

CAVA OF TOLEDO.

A ROMANCE.

Lane, Darling, and Co. Leadenhall-Street.

CAVA OF TOLEDO;

or,

The Gothic Princess.

A ROMANCE.

IN FIVE VOLUMES

BY

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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.

IN vain Alonzo endeavoured to recover any degree of calmness; he saw his lost Cava a forlorn wanderer; he knew not what climate gave her shelter; his imagination dwelt on her wrongs, her virtues, and her beauty; "She was within his soul like a fire in secret heath, which awakes at the voice of the blast, and sends its beam abroad." The night was dark and stormy, and in unison with the feelings of the unhappy prince; but the watch of midnight sounded from the castle; at a distance he heard it on the wind; and fearful of giving uneasiness to his friends by his lengthened absence, he retraced his steps, and, on entering the fortress, found a great addition to the strength of don Palayo's forces, by a number of Christians, who had been hid in the surrounding mountains, coming to place themselves under his protection, as soon as they had heard of Musad's defeat.

Every man was now of consequence to don Palayo; and though not at that moment employed in war, they found it necessary and wise to prepare for it; and had full occupation in disciplining the soldiers, and rendering them fit for a field of battle.

The duke of Biscay gained strength every day; his wounds were almost healed: again Favilla's eye sparkled with pleasure, again her cheek crimsoned with health; and as the fond eyes of the duke sought hers, love threw a rosy veil over her snowy bosom, and her modest looks were cast upon the ground. The grateful Alphonso blessed his happy fate, that had brought him from the gates of Death, to bestow on him so perfect a creature as Favilla; and he entreated don Palayo to consent to their union before they left the castle for his residence near Oviedo. "I cannot," said the duke, with ardour, "run any further risk; she must be mine before I again enter a field of battle;" and turning to don Palayo, "Fear not that so much happiness will enervate my arm; no, it will render me invincible against the Moors: who would not try to render himself worthy of such a brother as don Palayo, and such a wife as Favilla?"

"Who," said don Palayo, smiling, and taking the duke's hand, "could ever doubt the courage or the heart of the noble Alphonso? Willingly do I give my sister to your protection; you are worthy of each other."

It was then determined that, in a month from that day, the marriage of the duke and Favilla should take place; and that, after its celebration, they should leave a strong guard at the castle, and remove to don Palayo's residence near the sea coast, on the Bay of Biscay.

Alonzo was present at these arrangements, and, miserable as he was himself, his heart rejoiced in the happiness of his friends. Favilla was endeared to him by every bond of friendship, but most of all by her strong attachment to Cava, whom she daily lamented, and whom she determined to seek, if possible, all over Spain, and try to persuade her to take up her abode with her; and she often declared to Alonzo, could she obtain that wish, no other would remain to her on earth.

Again alone with Favilla and the duke, Alonzo entreated he might be made acquainted with the remainder of their adventures, and how it happened that they were so persecuted by the governor Gion.

“I have now little to relate,” said Favilla, “but that little makes me shudder with horror, for it shews me the dreadful abyss I have escaped: but you, my kind friend, who have saved me from the misery that hung over me, are entitled to know the whole of my sad narration.

“I think our conversation was interrupted where I told you that the good Anselmo led me half dead from the chamber of the queen. My heart indeed was bursting, and I felt almost indifferent to what became of me when I left Toledo. My brother’s foresight had provided for every thing; and, considering the suddenness of our flight, all that left the city were wonderfully well accommodated. The good bishop Urbain was with us, and I experienced from him all the tenderness of a father. We had continued our journey two days before my brother overtook us; he then joined us with a number of troops; and those that remained behind him escorted numbers of the citizens, men, women, and children. Seeing that such a multitude suffered a thousand hardships that I was free from, and that in my flight I had a hope of happiness that none of them had, for I still looked to my union with the duke of Biscay, I grew ashamed of my weakness and my grief; I endeavoured to dry my tears, and suppress unreasonable feelings, and to accept with thankfulness the good that I saw in prospect. I was soon rewarded for my determination, by the opportunities it afforded me of being useful to others; the thousand sweet attentions that a feeling mind bestows on those around them, is sure to bring tenfold pleasure to the human heart. I was a proof of this; for, before our melancholy journey was ended, there were few in our unfortunate company that did not vow an eternal friendship to don Palayo and his sister; and I believe there was not a soldier belonging to us that would not have laid down his life in my defence: indeed,” cried the princess, her voice faltering, and her eyes filling with tears, “the slaughter in the valley, where you, Alphonso, were so sadly wounded, was a strong proof of the attachment of the troops; for many brave men have fallen in my defence, whom I shall for ever lament.”

Here the gentle Favilla was some minutes before she could proceed. Alphonso’s tenderness assuaged her grief; and casting towards him a mingled look of gratitude and affection, she continued her discourse.

“You may suppose, Alonzo, that with such numbers, we travelled slowly towards the north; by degrees, however, these numbers decreased; we were not all destined to reach one spot. The country the most secure from the Moors was marked out as the abode for many; whole families took up their habitation in large caves in the mountains, and many in those large towns and villages where the Moors had not as yet appeared: a settled plan was adopted, or every thing must have been in confusion. Unfortunately for me, Musad, the governor of Gion, pretended a violent friendship for my brother; by birth and in outward shew he was a Christian, in his heart a renegado, and secretly in league with the Moors; for which reason he was left by them governor of a large district. When we were at some distance from his town, he came out to meet us, expressed unbounded joy at don Palayo’s safety, admired his valour, his activity, and declared him above all praise, for his protection of the Christians against their cruel masters.—He then besought my brother to remain some time with him; advised his placing his troops near the town, accepting for ourselves accommodation in his palace, and every assistance in his power to give to the Christians that accompanied us. He deceived the good Urbain by the respect he pretended for religion, and the attention he paid him. Don Palayo, not doubting the sincerity of the man, whose appearance was so plausible, consented to remain some time

in the district of which he was governor; and the deceitful Musad received us into his town and palace, with the shew of the utmost sincerity. I thought him hideous, malignant, and cunning, from the first moment I beheld him; and I confess at times his looks made me tremble; but his politeness was such, and his professions of friendship so great, that I kept my bad opinion of him concealed in my own bosom, not thinking I had a right to speak unkindly of one whose assistance don Palayo hoped might be of the utmost service to the cause of the Christians. After some time, Musad took an opportunity of persuading my brother to go on business, as he said, of the highest importance, to general Tariff; he even held out to him that the Moors might yet be persuaded to quit the country, and quietly give up the conquests they had made, if we could bribe them sufficiently—"For," said Musad, "their tenure of Spain is as yet very uncertain; and there is wanted a wise and brave man to negociate this business—you, don Palayo, are that man; and you will, if you undertake it, crown yourself with eternal glory, and the Christians will idolize and reverence you as the first of human beings."

"My brother saw not much to hope, notwithstanding all the arguments that Musad made use of; but he considered he should be to blame to neglect any thing that could be of advantage to his country, and determining not to lay down his arms but with a certainty of honourable peace, he would not refuse to negociate. Taking leave of me and the friends he left behind, he recommended us most strongly to the governor till his return. Many were the assurances that Musad gave him of fidelity to his cause, and eternal friendship; and Palayo left us, perfectly secure with respect to my safety, and the honour of the governor.

"In a few days after his departure, Musad's manners assumed a very different appearance; he lost his distance and respect for me, and treated me with a familiarity and gallantry perfectly disgusting: had he been the first king in the world, and my heart disengaged, he was so odious to me, that I should rather have died than accepted his hand; as it was, you may suppose how miserable I became, when he no longer made a secret of the violent passion he had conceived for me; from the hour he chose to declare it publicly, he allowed me no peace; I was continually intruded on by him; and under the plea of care for my person, I was constantly watched—I could not move without a spy. This conduct enraged me; I remonstrated in the strongest terms; I told him I never could be his; I assured him I was most solemnly engaged to the duke of Biscay; I desired to be left free and at peace. When I mentioned the duke, he put on a most malignant and sarcastic smile; and looking a perfect demon, said—"Lady, if I cannot obtain your love, I will at least have your hand; love lasts the longest that comes after marriage; you must be my wife; when once you are so, I will venture to say you will not repent it: it will be for the good of Spain that we should be united; your brother must think so, for I have written to him on the subject, and shortly expect his answer."

"He ceased; and notwithstanding my bad opinion of him, his great effrontery astonished me; and looking at him with the utmost contempt, I said—"How dare you, Musad, insult me in this manner? know you not that I am of royal blood, and cannot match with you? I am convinced you have not the temerity to write to don Palayo on such a subject."—"Rather suppose," answered he, with the most provoking coolness, "that actuated by love and glory, I have demanded your hand from don Palayo"—"He will rather die than grant it," returned I with indignation. —"We shall soon see," cried the monster; "and I promise you, my fair princess, that the measures I shall take will entirely

depend on the answer I receive from your brother. I beseech you, lady, to be gay; enjoy the pleasures of a palace, in which you shall shortly command, and waste not the time between this and don Palayo's answer in vain regrets; if you weep, your bright eyes will lose their lustre; and to a lady there is no loss like that of beauty; look as you do now, and notwithstanding your disdain, I must ever adore you.' Then seizing my hand, in spite of my endeavours to prevent him, he raised it to his lips. He saw the contempt I held him in; and, though inwardly provoked at it, he from this hour put some constraint on himself; he still surrounded me with spies. In public every attention was paid to my rank; my attendants, though watched as strictly as I was, were still allowed to remain near me. So secure did I feel of my brother's entire disapprobation of the governor's proposal and conduct, that I thought myself silly in having the least uneasiness on that account. I thought it, however, most prudent to let him know my situation; and eluding the vigilance of the spies that surrounded me, I contrived to send him a letter, beseeching him to return as soon as possible, and free me from the odious Musad, who had dared to insult me by an offer of marriage: having sent my letter so as to be certain it was safely delivered, I felt myself more composed.

"I avoided seeing the governor, when it was possible for me to do so; and I endeavoured to amuse myself by planning my future life; and giving the reins to my imagination, I saw myself safely and securely settled in Biscay with Alphonso: think then what my horror must have been, when one morning the detested Musad presented me a letter from don Palayo, while he held one to himself open in his hand. I was going, with a trembling hand, to open my brother's letter, when the insolent Musad prevented me, by saying—'I hope, amiable Favilla, you will no longer frown on my ardent passion, or treat me as you have hitherto done; you will see by the prince don Palayo's letter, he does not like you accuse me of presumption in looking up to you; no, he is too wise to tempt his fate; he accepts my offers as he ought to accept them; he perfectly sees the advantages they hold out to him, and, allow me to say, to you also—assure yourself, my fair Favilla, that, secure of your wise brother's consent to our union, I shall never relinquish my prize. I have waited on you to make known my intentions, and also don Palayo's; and I shall immediately give orders for the most splendid preparations for our nuptials; be satisfied, my queen, they shall be all you could wish.'

"I was mute with terror; he took no notice of my distress, but read aloud don Palayo's letter. It was full of acknowledgments to the vile governor for his care of me; he gave his consent to his union with me; and said, to prove how agreeable the marriage was to him, he must request Musad to appoint the celebration of it for that day month, when he would, if alive, attend in person to see his beloved sister so happily disposed of.

"Exultingly Musad read the letter. My astonishment every moment increased; terror took the place of every other feeling; and without making any answer, I tore open the letter I held in my hand. Alas! its contents agreed exactly with what I had just listened to; and I knew my brother's writing too well to suppose the letters were counterfeit: for some moments I stood like one condemned to execution; then giving a deep groan, I fell senseless to the ground. I remained for a long time insensible to the misery of my situation; when I recovered from the faintings into which I had been thrown, I was so weak and ill, that for some days I looked with pleasure on my approaching end; but the king of terrors does not always attend the call of the unhappy; in spite of what I endured, my health returned, and I was no longer suffered to be alone; Musad had the insolence to

declare, if I did not mix with company as usual, he would be the continual companion of my solitude. This decided me; I again appeared in public, for by doing so could I alone avoid his odious attentions.

“With horror I saw the preparations for my nuptials; and I could not on this occasion reconcile my brother’s present cruelty with his former tenderness. ‘Can he,’ thought I, ‘to favour his ambition, treat me thus? can he sell me to the vile Musad? can he forget his friendship with the duke of Biscay?’ At times my heart rose in anger against this dear brother; at other times I was melted into tears of tenderness, and feared his hopes were desperate respecting the part he had taken. ‘Can he,’ said I, ‘can such a man as Palayo lean on Musad for support? can he be fallen so low as to wish a connexion with him? do my ears and eyes deceive me? is what I have heard a dream, and are the preparations I behold only the visions of a distracted brain?’ Terrified at the near approach of the time I trembled only to think of, I again wrote to my brother, and trusted my letter to one I knew I could confide in.

“I implored don Palayo to consider that I was his sister, once dearly loved by him; that in consenting to Musad’s proposal, he consigned me to eternal misery; and I besought him to fly to my succour, instead of joining with my enemies to oppress and degrade me. I said all I thought could move the heart of my brother; and only wondered, when I had finished my epistle, how it could be necessary for me to say so much. I wept and sighed over it, and consigning it to my friend, I waited with the utmost anxiety for his return; but, alas! no messenger returned—no letter, came; and, if I was to believe Musad, Palayo himself had appointed the celebration of the nuptials for the next day. Never shall I forget my feelings when that morning rose. The dawn announced a glorious day, but to me all was dark and dismal; I loathed the light of the sun, and should have blessed the hand that had put an end to my existence. Towards noon, Musad sent me the most magnificent presents; I did not deign to look on them, and remained in an inner apartment lost in grief. Long I was not suffered to indulge it; an unusual bustle in the palace announced the arrival of don Palayo, and I soon saw him enter my apartment with a cheerful countenance, and followed close by the detestable governor. Much as I loved my brother, his air and manner provoked me; and instead of meeting him with affection, I shrunk from his embrace. He smiled, and carelessly turning to Musad, said—‘My friend, you must excuse a timid beauty, bred in a court, and always indulged. Come,’ added he, taking my unwilling hand, ‘I will have you smile, Favilla; you are fortunate, if you will but think yourself so; in a very short time, you will own to me that you are completely happy.’

“As my brother spoke, he gave me a look that imported much, but that I at the moment did not perfectly understand. Musad almost set me mad, as he seemed to exult in the success of all his schemes; and he looked more assured and insolent than ever. I was silent; my rage, my astonishment, and my disappointment in my brother, took from me the power of speech. For some time they remained in my apartment; and I found, by the conversation that passed, that don Palayo and Musad were to spend the whole of the day together on business, and that I was expected to partake of an evening banquet, that had been ordered in honour of my brother. My faculties were all benumbed; I could only bow my head, as don Palayo desired my appearance at it. He and Musad rose to depart, and the latter, turning to look at something in the saloon, don Palayo, quick as thought, threw a letter close to me on the ground, intimating by his looks it was for me; I had the

presence of mind to place my foot on it till they were out of sight, and then eagerly snatching it from the ground, I read the following words:—‘Dearest Favilla, don Palayo would sooner die than sacrifice you to Musad; but beware of your conduct; appear at the banquet with as little disgust as you can shew, and at midnight admit me to your apartment; at that hour I shall be at the private door nearest the gallery; dismiss your women—our lives are at stake, and we are narrowly watched; I have much to say to you. Alphonso is well, and almost as dear to me as he is to you. Be prudent, and all will yet tend to your happiness.’

“You may judge the effect these few lines had on me; they indeed brought me from the brink of the grave; I could with difficulty admit the delightful hope they inspired; yet I plainly saw my brother intended to prevent the hateful ceremony he had himself appointed to take place the next day; it appeared to me a thing nearly impossible; yet I would rely on his truth—I would hope every thing. Having read the note over a hundred times, and as often fixed my eyes with transport on what he said of Alphonso, I destroyed the paper, that not a vestige of it might remain; and summoning my women, I prepared for the banquet, with a heart, though palpitating and trembling at every sound, yet more at ease than I believed some hours before I should ever find it. During the evening, I acted my part better than I had hoped to do. Don Palayo’s cheerfulness surprised me; but I knew him wise, and was satisfied he had reasons unknown to me for his conduct. At length I was permitted to return to my own apartment; and never did time move so slow as between that and midnight.

“I dismissed my attendants, and hiding the light that burnt on my table, I watched at the private door the sound of don Palayo’s steps. True to his appointment, he came to the moment; he saw my great anxiety by my watching; but whispering silence, he entered the room, and gently closing the door, led me to a seat at a distance from it. ‘How could you think, Favilla,’ cried he, ‘even for a moment, that I could give up your happiness for any earthly consideration? no; on my soul, it is dearer to me than my own; and much as I love you, I would rather see you dead, than sacrificed to the odious Musad: but had I not deceived him with false hopes, you might before this day have been his victim; and I, with many whose lives I am anxious to preserve, would have fallen in your cause.’ Here this dear brother informed me he had received my letters, which he did not dare to answer, as we were beset with spies; that his murder was determined on by Musad, had his consent been refused to the marriage; that a general massacre of the Christians in and about the town would have taken place; and I should have been made his wife by force. Don Palayo having certain information of all this horrible plot, consented, in appearance most willingly, to the governor’s wishes, and himself fixed the day for the nuptials, that he might have a month to prepare a counter-plot, which might assist him and all his friends to escape from a monster, of whose character he was not aware when he entered his district. My brother then assured me, that his troops, and those Christians dispersed through the town and the surrounding country, were all in readiness to fly from the tyrant, if even they were to fight their way; but till he gave the signal, not a man was to stir; ‘that signal,’ said he, ‘must be given tomorrow night, at the hour appointed for the ceremony of your marriage. Musad has fortunately fixed it for the hour of midnight, and a great feast is to precede it. You must appear at this feast in your bridal habit; be cheerful, and fear nothing; seek not to have any conversation with me; and be ready to follow me the moment I seize your hand.’ My brother then rose, embraced me, and, through prudence,

refused to stay another moment in my apartment. 'Be upon your guard, and doubt me not, Favilla;' these were his last words: a dead weight was taken from my heart; and I adored the brother that risked every thing to save me from a wretched fate. I knew not his plans, but I fully relied on his prudence and wisdom; and, for the first time for many weeks, I enjoyed peaceful slumbers.

"The day appointed for my nuptials, and once so dreaded, now beamed upon me without inspiring terror; depending on don Palayo, as he directed, I collected all I had of value, and all the jewels that were not that day to adorn my person, and sent them to the apartments where he resided. He soon came with the governor to pay me a morning visit.

"Musad then informed me, that midnight was the hour appointed to bless him with my hand; that the chapel belonging to his palace was at that moment decorating for the occasion; but long before that happy hour, he would expect me to grace a banquet, where I should receive the homage of those in his court most worthy my notice. I was silent; I could not behold the insolent monster without fear and abhorrence; and involuntarily I stepped back to avoid him. I thought I could perceive a malignant joy in his eye, which seemed to say he would soon be master, and controul me at his pleasure.

