; this horrible figure was dressed in the most extravagant manner—a magnificent robe, of which the robber Fernando had stript a noble Spaniard whom he murdered, enveloped Ursula; it had been made for

some fine woman, and was so long for her, that she was near trembling every step she took; a head-dress, resplendant with gold and jewels, perched on her grissly uncombed tresses, gave her the air of a mad woman, and shewed her countenance more hideous.

As she set down the basket of refreshments she had brought, Favilla turned her eyes on her with surprise, but was silent; she smiled, however, complacently, as the idea crossed her mind, that Ursula's preposterous dress indicated her intention of keeping her engagement with the guard.

"I shall," thought Favilla, "get rid of this horrible creature for the night, and may with safety receive Alonzo."

The beldame seeing her smile, was convinced she admired her dress, and said—"You may well admire the fine presents of my poor dear Fernando; he was as generous as the light, and many a trunk have I filled with his gifts. Poor soul, he used to dress me in them himself, when he came off of a fortunate expedition. Well, he is gone, and I can't bring him back by fretting and lamenting; so I will not think of the past, but look forward to as much pleasure as I can get now-a-days. One comfort I have," cried she, tossing her head; "I am the true lady of the castle, and you and all in it are at my command, and must obey me. So good-night to you; you will see me no more till morning. I can't, nor won't, dance attendance on you both day and night; I have other fish to fry; so again I say good-night; eat your victuals, get some rest, for I promise you, you shall be married to-morrow."

Without waiting for an answer, she turned her back upon the princess, with as haughty an air as she could assume, walked to the door, and examining it, said—"There is no occasion for locks or bolts; you will not find it easy to break your chain, and if you could, it would only be to run into the river; I have you safe enough." With these words she left the room, swinging the door after her.

Delighted at her departure, and astonished at her extreme insolence and strange appearance, Favilla sat with her eyes fixed on the door for many minutes; she then made use of some of the viands the old fury had left her, and watched the coming of night with an anxious heart. She started at every noise; at length the lock of her chamber door moved—the door itself was gently opened—and her friend Alonzo stood before her. She rose from the sofa, and rushing the length of her chain, cried—"Tell me, oh! tell me, Alonzo, have you brought me any consolation? does my dear Alphonso still live? may I hope once more to be blessed with his sight?"

Alonzo was distressed at this address from Favilla; he had brought her no tidings of him she loved; and he judged by his own heart, and the anxiety he himself felt to know the fate of Cava, how miserable Favilla must be at his ignorance respecting Alphonso. Taking her hand, and leading her to the sofa, he entreated she would hear him with patience. He told her he knew no more than when he last saw her; that the whole day had been employed in planning her deliverance—that had he spent it in seeking the cottage where he hoped Alphonso was, he might have lost the power of saving her—that he was come now to deliver her, and had brought a trusty friend to assist in filing her chains, and setting her free.

Favilla's heart was oppressed—her disappointment great—but her reason told her Alonzo had acted wisely. He then laid before her the plan he had formed, and requested leave to call Pedro in to assist him in loosing her. Ursula had lit the lamp both in the chamber and vestibule before she had quitted the princess. Alonzo had left Pedro on the watch in the dark passage, and now taking a lamp, he returned to him, and they sought the door by which don Juan, Valasquez, and the soldiers, were to enter; they unbarred, and left it open, and then returning to Favilla, they set about

filing the chain that bound her; this was a work of time, for they were obliged to be continually on the watch, lest they should be surprised, and overwhelmed by the guard, before their friends arrived. At last their repeated endeavours succeeded; the chain was broken, and Favilla, transported at finding herself free, rushed into the arms of her friend; and, with tears, thanking him, entreated now to be led to the cottage to seek Alphonso.

“It is my wish that you should seek him,” replied Alonzo, “but, my dear Favilla, we must be prudent; you cannot leave this without a guard; my friends will soon be here, and you shall then quit this dismal abode.”

As he spoke, Pedro, who watched, heard the signal agreed on with don Juan, and was instantly at the entrance of the vestibule, to admit the troop; and in a few minutes they entered the apartment where Favilla was; and she had the satisfaction of finding in don Juan and Valasquez two old acquaintances, that she had seen much of at Toledo, and highly esteemed: they were now raised in her bosom to the rank of friends. Their country’s misfortunes, and their own, soon linked these amiable hearts in the strongest bands of friendship. Favilla, sensible of her present obligations, received them with delight and gratitude, and promised them, in the name of her brother, and the duke Alphonso, if he still survived, all that they could desire.

It was now debated at what time they should surprise the guard, and endeavour to get possession of the castle. Favilla informed them of the feast that they were to hold in the tower, the most distant from her apartment; “happily this feast was,” she said, “the cause of Ursula’s absence.”

Alonzo then concluded it would be most prudent to wait till their debauch was begun, as they might then be able to secure them without much bloodshed.

A shout was now heard from the tower; it was faint from the distance, but convinced Alonzo that they had met, and were enjoying themselves in a false security. “You must not remain here, Favilla,” said the prince; “Pedro and one of my bravest soldiers will carry you to a place of safety; we shall fight better by knowing that we have nothing to fear for you.”

Poor Favilla now wished to remain near Alonzo; but she feared distressing him; and giving him her hand, she requested he would do with her as he thought most prudent.

“I will, my sister, my friend,” cried Alonzo; “this worthy creature (pointing to Pedro) will be your guide—this faithful soldier your guard; here you might be exposed to danger; now you can either remain in the cavern till the combat is over, or seek Lopez’s cottage, where I hope the duke of Biscay will be found.”

To seek the cottage reconciled Favilla to quitting the castle: at the entreaty of her friends she swallowed some wine; and Alonzo wrapping her round in one of the dark cloaks he had found, led her to the passage towards the cave, and ordering the soldier to go before with a torch, consigned her to the care of the faithful Pedro. And as it will be some time before our heroes think it prudent to attack the castle guard, we shall for the present follow the steps of the princess.

When she let go the hand of Alonzo, and considered that he was then about to fight her battle, her heart was ready to burst; and she believed, weak woman as she was, she could better bear to combat by his side, than leave him to uncertain fate. He read her thoughts—he himself suffered, but he would not give way to his feelings; and pointing out the path, he said—“To-morrow, my dear Favilla, I have no doubt we shall meet in joy.” Then hurrying through the door, he was out of sight in a moment.