"On my continuing silent, my brother answered I should obey his orders. They departed; and soon after I was obliged to prepare for my appearance at the banquet. Towards evening I received a line by a trusty attendant, who waited not for an answer; I opened the paper and read—'Dress yourself with the utmost magnificence; attend the feast at the appointed time, with all the cheerfulness you can assume; fear nothing, all goes well; trust to don Palayo.' These few words were a cordial to my drooping spirits: I did as my kind protector advised, and willingly attended those who were sent to conduct me to the hall, where the insolent and proud Musad played the part of a king, and could not conceal his delight at seeing every one submit to his power.

"I own to you, my friends, that as firm as was my reliance on don Palayo, at times I trembled; and my heart almost died within me, as it presaged a fatal catastrophe. The banquet was long and wearisome; seated between Musad and my brother, I felt myself completely miserable; and as I often turned from the odious attentions of Musad to look at don Palayo, and ask by my eyes what was the meaning of all this, and how it would end, I fancied I saw in his countenance the utmost anxiety, concealed from common observers under the mask of joy. Weary and languid with the scene, I was almost tempted to rise from table, when a look from my brother fixed me to my seat; and he proposed to Musad drinking to my health. Musad accepted the challenge; large goblets of wine were brought, and by don Palayo's orders the trumpets were sounded. Musad, not satisfied with one goblet, called for a second, and drank to the bottom. I saw Palayo's eyes fixed earnestly upon him; in a few minutes he seemed suddenly overcome with the wine he had drunk, and my brother, rising and seizing my hand, said aloud—'it was now time to lead me to the chapel.' Musad sat with a stupid stare, and suffered us to quit the hall alone. My brother had fast hold of me, and hurrying me quickly on, I found he was followed by a number of his friends, who were always in attendance on his person. He whispered one near him; they all took a different direction, and he still hurried me towards the chapel. I saw at a distance the lights within, the guards that surrounded the door, and heard music from the interior. I trembling asked where he was leading me? at that moment a violent noise from that part of the palace we had left assailed our ears. I started at the sound, but don Palayo cried—'Fear nothing, my sister, all is well; we must instantly fly, and we

shall soon be beyond the tyrant's power.' By this time we were descending the steps that led into the chapel; a priest met us, and I soon found he was in the confidence of the prince. He threw a dark cloak over my splendid dress, and leading us with the utmost expedition through an aisle lighted only by the faint glimmerings of distant lamps, he opened a trap door, and making us descend a flight of steps, he followed, closing the door most carefully after him, and fastening it on the side we were at. He then took a dark lanthorn from his bosom, and making a motion to us to be silent and follow him, he preceded us with the light; and I hung on my brother's arm, wondering and anxious to escape from the dismal abode (for I perceived we were in the vaults of the chapel, among the mouldering dead), and I must confess my weakness—I was shocked when I beheld, by the pale light I followed, broken coffins and human bones scattered round this melancholy abode of death.

"The vaults were extensive, and we were long in passing them; the air was damp and putrid, and my spirits began to fail, when we happily came to the end of our journey; a grated door admitted a moonbeam to this dreary place, and, as our guide unclosed it, the fresh and cool air brought back my scattered senses; with joy I rushed through the narrow outlet, and found myself in the open country. 'Here you are safe, my prince,' cried the good father; 'and I must accompany you in your flight, for was I to return, certain death would attend me.' Don Palayo assured him he would ever protect him; and leading me forward, we found our attendants waiting with horses ready for us. We all mounted; our guide led the way; and my brother then told me, that in a few hours we should come up with a large party of our friends; that every soul belonging to us had got safely out of Musad's power; and that we were protected by a large body of troops not far distant. 'I would before this have made you acquainted with all my schemes,' said he, 'but a single word dropped in the hearing of a spy might have undone us. I completely deceived the wretch by consenting to his marriage; had I reproved his insolence, and refused his alliance, he would have called the Moors to his assistance, for he is a renegado. My plans you see, Favilla, have been well laid, and, thank Heaven, have succeeded. I have some faithful followers, who have conducted every thing; and not a single domestic belonging to us has been left in Musad's power: the signal for our friends to quit the town was the trumpet that sounded at the banquet. I did not wish to murder the wretch; it would have been a shocking and inglorious deed; I therefore spared his worthless life; but I bribed his cupbearer to give him a strong opiate in his wine; I watched the effect, and when I was certain of its influence, I withdrew you from the hall. He must for many hours submit to the power of the draught; it will not injure him; but his most skilful leech will not be able to awake him for a length of time; and till they do so, no one will think of pursuing don Palayo: and you, my dear Favilla, will, I hope, be soon in a place of safety, under the protection of the duke of Biscay.'

"Here I stopped my brother; I was nearly overcome with joy. 'When? where shall I see Alphonso?' cried I; 'does he know what I have endured?—is he near?—is he coming to my succour?'—'He is near, he is coming to your succour,' replied Palayo; 'I have apprized him of our situation; he flies on the wings of love to protect you; and tomorrow, I trust, we shall meet him on our way.'

"We travelled most part of the night, over mountains and unfrequented roads; towards morning, my brother insisted on my taking some refreshment, and a few hours rest. We had reached a beautiful and retired spot, surrounded with trees; and under their

shade some cloaks were spread, and I was forced by don Palayo to take some repose; he and his followers kept guard while I slept. Relieved from the distress of mind I had so long laboured under, and fatigued with my journey, I instantly fell into the most profound sleep, which lasted till broad day. On awaking, what language can express the happiness I felt on beholding Alphonso near me! I started in transport from the ground; and my heart owned, that a fugitive in a wilderness, the earth my resting-place, the canopy of heaven the only roof that sheltered me, I yet felt a moment of more real happiness than I had ever experienced in the splendid court of Toledo. To be rescued from the power of the odious Musad, and restored to the duke of Biscay, was such perfect bliss as beggars all description.”

“Never,” cried Alphonso, interrupting her, “never, my charming Favilla, shall I forget your looks at the moment you awoke; had a doubt ever entered my mind of your affection, it must have vanished when your speaking countenance told the feelings of your constant heart, and infused transport into mine.”

Favilla’s eyes thanked the duke for his interpretation, and she continued—“The glorious sun now gave light and comfort to the earth, and our guard spread upon the ground some milk and fruits, that they had procured among the mountain shepherds, and, placing ourselves under the shade of the trees, we made a delicious repast. Some of don Palayo’s soldiers, who had lingered in the town, now joined us; they informed us that the greatest confusion reigned in the palace; that after we had left the hall, the governor had fallen from his chair, and for some time he was believed to be dead; but his physician being called, pronounced him only in a lethargy, and declared his life was not in the least danger. For some hours we had not been missed, and all was quiet; but when it was found that don Palayo’s people had fled, and that neither we nor our attendants were seen in the palace, it was rumoured that my brother had carried me off, to prevent my marriage with the governor; it was also believed, that as soon as Musad should recover from his stupor, he would pursue us.

“Don Palayo now thought it most prudent to commit me to Alphonso’s care, attended by some faithful soldiers then with us, for many had joined us, and others came with the duke. It was settled that we should take the most unfrequented roads, and the shortest passes through the mountains, till we reached the residence of don Palayo, who declared his intention of remaining with his followers, and the rest of his troops, and making head against Musad, should he attempt a pursuit. Alphonso and I rose to depart; and no one seemed to doubt our being safe from the danger of an attack on the part of the governor. On bidding us adieu, my brother desired us to preside at his castle, till he should join us there; and he feared it would be some time before he had that satisfaction, as the numbers he had with him would render his march slow, and he believed he would take a circuitous course.

“I would willingly have remained with this excellent brother, but yielded to his better judgment, and sorrowfully bade him farewell.

“Alphonso said every thing to cheer my soul; and we travelled the whole of the day in safety, through solitary wilds and boundless wastes, and saw none of the human race, except now and then a shepherd driving his flock from steep to steep, to seek their scanty food; but with the decline of the sun my terrors returned; and if a hare crossed our path, or a bird fluttered on a blasted tree, I trembled, fearful of seeing the horrible Musad. The soldiers that were with me endeavoured to allay my fears, by assuring me I had

nothing to dread; it was not us the governor would pursue; it was don Palayo, whose route must be known; we had taken indirect and intricate paths, and in all human probability could not be traced. Alas! it was too certain that at the moment we were traced, and that some miserable individual had betrayed us to the governor.

“As soon as the effects of the opium was over, he was made acquainted with what had passed; and, burning with rage and revenge, he ordered out a party to pursue us, offering a great reward to any one who could certainly point out the road we had taken. An unfortunate being, who had for some unknown cause returned to the town, and who had heard don Palayo point out to Alphonso the road we should take, dazzled by the reward he heard proclaimed, was tempted to betray us; and going to the renegado, offered to conduct him before night to where he should find me. Musad was enchanted; he paid the treacherous soldier the gold, and then gave him into the care of his guards till he should perform his promise; then setting himself at the head of some chosen troops, he left don Palayo to pursue his march unmolested, and with the utmost expedition followed Alphonso and me through the mountains. He came up to us in a narrow pass near the valley, where the battle was fought, of which Pedro has already given you the sad account. You know how many brave men perished in my defence, and how near I was to being made the most miserable wretch on earth by losing Alphonso. It would be impossible for me to attempt describing to you, Alonzo, any thing that occurred at that dreadful hour. When I beheld Musad opposed to the duke, I lost all sense of what was passing; and the first thing I remember afterwards, was opening my eyes on the countenance of the disgusting Ursula, in the chamber where you found me; from her I heard that all my attendants were slain, and the duke no more.

“Successive faintings followed this news. The savage Ursula, tired of the trouble I gave her, ordered the guard to chain me to the pillar; then pouring a cordial by force down my throat, she had me lifted on the couch, and there left me for hours to mourn my sad fate, returning once or twice in the day to make me swallow something to support nature. You know that the length of my chain allowed me to move about; but it was heavy, and completely prevented my endeavours to escape; so that the fiend who guarded me, knowing I could not elude her power, was careless of paying me any other attention than just enough to keep me in existence; and to this I owe my present safety; for had she been more frequent in her visits, and discovered you in my apartment, she would have summoned the guard, and we should have been undone.”

“You forget, my dear friend,” said Alonzo, “that what we owe our safety to was the love of the fond Ursula for the robber Fernando; you know, as I glided before her in the vestibule, she took me for his ghost; and affirmed to you that he came nightly to visit her, from the violent passion he had conceived for her while living.”

“Well,” cried the duke, smiling, “if this is the case, we must certainly give Ursula the merit of a constant attachment.”

“Poor wretch,” said Favilla, “she was very hardened; and, I fear, had a very guilty conscience. I wish you could have seen her in all her finery, when she went to sup with the guard, for so extraordinary, hideous, and ridiculous a figure, I never beheld.

“Now, my kind friend, Alonzo, you are acquainted with all that relates to me since we parted at Toledo; and, considering the sad scenes we have gone through, I think it most wonderful that we are here to relate them: what would I not give that you were at this moment as happy as your friend! of this, however, be assured, that don Palayo, the

duke of Biscay, and myself, will do our utmost to render you so; nothing on our part shall be wanting to restore peace to your mind; let us look forward, my friend, to better and happier days.”

Here the gentle Favilla ceased; and Alonzo thanking her for her narration, but chiefly for her tender friendship, declared, that in her society, and in that of the duke of Biscay and don Palayo, he should find every mitigation of his sorrows that was to be found in this world. In such conversations these attached friends spent much of their time, while they remained at their present abode.

Nothing material happened at the castle during the duke’s convalescence. Don Palayo was indefatigable in augmenting his army, and training his troops. Accompanied by Alonzo and some more trusty friends, he reconnoitred the country to a great distance, and formed plans for his future conduct.

At the expiration of a month, he gave his sister to her worthy lover, and for ever secured the duke Alphonso’s friendship, and his assistance in all the schemes he afterwards so fortunately executed; and which, in the course of time, brought about the expulsion of the Moors from Spain.

As nothing farther occurred that can interest the reader while our heroes continued at Musad’s castle (now don Palayo’s by right of conquest), wishing the new-married couple all the felicity they can enjoy in a well-assorted marriage, founded on the only true basis for happiness, that of pure and mutual affection, we shall for some time lose sight of them; and, leaving them to divide their hours between love and glory, seek our heroine, whom we left so long since launched on the world of waters, attended by her faithful friend, Garcia, and casting an anxious and tearful eye towards Spain.

Here, however, we must ourselves slacken our sails, and anchor for the night in yon commodious harbour. Morpheus there keeps his court, and will cover us with his broad wings from the dangers of the night: with the morning’s dawn, exhilarated by its balmy breath, we will again unfurl our sails, lift our heavy anchor, and seek the wanderer on the boundless deep,

“Nor leave her in a land no longer seen,
Where oceans roll, and mountains rise between.”

CHAP. II.

ARRIVED at this part of my story, I own myself at a loss how to proceed; I have so long resigned my heroine to oblivion, that I almost fear, if my readers are not possessed of the best memory in the world, they will have done the same; and that, fascinated by the graces of Favilla, they will feel less interest for Cava.

But, as in generous bosoms the unhappy always find a friend, I will dismiss my fears; and having rested from the fatigue I suffered in following Alonzo for many weeks from one extremity of Spain to the other, fighting battles, and liberating captives, I will now, borne, I hope, on more fortunate wings than those of Icarus, seek my wanderer in the wide Atlantic; for there, if my memory is true, we parted. Yonder I behold the galley that bears her from the far distant island, the asylum of Alvarez. "She is dim in its sides—the night has covered her beauty—her hair sighs on ocean's wind—her robe streams in dusky wreaths—she is like the faint spirit of Heaven in the midst of his shadowy mist."

From the time that Garcia's galley had left the Canary Islands, favourable winds had filled its sails; cloudless days and starry nights had attended its course; and the joyful pilot shortly found himself in the known track towards the pillars of Hercules. The shores of Africa and of Spain now rose to view; and, while the mariners shouted with joy, don Garcia and Cava, with mournful steps pacing the deck, cast to both shores their anxious and inquiring eyes; but, alas! at the present no information could they hope for of what was passing in either country.

Garcia believed it most prudent to make for the port of Carthage; there their galley steered, and safely entered. All rejoiced once more to have regained their native land, all but Cava, who dreaded she might never find the father, or the asylum she was come to seek.

Garcia having discharged the crew and sold the vessel, advised Cava to remain for some days where they were, both to rest after their voyage, and to make inquiries respecting the state of the country.

Under a pilgrim's habit, the princess concealed her person and her rank; she also took the precaution of darkening her lovely complexion to nearly the dye of Egypt; and shortening those graceful locks that ornamented her beautiful head, and hung in ringlets on her ivory neck. Her large hat almost concealed her face; and little remained of Cava, to outward appearance, but her majestic air; this no disguise, nor even her own endeavours, could divest her of.

Garcia was indefatigable in seeking information on the state of his country; but his inquiries were useless; nothing was known of count Julian: many Christians had fled; and all he could learn was, that the dominion of the Moors was absolute.

Trembling for his wife and child, he was now as desirous as Cava to reach Toledo; and as soon as they were rested from the fatigues of their voyage, they commenced their journey towards that city.

During their course they were witnesses to sights of woe; and every where the faces of the inhabitants were marked with sorrow. As they approached Toledo, their grief was great at the desolation it presented; its towers were fallen—its gates were prostrate in the dust. The Moors seemed masters of the town; they guarded the ruined battlements; and, as they passed along, they appeared to outnumber the Christians. Cava's heart

swelled in her bosom; her staff could not sustain her tottering limbs, and she leaned on Garcia for support.

They entered the town, silent and in sorrow; they traversed the streets towards the quarter where Garcia's house stood; impatiently he advanced towards the entrance, and was pushing forward, when he was opposed by a young Moor, who asked his business? The terrified Garcia declared his name and quality, both which he had a little while before determined on concealing; and trembling with anxiety and terror, demanded if his wife and child were there? The Moor answered with good nature, and as if he felt his distress—"Christian, they are not here; they left this house in safety some weeks since, on the taking of the town by our brave general Abdalesis, the son of Musa. Your wife retired to the monastery of your saint Issidore; I liked this house, and gave her value for it, with which she seemed well satisfied. I have since heard nothing of her; I hope you may find her well:" then looking earnestly at Garcia, and the poor pilgrim that leaned on him, the Moor added—"Enter, Christians; you seem fatigued; you are welcome to repose and food within these walls. Abdalesis is no tyrant; and those in command under him emulate his bright example, and shew mercy to the conquered. I entreat you to accept my offers."

Garcia gratefully thanked the generous Moor; but excused himself from accepting his hospitality, from his impatience to seek his family.

Cava had been silent; but as they turned from the door, she lifted her fine eyes to the Moor's face, saying—"Kind stranger, know you any thing of count Julian? does he live?"

The Moor, gazing on her, stepped back, struck with her sorrow and her beauty, though in disguise; believing her deeply interested for the count, he would not add to her grief, by telling her his supposed fate; and with hesitation he replied—"Lady, I know not what is become of count Julian; when last I saw him, it was in the plains of Xeres."

A deep sigh expressed the sorrow and disappointment of the pilgrim; and silently bowing to the Moor, she again laid hold on Garcia's arm, and they took the way to the convent. Many were the desolated streets they passed through; many the heaps of ruins over which they trod.

At a distance the royal palace appeared full in view. Cava entreated Garcia to turn from it, and take the way to St. Issidore by a more circuitous path.

"I fear," cried Garcia, "from what I now behold, that that royal palace, once the seat of mighty kings, is now the habitation of Infidels: few are the Christians we meet, and they seem willing to shun us."

"Oh!" cried Cava, stopping, and speaking with energy, "could I but know if the excellent, the charming Egilone still exists—if she and my beloved Favilla still inhabit Toledo—if they are within yon palace—and if the Moors treat them with the respect due to their rank and character."

The princess now appeared doubtful whether she should not retrace her steps, and at the gates of the palace make the wished inquiries for her friends.

"Do not think of approaching the palace," cried Garcia; "recollect you wish not, you cannot, indeed, wish to be known for the daughter of count Julian; it might be fatal to you; neither Christians nor Infidels would, perhaps, shew you mercy: let us hasten to St. Issidore; we shall hear all from the good fathers."

"Garcia, my kind friend, I yield to your cooler judgment; and I submit with humility to the decrees of fate. Once high in rank, surrounded with splendour, possessed

of riches, of all the world could bestow, I have a hundred times passed, with a train of flattering followers, these streets, through which I am now wandering a wretched pilgrim, destitute of parents, of friends, of a home, where I could pass, in safety and without molestation, the short remainder of my miserable life: but Heaven's will be done," she cried. "What passes here below can little effect one whose ardent desire is to quit a world that holds out no comfort."

Garcia mourned the sufferings he had not the power to mitigate; and, in sad silence, they found themselves before the gate of St. Issidore. It was soon opened to them; their outward appearance declared them Christians, and they were instantly admitted. The good and humble fathers of the house came round them; and seeing they were sad and weary, offered refreshment, and all the poverty of their house afforded.

"The world has frowned upon us," said one of the oldest of the fathers; "the Moors have robbed us of every thing of value we possessed; and we have now barely what will support us; but our habitation, our hearts, and our hands, are still open to our distressed Christian brethren; and you, strangers, are welcome to share with us what the goodness of God has left us. We see that you are Christians, mourning over your lost country, and execrating the vile count Julian, who has so wickedly, wantonly, and cruelly, brought destruction on it."

Cava, who had been considering whether she should not discover her real name and quality to the religious of the house of St. Issidore, hearing these words, trembled in every limb; and leaning against the wall for support, she was just fainting, when one of the fathers brought her a cordial, and assisting her to a seat, entreated her to be composed.

Garcia, shocked also at what he had heard, and not wishing to be known for count Julian's friend, intimated to the princess to be silent on the subject; and then requested to know of the good religious, "if the wife of Garcia, who had formerly lived at the court of Toledo, had, with her child, taken refuge in the house of St. Issidore? for, if she was still under the protection of the fathers, he would desire an interview with her, as he had something of importance to communicate respecting her husband."

"She has quitted this asylum long since," replied Turpin, the most ancient of the fathers; "and I have heard that she and her child are with queen Egilone at Seville. She sent us a message some time ago, by a Christian that passed this way; she, poor thing, and her infant, were in health; but her anxiety on her husband's account was great; she knew not what was become of him. I feared she would die of grief while she remained here; though the Infidels had treated her very kindly; (but they were Abdalasis's Moors, and, I suppose, ordered by him to do so, as she was such a friend of the queen's); they paid her for her house; left her what she had of value; and she generously made us a handsome present when she quitted us; and our prayers are offered daily for her, that she may never embrace the Moorish faith."

"That is impossible," cried Garcia, with warmth; "Isabella is too good a Christian ever to change that holy faith for any other."

"I hope so," answered the father, not taking notice of the warmth his words had excited; "but these are dangerous and eventful times; and many innocent Christians have been deluded by the Moors; and it is believed by many that count Julian forsook his faith, or he could not have acted the part he has done."

Here Cava again trembled—was again near fainting; but soon she called forth all her strength of mind; and anxious to know her father's fate, she mildly said to the

monk—"Know you what is become of the count?—where is his abode?—is he accompanied by Moors or Christians?"

"Poor pilgrim," answered Turpin, "what has become of so bad a man can be of little consequence to you, who look so innocent and good yourself. I cannot however satisfy your curiosity; various are the rumours respecting the count, none of them to be depended upon; and we live so secluded within these walls, that he may still be alive, and adding crime to crime, without our hearing it: but you are fatigued and ill, my good child; you must have refreshment and repose. A small abode close to our house receives female pilgrims; there you shall spend the night, while your friend, or perhaps your brother, remains with us."

"He is, indeed, my kind brother," answered Cava, whose heart was lacerated by hearing her father spoken of with such abhorrence. "I entreat you, before we part for the night, to tell me if the good Anselmo still lives?"

"I hope so, my child," replied Turpin; "but we all mourn his absence. He left this house to attend the unhappy queen to Seville, where she went with those of her court, both men and women, who still remained attached to her. Abdalexis had made them his captives; and it was by his order they all followed him to Seville, the place he has chosen for his residence, and where he is absolute king. Anselmo he left at liberty, as he has done all the religious of this house; but the good father, when with tears he bade us all farewell, declared he would follow the queen to the end of the earth, if by so doing he could assist in assuaging her sorrows, or support her in firmly adhering to her religion; for it was believed before they left Toledo, that Abdalexis, struck by her beauty, and enamoured of her virtue, had offered her his hand in marriage, provided she embraced the religion of Mahomet. We have never heard from Anselmo since his departure; but Fame, if she can be credited, says the queen is married, is still a Christian, and has obtained liberty, both of person and conscience, for all her friends and followers; and that these were the terms she made with Abdalexis, before she consented to be his wife."

Here Cava would willingly have made inquiries for Favilla; but fearful of discovering herself, she for the present suppressed the curiosity she soon hoped to gratify; and turning her thoughts to Egilone, she revolved

"The various turns of chance below,
And now and then a sigh she stole,
And tears began to flow."

Turpin, seeing the affliction of the pilgrim, besought her, in tender accents, to be comforted; then leading both her and Garcia to the refectory, he insisted on their taking some nourishment; and when their repast was at an end, he led Cava to the house where she was to remain for the night; and recommending her strongly to the care of a female domestic, bid her good-night, blessing her, and beseeching her to turn her thoughts to him who alone can heal the wounds of an afflicted heart; and who, in his own good time, and in a more glorious world, will amply recompense the meek and patient sufferer for all their sorrows here.

All this was said in so pious and so gentle a way, and as if the monk read her very soul, that the princess, softened by what had passed, was near throwing herself at the feet of the religious, declaring who she was, and entreating an asylum in the house of St.

Issidore; but his hatred of her father rushed upon her mind; and again thinking concealment the most prudent, she thanked him, said she would lay his instructions to her heart; and taking his hand, she craved his blessing.

“A thousand times, my child, I give it you!” cried he, laying his hand upon her head; “be ever amiable as you appear to be; and if the world frowns on you, look up to that heaven which your angel face proclaims you made to aspire to; fear nothing in this nether world, my child; death is the end of all things here; and if I judge of you aright, it will bring peace to your soul, and not prove unwelcome. I ask not who you are; the divulging of your secret would avail you nothing, and I indulge not a vain curiosity; but your pilgrim’s weeds cannot conceal from me that your birth is exalted, and your mind great; your countenance has brought the past to my remembrance, too forcibly perhaps, for unavailing is the remembrance of happiness long gone by, and here we must shut out the world. Pursue, my child, that path that will lead you to eternal life, when this transitory one is past. Farewell! may angels watch over your slumbers!”

Saying this, the venerable man, his mild eyes still bent on Cava, withdrew, and left her to repose.

Weariness at length closed her heavy lids, though she long pondered on all she had seen and heard; she believed the monk knew her, though she had not the least recollection of him; but he was father Anselmo’s friend, and might have visited him at the court of Toledo, and been by that means acquainted with the persons of its inhabitants. She lost conjecture in sleep.

On the monk’s return into the monastery, Garcia questioned him much on the present state of Spain; but his communications were unsatisfactory; those religious saw few people, heard little of what was transacting without their walls, and, having been plundered of every thing by the Moors, were now more busily employed to support their own lives than to inspect into the lives of others.

Garcia had the comfort, however, of hearing many particulars of his wife and child, while they remained at the monastery, and was gratified to the utmost at finding the conduct of Isabella had been so exemplary in so trying a situation as hers must have been; he nearly wore out the night in listening to the sad tale of the disasters of his country, and the taking of Toledo.

Having reposed a single day, the wanderers bid adieu to the hospitable fathers, grateful for their generous reception of them, at a time they were so ill able to support themselves.

Cava, sensible of their poverty, and seeing their worth, presented to Turpin, at her departure, a rich jewel of great value, entreating his acceptance of it for his house.

The pious monk started as she placed it in his hand; he knew the jewel; it had belonged to the countess Julian, and before Cava was born, he had been attached to her family, and held in it the place of confessor. Tears rushed to his eyes; the princess stood revealed; the likeness to her mother had struck him when he first saw her; but he respected her wish of secrecy, and attempting to return the jewel, he only said, “Daughter, without this too great mark of your generosity, I shall for ever pray for your temporal and eternal welfare; but I will not accept what you, perhaps, in the course of your pilgrimage, may want to procure you the common necessaries of life. Little will suffice me and my brethren; with frugality and our moderate desires, we need not fear want.”

No argument that the worthy father could make use of was sufficient to prevail with Cava to take back her gift. Taking an affectionate leave of Turpin, she hurried through the gate of the monastery, attended by Garcia; and quitting Toledo, they took the road to Seville.

Long and wearisome was their journey, and fruitless their attempts to gain real information on any subject. The Christians were cautious in conversation; the Moors told exaggerated tales. Every thing, however, convinced don Garcia and the princess, that in all quarters the Christians were subdued; every town they passed through was under the dominion of the Infidels; and the old inhabitants who remained appeared more their vassals than their fellow citizens.

At length the wanderers arrived at Seville, and with astonishment beheld the flourishing state of that city. The suburbs and the town itself announced peace, prosperity, and splendour. The Christians and Moors seemed mixed in friendly intercourse; for the generous and brave Abdalesis there kept his court.

On entering the town, don Garcia found a safe asylum for the princess, and instantly flew in search of his wife. He inquired for her at the palace of Abdalesis, and was there informed that Isabella, queen Egilone's favourite attendant, lived with her child and some domestics in a small house contiguous to it; and one of the soldiers off guard offered to conduct him to it—this was the first happy moment the worthy Garcia had known for many months—he accepted the kind offer, and concealing the transport he felt, he joyfully followed the man to his own door; he took the precaution of dismissing the soldier before he desired admittance. He struck with trembling hand upon the door; a domestic appeared, whom he had left at Toledo, and opening the portal with caution, asked what business he had with the lady Isabella? “Do you not know me, Sancho?” cried Garcia, throwing open his cloak.

“I do, my dear master,” answered the astonished slave; and, without staying another moment, flew to inform his mistress of her husband's return. Garcia was too impatient to remain behind; with hasty steps he followed his faithful domestic; and in a few moments had the felicity to clasp to his affectionate heart, his amiable Isabella and his lovely boy.

We attempt not to describe the meeting of such faithful lovers, after so long an absence, in such dangerous and eventful times; those who have the felicity of being united to the real object of their affection, if they have ever been long separated, and have suffered during that separation, will be able to paint the scene to themselves, in brighter colours than the most florid language can do.

“They best can paint it, who shall feel it most.”

To our unmarried readers of both sexes, we can wish no happier lot, than that they may love like Garcia and Isabella.

When the first transports of joy were a little subsided, and they could converse with any degree of calmness, they informed each other of what had occurred during their separation: the various reports collected by Garcia on his journey through Spain, prevented his surprise at finding that Egilone was united to Abdalesis; that there was not the smallest doubt of the death of count Julian; and that it was caused by the Moors, though in what manner was never exactly ascertained. Garcia had the comfort of finding

his wife was under the protection of the queen, and as happily situated as the present dreadful crisis would admit. Isabella told her husband that Egilone impatiently looked for his return; that she had so interested Abdalasis for him, that he was ready to bestow an employment on him, and allow him all the freedom he could wish. "He is a gentle master," said Isabella; "and in Seville, under the protection of the queen, the Christians live happily."

Don Garcia was grateful for the safety of his family; but a deep-drawn sigh issued from his bosom; for what good man can view the downfall of his native country, without heartfelt sorrow?"

As soon as Garcia made his wife acquainted with the arrival of the princess Cava in Seville, and that she had returned to Spain to ascertain the fate of her father, and also to seek an asylum in a religious house, the amiable Isabella entreated him to bring her to their house; and assure her she should be there attended, with all the duty and affection due to her— "What joy will it be to me," said Isabella, "to behold her once more, and to endeavour at softening her hard fate! I live so retired," added she, "that Cava can reside with us, in perfect security; no one will molest her here; she will find herself, if not happy, yet at peace in the house of a friend."

Garcia, charmed with the amiable character of his wife, and with the feeling she shewed for the wretched princess, joined her in wishing they might be able to prevail upon her to remain with them; yet he doubted the possibility of doing so. He was too well acquainted with human nature, not to know that the wretch who hopes not a mitigation of his woes, flies from them he most loves, feels an anxious wish for change of place, can endure nothing long, and that being stationary renders him still more miserable. In change of scene he hopes relief; in wandering from place to place, he fancies he can leave at least some part of his cares behind him. Alas! he soon finds his mistake; he can neither fly from himself or his sorrows.

This Garcia looked on as the case of the princess, and he despaired of ever seeing her restored to the least degree of happiness; but he united with Isabella in the friendly wish of rendering her every possible service.

Towards the close of evening, he repaired to where he had left her, and conducted her in safety to the house of Isabella. Cava had known her at Toledo, and felt comfort in being received with affection by the wife of Garcia. Isabella was prepared for seeing the princess much altered from what she was when she shone a splendid star at Toledo; but she could scarcely subdue an exclamation of horror when she beheld her, so shocked was she at the change in her appearance; still she looked lovely; but a dark cloud of sorrow hung over that loveliness; her changed complexion, her shortened hair, her pilgrim's habit, would have rendered her unknown to Isabella, had she been presented to her by any one but Garcia.

The prudent Isabella concealed her real feelings, and welcomed the Gothic princess with the affection of a sister. Seeing the state of Cava's mind, she avoided, for some days, as much as she was able to do, any relation of what had passed, or any conversation on the present state of things; and both don Garcia and his wife conceived it best to conceal her father's fate.

Some days had gone over, and though her mind found no relief, her frame was visibly strengthened by repose, and the attention her friends had paid to her health.

A proclamation was now made in Seville, that in six days from that time, Abdalesis, queen Egilone, and the nobles of the court, would sup in public; that the royal palace should be thrown open, and both Moors and Christians admitted to see so splendid a shew. Isabella was ordered to attend the queen.

A strong desire possessed Cava once more to behold Egilone. She rejoiced to hear of her present happiness, and she wished to judge of it with her own eyes, as far as she could do so by her outward appearance. She proposed to Garcia her mixing with the crowd in her pilgrim's habit, which must secure her from being recognised; and Garcia, willing to gratify all her wishes, offered to attend, and watch her at a distance. His return to Spain was not yet announced at the court; and he had scarcely left his own habitation for a moment. The same evening, during their repast, the princess expressed a wish to be informed of all the particulars relative to the marriage of the queen; wondering that she had not, with Favilla, and many other noble ladies, followed don Palayo into the north.

"Alas! my princess," replied Isabella, "few are the minds that are not enervated by luxury; and till the fatal moment arrives that levels a powerful potentate with the dust, they open not their eyes to danger; flattery is near to tell them their downfall is impossible—that empire, power, and command, is still theirs; and at the moment the sceptre is dashed from their hand, they still believe they grasp it. This was the situation of our unhappy queen.

"Don Palayo and his brave followers determined on flying towards the north, and there make a stand. The prince used every argument to persuade the queen to fly with him; they were useless; she would not abandon Toledo. She still looked for succour from those Christians who were either not willing or not able to give it. Toledo was attacked and taken; of course the Christians within its walls were made captives. You already know that I had the good fortune to be received by the fathers of St. Issidore, and escaped bondage. On Abdalesis being left by Musa, his father, governor of Spain, he declared all the prisoners belonged to him by right of war. Among them was the queen; and he commanded her to be brought before him. Egilone, you know, is still young; the delicacy of her complexion, the regularity of her features, her majestic figure, her noble and modest air, still remained; and at that moment she appeared the creature of all others most likely to make an impression on the heart of a young conqueror not insensible to love.* At first sight, Abdalesis was dazzled with her beauty, which her misfortunes had even served to enhance, and render more interesting. The prince, as he gazed on her, was touched by her sorrow; and, with love springing up in his heart, he inquired, in the most respectful manner, the state of her health.

"The queen, remembering the crown she had worn, and the throne on which she had sat, felt her griefs renewed by the questions of the prince: almost suffocated by her sighs, she could only answer with her tears; these she shed in abundance; and in the eyes of Abdalesis they added new charms to her person.

"He then made use of every winning art to encourage her to speak. At length, raising her swimming eyes from the ground, she said—'What, oh! prince do you wish to know of me?' Then pausing a little, she added, in a feeble, melancholy, but sweet accent—'Are you ignorant of my misfortunes, the noise of which has filled the universe? It would be some consolation to me were my sufferings only known to myself; what doubles them tenfold is, that they are known to the whole world. I was lately a great and

* From the History of Spain.

happy queen; my power extended far beyond Spain; multitudes placed their glory in obeying me; but at this hour, oh! wretched and deplorable fate! hurled from my throne, and despoiled of every thing I valued on earth, I find myself numbered among your slaves; and am forced to receive laws from those to whom I ought to give them. My fall is made more dreadful by the height from which I fell. Yet I flatter myself that the Spaniards feel for my deplorable fate, and lament it as truly as they do their own. For you, Abdalasis, if you are sensible to the misfortunes of a sovereign—but can I for a moment doubt it? to do so would be to injure you; for it is the characteristic of great souls and generous hearts to feel for the wretched—rejoice in the elevated and happy situation in which fate has placed you; rejoice to have found an opportunity to mitigate the sorrows of an unhappy queen, whom you behold at your feet. I ask you not to restore to me the crown, of which your father deprived me—I ask not to be placed again on a throne from which I am fallen—I only beseech you to remember that I am a woman, and an unfortunate queen; suffer me not to be treated with indignity or insult; this is the only favour I ask from your great soul, from your known generosity of mind. I belong to you—I am your slave—fate has given me into your power—dispose of me as you will, but allow me the melancholy satisfaction, alone, and in retirement, to weep my sorrows; I entreat, I expect this favour at your hands; I can never repay you; but the remembrance of that mercy you shew me will for ever be impressed upon my heart.’

“These words, from the lips of beauty, interrupted by sighs and tears, and uttered in so soft and plaintive a tone, that no one could hear unmoved, fanned the flame in the heart of the young Moor, that the first sight of the princess had inspired him with. The ardent Abdalasis was no longer master of himself. He looked forward to supreme happiness in an union with Egilone; and he strove not to conceal his passion. From that moment he endeavoured to reconcile his captive to her fate; he used every art to banish her past sorrows from her mind; he gave liberty to all her attendants; he suffered not the least diminution of respect in those who approached her; and, with many others of her former court, I was ordered to attend her at Seville.

“I have myself been the witness of Abdalasis’s passion, and the delicacy of his conduct towards her. He offered her his hand—his heart—his throne. She turned pale—she hesitated—she attempted to speak—her voice was gone. She drew her veil across her wan cheek. She was seated near Abdalasis—she turned from him, and burst into tears. The prince respected her feelings. He did not despair, for he was sensible he could command. I met him in the outer apartment; he stopped, and with a gracious smile desired me to attend the queen, and inform her, he hoped to find her more composed when he paid her his usual evening visit.

“As I entered I saw the agitation of Egilone. She called me to her; she told me all that had passed, and in a mournful accent she cried—‘Isabella, I am a slave; my will is not free. I allow the merits of the mighty Abdalasis; handsome, brave, noble, and good, he offers me his heart; he lays his sceptre at my feet; and yet my heart recoils. He has assisted to enslave my country: and still, oh! Isabella, my dear, though cruel Rodrigo hangs about my heart. I can forget his usage of me, but I cannot forget his vows of love in the days of innocence and happiness. The waters of the Guadaleta have overwhelmed him, but they have not quenched the pure flame in my bosom. I turn my eyes from his faults; I think of him uncorrupted as he once was; and, alas! Isabella, I find no place in this heart for another.’