Long, dismal, and damp, was the subterraneous passage; the torchlight shewed in perspective the gloomy length they had to pass. Favilla, leaning on Pedro,

shivering from the cold and damp of the place, anxious for the safety of her friend Alonzo, and doubtful as to the fate of the duke Alphonso, had scarcely strength to proceed; her frame tottered; and only Pedro with his strong arm supported her, she would often have fallen to the ground.

After an hour's walk they ascended to the cavern, where the trusty soldier and Pedro lighted a fire, and placed some wine and fruit before the princess. Entreating her to be composed, and hope the best, they went to the entrance of the cavern, in order to reconnoitre the castle; on the rocks above the cavern they had a full view of it, and perceived that all was still quiet there. Lights were visible in the tower where the guard held their revels; and Pedro saw, or thought he saw, a faint ray of light from the window of the room where they had left Alonzo and the troops. They then returned to Favilla, assuring her all was still quiet at the castle; and they had no doubt, when the guard were drunk, the cavaliers would take them all prisoners, with scarcely any loss or danger.

Favilla, breathed freer, and felt more composed; she entreated Pedro to lead her to the spot from whence he had viewed the castle; he immediately led her to the mouth of the cavern.

The night was fine, the moon rose in unclouded majesty, and covered the castle, the mountains, and the lowlands, with her soft light; but not even her silver mantle could give softness or beauty to any object within their ken.

Favilla recoiled as she viewed the gloomy half-ruined castle, an immense and heavy fabric, in the worst style of gothic architecture. The sombre river rolled beneath its walls, and the stupendous cliffs that rose behind, so rude, so barren, so uncouth, that they appeared to have been thrown together by some convulsion of nature; all around bore the marks of a sterile and desolate country; few were the flocks that roamed over these steep craggs, and thinly were the shepherds' cots scattered through the valleys. Pedro observed the impression that this dreary country made on the princess, and said—"You cannot now wonder, lady, that these mountains were infested by banditti; the cave we now inhabit was their hiding-place; and the country people say yon castle was abandoned, and let go to ruin, because no one could live in safety within its walls. Many are the wonderful stories that the old shepherds tell of the famous robber Fernando; it was even reported that he was assisted by evil spirits; and some go so far as to say, that he often met, and conversed with the old one himself, on the top of one of these mountains; but however it was, he never failed in any enterprise for years—for he pillaged and murdered many a traveller—those whose lives he spared were great and rich people, whom he made pay a large ransom, and take an oath, the most dreadful they could take, never to betray him; if they were fools enough to do so, he was sure to come when they little thought it, burnt their castles, and not only carried away their valuables, but their wives and daughters; in short, every one within many leagues of these mountains lived in terror of him; and it is even said, he sometimes went to their houses under a feigned character, and that though they knew him, their fear of him was so great, they would pretend to be deceived, treat him with all manner of civility, and appear entertained by his wit and agreeable talents; for he was a fine handsome man, had been of good parentage, and well brought up; he sang and danced to perfection. It was reported that he had been crossed in love in his youth, and by grief drove to the vagabond life he led. I can scarcely believe, however, that he dealt with the devil; can you, lady?"

"I believe," answered Favilla, "that his own wicked and unrestrained passions were the devils that tempted him to act as he did. When men, Pedro, give the reins to

those, they want no spirits from the other world to push them on to wickedness. I have already heard of Fernando from Ursula.”

“That old wicked crone,” answered Pedro, “was a fit instrument for him, and she now is in the service of as bad a man, the governor of—”

Pedro was here stopt in his harangue by a noise proceeding from the castle—lights seemed passing in every direction—they heard the sound of horns—and, even at the distance they were at, fancied they heard the clashing of armour.

“They are at it,” cried the soldier, that with Pedro attended on Favilla; “would I was with my brave leader—I might be of use—he has but few with him.”

“Fly then,” cried Favilla, “fly to assist him; Pedro can protect me.”

“I must obey orders,” answered the man; “that is the first duty of a soldier. Don Juan charged me on no account to quit you, till you were in a place of safety, and I swore to defend you with my life.”

The tumult now increased in the castle, and Favilla’s heart sunk within her. Pedro then proposed her returning into the cavern.—“You will there be in perfect security,” said he; “within it you can hear no sound,—the noise of the battle cannot reach you—we will remain on the watch, and give every information in our power.”

Half fainting, Favilla returned to the cavern; the discreet Pedro led her far within it, and having placed her on some cushions, and set a table and lamp before her, he made a fire with sticks and dried leaves, whose cheerful blaze diffused warmth over her shivering frame. Favilla was soon absorbed in pious meditations, and ardent prayers for the safety of her deliverers.

Pedro returned to the soldier at the entrance of the cavern. The noise encreased—torches were seen blazing in every direction—the horn at the gate was sounded—and the soldier said he believed they were preparing to let down the drawbridge. Pedro fixed his eyes on the castle—it was too distant to have a distinct view of any thing that passed; but looking over the mountains to the left of the castle, he cried—“I see men moving at a great distance on yonder hill—they are armed—the moonlight rests upon their shields:” then turning to the soldier, “if they are foes, they are come, as was expected, to carry away the princess Favilla; should they surprise us here, we should all become an easy prey; let us place the princess in safety, and return to assist our chiefs.”

“Where can we find a more secure retreat than this cavern?” said the soldier, (impatient to be at the castle); “let us conceal her in the most secret recess, and hasten to the scene of action; we have no time to lose.”

“No,” replied Pedro, “we will carry her with all speed to old Lopez’s cottage, where the cavalier wounded in defending her now lies. The good shepherd and his daughter will attend to her, and conceal her, in case any of the governor’s people pass that way. The poor lady would die, was she left alone in this dismal dungeon; it would be far worse than remaining at the castle. But, see, those men are descending the mountain; thank Heaven, our road lies in a contrary direction; we shall have no difficulty in getting out of their way.”