“I knew not what to answer to the charming queen: in her situation, to marry the Moor, was wisdom; to reject him, the extreme of weakness; and yet that very weakness placed her character in the most amiable light. The fate of the Christians under the government of Abdalexis hung on the queen’s power over him. He was willing to allow them the free exercise of their religion if he espoused her. I represented to her, in the best manner I was able, how much it became her duty to protect them.

“She listened to me with calmness; and when we had discoursed for some time, she ordered me to bring the good father Anselmo to her apartment. He had followed her from Toledo, and devoted himself to her service. His pious exhortations had always a happy and visible effect on Egilone; and he was the only person who seemed to have the power of soothing her grief.”

“Is the good father in Seville?” asked Cava, interrupting Isabella; “may I still hope to place myself under his protection? He, better than any one, is acquainted with the human heart, and knows how to pour balm on the wounds of the afflicted.”

“My princess, the worthy Anselmo is not in Seville; he is lost to those friends that love and that lament him: we know not to what country he has retired.”

This was a sad stroke to Cava; it blasted her best hopes; but not wishing to interrupt the interesting story she was listening to, she was silent, and Isabella proceeded.

“I obeyed the queen; and conducting Anselmo to her presence, I left them, and withdrew to the antichamber: their conference was long; when it ended, the good father went to the palace of Abdalexis, and had as long a conference with the prince; the result of the whole was, that Egilone should be allowed a couple of months to reconcile her mind to the step they wished her to take; and that during that time, Abdalexis should shew the Christians that lenity he had so nobly offered to shew them. The generous prince agreed even to more than the queen desired; and if she could not love him with the ardour she had loved Rodrigo, she could not refuse him a great share of her affection, and all her gratitude and admiration.

“In about three months this amiable pair were united, with the approbation of all the Christians, who so greatly benefited by their marriage. Egilone was a mother to them.

“The ceremony was private, as she absolutely rejected a public exhibition: but the splendour of her coronation was superior to any thing ever seen in Spain; all the brilliant luxury of the East, joined to Gothic magnificence, was displayed on the occasion; and Abdalexis, proud of his beauteous bride, placed, with his own hand, that crown on her head, of which she had so lately been deprived. Anselmo stood near her, and said—‘Heaven has rewarded your virtue; be again the mother of your people.’ The queen answered—‘My kind father, I desire to live no longer than I can be of use to the Christians.’ The exulting Abdalexis then led her to the palace; and from that hour has studied to make her happy.

“She assists at his councils; he does nothing without her advice; and has every honour paid to her that can exalt her in the eyes of the Moors; and could we forget that Infidels are masters of our country, we have nothing to complain of under the government of Abdalexis.”

Here Isabella ceased speaking.

The change in Egilone’s fortune gave real pleasure to her hearer, who now anxiously inquired what had prevented Anselmo’s remaining at the court of Seville?

“I know not,” replied Isabella. “The good father appeared as contented as he could be in such times as these. The queen had been guided by him; had acted in every thing by his advice; he was treated with attention and respect by Abdalehis. All the Christians here, as well as the queen, are allowed the free exercise of their religion; and are only expected not to abuse their liberty. One night Anselmo disappeared; and on entering his apartment a letter was found, directed to the queen: the contents have never transpired. She was much affected on reading it; she wept—she lamented the loss of his society; but she seemed not to have any fears for his health or safety, and soon regained her cheerfulness; no one has since presumed to question her on the subject.”

It was late when Isabella had finished her narration. Cava, overcome by her various feelings, and oppressed by the little hope she now entertained of placing herself under the protection of father Anselmo, was unable longer to converse on topics so near her heart. Bidding farewell for the night to her kind hostess, she sought, in the solitude of her chamber, to calm the perturbation of a mind ever alive to every good and tender feeling of the soul. As she sunk to rest, she breathed a fervent prayer for the permanent felicity of Egilone; and anxiously desired the moment when she might again behold her, though unknown and unacknowledged.

CHAP. III.

“Bring not her memory to my mind;
My soul must melt at the remembrance—
My eyes must have their tears.”

IN the house of Garcia the Gothic princess led a tranquil and sequestered life; his friendship and Isabella's knew no bounds; and their satisfaction was great in being instrumental to her peace.

On the day appointed for the feast which Abdalesis was to give the queen and the court, the morning was ushered in with joy; nothing was thought of in Seville but the splendid entertainment for the evening; and the generous prince, happy himself, wished to bestow happiness on others; and, gratified by the acquiescence of his people in his marriage with a Christian queen, he ordered large sums to be distributed, both to his army and others of his subjects in Seville, including the Christians.

But no cheerful shouts, no festive scenes, brought joy or comfort to the withered heart of Cava. Alone, and in deep contemplation, she passed the morning which was devoted by others to pleasure. She knew how anxiously Garcia and Isabella wished her to remain with them; they had most earnestly entreated her to do so, and had promised to devote every leisure moment to her society. He had also declared, that if she could not be prevailed upon to continue at Seville, he would himself attend her to the north, and place her under the protection of Favilla, who was known to have retired there with her brother.

Cava, grateful for his friendship, listened to all he said, but was determined that she would not avail herself of such an escort, by parting him and his Isabella. She knew he had it now in his power to settle in safety with his family near Egilone; and she was too generous to deprive him of happiness, to render him useful to herself. Much she meditated; many were her schemes; and on nothing had she determined, when she was summoned by Garcia to proceed to the palace. Isabella had been in attendance since the morning.

Crouds surrounded the royal abode. Christians and Moors were mixed in friendly intercourse; and all looked happy. The princess was astonished; she had not yet learned from her own feelings, that the allurements of pleasure can for a while drown sorrow, and cover the face of care with joy. On entering the palace, its splendour surprised her. Although her whole life accustomed to the luxuries of a court, she perceived, that till now she had never seen it in perfection. The refined elegance of the East relieved the heavy magnificence of the Goths. Persia and Syria had supplied the palace of Abdalesis with all its decorations; gold, silver, and precious stones, every where met the eye; purple canopies, richly embroidered, ornamented the apartments; and the numerous lamps that festooned the pillars, surrounded the walls, or hung from the high roof, emitted a delicious perfume, while they filled the apartments with a brightness almost equal to noonday. Passing from room to room, and wondering how in the midst of war and devastation such luxury could be procured, Garcia and Cava entered the grandest and most magnificent hall, where the court was seated at the banquet. Garcia, anxious to give the princess a full view of the queen, led her nearly to the upper end of the saloon. He feared not a discovery; for all nations were there, all in their various habits: and many

pilgrims, as they passed through Seville, had entered, in the hope of seeing a queen who was obtaining so many favours for the Christians. As Cava moved on, her heart palpitated; she wished, yet she dreaded, again to behold one so beloved as Egilone. As Garcia led her, her eyes were cast upon the ground; the splendour of the palace was forgotten; and she almost wished she had not given way to a curiosity which could be of no use. Roused by Garcia, she raised her eyes, and beheld the queen in the most splendid attire, looking more exquisitely beautiful than she had ever seen her. She was seated on the right hand of the noble Moor Abdalesis. Cava saw his fine figure and benevolent countenance; but she had no leisure to examine him; her eyes were fixed immoveably on Egilone.

The queen's looks were pensive; a melancholy and transient smile, that, like the pale meteors of the north, vanished almost as soon as seen, at times passed over her countenance. Abdalesis appeared to address her with passion and tenderness—she to treat him with deference and respect. She watched his looks—was attentive to all he said; her manner, and her mild eyes, plainly shewed her gratitude and admiration.

Cava was deeply contemplating her friend, and endeavouring to read the heart of one whose looks she so well knew how to translate, when Garcia interrupted her contemplation, by asking her if she ever saw any one so beautiful as the Moor who sat by Egilone, and who had been for some time in deep conversation with his wife, who stood near her? How astonished was Cava, when, turning her eyes from the queen, she beheld placed next her, her beloved Zamora! Joy, an unexpected guest, filled her bosom; and she could scarcely suppress an exclamation of pleasure. Garcia saw her agitation, and inquired the cause; she was about to tell him she had found the friend for whose fate he had so often seen her anxious, when, again turning her eyes from Zamora to the queen, she perceived her pale, agitated, with hers fixed in a mournful manner on the poor pilgrim.

Cava shrunk back; was it possible she could be recognised? “How imprudent,” thought she, “have I been, depending on my disguise, to enter these walls to satisfy a vain curiosity, and also a tender friendship! I have, by my appearance, perhaps brought past times to the remembrance of Egilone, and lacerated that bosom whose peace I would willingly purchase with my own.” Retreating, she mixed with the crowd, and lost Garcia. She passed into the second chamber; and, unable to proceed farther, she leaned for support against one of the pillars which surrounded it.

The crowd that filled the hall were all strangers to her; and, occupied by the beauties of the palace, and the pleasures that surrounded them, they cared not if the poor pilgrim had sunk into the earth, for every sense was captivated in the castle of Abdalesis.—“The voice of sprightly mirth arose—the trembling harps of joy were strung;—bards sung the battle of heroes—they sung the heaving breast of love.”

Cava's soul recoiled from war and love; the flute's soft note was discord to her ear; and endeavouring to find a passage through the crowd, she was hastily retreating, when she beheld Isabella coming towards her.—“My princess,” said the faithful Isabella, in a low voice, “if you do not wish to be known to Egilone, you had best retire; she suspects you are here under the habit of a pilgrim. You have not been able to elude the eye of real friendship, such as Egilone bears you. She called me to her, and telling me she had seen either her beloved Cava or her spirit, she ordered me to seek you and bring you to her; assuring you she will look upon it one of the glories of her reign to protect you,

and still treat you as her child. She also bids me say, Abdalexis will shew you the distinction due to a princess of the Gothic race. I am ordered to present you this ring; it was once your gift to the queen. She has always worn it; and she sends it now as a proof of her affection.”

“Isabella,” cried Cava, recovering all her energy of mind, “return to the queen; say you have not found the pilgrim; give back the ring; oh! may she ever wear it for my sake! I dearly love her; I feel all her worth, and all her friendship; but I will not see her; I will no longer embitter a moment of her life. Persuade her, Isabella, that it was an imaginary likeness that struck her. And now leave me; I will hurry to your abode: should you meet Garcia, inform him of my departure.”

There was no time to be lost; Isabella returned to the queen to act as Cava wished; and Cava lingered in the apartments, in the hope of finding Garcia: but Garcia came not; he had wandered in search of her through the extent of the palace.

Soon the princess heard it rumoured among the crowd that the banquet was over, and the court moving that way; fearful of again encountering the eyes of the queen, she retreated to where she could, unseen, behold her as she passed. Abdalexis led the queen; his noble air was rendered still more conspicuous by the splendour of his habit. A conqueror, but not a tyrant, his countenance told his happiness and his success.—“His face was like the plain of the sun when it is bright; no darkness travelled over his brow.”

Egilone’s eye was in search of the pilgrim; and she often spoke earnestly to the prince.

The lovely Zamora, bright as the star of morning, followed the queen. The crescent, as she was wont to wear it, sparkled on her forehead; and the graceful and superb dress of an Eastern queen distinguished her from the Moorish ladies in her train.

“Bracelets of pearl gave roundness to her arm,
And every gem augmented every charm.”

As the splendid train passed near where Cava stood, she looked in vain for Aleanzar; she had neither seen him at the banquet nor in the passing crowd; yet she could not doubt, from Zamora’s appearance at the court of Seville, that he also was there. Zamora’s countenance bespoke peace of mind; and Cava anxiously wished to be acquainted with the fate of so dear a friend. An involuntary sigh rose in her bosom, as she contrasted her present situation with what it once was; and something like despair for a moment overcame the efforts of her reason; her eyes followed the steps of the friends she believed she should never see again; and in an agony of mind she beheld them quit the hall: no longer did she wish to remain there; and, as she had lost every trace of Garcia, she endeavoured to find her way alone out of the palace, and was hurrying from one apartment to another, not knowing where to bend her steps, when she heard a voice behind her say in the Moorish language—“Is it possible that I behold the princess Cava in the disguise of a pilgrim!” and turning round, she saw Zulima, the nurse of Aleanzar, close to her. In the most affectionate manner the Moor expressed both pleasure and concern at meeting her. “What can your dress signify, amiable Cava?” said the good-natured slave; “have you fallen into any new misfortune? can I assist you in your distress? can Aleanzar—can Zamora be of use to you? If they can, they will rejoice to treat you as they would do a sister.”

Cava, though gratified by the kindness of Zulima, was unable to answer her; and, leaning on the generous Moor for support, she burst into tears.

“This is no place to converse in,” cried Zulima; “come with me to my apartments; they are not far distant;” saying this, she seized the hand of the princess, and leading her through another hall, and round a colonnade belonging to the palace, she opened a door that led to her abode.—“Here,” cried she, “we can converse without the fear of interruption; and I must persuade you to let me be the means of restoring you to happiness, by placing you under the protection of those friends who are truly and tenderly attached to you, and who have long lamented not knowing where to trace you, who are so dear to them. We believed, that after you had left Aleanzar’s castle, you had safely reached that of count Julian. On our arrival in Spain, Zamora sent a trusty messenger to Africa, who, she hoped, would bring her every information respecting you; but he returned with the melancholy tidings that you had quitted Africa in the night, and no one knew your destination. Many tears did Zamora shed on this account; how will she rejoice at having found you!”

All that Zulima said was uttered with such volubility, and at the same time with so much good nature, that Cava had no power to interrupt her, and could only answer with her tears.

The old Moor, shocked at seeing her in so forlorn and desolate a state, was proceeding both to comfort her to the best of her power, and to advise her against leading the wandering life she appeared to have chosen, when she was interrupted by a gentle knocking at the chamber door. Cava and she had been seated in the upper part of the room, and completely in shade, for only one lamp from the roof lit the apartment. Zulima rose to see who had so unexpectedly intruded on her; and Cava timidly withdrew into deeper shade. Before Zulima could reach the door, it was gently opened by Zamora, who said—“Zulima, I am come to speak to you, on a subject which you know is ever near my heart. I am miserable about my beloved friend Cava. The queen believes she saw her this night, while we were at the banquet, among the pilgrims, (for many of that wandering tribe were in the hall). Possessed with this belief, and dearly loving the princess, the charming queen has entreated Abdalasis to give orders for a search among all the pilgrims in Seville for my unhappy friend: upon examining those that have just left the palace, she was not of the number; and every one is now convinced the queen only imagined she beheld her: she is, however, so certain of the fact, that I am persuaded she is not deceived. I am as anxious as Egilone can be for the fate of my charming friend; and I have left the court for a moment, to beseech you to assist in the search. If the pilgrim was Cava, she must be in the palace; if you can find her, you know, Zulima, what unfeigned delight both Aleanzar and his Zamora would feel in rendering her life happy.”

Unable to restrain her feelings, Cava, at hearing these words, sprung from where she stood, and throwing herself into Zamora’s arms, was, for some moments, bereft of speech. Zamora pressed her fondly to her bosom.—“Have I indeed recovered you, my angel friend!” she cried; but the Moor, soon aware of the dreadful alteration in the appearance of the princess, burst into tears, and gazed on her with mingled grief and joy, as by turns she clasped her in her arms; and then withdrew a few steps, that she might have a more distinct view of her person; and Zamora’s expressive eyes asked Zulima for an explanation of all that had passed.

Soon Cava was herself able to express her gratitude to Zamora, and her delight at their unhoped-for meeting.

The magnificent dress of the young Moor, which was that of a sultana, and the expression she had made use of when she spoke of Aleanzar, convinced the princess that Zamora was his wife; and she soon had a confirmation of what she wished from the lips of her friend.

Zamora sighed deeply when she saw the sad change in Cava; and she even feared for her senses, beholding her in so strange a dress, and seemingly alone. Zamora now forgot all engagements at the court; seating herself on a sofa, with Cava at her side, she again declared her joy at their reunion; and, when she could speak with calmness, urged the princess to remain with her and Aleanzar, if she did not wish to continue under the protection of the queen, who earnestly desired she should do so.

“No,” replied Cava, with energy, “never will I see Egilone more; I rejoice in her present prosperity; so angelic a being deserves happiness; Cava prays that no future evil may ever assail her. I see the melancholy impression that remains on her beautiful face; but I trust that her own innocence, and Abdasis’s fondness, will erase every thought of the tyrant that caused her misery.” She then added—“I beseech you, my dear Zamora, to persuade her that her seeing me was ideal; that I am far, far distant from her abode, and intend to enter a religious house. Assure her also (for if you tell her all that passed in Africa, she will see you are acquainted with my heart) that with my last breath I will bless her; and that, till I am no more, her affection to me will be a consolation that nothing else could be.”

Zamora saw the determination of her friend with pain, and the little hope there was of altering her plan for her future life; and believing it best not to urge her farther on the subject at the present, besought an account of all that had befallen her since they parted; and the princess related the whole of her adventures, from the time she left the palace of Aleanzar till that moment, and beguiled Zamora of her tears.

Zulima listened with deep attention and interest, and prayed to Alla to convert the amiable Christian to the faith of Mahomet.

When Cava had ended her narration, she expressed an ardent desire to hear the sequel of Zamora’s history, and what was Aleanzar’s conduct when he returned to his castle, and found she had fled.

Zamora, sweetly smiling, said—“He found me, Cava, in deep affliction for your loss; the pleasure I should have felt at his return was chilled by being deprived of your partaking it; and I sadly accused myself for not having divulged to you a conversation I had with the prince, in which he offered me his hand; I believed, that had I done so, you would no longer have avoided him, and that I should still have enjoyed your delightful society. You are sensible that jealousy had never entered my mind; I allowed your superior merits, and would have been surprised had Aleanzar been blind to them; but you loved him not; your affections were long given to a Christian prince; mine, I need not now blush to own it, were Aleanzar’s from the moment I was conscious of having any to bestow. It is almost impossible to conceal a real passion. Aleanzar, finding you had only friendship to give him, turned his thoughts towards one, dear Cava, less happily endowed by nature with the gifts of mind or person, but one whose very soul was his. Delighted at my own prospects of felicity, conscious that Aleanzar was sincere in his professions of attachment to myself, I looked forward to the freedom it would give you, and the constant

and eternal friendship Aleanzar's conduct would produce: think then what the feelings of both must have been, when, in the moment we wished to make you a partaker of our happiness, we found you had fled!

"Instead of welcoming Aleanzar with smiles at his return, I flew to him in tears, telling him Cava was lost—Cava had left the castle, and I knew not how; that she had departed during the night, and it must have been with her own consent. I then repeated to him the tender leave you had taken of me in the bed-room, and how little, at the moment, I could understand what had so much disturbed you. While I repeated that tender scene, which must be for ever impressed on my memory, tears almost suffocated me; and Aleanzar, softened by them, endeavoured to comfort me at the moment he wanted comfort himself; for he loved and admired you too much to bear your having an ill opinion of him, which he dreaded you would have, from the violence he had been guilty of in carrying you off.—'Yet,' cried Aleanzar, 'could I be so sunk in Cava's opinion that she would not trust to my honour, when I promised her a safe return to her father's castle! Love unreturned must die,' added he, 'but friendship often outlives even treachery; and my friendship to the lovely and unhappy princess will end but with my life. My plighted faith, Zamora, is yours; you merit the first affections of my heart; and your gentle nature will not be offended that I place next you, in that heart, the hapless and too amiable Cava.' And he added, with tenderness—'Alas! she despises Aleanzar; she looks on him as a cruel tyrant, whose solemn assurances she cannot trust; and she had fled, unknown, from her friend, that she may escape from the detested Aleanzar.'

"Oh!" exclaimed Cava, interrupting the sultana, "how unjustly has Aleanzar judged me! how little could he read my heart! I denied him my love, but I felt, and shall ever feel for him, the truest friendship and esteem; the ardent temper of his nation, and the greatness of his power, might excuse the violence of which he was guilty; his conduct to me while I remained in his power was so truly noble, that it soon obliterated all sense of his error; besides, my beloved Zamora, to that violence, which at first I so much deplored, I owe my acquaintance and friendship with you; can I, I ask you, now regret it? no, Zamora, never, never. I beseech, I entreat you, blot out from the remembrance of Aleanzar, all that can distress him on my account. He has not in existence a friend who knows his worth, or values him more than I do. But proceed, dear Zamora; I am impatient to hear the rest of your narration, and I hope you will forgive my interruption."

Zamora pressed the hand she held in hers, and continued—"Aleanzar did not long remain calm; as I wept he grew enraged, and calling for the captain of his guard, demanded sternly what was become of the Gothic princess; that she was missing from the castle; and he must know of her departure. The brave soldier stood unmoved in the presence of his enraged master, and calmly assured him he knew nothing of the princess, or how she had escaped; for no stranger had that night passed the arch, either to enter, or to quit the castle. Convinced of the honour and honesty of his officer, Aleanzar dismissed him without a reprimand; and then musing for some moments, he ordered Zulima to his presence. Zulima entered trembling; she was pale and agitated; and Aleanzar, advancing towards her, said—'I see you are guilty, Zulima; it is you who have deprived us of Cava—who have assisted her to escape; do you not fear the rage of your offended master, and your prince?' Never did I see Aleanzar look more terrible; I trembled for Zulima, convinced of her guilt. Distressed and terrified, she looked earnestly for some moments at Aleanzar, then, recovering her composure, she threw herself in the most humble posture

at his feet, saying—‘My noble, my indulgent master—my child, whom I have nourished at my breast—my prince, whom I revere and honour—I am guilty; I alone have assisted the flight of the princess from this castle; but I had no sinister motive for acting as I did; it was your glory—your honour, I considered. I was sensible you had promised that she should depart in safety; but I knew not how you might repent. I feared those strong passions which rage in the breast of youth, and often subdue the wisest and the best. Cava has left these shores with honour, under the protection of the prince Alonzo, and the domestics of her mother. I loved the princess; I myself parted from her with regret; but it was necessary to the happiness of all that she should be removed; the guilt, or the merit, is only mine; my life is in your hands, Aleanzar—it has ever been devoted to you; and should the anger I see on your brow tempt you to plunge that dagger in the bosom on which your infant form has so often rested, your faithful slave will die contented, and bless the hand that smites her.’ Fearful for Zulima’s life, and terrified at the dark cloud that gathered on the prince’s brow, I gave a faint shriek, and attempted to lay hold on the hand that held his dagger; when throwing it at a distance from him, he turned towards me with a milder countenance, saying—‘You know, Zamora, I am no tyrant;’ then stooping down, he raised the prostrate Zulima from the floor, and seating her trembling form on the nearest sofa, he placed himself at her side, and ordered her, as she valued his future favour, to give him a true and exact account of all that had passed—every word that Cava had uttered—every step that she had taken, in a matter that so nearly concerned us all. Zulima, knowing Aleanzar’s temper as she did, was now certain she had nothing more to fear from his resentment, and recovering her energy of mind, faithfully related every word, and every circumstance that Aleanzar could wish to be acquainted with; and I had soon the happiness of seeing that the prince was satisfied, and the faithful Zulima restored to his affection.

“As you are perfectly acquainted with all she had to relate, a repetition would be useless, and only waste the time that is now so precious to us. I will therefore put an end to a scene that terminated more fortunately than I had dared to expect. Consulting with Aleanzar, we determined on sending a messenger to count Julian’s territory, with letters from us both to you; and he had orders to return as quickly as possible; for Aleanzar was anxious in the extreme to recover your good opinion, and obtain your pardon. My letter was filled with the effusions of my heart, and a faithful account of all that had passed; my fears and anxieties also for your health and peace were not forgotten.”

“Alas!” cried Cava, “I never had the comfort of receiving such precious memorials of a friendship I so truly prize.”

“The messenger,” said Zulima, “has never since appeared, and we know not what has become of him.”

“A few days,” said Zamora, continuing her discourse, “brought an order to Aleanzar to proceed with the troops under his command to Spain, there to join his friend Abdalesis. The prince now proposed to me to accompany him as his wife, if I could bear to live in a country where war was carried on. You cannot doubt, Cava, that I preferred following him to staying in a paradise; and the ceremony of our marriage having taken place, we, in a short time, bid adieu to our enchanting abode, and set sail for Spain. As Aleanzar led me to the galley that waited for us below the castle, we both cast a melancholy look towards the walks we had traced with you; and towards those bowers of roses, where we had so often passed the sultry hours in converse with our lost friend.

“On landing in Spain, we made every inquiry possible concerning you; we also sent a second messenger into Africa: the sad tidings of your having quitted your castle gave us inexpressible grief; but, my beloved Cava, that grief is now turned to joy. I have found you; you must remain with me. Consider Aleanzar as your brother—Zamora as your dear sister; nothing shall be wanting on our part to render your life happy; in our castle, on the coast of Africa, you shall live as sequestered as you please; the free exercise of your religion will solve every objection to your living with Mahometans—I cannot endure to behold you in this disguise; it wounds me to the soul.”

The princess was deeply affected by the tenderness of Zamora; but no argument had power to stagger her determination of seeking the good father Anselmo.

The beautiful Moor then informed her that Aleanzar was not then at Seville; he was gone to Cordova, on a particular mission from Abdalasis.

“A few days will bring him back,” said Zamora, “and his delight will equal mine, at finding you restored to our prayers.”

Cava, sensibly touched by this disinterested friendship, expressed, in glowing language, the feelings of her soul. Zamora’s happy union with Aleanzar gave her heartfelt satisfaction; it obliterated the folly of his conduct towards herself; and she thought and spoke of the prince as if he had been a most beloved brother; and gratified the fond Zamora by her admiration, and her praises of the gallant Moor.

Instead of returning to the court, the sultana remained the greatest part of the night in conversation with her friend, endeavouring to sooth her mind, and give her a distaste to her wandering life. Cava heard with attention all she said, promised to consider her arguments, and soon to inform her of her determination; but she entreated her to keep her being in Seville from the knowledge of the queen. Zamora assured her she would do so. Towards morning, the friends parted with mutual affection, Cava promising, if possible, to return the next night and spend it in Zulima’s apartment.

The old Moor then conducted her to a door in the palace garden, which opened directly on the house occupied by Isabella. Garcia was just entering it as she approached. He had been in search of her till that hour; and was returning to his home, weary and disappointed. Fearful that some accident had detained her in the palace, he now rejoiced to see her in safety, and they entered the house together.

This had been an eventful day to Cava. She had experienced, by turns, grief and joy; the sight of Egilone, and the convincing proofs which she had received that she was still dear to this amiable woman, made a pleasing, though melancholy impression on her mind; the felicity and friendship of Zamora revived her drooping spirit; yet still her heart was sad; she looked on herself as an outcast from the world; she found misery even in the company of those she most loved; and as she stript off her pilgrim’s weeds, in order to take some repose, she looked on them with satisfaction, as they might be said to afford her an asylum while she led a wandering life. “In this garb,” said she, mentally, “I am secure from molestation, and from almost every danger: the person of a pilgrim is sacred in all countries, and to all religions; under this disguise, I can pass in safety through peopled cities, and solitary wilds, free from the vices, cares, and luxuries of a court; I can with security take up my humble abode in the labourer’s cottage, or the shepherd’s hut. I shall be unnoticed, unpitied, but I shall be unknown; and till I can trace the steps of the pious Anselmo, or find protection from my dear Favilla, I wish for nothing so much as to be forgotten by the world.”

With these ideas floating in her mind, she recommended herself to Heaven, and in a soft repose for awhile forgot the world and her sorrows.

“Sleep, kill those beauteous eyes, and give as soft attachment to thy senses, as infants empty of all thought.”

CHAP. IV.

WHEN the charming Moor had bid her friend farewell, she sought her couch, but sleep forsook her; her affectionate heart planned a thousand schemes of happiness, when, again blest with the society she loved, she should trace the many walks of her delightful abode on the shores of Africa. Her vivid imagination placed her on the throne of the caliphs, from whence she and her Aleanzar should dispense favours to the Christians, through the Gothic princess; friendship and love divided the pure heart of Zamora; and when sleep at length closed her beautiful eyes, the same benevolent thoughts and wishes occupied her mind; and delightful visions hovered round her pillow.

The festivities that had taken place at Seville ended only with the dawn; then the gay crowds returned weary to their homes; and till mid-day silence reigned in her streets.

Cava, who had not given much time to repose, beheld from the window of her apartment the deserted town; and as her resolution was taken, she was almost tempted at the moment to bid it farewell for ever; but she had promised Zamora to see her at night. Zulima was to conduct her to the apartment of the sultana, through the garden of the palace. Affection triumphed over her wish to leave Seville; and she determined to give some hours to friendship and Zamora.

When she joined Garcia and Isabella, the latter informed her that the queen, not satisfied by any report that was made, had ordered the strictest search for her through the city.—“Here, I trust, you are safe,” said Garcia; “but I beseech you, my princess, lay aside your pilgrim’s dress; and if you are determined on a religious life, let it be led within the walls of Seville, where you can be under the protection of those who will never, while life is lent to them, forsake you.”

Cava listened attentively to the advice of her friends; but though grateful for it, it weighed little against her first resolution of seeking father Anselmo. She consented, however, to divest herself, for a time, of a dress that might betray her; and Isabella having purchased for her an elegant, but very simple attire, she deposited with care, in her own apartment, those weeds she intended very shortly to resume. Hoping every thing from this willingness to gratify them, Garcia and Isabella were charmed to see her look something like her former self; and although a visible alteration had taken place in her appearance, they flattered themselves her health and beauty, and even her peace of mind, might be restored.

Night came; the faithful Garcia escorted her to the garden door, and Zulima to the apartment of Zamora, who rejoiced at her change of dress, and seeing her again like Cava.

The hours flew in relating to each other thousands of trifles that interest united hearts.

At a late hour the princess rose to depart; a promise was again exacted for another interview; another, and another took place—Cava had not the power to tear herself from her friend.

One evening, Zamora told her, with the utmost delight, that the next day would bless her with the return of Aleanzar—“And I look forward with pleasure,” cried she, “to the surprise and joy he will feel in again beholding our dearest Cava.”

The princess was silent; she could not bear to undeceive her friend, and she suppressed the secret sorrow she felt at knowing that this must be their last interview. She took a tender farewell of Zamora; and fearful of betraying her intention, she checked the starting tear.

The penetration of Zulima was not to be deceived; and as she conducted the unhappy princess through the garden, she questioned her on her intentions, and ventured her advice.

Cava answered not her questions, did not promise to follow her advice; but before she passed the garden-gate, turned towards the Moor, and kindly embracing her, assured her of her gratitude and affection—"I owe you much, dear Zulima," she said as she embraced her; "I shall owe you much more, if you will keep me in the memory of my Zamora and her amiable Aleanzar. Placed at the extremity of the earth, my thoughts, my wishes, and my affections, will reach them; and sweet will the idea be to my sad heart that I am not forgotten."

Zulima could make no reply; for the princess swiftly passed the gate, and was soon within Garcia's walls. The kind Moor returned sorrowful to the palace, and was silent.

Cava entered her apartment, and began seriously to consider her present situation. Aleanzar had once loved her; he had certainly now transferred his affection to the lovely Moor; but men were inconstant—those of his nation particularly so. Zamora had no jealousy; she herself had lost her dazzling beauty; but was it fair to awaken, even in the smallest degree, a spark of love that might lie dormant in the bosom of the prince? No, friendship, honour, every feeling of her heart, forbade it. Of all men next to Alonzo, Aleanzar stood highest in her estimation; she believed she might trust to his heart and his honour; she felt she could pass the rest of her life in more comfort within his palace, than any where in the universe; but fate forbade it; she would not run the risk for worlds of imbittering one moment of Zamora's life; she would never see Aleanzar more. After many plans thought feasible, and then rejected, she determined on leaving Seville with the first dawn, and unknown to a human being: Garcia's attendance she would reject; and therefore feared to inform him of her departure, knowing he would endeavour to prevent it. He and Isabella had treated her as a sister; she could not steal from their house, and leave them in a grief on her account, and in ignorance of her determination. A letter then must be left to calm their fears; the task was difficult; at length she framed one to her satisfaction, in which she besought them not to follow her, as nothing could prevail on her to return to Seville, or to relinquish her search of her father, or the good Anselmo.

Cava's heart was of that mould to feel every kindness, and also to express with ardour the affection she felt for others; and her letter breathed the most perfect friendship for the amiable Isabella and the good Garcia; and to them she delegated the task of reconciling the charming Moor to her departure. Her own mind satisfied by what she had done, and resolved on the part she was about to act, at an early hour in the morning, while all her friends enjoyed the sweets of soft repose, the restless and unhappy princess left Garcia's hospitable roof, never to behold it more. Prudence dictated her concealing her pilgrim's habit till she was beyond the gates of Seville.

Dressed in that which Isabella had procured her, she threw a large black cloak over her person, concealing under it the weeds of the pilgrim. She proceeded with caution through the silent streets; and as crimson streaks of light in the East announced the

coming day, she found herself in safety from pursuit beyond the gates of Seville. Here she paused; and from a rising ground looked back upon the city, still sunk in rest, and silent as the grave: for a time she indulged herself in taking a last look of a spot which contained some of her dearest friends. As the day opened, its early light fell upon the lofty towers and magnificent churches of Seville; and she saw, not only the cross illumined by its beams, but that the golden crescents erected by the Moors glittered also in its first rays; her heart sickened at the sight; and turning her back upon the city, “with wandering steps, and slow,” she took her path through a wood, that led to the western shores of the peninsula.

For some hours, absorbed in thought, she pursued the road that lay before her; it was narrow, intricate, and winding; and roused to reflection by weariness and hunger, she began to fear she might lose herself in the mazes of this extensive wood. She cast her eyes around her; she was shrouded by trees, the growth of ages; and the bright beams of the morning sun gave through their thick foliage only a dubious and chequered light. The princess, satisfied that in her wanderings her pilgrim’s habit was her best security from insult, and a certain claim for protection, both from Moor and Christian, sought the most retired spot among the trees, and divesting herself of her upper garments, again resumed the pilgrim’s weeds and staff. Having rested herself for some moments, she walked on in the direct path, and one that appeared most likely to carry her through the forest; and as she proceeded she listened attentively, in the hope that some human voice might reach her, and direct her to a Christian abode.

Hunger, weariness, and fear, had nearly oppressed her, and almost caused her to repent her rash journey, when infant voices struck her ear; delighted, she followed the sound, and shortly found herself near the skirts of the forest. On its confines, and at some distance, under the shelter of tall cork trees, she perceived a cottage, and the gay group playing before it, whose joyful shouts the winds had carried towards her: as she emerged from the forest, a beautiful and boundless country lay in prospect; and when she considered what an extent her pilgrimage must be before she could reach the Asturias, her courage nearly failed; and she began to think her most prudent plan would be, to enter a religious house at Seville. While she stood irresolute to proceed on her journey, or to return, a wood-cutter crossed her path, and seeing a pilgrim, he kindly gave her the salutation of the morning, and invited her to partake his simple breakfast. The fainting Cava revived at this unexpected succour; and, modestly bowing, thanked the rustic, and followed to his hut. His dress and language proclaimed him a Christian, and every fear vanished.

The little urchins, yet unfit for labour, and who had been amusing themselves with the gambols and sports of children, now left their play, to surround and to admire the beautiful pilgrim; and even the untaught and infant mind owned the power of the resistless Cava.

The cheerful, good-humoured mother of the ruddy group checked their bold examination of the stranger; and believing that the kind reception of a holy pilgrim would draw a blessing on her humble roof, she entreated Cava to excuse the rudeness of her children—to accept what her poverty could give—and for what length of time she pleased, to take shelter in her cottage; the lively and robust rustic, while she spoke, assisted her husband to unload his shoulders from the weight of wood that his industry had hewn that morning in the forest. It was his daily and early labour, necessary to the

support of his family; and the honest woodman, now in the prime of life, with joy devoted himself to toil for those he loved, and in their smiles found a rich reward.

“His children ran to lisp their sire’s return,
And climb his knees the envied kiss to share.”

Cava, whose birth had placed her at such an immense distance from a cottage, had, till now, looked with compassion on those condemned to lead a life so rude—so poor—so eternally separated from all the luxuries—almost all that appeared to her the comforts of the world. With wonder she now gazed on the woodman, his cheerful wife, and happy children; and confessed to her own heart, that felicity is not confined to the splendour of a court; that the human mind must find it in itself; that if riches cannot give it, poverty has not always the power to banish it; and that the good, the virtuous, and the feeling, will draw it from their own bosoms, and from those unbounded treasures of nature, which a wise, merciful, and all-powerful Being has freely given to all his creatures.

On entering the decent cottage, she was freely offered what it contained; the simple inhabitants pressed her to partake of their morning’s repast; and feared, from the little that sufficed her, that, unaccustomed to their coarse fare, she was unable to satisfy her hunger. Cava assured them it was not so; their excellent milk, their white curds, wild fruits, and honey, made a delicious meal: this was spoken from her heart; her sickly appetite had long failed her, and it was only that morning, in the poor woodman’s cottage, that hunger had given a zest to her repast.

Cava contemplated the happy family around her; greatness, empire, the riches of the world, sunk in her opinion; and she fondly believed, could she choose her station in life, it should be that of mediocrity, where neither thought nor action should be shackled by the vanities or ceremonies of the world.