The soldier agreed to the wishes of Pedro, who, approaching Favilla, informed her he thought is safest to carry her to the cottage, if she found herself able to go so far. This was exactly what she wished. Love and hope now braced her frame; starting from where she sat, she declared she was willing and able to encounter any fatigue, in the delightful expectations of finding Alphonso in existence. Pedro, who had seen the wounded cavalier in a very desperate state, as he thought, was unwilling to give her a hope he did not himself entertain, only shook his head, and concealing her as much as possible in the dark mantle Alonzo had thrown over her rich dress, he gave her his

arm, to assist her out of the cavern. The soldier stood at its mouth, his eyes fixt on the castle, his sabre naked in his hand, and his breast panting with anxiety to be with his comrades. He heard not Favilla's approach, till Pedro called to him to descend with them the path to the right.

Happily for the princess, she perceived not the little hope the young shepherd gave her, respecting the wounded cavalier; terrified by the sounds she heard from the castle, and the torches she saw blazing within it, she laid hold both on Pedro's arm and on the soldier's, and hurried down the declivity, with a strength and activity she had the moment before appeared little capable of.

Happy was it for Favilla that the prudent shepherd had in time withdrawn her from the cavern. Soon a band of armed men rushed down the steep, close to the spot they had been in. Their eyes were bent on the castle—their horses were urged towards the drawbridge at their utmost speed—the echo of their horns was returned by the distant hills—the bridge was lowered—swift as lightning the gates were thrown open—the foremost entered the outer court of the castle—the fierce Musad was at their head—he came in the pride of his heart, and his cruel purpose was to force Favilla to be his wife.

More savage than the wildest beast of the desert, his heart, hardened in iniquity, neither knew pity or remorse. Here he had immured the princess—here he thought he was secure of his prey—and riding with violence through the gates, he was not a little surprised at hearing the noise of battle within the courts of the castle, and shrieks and dying groans now issuing from the tower nearest to the gate, and which was on fire in every part.

“What has befallen my people?” cried the fierce Musad in a voice of thunder. The few soldiers that were on guard at the gate, astounded by the fury and horrible expression of his countenance, hesitated in answering. Flinging himself from his horse, (who started at the flames before him), and drawing his sword, he swore to sacrifice the man that should refuse to inform him what this tumult meant. He had rode in before the party he brought with him, and they followed singly, or a few together, as chance directed, not supposing they had a single enemy at hand; but the flaming tower soon undeceived them. The trembling centinel, throwing himself at the feet of the governor, declared he knew not what was passing within the castle—that he was afraid the soldiers had quarrelled with each other—that he and his comrades dared not to quit their post—that the moment they had perceived him coming down the mountain, they had let down the drawbridge, and flung open the gates; and that while they were occupied in doing so, the flames had burst from the tower.

“Noble governor,” cried one of the guard, “no human being has entered these walls but your own people; the disturbance must be occasioned by some unhappy nightly brawl, which your presence will quickly appease.”

Musad believed this to be the case, and sternly ordering his men to follow him, strode on towards the flaming tower; he called loudly on those within, but was only answered by loud shrieks; and rushing forwards to enter an inner court, a wretched being fell from the battlements, close to where he passed, and he perceived a human figure dashed to pieces at his feet. He stood aghast, as a dead groan issued with departing life from the wretched Ursula, who was precipitated from the top of the tower. “There must be vile treachery in this,” exclaimed Musad, as he rushed forward with fury, calling loudly on his troop to follow him.

From the moment that Alonzo had sent Favilla from the castle, he lost no time by delay; leaving his men all prepared in the vestibule, he, don Juan, and Valasquez, set out to reconnoitre the castle. They found that a few centinels only were left on the

walls and at the gates; and that the tower Ursula had mentioned to Favilla was the grand place of rendezvous for the night.

The captain of the guard, believing all was safe within the castle, and knowing what a severe task-master would arrive the next day, was determined (for he was a drunken soul) to enjoy the night, and allow the men under him to do the same. He had invited Ursula, not only to entertain himself with her stories, but also to keep her in temper, and prevent her informing the governor of his conduct.

Alonzo found they were at supper, and waited till they had begun drinking, to attack them; for sober, they might overpower him by their numbers.

Soon mirth went round, and peals of laughter burst from the tower. Alonzo then brought his little troop to the bottom of the stairs, and called on those within to yield themselves prisoners; that their lives should be spared if they did so, but otherwise he would have no mercy on a single man; that the castle was now in his power. The troops within the tower did not want courage, and instead of yielding, half drunk as they were, they seized their arms, and dashed down the stairs against their opponents. The conflict now became severe; some of Alonzo's men were wounded, and some of the guard killed; those were dragged away by their comrades, and their place supplied by the living. Alonzo and his friends fought desperately, and were well supported by their men; but it was all in vain; numbers were on the other side; and they forced so on Alonzo and his little troop, that the friends believed it would be most prudent to let them, if they chose it, come forth and fight them in the open court. It was now perceived that the tower was in a blaze, and that the greatest confusion reigned within it. The neglected torches had set it on fire, and the flames raged with violence. Alonzo's merciful nature was for giving instant liberty to the enemy within; but one of his men coming to inform him that Musad was near the castle with many followers, don Juan, even more anxious for the life and liberty of his friend than for his own, gave immediate orders to bar the gates of the tower, as strongly as it was possible to do it, and leave the wretches within to their fate. He was obeyed, and the three friends, with admirable presence of mind, instantly drew up their little, but brave and determined troop in the inner court, opposite the grand entrance of the castle, where they stood ready to encounter the enraged governor. Certain that the tower now on fire must, in a short time, fall into the court in which it stood, they withdrew from the impending ruin; and this was the cause that at Musad's entrance he saw no enemy, nor encountered any opposition. But he was too old and experienced a warrior not to proceed with caution. Advancing, he beheld the brave Spaniards drawn up, and determined to oppose his entering the castle. "Miscreants," he cried, "who are you that dare to dispute with me the entrance to my castle? are you a remnant of that cowardly troop escorted by the worthless duke Alphonso, who had the audacity to force from me my lovely bride, and was afterwards unable either to defend her, or fly from the power of my all-conquering arm? I left him dead on the field of battle; and shall you," cried he to Alonzo, "whose name I know not, but whose youth and weakness I despise, have the insolence for one moment to oppose my passage? This castle contains the princess that Musad honours with his choice; begone, I say, or I shall flog you hence."