While the pilgrim mused, the woodman and his wife had full employment in satisfying their own hunger, and gratifying the impatient little tribe that surrounded them.

The princess, oppressed by the extreme heat of the morning, and weary from the exercise of so many hours, took off her large pilgrim’s hat, and placed it on the ground near her. The woodman, who was in the act of distributing some honey to his children, stopped his hand, and gazed earnestly at the princess, then at his wife, whose sprightliness seemed gone, and her eyes filled with tears. Cava saw the look the woodman gave, and the pensive countenance of his wife; she dreaded being recognised, and was silent. The woodman soon resumed his occupation; but his wife asked the pilgrim, as if by chance, from whence she came, and whither she was going? Cava answered without hesitation, that she came from Toledo, and was on a pilgrimage to a particular church in the north of Spain.

When the north of Spain was mentioned, the honest woodman rose agitated from his seat, and walking to the door of his cottage, cried—“There, lady,” pointing his finger towards the north, “there lies that blessed haven for the unfortunate Christians; and there dwells that protecting angel, don Palayo. Nothing, lady, but those helpless beings you see before you, could have prevented my following him to the Asturias; but what could I do with them?”

“You did right,” replied the princess, “to remain with your family; and under the Moor Abdaleis, if fame speaks truly of him, the Christians will be protected.”

“My poverty, lady, will protect me,” returned the wood-cutter; “nothing here can be found to tempt the avarice of princes; they must have slaves and dependants; those useful to them must be let to live; poverty and labour is their security. Unhappy count Julian!” continued the rustic, “you were once my good master, and I lament your faults.”

Cava started: the words—“Oh! tell me all that relates to count Julian,” quivered on her lips; but she smothered her feelings, and sat silent.

“Did you ever see count Julian, lady?” asked her hostess.

“No; but I have heard much of him; where is he now?”

“I wish, lady, I could answer your question,” replied the woman; “he was our lord; this forest and these grounds belonged to him. The cottage he gave my husband, and our daily labour was his; but now we work for the Moor Abdaleis, who has seized on all these domains, since the count is no where to be found.”

Cava was near sinking to the earth; she dreaded her father’s fate; she dreaded the mention of her own name. She swallowed a little milk that was placed before her, and suppressed her tears. “Am I,” thought she, “to be for ever persecuted—never to be left in peace?”

The wood-cutter’s wife continued—“The wars were unfortunate for us, lady; we lost an indulgent master; it was a sad thing count Julian joining the Moors, and being so led astray as he was; but they say his friends, the Infidels, forsook him at the last, and that they have hid him somewhere.”

“Hid him!” cried Cava, starting from her seat; “they could not dare to treat count Julian ill.”

“Power can do any thing,” answered the man; “count Julian betrayed us all; I feel glad, lady, you have nothing to grieve for on his account: when you removed your hat from your forehead, you appeared to me to resemble him; I fancied you related to him, but you say you never saw him.”

“Notwithstanding,” answered Cava, “I lament the fate of the count; as a Christian, he could never mean the Moors to have possession of Spain.”

“As a Christian,” repeated the man, “he never should have brought them into Spain.”

Cava, shocked with this truth, could make no reply. She replaced her hat, concealed her confusion, and then inquired how far it was to the next town; and if there were at present many pilgrims passing through Spain?

“Some there are,” answered the wood-cutter; “and to travel in their company, lady, would be your best plan. There is a large town some leagues off; I go there tomorrow; and if you will remain with us till then, I will place you in safety among a company of pilgrims, who, I understand, are going across the Tagus; where their farther journey will be, I know not.”

Cava with thanks accepted the kind offer of her rustic host; and finding both mind and body fatigued, willingly remained at the cottage. The wood-cutter returned to his daily labour; his wife was employed in her household cares; and the solitary princess was left to her own sad reflections: yet the day appeared not as long as she expected; the scene around her was new; the business of rural life was passing before her; she saw innocence, peace, and cheerfulness, attend it, even in the midst of war, and the revolution

of empires; and she owed to herself, what before had never entered her imagination, that it is on the peasant, the mechanic, the merchant, that the great and rich depend not only for their luxuries, but for their comforts, and even their sustenance.

The understanding of the princess, enlarged by adversity, presented truth in the place of falshood to her view.

Seated on a rustic bench, under a spreading beech at the entrance of the woodman's cottage, her eye took in the surrounding landscape; and she powerfully felt the delightful influence of nature, when it presents itself robed in light and beauty. The dark woods that waved over her head, contrasted with the rich and smiling vallies that lay before her, gave inimitable charms to the silvan scene. All was peaceful and serene; the winds were hushed—the sun fast sinking in the west:

“And where the valley wounded out below,
The murmuring main was heard, and scarcely heard to flow.”

Cava's mind was lulled into a temporary calm; she rejected well-meant assiduities of her humble hosts; and when evening came, and the honest rustics returned from the labours of the field, she again partook willingly of their homely meal, and induced them to relate to her much that she wished to know concerning Spain.

Her night was undisturbed; and at the dawn of day she rose refreshed and joyfully accepted the woodman's offer of accompanying her to the town where the pilgrims were to assemble. Grateful for the hospitable reception she had met from the poor inhabitants of a lovely cot, she gave, at parting, a handsome present to her wondering hostess, who, dumb with surprise and pleasure, could scarcely articulate her thanks, or call down the blessings she wished to attend the good angel that had showered plenty on her humble abode.

Cava, who wished her charity to fall silent and unseen as the dews of night, hurried down the path that led through the valley, followed by the grateful woodman, pondering on what he had seen, and wondering who his beneficent guest could be.

Nothing worth relating befell the travellers; it was some leagues to the town they were journeying to; and the pilgrim was cheered and supported by her cheerful, happy companion. They met many Moors; some saluted them with civility; others passed by the Christians, as if in triumph, and drew sighs from the breast of the princess. The rustic had nothing to fear, for he had little to lose; and though he showered curses on them when they had passed, his thoughts soon returned to the bosom of his family—to the labours in the forest—and to what trifle he should bring from the town for the entertainment of his infant brood.

Unblessed with liberty under any government, he (except for a moment) cared little who governed Spain; while he enjoyed youth and health, he could sing at his toil, and eat with pleasure the bread he had earned by the sweat of his brow, careless of a coming storm.

Arrived at the town, the woodman sought the pilgrims, and having placed Cava in their company, he bid her farewell, praying the Virgin to protect her. The pride of the Gothic princess was no more; with kindness she stretched her hand to the honest rustic, and sorrowfully bade him adieu. She saw the barriers that pride had erected between the rich and poor were soon demolished by misfortune—that mind alone distinguishes man

from man—that greatness may be reduced to a level with poverty, and, perhaps, receive from it that kindness and assistance it would never have humbled itself to bestow. And this useful lesson was impressed upon her mind—that the truly good are alone the truly great.

CHAP. V.

A LARGE company of pilgrims having collected at the town to which the woodman conducted the princess, she found herself in perfect security among them; and her fear of being recognised became less every day. Air, exercise, and the wandering life, which obliged her often to withdraw her thoughts from her misfortunes, was of service to her health; and she was every hour more able to endure those fatigues she had imposed upon herself.

As the pilgrims advanced towards the Tagus, they visited many churches on their way; and often rested for a day, to pay their devotions at some holy shrine, in a more particular manner. The princess carefully interrogated all the religious she conversed with respecting father Anselmo; but no one was able to give her the least satisfaction. Many had never even heard his name; some only knew that he had left the court of Seville, and was not since heard of; and others supposed he had retired to one of the religious houses near Seville or Toledo. Cava, however, was not disheartened in her search; she had heard from Isabella that queen Egilone had dropped a hint of his having fixed his residence in some solitary corner of the western shores of Spain, and north of the Tagus; and there she determined on seeking him.

For many days the pilgrims continued their route towards that river; at length they reached and crossed it. The churches, the monasteries, and all the houses of the Christians, were open to them; and the princess found many among them by whose conversation she was not only pleased, but edified.

Though her beauty was faded, it was still celestial; all were charmed with manners so enchanting—with the dignity of her appearance, which, without exacting, commanded respect from the whole world; and not a single pilgrim in the company but would willingly have suffered hardships in their journey, to have relieved her from toil or weariness. Arrived at a small village, many of the pilgrims took leave, and parted company; but Cava, with some others, determined on resting a few days at the village. Here she made unceasing inquiries for the good Anselmo; and was informed by a monk, passing that way by chance, that the father dwelt some leagues from the village, in a rude and sequestered hermitage; that he had been settled there for months, and was revered as a saint by the people of the country; that he never left his hermitage, but to do acts of charity, to visit the sick or the unfortunate. “He has changed his name,” added the monk; “and, had we not been acquainted at Toledo, he would not have acknowledged himself for the venerable Anselmo.”

Cava, happy at having obtained her ardent wish, entreated the monk to point out the path that led to the hermitage “Holy pilgrim,” replied he, “it is some leagues from hence; the road leads through a wild and barren country; there is also a gloomy forest to pass, and solitary wastes; they are intersected by many roads, and little frequented; one road only leads to the hermitage of the cross, inhabited by the virtuous Anselmo. Was I not on an embassy from my superior, I would willingly attend you to the abode of my friend; but, lady, I beseech you to procure a guide; for the way is long and dreary, and easily missed. Remember it is the hermitage of the cross—peace be with you, lady!”

The monk departed, and Cava returned to her inn to seek a guide; but the day was too far advanced for her to think of leaving the village till the next morning. Her hostess,

who, from her knowledge of the world, guessed by Cava's air and manner that she was no common pilgrim, and supposing she would handsomely pay any guide she might take, assured the princess that her own son, a boy about fourteen, had a perfect knowledge of the road to the hermitage of the cross, and that if she would accept him as her guide, he should attend her there at an early hour in the morning.

The boy appeared modest, humble, and obliging; and Cava, not doubting his being well acquainted with the way, agreed to take him as her escort, and paid his mother well for his trouble. At an early hour the princess and her youthful guide left the village in search of the hermitage: near a league and a half the country presented a most beautiful appearance; their way lay through flowery fields, or through shady groves. The citron and orange loaded the gale with their odours, and the wild music of the woods "added new gladness to the morning air."

The youthful guide (whose heart was light as the atmosphere he breathed) enraptured at the scene, pointed out all its beauties to the princess—told her the name of every hamlet—of every church—and almost of every cottage scattered over the beautiful country they now had in view. Pleased with the intelligence, and the natural fine taste of a creature just emerged from childhood, Cava, in conversing with him, for awhile lost the sense of sorrow, and truly enjoyed her walk. Having travelled for near two leagues, they entered a defile between steep mountains, and bid farewell to the varied landscape, the laughing fields, and shady groves. Mountains, piled on mountains, with deep and dismal valleys, now came in view.

As they continued their course, all appeared dreary, wild, and desolate; sometimes three or four paths met; and Cava imagined her young guide was not always certain which to choose. Emerging from among the rocks, almost a boundless waste presented itself; and no human being, or human habitation, was seen in the wide expanse.

The princess perceived that the boy's gaiety had fled; he often looked round with an anxious eye; seeing him visibly uneasy, she inquired the cause. "Lady," he timidly answered, "I have heard that these mountains are infested by robbers."

"And suppose it is so," said the princess, "what have we to fear? A pilgrim, who has nothing to lose, and is always respected, is certain of travelling unmolested through every civilized country; and surely you have nothing to tempt a robber to use you ill."

"I hope not," answered the boy, smiling, and seeming more assured.

They then traversed the dreary heath in safety, and again got among mountains and valleys; but not so very dismal as those they had left behind.

The path they were now pursuing winded so, and appeared so intricate, that the princess believed they had really mistaken the way: on asking the boy was he certain they were in the right road? hesitating, he owned he did not know; he had never been but once with his mother at the hermitage of the cross; it was some months back; and he did not believe they were now in the road his mother and he had taken.

On hearing this, Cava felt dismayed. The day was on the decline; they were in a wild, uninhabited country, unknowing what path to pursue of the many that lay before them. At a great distance she beheld the gloomy forest, which the monk told her she must pass; this convinced her her little guide was completely ignorant of that part of the country. She paused to consider, in so sad an emergency, what she ought to do. She dreaded the night overtaking her in these wilds; she did not believe them the habitation of man, but she feared the wolves coming down from the mountains at the fall of night. She

looked around, and at some distance on a rising ground, she perceived a verdant spot, surrounded with trees. She had travelled far—she was weary and distressed; she earnestly desired to rest for a little while, and repair her strength and spirits with what her scrip contained. The boy, unused to so long a fast, as anxiously wished for food, and urged her to repair to the only inviting spot they saw around them, and allow him to spread their provisions on the grass. Cava willingly consented to what he proposed; and a short time brought them to the foot of the trees, whose branches made a natural arbour, and spread luxuriantly over the ground: near them ran a clear stream of the purest water. Raising the verdant curtain from the earth, our weary travellers entered the recess, and were astonished to find that the thick trees concealed those within from the view of all that might pass that way, and protected them from the strong evening sun that now oppressed the valley.

Refreshed by the shade of the luxuriant branches that fell around, and by the noise of the rivulet that rolled over its pebbly channel almost at her feet, Cava threw herself on the verdant grass; and the good natured boy, opening the scrip, entreated her to eat some dried fruit and biscuit, which he presented her; he also procured water for her from the spring, before he would satisfy his own hunger; and he endeavoured to cheer her with the hope of soon finding the road they had missed. Cava told him she certainly knew they should have passed through the forest they beheld at a distance.

“It is far off,” said the boy; “you seem weary; if you will remain here, I will run to the skirts of the wood—endeavour to find the road that leads to it, and return to you as quickly as I can. I think,” cried he, starting from the ground where he had been sitting, “I see smoke rising beyond the trees.”

Cava, had she wished it, had now no power to detain him. Persuaded he should find a cottage where the smoke ascended, he flew like lightning over the heath; heard not the princess call to him to return; and was out of sight in a few minutes. Left alone in such a desolate spot, and perfectly ignorant of the country, Cava was startled, and felt dismayed; her first idea was not to wait for the little giddy, imprudent boy, but to retrace her steps to the village she had left. She thought, by making every exertion, she might reach it before the dead of night. She was at least certain of getting into an inhabited country as soon as she could clear the mountains; and as she had accurately observed the way, she was almost sure of not losing herself. Her good nature, and her fear of either distressing her little ignorant guide, should he return and find her gone, or of getting him a beating from his mother, determined her at all hazards to delay her departure for some time.

The little hillock on which she sat was, as we have said, entirely covered with trees, whose thick branches, descending to the very ground, concealed her from any passenger, though she could distinctly view through the quivering leaves all that passed without. She had waited near an hour in anxious expectation of the boy’s return, and her eye sought him in vain in every direction: weary of this uncertainty, she was rising from her verdant seat, had resumed her pilgrim’s staff, and was about to tie on her large hat, when the near sound of human voices gave her extreme alarm. Soon resuming her wonted courage, she smiled at her fears, believing it might be her little guide, with some countrymen who could lead them through the forest.

All was silent for a few minutes, when the sounds came nearer, and heavy footsteps approached. Cava resumed her seat; a secret horror stole over her. The robbers

who infested the mountains might be now in search of some traveller; and Cava, courageous as she wished to appear to her young conductor, now felt there might be danger. She had some gold, and a very great treasure in jewels concealed in her dress; and banditti are too well versed in the arts of travellers in hiding their valuables, not to make very strict search when time is allowed them; and should they find her concealed among the trees, she could expect little mercy at their hands. She shrunk within herself, and scarcely breathed or stirred. Presently two men in deep discourse came in front of the trees, and just under the hillock where the princess sat concealed; they had their backs toward her; and one of them said—"Can you have the cruelty to urge me to a deed that will eternally destroy me? the remainder of my wretched life will be so embittered by it, that I shall hate to live, yet dread to die. If I agree to what you exact, I must give my soul to the enemy of mankind."

Here he crossed his arms on his breast, and hung his head. Cava distinctly heard the words, and sincerely pitied the poor wretch that uttered them, though she knew him not, nor what he alluded to. She could just discern the figures of the men through the trees; but she knew not the voice of him that spoke.

A pause ensued. "Who," said Cava, mentally, "can that monster be, that would urge a wretch to render himself eternally miserable? he must wish him to commit some dreadful deed: perhaps they are the banditti of the mountains, that my little guide seemed to fear; yet what can they seek at this hour, far from the walk of man, and in this inhospitable wild? If these be midnight ruffians, shield me from them, all-gracious Heaven." Her frame shook; and she now became fearful of the boy's return, lest it should discover her.

The stranger who had spoken still seemed in the act of supplication. His companion was perfectly silent. His gigantic figure was bent over a huge staff, that he held with both hands, and stood as if rooted to the ground: his dress was in the fashion of a shepherd's; it was made of the skins of wolves; and a large cap, formed of the same materials, and which nearly covered his visage, was decorated with paws of the animal; they hung from the back part of the head, and gave a terrific appearance to the wearer.

The sun was now fast descending; it threw its yellow light all around, and fell strongly on the trees that sheltered Cava, and on the figures that stood beneath her. Some fearful minutes passed: the princess scarcely breathed; she dreaded the stirring of a leaf, lest it should reveal her secret abode.

Silent, and still as death, she inwardly prayed for the departure of the strangers; when he who had gloomily and silently bent over his huge staff now stood erect, and displayed the majesty of a figure, which neither the savage dress he wore, nor the miseries he had suffered, was able to destroy or to conceal; turning to his trembling companion, he cried—"Is it possible you can refuse obedience to my commands—I, who am still your king—who saved your worthless life when it was forfeited to the laws of your country—I who, in the plenitude of my power, protected and enriched you? You own to me, that in the East you learnt the arts of magic; and you now refuse to make use of that art to satisfy the curiosity of your benefactor—a curiosity that shall be satisfied at every risk. Think you I have so grovelling a soul as inhabits your weak body? Superstition has blinded you—it has no power over me. Believe as I do, that all here is the work of chance—that, as we were nothing before we came into this world, so shall we be nothing after we leave it; behold in me the fearless mortal who thinks thus—who has

enjoyed all the wide universe could give; and who does not yet despair, that chance may once more fix him on his throne, and lay his enemies prostrate at his feet. Meet me," cried Rodrigo, in a voice of thunder, "meet me here in an hour, prepared to answer by your art all the questions I shall please to put to you. I fear not your demons," added he, with a malignant sneer; "Rodrigo would defy them in the jaws of hell; bring them before me; my dagger shall force them to tell me all they can reveal, or that I can wish to know: meet me as I have commanded you, or I resume my gift—your forfeit life." Turning to leave the spot, the princess had a full view of the dreadful Rodrigo.

All that sight of the fabled gorgon produced was now realized in Cava; speechless, stupid, motionless she sat; the blood forsook her cheeks, her lips, and rushed in strong tides to her beating heart; her eyes nearly started from their sockets; and her pale and inanimate form wore the livery of death. No sound escaped her lips; she gazed in mute horror on the receding figure of the king; and when the dreadful vision was removed from her sight, she sunk, fortunately for the preservation of her senses, into a state of perfect insensibility. Stretched on the verdant turf she lay; her feeble hand had dropped her pilgrim's staff; it fell across her bosom; her hat was near her on the grass, and her loosened hair fell over her closed eyes, and almost concealed her horror-struck, yet lovely countenance. The king of terrors seemed to have made a prey of the once-blooming, the once-matchless Cava. Alone, unfriended, in a wild waste, insensible to joy or woe, on the bare earth she lay; the leaden hand of death pressed hard upon her; and soon would her pure soul, disencumbered from its mortal coil, have escaped from this vale of misery, and risen to life in happier regions, had not her little guide returned with a young peasant of his acquaintance, whom he had found in the forest, and who had a perfect knowledge of the road through it which led to the hermitage. The boy perceiving the clump of trees where he had left the supposed pilgrim, rushed on before his companion, and darted towards it with joy sparkling in his countenance, and exulting in his good fortune that led him to find the right road before the night came on. Calling aloud that he had discovered the path through the forest, he raised the branches from the ground, and was in a moment in the recess.

Starting back with horror, and clasping his hands together, he exclaimed, "Have the banditti been here? sweet lady, have they killed you?" He looked round fearfully; but perceiving no one, and believing Cava dead, he began to weep bitterly. Entering with such velocity, he had broken a large branch from the tree, under which the princess lay, and a strong ray from the setting sun fell on her livid form; the evening breeze fanned her pale face; and the boy kneeling down by her, imagined she still breathed: starting on his feet, he flew down the hillock, and filling his cap with water, returned in a moment to the recess; he sprinkled some over her face and hands; and hearing the footsteps of the shepherd, his companion, he called aloud to him to come to the assistance of a dying lady. The rustic boy, as good-natured as himself, entered the secret bower; and tearing away the branches of the trees that shaded her, gave air to the expiring Cava: she stirred, she half opened her eyes; her little guide trembled with delight, and gave a joyful shout; it struck her ear; she believed it the appalling voice of Rodrigo; and again shutting her eyes, she fell even into a deeper swoon. The young shepherd now thought her really dead, but proposed bringing her into the open air, and nearer the rivulet; they lifted her light form from the ground, and carrying her from under the trees, laid her near the spring, and plentifully showered the refreshing waters on her face and bosom. She revived—she

looked round—she beheld her guide—she clung to him—she was unable to speak. He told her the robbers were gone, and besought her to be composed. She looked in terror at the stranger; but his countenance was mild and compassionate; she perceived it, for her wandering senses were now returning; the hue of death had left her cheek, and her lips again appeared like opening rosebuds—“Am I safe?” were the first words she addressed to her little guide, who stood in transport near her.

“You are safe, lady,” answered the stranger; “there is no one here but my friend and myself; if you saw banditti, they are by this time far away; and when you are recovered, we will, if you choose it, shew you the shortest way through the forest to the hermitage of the cross.”

Cava listened with attention to the shepherd; she was anxious to fly from the place they were in, for she remembered the dreadful Rodrigo’s words to his companion—“Meet me here in an hour.”

She raised herself on her arm; her eager eyes sought an object they dreaded to meet, even to the distant horizon; but nothing struck her view except the forest; neither bird, beast, or human being, but the two that stood at her side, appeared in the boundless waste. The sun had almost hid its bright head behind the distant mountains, and darkness was gathering round.

“Lady,” cried the stranger boy, “it grows late; the forest is at some distance; when arrived there, the road to the hermitage is long, and in the dark, hard to find: rise, I beseech you, lady, and if you have any strength left, we had best set forward; if you are ill, the holy hermit will soon restore you to health.”

“I am not ill,” returned Cava, making use of all her strength to rise from the ground; but again she was near fainting, as it crossed her mind that there might be a possibility of the king’s return before she could reach the shelter of the forest.

“We must assist her, Carl,” cried her little guide. “Fear not, lady; we can carry you if necessary; but your head is bare; the damp of night will kill you;” then remembering that her pilgrim’s hat lay near her in the recess, he flew to bring it; and soon placing it on her head, he fastened it and her cloak, which he had opened to give her air.

His kindness affected the princess; and her terrors being in some measure appeased, she rose from the ground with renovated strength, and leaning on the shepherd, followed her good-natured guide, who now joyfully led the way.

The young shepherd, who supported the poor pilgrim, perceived that she started at the sound of their feet, and every moment looked fearfully around—“What terrifies you, lady?” asked he; “no harm can now happen to you; you will be safe at the hermitage, before the wolves come down from the mountains; they come not till it is quite dark; and should one by chance appear now, we can protect you; this stick has often driven them from my father’s sheepfold.”

“I fear not the wolves, shepherd,” replied Cava, “but while I was alone in the recess, I was alarmed by the sight of two men in conversation under the trees where I sat; perhaps they were some of the banditti; I took them at first to belong to them.”

“I know of no banditti at present in these parts,” answered Carl; “perhaps you were alarmed by seeing the strange man that often wanders about these wilds; people think him mad; he walks the hills for whole days together, and often for whole nights. He seems in general lost in thought, and very melancholy. His dress is the skins of wolves, for he has slain many since he came into this country. He pays honestly enough for what

he gets from the shepherds; but no one knows his abode; and to say the truth, we all avoid him as well as we can, his looks are so terrible; though I have heard say he is at times very charitable to the poor in the mountains; they give him, however, the name of the savage man.”

“Truly have the untutored shepherds denominated you, vile Rodrigo,” said the princess to herself. She then demanded of the shepherd who a poor emaciated, sickly figure was, that she had seen in company with the savage man?

“I have seen the man,” answered he, “but cannot tell you who he is; he appears to me to be dying, and I know has been for some weeks at a shepherd’s cot on the borders of the forest.”

“Then,” cried Cava, starting as she spoke, and making an effort to free her arm from that of the shepherd, “let us not go towards the forest;” and she appeared ready to fly across the wild.

“Lady,” cried the boy, “for the love of the Blessed Virgin, and all the saints, take courage; you are safe; no soul is near; and if there was, what could you fear? we have none of us any thing to tempt robbers; and should we even meet the wild man of the mountains, he never harms the traveller or the shepherd; he himself seems to fly from them, and never wishes to converse with mortal.”

Cava replaced her arm within the shepherd’s mentally saying, “I would fly from him to the extremity of the earth; I would bury myself beneath it, ten thousand fathoms deep, rather than for one moment endure his sight;” then raising her eyes to heaven, she ardently prayed for its protection against Rodrigo.

Anxiety to pass the forest, and gain the hermitage, gave her fresh strength; and leaning on the shepherd, and attentively listening to every sound, she walked at a quick pace.

Night came on; the hollow wind howled across the desert, and began to shake the trees of the forest; the moon rose, but she waded through dark clouds, and foretold a storm.

Cava looked terrified, and quickened her pace. Again the shepherd encouraged her, promising to lead her through the wood, and to the hermitage, long before the storm came on.—“It will be a hurricane, lady, but not till past midnight; and long before that hour, you will be safely housed with the good hermit; and my friend and I asleep in my father’s cot close to his warm hearth. My poor old father will not rest his weary limbs after his hard day’s labour, till he sees his sheep collected for the night, and his Carl safe within his peaceful abode.”

“Peace belongs to the shepherd—to lowly life,” cried Cava, “for unhappy is the head that wears a crown.”

These words escaped her; she would have recalled them, but it was too late; the boy looked at her, as if he thought she was deprived of her senses, and asked her was she unhappy?

She answered not his question, but taking a jewel from her bosom, with a sweet smile, she thanked him for his care of her; and placing it in his hand, she desired he would purchase with it more sheep, and a better cot for himself and his father.

The amazed boy, seeing the richness of the jewel, and having the beautiful being that gave it full in view, believed it was some blessed spirit sent by the Virgin to enrich

him, and was ready to throw himself at her feet, to express his gratitude and joy, had she not prevented him, and hurried on.

They had not got far into the wood when the gloom became deeper; few were the stars that twinkled in the firmament; and the moon at intervals only was visible through sable clouds.

Appalled, the princess continued her course, still leaning on the shepherd. She listened to every sound; she feared not the coming storm; Rodrigo only had power to shake her soul. Every step she took she dreaded his crossing her path, and she became deaf to all the shepherd said.

When they had advanced towards the middle of the forest, the sound of a human voice struck on her attentive ear; it was distant, and came only at intervals on the blast. She could not ascertain the voice, but terror rose in her heart; she convulsively grasped the shepherd's arm, and gasped for breath; her little guide was on before—the path was narrow, and he brushed away the briars that might impede her passage: they came to where three roads met; it appeared to be the center of the wood; there was a large opening thinly set with trees, and here a faint light piercing through the branches, chequered the ground.

Cava's keen eye saw through the gloom, in deep perspective, the figure of a man. Her fancy presented the hated and appalling figure of Rodrigo; and instant flight was her determination. Suddenly loosening her hold on the shepherd, like lightning she darted from her astonished guides, down the opposite road from where she beheld the figure. Terror winged her flight; the shepherds pursued her in vain; they called to her to stop—she heard them not; she turned not her eye to see—her ear to listen; she had no fear but that of meeting Rodrigo. She made a thousand windings in the forest; her feet—her hands, were torn by the briars and underwood through which she passed; but she still fled, fearless of every danger but that of falling into the power of the king.

At length, weariness obliged her to stop. She leaned against a tree—she panted for breath—night was silent around—again she listened attentively, and heard no sound, save the whistling of the wind through the forest. She now looked in vain for her guides; they were far distant; she had herself outstripped the winds. She still leaned against the tree. “What,” she cried, “will become of me in this solitude? I shall either be devoured by wolves, die of famine before I can emerge from this labyrinth, or, what is worse than death, be found here by Rodrigo! Give me patience and courage, kind Heaven! My fate is a wayward one, but I will not lose myself in vain complaints; I will preserve my life if possible; but if I cannot live free of Rodrigo, I will die.” She then sought in her bosom for a dagger she had long carried there; she drew it forth, and felt that it was sharp—she again sheathed it, and replaced it in her bosom.

“Almighty Power,” she cried, “forgive me, if dire necessity should compel me to make use of this fatal instrument; thou knowest my heart. I would not willingly hurt the worm that crawls beneath my feet; how then should I start at shedding human blood! alas! I am more likely to turn the dagger against my own life, than to find courage to take that of even the vile Rodrigo.”

Sinking on her knees, she breathed an ardent prayer to be saved, from the crime of even an unwilling murder. “Save me,” cried she, “from the power of the wretch who has been the ruin of my peace in this world; and take me, Almighty Power, take me to regions of eternal bliss, where the innocent in heart shall find favour in thy sight, and

where those who suffer here shall receive blessings a thousand fold; where we shall be free from enemies, and joined to those good and virtuous whom we have loved on earth.”

Alonzo then occupied her thoughts; his name trembled on her lips; and she poured out her soul in fervent prayer for the safety of him she so fondly loved.

Rising from her knees, with a firmer step she walked slowly on, through underwood and the thick branches of overshadowing trees; but no path led her through the wood, nor had she a hope that her guides would now be able to trace her. She wandered near an hour in this labyrinth; sometimes emerging into a gloomy light—sometimes lost in almost total darkness. At length, a faint moonbeam, streaming through the trees, shewed her an immense hill rising before her; its summit was covered with wood, but its base was rocky, and broke into many deep caverns, the entrances to which were overgrown with underwood and briars; one seemed easy of access, and spacious. Cava was weary; and drizzling rain began to fall. The winds growled through the forest; and she dreaded a coming storm. She thought she might securely rest within the cavern till the tempest should pass away. Entering with caution, the princess perceived, by the pale light that shone full on its mouth, that it was then without inhabitant; no trace of human footstep was visible. The cave was spacious; and dark recesses seemed formed in its sides.

As Cava advanced, she started at beholding some embers not quite extinct at its extremity, and a rustic seat placed near them. The skin also of some wild animal, not long torn from its carcase, lay on the ground. Her heart died within her at this sight; and striking her breast in wild despair, she cried—“Heaven assist my flight; this cavern is the abode of man, perhaps the asylum of my fell destroyer; let me meet death in the storm, rather than endure his hated sight.”

With precipitation, panting for breath, and pale as the wan moon that shone upon her visage, she rushed to the entrance of the cave; but soon her steps were rooted to the ground, and her frame stiffened with horror, when the loud voice of Rodrigo came upon the blast, and she heard heavy steps descending the steep. It was now no time to fly—the moment was past—she should meet him at the entrance of the cave—he would know her—he would arrest her flight—she was lost for ever. She drew her dagger from her bosom—she held it naked in her hand—“This,” thought she, “may for a moment protect me; it may entirely free me from his power; yet shall I dare to avoid the ills which Heaven is pleased to shower upon me—venture to rush unbidden into the presence of my Creator? Christianity forbids it: let that pure faith give me courage to seek other means for my preservation, than that of dipping my hands in my own blood, or in that of others.”

With eyes full of despair, yet with a faint ray of hope in her heart, she looked round for some secret spot where she might conceal herself till she could find an opportunity to escape; precious were the moments—the sound of steps descending the rock was heard—the voice was nearer, and more distinct. Rodrigo’s tall figure threw a shade on the mouth of the cavern. As the princess shrunk back at the sight, she discovered a deep recess near where she stood; she instantly availed herself of it, and softly stepping back, was soon within the dark chamber. A fragment of the rock projecting, completely concealed her from the sight of those in the outer cave, but she could distinctly see all that passed. The terrified Cava clung to the rock, or her agitated frame must have sunk to the ground. She drew her dark mantle across her bosom; and

with terror that palsied every limb, and eyes fixed wildly on the cavern's mouth, she watched the approach of Rodrigo.

For some minutes he seemed in angry altercation with the wretch she had seen in the evening; words rose high between them; and for a moment the alarmed princess indulged the hope that they were only passing by the entrance of the cavern. She was deceived: all hope fled her bosom when she beheld the fell king, with his left hand strongly twisted in the wretch's hair, drag him with violence into the cave; while the right held a drawn sword, threatening instant death if he did not obey his orders, and conjure up the spirits of darkness to disclose his fate.

The miserable man fell at his feet in agony; he besought him to spare him, and not to insist on so dreadful a proof of his gratitude for former kindness.—“My life,” he cried, “oh Rodrigo! is in your power; tempt me not to buy it at so deadly a price. Here me, oh king! and pity me. To you I owed my forfeit life: when I left Spain, I was dissolute—I was abandoned—I had no sense of virtue, or of true religion. Wherever I wandered, I learnt nothing but vice: for gain I denied Christ, and embraced the faith of Mahomet. I traversed many countries, with various fortune; and in the East I formed a friendship with a man gloomy and dark in his manners, but, when once known, his conversation fascinated. His wisdom, and the extent of his knowledge, astonished me; never was I weary in his company. Even the dissolute pleasures I had hitherto followed, I now abandoned to live with him. But he was often absent; in the midst of our most interesting conversations, he would, at times, start from me, and hide himself for days in solitary caverns, and wild woods. I followed him—I discovered his haunts. I did not suffer him to be alone; and I urged him to discover to me the cause of his visible uneasiness. At first he evaded all my inquiries; at length he owned to me that he was deeply skilled in magic, which he had studied many years. He told me, that though he had appeared to lead a happy life, his sufferings had been severe. The demons, at his command, had gratified all his wishes; it had been in his power to transport himself from one country to another in an instant—in the twinkling of an eye. Gold and gems were poured out before him in profusion; all the pleasures of sense were his; the proudest kings, when he appeared at their courts, had offered him their friendship; the first beauties of the world had showered favours on him; his wishes had been unbounded—unbounded had been his gratifications.

“At this declaration I interrupted his discourse, by crying out—‘Oh Theodore! what can you desire, but what you have in your possession? Are you not, at this moment, the first and greatest of human beings? would that I had your wisdom! would that I could controul the spirits of the nether world! I would shake this to atoms, but I would enjoy my power. I would not, like you, fly, gloomy and discontented, to caverns and wild deserts; I would smile for ever—I would ride triumphant from pole to pole, and command the world.’

“Calmly turning towards me, he said—‘And yet you cannot command your own imagination. Alas! my friend, he who abjures religion and virtue can know no peace. Conscience may be laid asleep; but when awoke, it inflicts more deadly pains upon its victim.’”

At these words of the prostrate wretch, Rodrigo groaned; and loosening his hand that was twisted in his hair, he smote his breast; but soon recollecting himself, he rolled his dark eyes round the cavern, and then fixing them on the emaciated figure before him, and still holding his naked sword as if he meant to strike, he ordered him to proceed.

The terrified being was faint and weak, but raising himself upon his knees, he thus continued at his discourse.—“Vile as I was, I laughed at my friend’s harangue on conscience; I declared my disbelief in all religions, though I had assumed that of Mahomet, supposing it of use during my travels in the East. ‘But let me,’ cried I, ‘make acquaintance with your demons; they must be most agreeable companions; I am impatient for their charming society; if they can bestow all you say, they shall be my dearest friends.’ Theodore shook his head; his look was gloomy and perturbed. He avoided me; I pursued him—I conjured him, by our friendship, to teach me his wisdom—to instruct me in the arts of magic. For a long time he resisted my most earnest supplications. I persecuted him; and in an evil hour he complied.

“Oh king! I cannot now describe the dreadful scenes I passed through—the horrors that met my eyes—the hideous demons that day and night presented themselves to my view. I had riches at my command; if I clapped my hands—if I stamped my foot, what I wished for was before me; but presented by beings so hideous, so ghastly, so dreadful, that my firm nerves trembled, and became weak as the bending reed. A deadly sickness overpowered me; and I have often wished for dissolution. I dreaded poison in the costly banquet; I turned in disgust from the blandishments of beauty. To me only were the fiends visible that watched all around; they mocked me in the moment I appeared to enjoy the most. The song of the syren—the soft breathings of the flute—the most melodious concert, was followed by yells that seemed to proceed from hell—that would have appalled the stoutest, and were only heard by me. I wished for Sabean odours; they came upon the gale; delighted, I inhaled their fragrance; suddenly a stench arose, so dreadful, so sickening, that, overcome with it, I have fainted in the arms of my attendants, who could have no idea what caused my illness.

“I was now in the predicament of my friend; I also hurried at times from the cheerful haunts of men, to caverns and to wilds. I cursed the hour that I had dared to taste of the forbidden fruit; and I seriously began to think of flying secretly from Theodore, and abjuring the magic art: yet I loved—I pitied him. He too suffered, and had unwillingly instructed me in the diabolical arts so well known to himself. While I continued uncertain what to do, I perceived a great alteration in the appearance of my friend; his strength seemed to fail; a deadly paleness at times overspread his fine face, and his sunk eyes had lost their fire: for two or three days I missed him from the town which we inhabited, and had determined on seeking him the next morning, when a strange boy brought me a slip of parchment, on which was written these words:—

‘Come my friend, as soon as possible, to the cavern at the left hand of the wood. I wish to bid you an eternal adieu, and to impress on your mind the last advice that I can ever give you.