"Vain and despicable wretch," retorted the brave Alonzo, "you see not before you miscreants, or those that you can treat as slaves; know me for the prince Alonzo, the grandson of a king, whose mean and wretched vassal you once was—know me for the friend of don Palayo, the defender of the fair Favilla. Know also that I have removed her hence—that she is in safety—and that the duke of Biscay is not dead. I

am no renegado as you are—I trample not on the cross—behold it on my shield, and tremble. I defy you to single combat.”

The renegado indeed trembled—Alonzo raised his shield—the flaming tower spread a dreadful light around, and the holy sign of the religion of Christ met his eyes, and struck terror to his soul. But Musad was not long the slave of his conscience; each succeeding hour of his life was marked with deeper sin, and now his rage knew no bounds. He cursed the Christians, and vowed the destruction of don Palayo, the duke of Biscay, and even of Favilla. He then rushed with fury where Alonzo stood. Don Juan and Valasquez, trembling for the life of the prince, (for Musad was gigantic, and his strength beyond the common strength of men), poured in their whole troop between them, and forced them far asunder. Don Juan was an excellent soldier, and for a long time kept Musad at bay, who raged like a lion, and with such unguarded fury, that he fought not with his usual success. Out of breath, he was often obliged to give way; and he saw with indignation many of his men fall around him. Alonzo did wonders, and endeavoured to force his way to where the governor fought, unconscious of the efforts his faithful friends made to prevent their meeting. An hour had nearly elapsed—victory declared for neither troop. Musad had many more men than the prince, but they fought for a leader they hated, and their valour was not so strongly exerted as that of Alonzo’s little band. Some had fallen on both sides, and some of the governor’s people had fled. At length Alonzo forced a passage to where Musad stood, and commanding his men to draw back, again dared him to single combat. The furious and irritated governor, hoping an easy victory, with a deeper frown impressed on his scowling brow, ordered his soldiers to retire, and leave him to chastise the boy. Don Juan and Valasquez, as anxious for the honour of the prince as they had been for his life, could no longer interfere, and in mournful silence watched the issue; determined, should he fall, to revenge his death, were their own lives to be the certain sacrifice.

The burning tower now sent up volumes of smoke and fire; a lurid light gave the combatants a full view of each other. Alonzo was agile, dexterous, and cool; activity stood with him in the place of brutal strength; and the ferocious and gigantic Musad, with all his skill and force, could obtain no advantage. They advanced—they retreated—they wheeled round, and for some time their strokes were given in vain. Musad, enraged at the opposition he met, and the skill he discovered in Alonzo, rushed forward incautiously, and received a slight wound in his left arm. Alonzo’s friends shouted with joy; and the governor, doubly enraged, and seeing he had no novice to contend with, exerted every nerve, and struck with such fury at the prince, that he forced him to retreat towards the steps of the castle. Alonzo, however, while he retreated, parried the repeated and terrible strokes of his enemy’s sabre, and stopping at the castle steps, stood firm as a rock, with his back to a massive pillar belonging to the portico, where, covering himself with his shield, he not only avoided the strokes of his furious adversary, but with his lifted sword prepared to inflict on him the punishment due to his many crimes. Musad rushed on, and making a furious and well-aimed blow at the prince, he carried away part of his helmet, and broke his uplifted sword in pieces. Unarmed, and smarting with the blow he had received, Alonzo for an instant looked round. Conscious that no help was near, and the loss of Cava presenting itself to his mind, he regretted not the loss of life. All this was the idea of a moment, for a man darting from behind the pillar, fearless of what might befall himself, placed a trusty sword in the hands of the prince. Alonzo turned not round to see who was his gallant friend, but making instant use of the weapon so fortunately given to his hand, in his turn he made such furious and repeated strokes at

his antagonist, that he fell back dismayed at the powerful arm that assailed him. Musad had believed himself sure of victory.

The wretch who loudly denies his God, will still in secret fear and acknowledge his power; the still small voice will speak even to the most hardened heart, and appal the sinner that it cannot reform. Thus it was with Musad; seeing Alonzo again armed, and not only ready to defend but to revenge himself; thinking for an instant that the assistance he received was supernatural, he drew back, doubting the evidence of his senses. This momentary delusion soon vanished, and he pushed forward more furious than ever. The cool and brave Alonzo, trusting in the goodness of his cause, and the protection of Heaven, parried with skill the strokes that were made at him with unguarded violence; and, watching a favourable moment, thrust his sword deep into the side of the vile Musad.

“Down sunk the monster bulk, and press’d the ground;  
The arms and clatt’ring shield on the base body sound.”

At the same moment the burning tower fell in, and with its devouring flames and tottering walls, destroyed the miserable beings it enclosed, the vile and ready instruments of the worthless Musad.

## CHAP. VII.

“And now the crackling flames appear’d on high,  
And driving sparkles danc’d along the sky.  
With Vulcan’s rage the rising winds conspire,  
And near the palace roll the flood of fire.”

AMAZED, the troops on both sides heard the loud crash, that shook the castle to its base, as the tower fell, and beheld the increased torrent of fire that rushed along the courts. The body of the worthless governor still quivered on the pavement, and his ghastly and distorted visage bore in death the character of his ferocious soul. Alonzo, weary from the combat, was resting on his sword, still near the pillar, and looking round for him who had proved himself so fearless and so interested a friend in the moment of danger. But now there was no time for inquiry, or for thanks; the clattering of horses hoofs was heard across the drawbridge, and by the uncertain glare of the sinking fires, a fine body of troops was seen entering the castle gates. Don Juan, who had remained with his handful of soldiers, now rallied them; those belonging to the governor had almost all fled when he fell. A cavalier in black armour rode with velocity into the castle court; and don Juan and Valasquez instantly recognising him, cried out in a transport of joy—“Welcome, brave don Palayo; come and behold our triumph; the lovely Favilla is safe, and the vile Musad no more.”

Don Palayo (for it was he come to rescue his sister), now breathless with joy, as he had been before with terror, when he saw at a distance the flames from the castle, sprung from his horse, and embracing don Juan, was about to express his gratitude for the succour he had given his beloved sister, when don Juan stopt him short, saying—“Noble don Palayo, your thanks are not due to me; yonder stands the brave prince Alonzo, who has saved Favilla; Musad lies dead at his feet.”

“Alonzo!” cried don Palayo, in surprise; “the prince Alonzo, the nephew of count Julian—impossible! he would not succour Favilla; his part has been to join the enemies of his country and his faith.”

“Oh, noble! oh, brave don Palayo! the first of the Spaniards, the support, the boast of your country, forgive the errors of youth—forgive the faults of which your nature is incapable—forgive the weakness, the intoxication of love. You are not ignorant that the charming Cava, the bosom friend of your sister, was the beloved of his soul, his promised bride. Blinded by love to avenge her wrongs, the brave, the amiable, the excellent Alonzo joined the insidious count Julian. He thought only of hurling the tyrant Rodrigo from his throne—of burying his sword in the bosom of him, the destroyer of his peace—he was guiltless of wishing to enslave his country. The moment he saw the dreadful effects of count Julian’s conduct, he determined to change his own; even on the plains of Xeres he formed this virtuous resolution—he heard with delight and admiration of your great deeds, your patriotism, your martial glory—he has forsaken every thing to follow you, to enlist under your standard, to fight your battles—he has brought what treasure he possessed, to lay it at your feet—Valasquez and I, with a few brave men, have followed his fortunes. It is some time since we quitted Africa; we have taken the most unfrequented paths through these mountains, in the hope of reaching the Asturias in safety, and attaching ourselves to you. Reject him not, Palayo; his heart his noble; he knows not to deceive. Yonder he stands, his sword bathed in the blood of your enemy—Favilla, your beloved sister, by him, and by him alone, preserved from misery worse than death; for this night Musad

was to have made her his wife. Yonder he stands; and though victory sits on his shield, and that he had revenged your wrongs, his modesty is such, the sense he has of his single error so strong, he has not the courage to approach you.”

Here don Juan paused, and don Palayo said—“Brave don Juan, certain I may believe your words, I rejoice in my inmost soul at the gallant Alonzo’s altered sentiments. I knew his worth, I lamented his errors; but they are past; I bury them in oblivion; and shall open my arms to him, as to a brother.”

Alonzo still stood near the pillar; he heard not the conversation that was passing between don Palayo and don Juan, but fearful of a repulse from the noble Palayo, he remained immovable as a statue, his eyes fixt on the ghastly corse before him—his thoughts were wild—Cava mixt with every idea—the melancholy fate of Spain sat heavy on his heart, and he blushed to meet her great defender: but soon the generous Palayo relieved him from this distressing situation; he approached with the kindness of a brother, and, tenderly embracing him, in the most exalted terms, strongly expressed his gratitude for the inestimable service he had done him; and declared the happiness he felt, in hearing his determination to assist him in his endeavours to save Spain from the Infidels.

With reverence, with gratitude, and almost with tears, Alonzo listened to don Palayo. In silence he pressed his hand, and when he was able to articulate, he gave him an account of his sister, and told him what hopes he entertained of the duke Alphonso’s being still alive—“But we had too much to do to-day,” added Alonzo, “to be able to ascertain the truth.”

“My noble master,” cried the soldier, approaching Alonzo, to whom he had, with Pedro, given the care of Favilla, “I was ordered by the princess to tell you, that it is the duke Alphonso who is at the shepherd Lopez’s cot; he has recovered his speech and senses, and Pedro and I left the lady Favilla with him. She is well and happy.”

“Thank you for her being so, my kind friend Alonzo,” cried don Palayo; “never while my heart beats shall I forget my obligations to you. But now we can waste no longer time in conversation—it is near daylight—we must quench these smoking ruins, or the flame will communicate itself to the castle.”

The two heroes, with don Juan and Valasquez, now busied themselves to assist the soldiers in extinguishing the fires that blazed around them; and a large pit was dug for burying the dead. The body of the governor, with all those that could be collected from the flaming ruins, were consigned to their mother earth; and Alonzo had the comfort to find, that of his little troop but two were killed, though many were wounded; none mortally. Those that wanted care were soon carried to the castle, where their wounds were dressed; and Pedro, with his natural sense and cleverness, assisted in regulating every thing. The castle and the courts were searched, lest any of the enemy might lurk within its walls; but every soul that remained alive belonging to Musad had fled—a bad cause makes cowards.

By the dawn all was quiet. Don Palayo, however, to guard against a surprise, ordered the bridge to be drawn up, the gates closed, and proper centinels placed on the remaining towers.

Weary with the labour of the night, both the troops and their leaders stood in need of refreshment and repose; and our heroes repaired to the great hall, where, during their repast, they talked over the transactions of the night, when don Juan, running out in praise of the skill and coolness that Alonzo had shewn in his combat with Musad, Alonzo smiled, and said—“It is to your friendship and fearless conduct, don Juan, I owe the victory; my sword was shattered to pieces, and you placed one in my hand.”

“That I had not the happiness of doing,” returned don Juan; “I was at too great a distance to have rendered you any service; and though my eyes were fixt on you, I did not even know till now the danger you must have been in.”

“The transaction was so instantaneous, that I scarcely missed my sword,” said Alonzo, “though without my invisible friend had replaced it, I should not now sit here: but who was it that saved my life? was it you, Valasquez?”

“Would I had done so,” answered Valasquez; “I should glory in the deed.”

“Who could have been my good angel then?” asked Alonzo; and seeing the soldier near that had been with Favilla, he called to him to know whose sword it was that had been placed in his hand, and gave it to him to examine.

The man said it was unnecessary to examine it—he well knew the sword—it had served him faithfully many years—it was a famous one made at Toledo, and given him by a friend; “but,” cried the soldier, “it has never done a more glorious work than this night; it has saved your noble life, and ended that of the wicked Musad. But I, my prince, had not the honour of putting it into your hand.”

“Who did so then?” asked Alonzo.

“It was Pedro: as soon as we had left the princess Favilla in safety at the shepherd’s cottage, we returned, with all the expedition we could make, to the cavern; my heart burnt for the battle, and I rather flew than walked. I thought that even my weak efforts might be of use to you, and I most ardently wished to be near you: but all my speed could not outstrip the young shepherd; he rather outran me than lagged behind. We consulted on the best way of getting to our comrades, and determined on entering the castle by the cavern, as we thought entrance at the gate might be disputed. Even in the subterranean passage, we heard the noise of the battle like distant thunder. The falling of the tower made the ground tremble as we passed; and every moment we became more anxious to be at the scene of action. On reaching the vestibule of the castle, we found the noise and tumult of the battle was over; but I distinguished the clashing of swords, and strokes given on a shield; and cried to Pedro, that there was a single combat, and not far distant: like lightning we flew to the halls that led to the portico, where we perceived you defending yourself against the governor. I was hurrying to place myself at your side, when I felt my sword, which was naked in my hand, snatched suddenly from my grasp by Pedro, who flew, fearless of danger, and placed it in yours. He had perceived with his keen eye that you were unarmed; and, thank Heaven, the brave fellow was in time to save so valuable a life.”

Here ended the honest soldier, and every person present was charmed with his behaviour, in giving, without the smallest share of envy, the praise to Pedro that was his due.

“What brave fellows these are!” cried don Palayo; then turning to the soldier, he promised amply to reward him for his care of his sister, and the happy news he had brought him of the duke of Biscay.

Alonzo had left the hall; he sought Pedro, and in the warmest manner expressed his sense of the strong attachment he had shewn him. “I never shall have it my power,” cried the prince, “to do for you what I wish; but all that can make you happy, Pedro, I will exert myself to effect.”

“I wish, I want nothing but to remain in your service; you overrate what I have done; it was only my duty; and the joy I have in seeing you safe, and the vile governor dead, has more than overpaid me for any danger I ran.”

The modest worth of Pedro made a great impression on Alonzo and all his friends. Don Palayo, highly pleased with his open countenance, his courage, and the great anxiety he had shewn to relieve his sister from captivity, declared he would

make his fortune; and ordered, that, without separating him from the prince Alonzo, he should be taught all that could fit him for a soldier; “and then,” said he, “I shall by degrees raise you to that rank which I have no doubt you will be worthy to obtain, and, when you have attained, adorn.”

The modest shepherd, unable to utter his thanks, retired happy, and anticipating the bright prospects that opened to his view, vowing to devote his life to Alonzo, don Palayo, and his country.

Our heroes felt now the necessity of a few hours repose. Don Palayo anxiously desired to see his sister; but consulting with his friends, they thought it most prudent to inform her by Pedro of all that had passed at the castle; and that by mid-day she might expect her brother and Alonzo at the cottage. Pedro heard with joy that he was to be the messenger of such good tidings; and now setting him on his way across the mountains, as the day rose above the eastern hills, and finding ourselves nearly as weary as our heroes, for we have not left them a moment during the battle, we shall also draw a curtain round us, and “steep our senses in forgetfulness,” till we are summoned to attend on don Palayo in the hall of the castle.

## CHAP. VIII.

A SHORT repose was sufficient to recruit the strength and spirits of the heroes of the night. On the appearance of don Palayo in the hall, all collected round him, to know from him the situation of the Christians, and the hopes they might entertain of expelling the Moors, who now began to tyrannize over the whole land.

The worthy don Palayo was the only support of his sinking country—he was in possession of the Asturias—he inhabited a town on the coast—his troops, friends, and followers, he placed in every stronghold that he could secure; and even large caverns near Oviedo, served as asylums for the Spaniards. Concealed in the inaccessible mountains of the north, in Galicia, and Biscay, they depended more on the difficulties the enemy would find in reaching their habitations, than on their own powers of defence. Palayo had mourned the sad fate of the duke of Biscay, whom he loved as a brother, and determined to revenge him; and if not too late, rescue his sister from the hands of Musad. He had made the utmost expedition to reach the ruined castle, where he had been informed Favilla was carried to, after the death of her lover, and the defeat of her escort. Great then was Palayo's joy at finding the princess in safety, and his friend still alive. He proposed to the brave men assembled round him to assist in removing the duke to the castle, where he could be better accommodated than in the shepherd's cottage. "I ardently wish," said don Palayo, "to see my sister; but before I indulge myself in doing so, we must reconnoitre the castle, and give all proper orders, now that we have won it, to prevent a surprise from our enemies."

Every one acceded to the prudence of his determination; and they set out to inspect this most dreary mansion. Don Palayo found it a place of strength, and one that might be of consequence to the Christians; and he instantly gave orders to his followers to put it in the best state of defence in their power. They found, on examination, that the extent, as well as the strength of the building, was great; and its communication with the cavern rendered it a most valuable acquisition.

Don Alonzo informed him of the treasures they had found in the robber's cave, and the resolution they had come to, of putting it into his hands, for the use of his army, and the distressed Christians. Don Palayo, charmed by the disinterested conduct of his new friends, with thanks accepted the donation; and they proceeded to inspect the cavern and its recesses: they then passed to the dungeons and subterraneous parts of the castle, and there found a number of hapless Christians, both men and women, who had been confined there by the merciless governor; and as Ursula, and all those employed under her, had perished in the tower, the poor prisoners must have died in a short time for want of victuals, had not don Palayo thought of examining the dungeons. Orders were instantly given for the release of those unhappy people, and every means taken to restore them to health and peace. Some who had not been long confined, were ready and willing immediately to take up arms in the common cause, and serve under that great leader, don Palayo. The females were soon employed in preparing the different apartments of the castle for the reception of the sister and friend of their deliverer.

Ursula had said truly, that there was much treasure in the castle; a room, well secured, was found full of clothes, coin, jewels, furniture, and an immense quantity of valuables. In the present state of things, it was all consigned to the public stock.

Every one now appeared delighted at the success that had attended our heroes, and every hand was employed to make their present abode secure and comfortable. It

was an ugly and wild country that surrounded the castle; but that very circumstance was favourable to its safety.

Leaving every thing in the train they wished, don Palayo and Alonzo, attended by don Juan, Valasquez, and the happy Pedro, took their way, with some soldiers, through the mountains, to seek Favilla at old Lopez's cottage. When near it, they sent Pedro on, to inform the princess of their approach. Favilla, who anxiously wished to see her brother, and to behold in safety her friend and gallant deliverer, Alonzo, waited not their arrival at the cottage; but soon as she heard from Pedro that they were near, she flew to meet them. Joy beamed on her beautiful countenance; and throwing herself into don Palayo's arms she cried—"My brother, it is unutterable happiness to behold you again—to tell you that Alphonso lives—that his senses have returned—that he knows his Favilla"

Don Palayo pressed her a thousand times to his bosom; and Alonzo approached, to congratulate her on the happy events of the night. When giving him her hand, she said—"It is to you, my dear and gallant deliverer, I owe my present felicity; never, never shall my heart be wanting in gratitude to you; it is most deeply impressed with a sense of its obligations."

Alonzo kissed the hand he held; the friend of Cava was doubly dear to him, and he vowed ever to regard her as his sister.

Pedro had already related to the princess all that had occurred at the castle during the night, and had set her heart at rest for the safety of her friends. The death of Musad, and the reduction of the castle, placed them all in perfect security for the present.

Favilla leading the way, they entered the cottage, where they found the duke Alphonso, though pale and weak, recovering fast. His wounds were none of them mortal; though, from the great loss of blood he had sustained, his state had been most dangerous. The joy he felt on seeing his beloved Favilla and his friends, was almost too much for him. Alonzo he regarded with the truest friendship; and was endeavouring to express his feelings, when don Palayo imposed silence, declaring he would suffer no conversation that could agitate him; that they were come to remove him to the castle, where they should all remain till he was perfectly recovered, and where they should have an opportunity of consulting in what manner they could best endeavour to relieve their unhappy country. Gloomy as the castle was, Favilla now rejoiced to return to it; so true is it, that the mind can make "a heaven of hell, a hell of heaven."

The old shepherd, a skilful leach to his neighbours in the mountains, was consulted concerning the removal of the duke; and he thinking it might be done with safety, the soldiers made a sort of litter; and having placed the duke on it, the cavalcade, attended by the old shepherd, set out for the castle. The affectionate and tender Favilla would not for a moment leave Alphonso's side, and Alonzo gave her his supporting arm. Don Palayo, who had the most affectionate friendship for the duke, appeared almost as happy as Favilla, and watched every step the soldiers took, fearful of his receiving any injury in his present weak state. The duke was too well beloved by the troops, not to be an object of the greatest interest and attention to every individual.

They all arrived in perfect safety at the castle; the air, and the gentle motion of the litter, having greatly revived the duke, he was immediately placed in a commodious apartment prepared for him; and the old shepherd having succeeded so well in his care of him, he would suffer no one else to dress his wounds.

Great was Favilla's surprise at finding female attendants at the castle; she had heard of the fate of Ursula, and had supposed there was no other woman within the walls. Alonzo explained to her the search that had been made in the dungeons, and the numbers they had found there confined by the vile Musad. The princess lifted up her heart in thankfulness to Heaven for her deliverance, perfectly convinced, that had not Alonzo come to her assistance, she would soon have inhabited the dungeons.

A very few days made a great alteration in every thing in and about the castle. The duke gained strength and spirits every hour; his Favilla never left him, and proved as tender a nurse as she was a delightful companion.

Don Palayo, Alonzo, and his followers, were indefatigable in their attention to their troops, and the strengthening and repairing the castle; and all around wore a new face. It was a stronghold for don Palayo; it had long been the depot of Fernando and his gang; they were so suddenly cut off, that the plunder they had amassed still remained in the castle, even unknown to Musad, for the wily Ursula only knew what it contained.

Many of the cavaliers that were liberated attached themselves to don Palayo, to follow his fortunes; and not a common man deserted him; so that his little army was much increased by the reduction of the castle. The women were all kindly treated, and offered their liberty, and sufficient to place them in comfort; but they being all Christians, and good Spaniards, preferred the service of the princess Favilla to the danger of falling into the hands of the Moors. She now saw herself, instead of a miserable and unhappy prisoner, restored to her rank, and all those comforts unknown to her for a length of time; and although she disliked the dreary situation of the castle, and wished to get to her brother's more agreeable abode in the Asturias, yet till the duke Alphonso's health was perfectly restored, she thought it the most prudent to remain where they were.—Don Palayo was not idle; he had full employment for his active mind; but every moment he could spare he gave to the duke, who was now eager to talk on the war, and desirous again to be employed in the defence of the Christians.

Favilla anxiously wished to know something of Cava, but the fear of distressing Alonzo, who she saw was in general overwhelmed with melancholy, kept her silent. At length affection prevailed over delicacy, and she received from Alonzo a full account of every thing that respected her friend, from the time she left the court of Toledo, till with Garcia she fled from Africa. At the conclusion of his narrative, Alonzo said, his eyes swimming in tears—"Alas! I am now ignorant what part of the world contains my heart's treasure; that she meant to return to Spain, I have every reason, from the letter she left for me, to believe. I have, however, sought her in vain; and my first inducement to attack this castle was my belief that she was confined within it. I mistook you for her, Favilla; the night I so greatly alarmed you, by abruptly entering your apartment, I own to you my disappointment was severe at not finding Cava; yet, believe me, next to her, you are the being on earth I would most wish to serve."

Favilla said every thing that her grateful and affectionate heart dictated; and the duke of Biscay, who was present at this interesting conversation, again repeated his vows of friendship to Alonzo.

One evening, when the three were together, and Alonzo knew they should not be interrupted for some hours, he requested Favilla to give him an account of what had passed at Toledo, from the time that count Julian had contrived to send him into Italy, that he might be out of the way when he carried Cava to Africa—"You know,"

said the prince, “that at that time I was not allowed to see her, and that I never again returned to Toledo.”

“I know too well,” answered Favilla, “that it was a woeful hour when we all parted. I then knew none of the secrets of the court, and my thoughts were so much employed on Alphonso, and the hope of his speedy return to Toledo, that a thousand things escaped me which made an impression on others. Minds pre-occupied are bad judges of what is passing round them. I saw not the gloom on count Julian’s brow, that I was afterwards told predicted no good to the king; and for a long while I gave no credit to the stories that were every where in circulation. The first thing that gave me any alarm was the uneasiness I perceived in my brother’s mind, on his return from that daring visit to the enchanted castle.”

Favilla now related to Alonzo all that has been told in the beginning of this little history, and what would be tiresome and unnecessary to repeat.

The princess thus continued—“After this event, the king grew every day more gloomy—his excesses and his violence were every where the subject of execration—it was rumoured in every quarter, that the people would no longer suffer him; and that even the court was full of his bitter enemies. The charming and gentle Egilone left no art untried to bring Rodrigo to reason. She was adored throughout the kingdom; and while the people cursed the tyrant, they blessed her. In secret, the queen suffered a thousand cruelties from the man who had once so fondly loved her; and who, wicked as he was, could not cease to admire her. While her heart was wrung with anguish, a heavenly smile concealed her sad feelings; and disguising the wretched state of her mind, she thought only of restoring her husband to the good opinion of his subjects; but her efforts were in vain. Soon the war broke out—Rodrigo heard in gloomy despair that count Julian was his foe. But to the surprise and the delight of Egilone, the corrupt and enervated Rodrigo shook off his sloth, and appeared also to lay aside his vices. He collected his army—he called on the nobles to assist their king—he addressed them like a hero; and declaring his intention of either saving his kingdom or dying in the field, he left Toledo, followed by an immense army, and with every hope of success. The day of their departure was a miserable one for Spain. You, Alonzo, know much better than I do all that passed on the ill-fated plains of Xeres; but you can have no idea of the horror that assailed us, when many and continued messengers brought to Toledo the dreadful news of the defeat of the Christians, and the Moors success. Though the unhappy queen had severely felt the cold treatment and unkind language of the king, at bidding her farewell, yet she still flattered herself with a return of his love; and when the account was brought to Toledo, that he had found his death in the Guadaleta, a flood of grief overwhelmed the unhappy queen; and she lamented his loss more, much more, than she did her crown and liberty. The first paroxysm of grief had not subsided, when my gallant brother arrived at Toledo; he entered it in haste, attended by a faithful few; all was horror, confusion, and dismay. It was night—I was with the queen in a retired apartment of the palace—she had dismissed her weeping women, and suffered no one to remain with her but me. She had had successive faintings the whole day, and was now seated near an open lattice, for the benefit of cool air, for the night was sultry. A thousand meteors shot across the sky, and the moon seemed to walk in blood. I watched by the queen—deep sighs issued from her bosom; but the lightning’s glare passed unheeded; her thoughts were in the field of Xeres, in the Guadaleta; often she uttered the name of Rodrigo, and a deluge of tears followed. The window of the apartment looked towards one of the gates of the town. I watched each passing sound; through the silence of night, my brother’s voice struck my ear—hope revived in my bosom, and I endeavoured to

persuade Egilone all was not lost; but don Palayo's entrance banished every flattering vision—pale, fatigued, and in deep affliction, but looking what he is, a hero, he entered alone the queen's apartment. Unable to look up, Egilone hid her face with her hands, and in the most lamentable accents, asked was it true that Rodrigo was no more? My brother, violently agitated, took both her hands in his, crying—'My queen, my friend, my ever-honoured Egilone, this is not a moment to answer you—you must prepare for flight; here you must not, you cannot stay. The good archbishop Urbain—many of your friends—the nobles of your kingdom, are preparing to attend you to a place of safety. We have still many valiant soldiers left, and a number of faithful followers and friends. The mountains of the north will shelter us from the Infidels, till we can again make head against them; and don Palayo will protect you with his life—before morning we must quit Toledo.' Here don Palayo ceased; Egilone had sunk back on her seat, insensible to every thing. It was long before we could restore her to life. Don Palayo was under the necessity of leaving her to my care; he was called upon to prepare for the departure of the troops, and the multitude that wished to escape from certain destruction, should the town be taken. When the queen was recovered from her fainting fit, and restored to some degree of calmness, she sent for don Palayo, desiring to know from him exactly all that had passed in the camp; and when she had heard the whole sad relation, she positively refused for the present to quit Toledo. She said she might perhaps be still of some use there. She could not believe, that should count Julian make himself master of the place, he would treat her but as a queen; nor did she suppose he would suffer the Moors to shew her any indignity.—'Should I,' cried she, 'find at length a necessity for flight, I will undoubtedly follow you, my dear and valued friend. I shall not think myself entirely miserable, till abandoned by don Palayo.'—'That can never happen,' replied my brother, with warmth; 'I should be unworthy to live, Egilone, could I ever abandon you; but, do not delay, I beseech you—trust not count Julian's mercy—put yourself now under my care, and let me have the comfort of placing in safety the two women I love most on earth, my queen and my sister.' All the arguments that could be made use of were of no avail. The queen would not quit Toledo. Father Anselmo had prepared to follow don Palayo, but now determined to share the fortunes of the queen, since she could not be prevailed on to depart. Some ladies also remained with Egilone; others had already fled. I wished not to quit her, but she insisted on my following my brother; I wept, I begged, I besought her not to send me from her; I asked to remain with her even a few days, but she was not to be moved; she herself ordered every thing for my departure, made me the most magnificent presents, and having embraced me a thousand times and prayed for my happy meeting with the duke of Biscay, she made father Anselmo lead me half dead from her apartment; this was the last time I saw my beloved Egilone. Before the sun rose, I was sent with many others, by my brother, under a strong escort, from Toledo towards the north. Don Palayo remained all the day with the queen, spending it in vain endeavours to persuade her to quit so dangerous a situation. At length he bid her a tender adieu, and, with many friends and followers, overtook us on the road. Since that day I never have had the comfort of hearing directly from Egilone; but rumour says, that Musa's son, the gallant Abdalasis, made her his prisoner at Toledo, and that her charms have so captivated him, he has offered her his heart and his throne."

"Dear, amiable Egilone," cried Alonzo (deeply affected by all that Favilla had said), "may you be happy, and if you wed again, meet a husband that will know your worth better than the savage Rodrigo."

Just then don Palayo entering the duke's apartment, the conversation took a different turn; and the agitated Alonzo was not sorry to have the remainder of Favilla's story postponed to another evening. The different passions of his soul were set in motion when he thought on the past—Egilone claimed all his tenderness—the name of Rodrigo roused his fury; and quitting the duke's chamber, he sought to calm his perturbed spirit in a solitary ramble among the rocks that surrounded the castle. "His steps are short; he often stops; he tosses his sinewy arms; he is like a cloud in the desert, varying its form to every blast. The valleys are sad around."

END OF VOL. III.

Lane, Darling, and Co. Leadenhall Street.