THEODORE.’

“Shocked at this sad scrawl, I hurried without delay to the cavern; and found, stretched at full length on its flinty bottom, my unhappy friend. I took his hand—I wept over him: his skin burnt like fire; his eyes were sunk; his face was ghastly; in a hollow voice he cried—‘Behold the end of the wicked! I die, and I despair; fiends wait to receive me. I forsook my God to follow their counsels—to buy their services for the worst

purposes. I repent, but it is too late; I am no longer allowed that time I have made so ill an use of. Take warning, my friend! I am not so lost but I wish to save you. Abjure magic; resist the influence of the evil one; lay it to your heart, that virtue only can render you happy here, or in a world to come. Three days I have passed in prayer—in heartfelt contrition—in deep repentance; for these last twelve hours the spirits of darkness have forsaken me; they quit the cavern with horrid shrieks. A ray of light comes on my parting soul—the true penitent may have found mercy. When I am dead, remove not my body from this cavern; bury me here: and, my friend, swear to me that you will follow my advice, and forsake your evil ways; to be assured of it, will console me in death.’

“In a convulsive manner he pressed my hand; his eyes were fixed—his eloquent tongue was dumb—I hastened to swear what he wished—he again pressed my hand—he raised his to heaven—his lips moved—he smiled, and expired. I sat long by his cold corse—in mute agony I gazed on his face—I thought of the charms of his society—I lamented his faults—I swore to amend my own. I myself dug his grave. All night I laid me down at his feet—all night I wept, and ventured to pray. I rose with the dawn; a dead weight sat on my heart; but no infernal demon had intruded on my sight, and I looked to it as a happy omen. I raised my dead friend in my arms—I kissed his marble cheek; and his face was wet with my tears; I laid him in his grave. I hesitated before I could throw the earth over him—with labour and sorrow I finished my sad work; and when it was at an end, blocking up the cavern with earth and large stones, I took my way to our former abode.

“I entered the desolate apartment of my friend; I seized with fury on all his fatal papers—on all I thought had assisted him in his art; I carried them into a court behind his mansion, and committed them to the flames; they appeared to me a funeral pile to my friend; and by so doing I hoped to save his memory from obloquy. I also devoted all that belonged to myself to the same devouring flames.

“When this task was accomplished, harassed in person and in mind, I took some refreshment, and sought in sleep to forget, for a few hours, my sorrows; it was past mid-day—the weather was sultry—I courted repose, but my sleep was disturbed; and my sad dreams were worse than my waking thoughts. I believed that the dead form of my friend, just as I beheld him a pale corse, stood upright before me, charging me to abandon his diabolical arts, and instantly to fly the town, and even the country we had inhabited. I started from the couch on which I lay, terrified, and feeling myself a guilty wretch. I stared fearfully around—the shades of evening were descending—by the dim light in the chamber, I was assured I saw the ghastly form of Theodore slowly quitting it. A moment sufficed to tell me he had come to warn me of danger. Opening a cabinet in which I had deposited some jewels, I took them from a drawer, and placing them in my bosom, I entered the garden of the house in which we had lived, and unlocking a private door in the wall that led to the mountains, I took my way towards the cottages of some shepherds who, I knew, dwelt a few leagues from the town.

“Before midnight I reached the hut of one whom I had formerly relieved from distress. The poor man lived alone; he had long been asleep when I lifted the latch. He saw me—he rose, lit his fire; at the same moment asking what misfortune had befallen me, that I should make him so late a visit? He seemed shocked at my dejection; and finding me unwilling to speak, he placed some milk before me, and quickly making up a

bed of skins, besought me to rest my weary limbs till morning. I drank the milk; and without speaking, lay down, and fell into a composed slumber.

“The day was far advanced, when the noise the old shepherd made by violently shutting and barricading the door of his cottage, awoke and alarmed me:—‘What is the matter, Pedro?’ I exclaimed, starting from where I lay.—‘My benefactor, I must save you!’ was all the answer he made; but laying hold of my arm, or rather, dragging me along, he pushed me into a cavern where he had confined some goats: while he held me, he pulled a great stone from the mouth with all his force; and when I was within, he rolled the stone into its place, crying—‘Stir not till I come—milk the goats for your support; you will find a vessel in the cave.’

“He suddenly left me. I sat down on a large stone, against which I had hit my foot as I entered. At first I believed myself in total darkness, but by degrees I could distinguish every object round me; some crevices in the rock let in a faint light, which every moment increased. I sat for a time, stupified by the events of the last twenty-four hours; and, had I not dreaded to die, I should have anxiously wished to quit a world which I was weary of; every crime I had been guilty of rose full in my view, and I shed torrents of tears. Hours passed—no shepherd returned: the goats that were confined seemed restless for want of milking. I myself grew faint without nourishment. I then remembered what the old shepherd had said to me; and taking the vessel which I found near the entrance of the cavern, I relieved the poor animals from their burden, and myself from the hunger and thirst which oppressed me. I again sat down upon the stone; deep repentance entered into my heart; and, for the first time I had dared to do it since I had abandoned the Christian faith, I kneeled down, and made the sign of the cross.

“It was now almost night. Before I had risen from my kneeling posture, I heard the good shepherd roll away the stone that secured the cavern.—‘Come, my kind benefactor,’ said the good creature, ‘come now in safety for the night to my cottage; a plentiful meal, and a good bed, await you; your enemies are departed—all danger for the present is past, but for the future I cannot answer.’ ‘What mean you, father?’ I cried, much alarmed, for I felt the bowstring at my neck. ‘Let the future take care of itself,’ returned the shepherd; ‘thank Heaven, you are now safe: leave this melancholy spot to the poor animals I am obliged to confine here during the night, and follow me.’

“He now led the way to his cot, where, as he had said, every thing was prepared for me, with a degree of comfort seldom found in such a place. I sighed deeply as I sat down to his humble, yet hospitable board. I reflected, that the assistance I had once afforded him in his distress was almost the only really good and disinterested action of my life, and how amply was I rewarded! Reflection produced contrition for my crimes; and, thinking how happy I might have been had I followed the path of virtue, instead of the delusive one of vice, I sat down motionless and inanimate at the table provided for me.”

Here Rodrigo, who had till now held his naked sword over his victim, let the point drop—fixed it in the ground, and leaned upon its hilt; his head bent over it, and all the varying passions of his soul were pourtrayed in his changing countenance—“Do not moralize,” cried the fierce king; “proceed in your story, and be concise, I charge you, for I am impatient to have my commands obeyed.”

Cava trembled in her recess, and almost lost feeling for herself, in her commiseration for the perilous state of the wretched being now in the power of so fell a

tyrant. He, still kneeling before Rodrigo, continued—"I eat, to please the shepherd and support nature; but my heart was sick within me. I then inquired what the danger was that his affection had warded off?—"Your life," answered he, "was in the utmost danger; you are pursued by the officers of justice; and, had they found you, you would have been sacrificed on the spot. You are accused of murder and robbery, and of practising the arts of magic. It is reported and believed that you have murdered your friend Theodore—hid his body by diabolical arts—entered his house—carried off every thing of value, and burnt what you could not carry away. You were traced to the foot of the mountains; and as you were not to be found, either on the mountain or in this cot, your pursuers, after remaining here for hours, and making a strict search in vain, are returned to the town, convinced you have rendered yourself invisible by your art. They will propagate this belief as a truth; this, my kind benefactor, favours your escape, should you have done any thing you fear bringing to light. I will never give credit to any thing against you; you can neither be a murderer, a magician, or a robber."

"Struck dumb by the simplicity of the worthy old shepherd, and ashamed of the good opinion I so little deserved, I sat for a long time without motion, till I perceived he looked fearfully at me, and I began to fear, should he judge of me as other people did, he might believe his religion, and his duty to the state, obliged him to betray me. I felt the blood rush into my face as I rose from the table, saying—"My good father, I am no murderer; I have lost my friend, but he died a natural death; I buried him as he himself desired; and I deeply lament him. I am no robber; I possess nothing but a few jewels, which I have now about me, and which belonged exclusively to myself. I have nothing of my friend's but this lock of hair, (drawing one from my bosom that I had taken from his head before I laid him in his grave). I burnt nothing in his house, but papers useless to the dead and to the living, what he himself wished destroyed.'" Then turning to the virtuous man who had protected me, I said (not having the confidence before such simple virtue to assert a falsehood)—"Was I a magician, think you I would hide myself in a cavern to avoid my enemies? would I not confound them in a moment, by a word, or even by a look?"

"My voice trembled while I spoke; the honest shepherd penetrated not my thoughts; guiltless himself, he believed me so; and full of gratitude, he would have risked his life to serve me. He proposed my remaining at his cot for some time, to recruit my strength and spirits; but I was desirous to quit the country, and once more to put my foot on Christian ground, there to make atonement for my many crimes.

"At the fall of night I parted from the good shepherd, giving him, much against his will, half the treasure I had about me; he amply replenished a scrip, which he insisted on hanging round my neck; and with tears and prayers he parted with me at the foot of the mountains, from whence he shewed me the nearest way to the next town, where I had determined to abide during the day; and, till I had got an immense distance, to travel only by night.

"When I pressed the hand of the kind old man, I felt my heart wrung with sorrow and remorse; I hurried on, and turning to take a last look of him, I perceived he lingered on the spot till we could no longer discern each other. I then bent my solitary way towards the south. I was alone in the world; no human being had any interest in my fate; I had nothing to love—nothing to look on with pleasure or delight. I cast my eyes inward—there all was guilt, sorrow, and remorse. My life had been one crime; I

determined on devoting the remainder to penitence and tears. Long and weary was my journey: I passed through Syria—I traversed the deserts of Arabia—I crossed the Red Sea, and entered Egypt. I heard of the holy hermits in the deserts of Africa, and I doubled all my efforts to find their abode. I at last succeeded, after two years of toil and misery; sometimes begging my bread—often earning it by the labour of my hands. I found the abode of virtue—I found an asylum for a wretched penitent among these holy men. Here, after dreadful expiations, I was again received into the bosom of the church. I forsook Mahomet, and again proudly carried the cross upon my breast. Ten years I remained in the deserts; every hour my soul grew more calm; I had shut out the world; I was the companion of the virtuous; and, could I have forgotten the part I had acted, should have been happy. My health declined; the great heats of Africa would soon have put a period to my worthless life, had not a kind hermit with whom I dwelt, entreated me to visit Spain for some time, as it was believed a few months residence there would entirely restore my health; and I might then return to the society I so highly valued, better able to fulfil those duties the holy hermits impose upon themselves. The worthy man pointed out the very spot he wished me to inhabit, on the western shores of Spain; assuring me he had business of importance which would call him there in a few months, and we might return to Africa together.

“Knowing this, I consented to quit my blessed asylum, and the virtuous beings that inhabit it; but consented only for a time. Every day, oh king! I look out for this holy hermit; he must soon be here; and, let my health be what it will, if I can crawl the earth, I will return to Africa. Do not, I beseech thee, brave and generous Rodrigo, force me to pollute my soul by arts, the use of which I have long forsworn. Can I tempt the Almighty with impunity? No; rather will I die at your feet, than be the wretch I once was.”

“You shall be the wretch I choose to make you,” cried the fell Rodrigo, again raising his sword; “if you commit a crime, your canting holy hermits, your immaculate monks, will soon absolve and purify your weak soul for the paradise they preach. You shall never return to your deserts, to boast you have conquered the will of the great Rodrigo, and to contrast his faults with the merits of your monks. Call up your imps, if you have the power, and I will question them.”

The miserable man fell lower at the tyrant’s feet; he dreaded death. In the most suppliant manner he entreated compassion—compassion for his soul. He asked for delay—for another hour—another day.

“Impossible,” fiercely answered the king; “before you leave this cavern, you shall gratify my ardent curiosity; or I will fling you from it, a cold corse, to feed the wolves of the mountains, or the birds of prey.”

The sword was now close to the suppliant’s breast; and he, weak mortal, dreading to pass “that bourne from whence no traveller returns,” yielded, with tears and groans, to the wishes of the king; and was about to begin his diabolical incantations, when Rodrigo, seeing him shake in every joint, and turn more deadly pale than he had yet appeared, cried, with a smile of contempt—“Dastard, what fear you? willingly I take all your sin upon my soul. In the enchanted castle I once braved a demon (if such there be), and shall I dread one now? The guilt be mine that you now conjure them to sight; let it fall only on my head.”

“Remember your words, Rodrigo, in the great day of wrath; for then will I confront you with them.”

“Confront me with what you will, coward, in another world, but obey me now in this.”

Tempests raged round the cavern; the rain descended in torrents, and thunder rolled far off. Undismayed, Rodrigo stood and watched the stranger, and all his motions. Blue vapours filled the cave; a slight earthquake seemed to shake the ground, and a small spiral flame rose in the centre. Cava, half dead with terror, fervently prayed that her senses might be spared her, and that she might have the power to escape during a scene which she should fear to look on; then closing her eyes, and rolling her dark mantle round her, she felt for the cross she always carried in her bosom, and pressing it to her lips, she leaned her head upon the rock, trembling at every peal of the loud thunder, that now rolled almost incessantly over the cavern.

CHAP. VI.

“Arise and say
For whom yon glittering board is spread—
For whom prepared yon bridal bed?”

.....

“Shew his eyes, and grieve his heart;
Come like shadows, so depart.”

THOUGH the storm raged through the forest, all for a time was silent in the cave. The fire in the centre increased not in circumference, but it rose in height. The unfortunate magician, with a faltering step and mournful countenance, slowly advanced; he stretched his arms towards it, and muttered incantations; the flame parted—it was red as blood—a thick vapour rose—an uncouth form appeared—but an outline only was visible—no features met the view; a peevish and shrill voice cried—“What seekest thou, thou double apostate? force me not to obey you, who discarded me in the deserts of Africa. I deny your power; my masters in the nether world have inflicted double torments on me for your soul’s escape. Begone—I obey you not; but to the king I bow,” cried the shapeless phantom, which now grew in stature, and bent forward from the flame. “Mighty Rodrigo, ’tis thou hast called me from the profound abyss; thou, undaunted king, standest in the place of that ungrateful coward, who abjured the attendant spirit that so long had gratified his every wish. A power I hate, and dare not name, alone protects him from the princes of darkness: but thee, Rodrigo, they are willing to obey; thy dauntless heart is congenial with theirs; and, in the regions from whence I come, thy name is familiar to our ears, and shouts of loud applause attend it through the nether world. Time presses—speak thy wishes, mighty king.”

Astonished, nearly confounded with this address, and almost afraid that there was a Supreme Power, who had now sent a demon to chastise him, Rodrigo recoiled; a ghastly hue overspread his countenance, and he had nearly fled from the cavern to avoid the phantom, when casting his eyes on the wretch he had forced to call it up, he saw him standing with his hands folded on his breast, his eyes fixed on Heaven, with an

expression of the greatest humility, gratitude, and delight; he seemed in the act of prayer. The enraged king lifted his sword with an intention to bury it in his bosom, when the phantom again addressed him:—"Mighty prince, reserve the strength of your arm for a nobler foe."

Rodrigo started—his eye flashed fire—a field of battle—conquest—a recovered crown, rushed on his soul; he stood like a giant in strength, fearless even of the fiends of hell. He called to the phantom—"Give me to see Toledo."

"Look yonder," cried the awful figure, raising its uncouth arm, and pointing to the extremity of the cave, "look, mighty monarch, at thy once-loved capital."

This was uttered in a deep sepulchral voice. Rodrigo turned to the sight. Toledo was before him; its walls were broken down; its gates were in the dust; its towers were fallen; many of its palaces were in flames. His eye sought the royal one; he could behold its innermost chambers; no trace of his family remained; the Moors occupied every part of the building; the whole town seemed full of them.

Sick at the sight, Rodrigo turned away, and Toledo sunk in night. Recovering himself, he cried in a softened accent—"Shew me where dwells my abandoned Egilone—does she survive the desolation of her country?"

"Turn and behold her," said the phantom, in a terrifying accent.

Again Rodrigo raised his eyes—they fell on Seville; here all seemed joy and peace. Moor and Christian walked hand in hand; the town was crowded—joyful shouts were heard—music floated on the gale—the lofty gates of the royal palace were thrown open—the banqueting hall was full in view—Christians and Moors surrounded the table; it appeared as if the world had been ransacked to decorate this abode of pleasure; and, oh! killing sight! at the banquet, exalted on golden thrones, Rodrigo beheld Abdalesis and Egilone; they both wore crowns, and were in bridal habits. All a lover's admiration, and all a husband's fondness, shone in the eyes of the noble Moor; and the lovely Egilone appeared almost a divinity. A cold horror ran through Rodrigo's veins as he gazed upon his wife—the wife whose value he so little knew—whom he had used so ill—so cruelly abandoned. When he beheld her lost to him, and in the arms of another, all her merits rushed upon his soul; she tugged at his heart; and throwing himself on the ground, he tore his hair; he cursed the hour he was born—the world that had deceived him—and then the fiend that had brought this scene to his view.

A laugh, as if in derision, proceeded from the phantom—"Curse not me," it cried, "oh! brave and powerful Rodrigo; I am your lowest slave; I only obeyed the commands of him, the wise and mighty prince who has called me to his side: I will not abandon thee as Egilone has done; I will be near thee in the hour of peril, follow thy steps, and assist thy efforts."

"Of peril!" cried Rodrigo, starting from the ground; "say, shall I again hear the sound of glorious war?—shall I again meet my enemies in the field?"

"Again you shall meet your enemies in the field; mighty king, shall you lift the shield, and draw the sword, and I will not desert you in the battle. I have now answered your questions; dismiss me, Rodrigo, my hour is come; I have other tasks to perform in other regions."

"Spirit, phantom, devil, angel, or by what name you choose to assume, I conjure you," cried Rodrigo, "shew me count Julian's daughter—shew me Cava." While he

spoke, his agitation was so extreme, that his voice became inarticulate, and the name of Cava died upon his lips.

In a shrill angry voice the spirit answered—"Be prudent, king, you touch on forbidden ground; I have no power to obey you in what you demand; dismiss me, if you regard your life."

The king, heedless of the threat of his dreadful friend, and determined to be informed of the fate of the princess, in a loud and authoritative tone demanded—"Was she alive or dead?"

In a voice of fury the phantom answered—"The ground covers her whose fate you seek to know; let her rest in peace, or you meet the grizly king."

A spiteful laugh, succeeded by a horrid yell, and a loud peal of thunder, followed these last words of the phantom. He instantly sunk with the clouds and flame that surrounded his shapeless form, and the cavern was restored to its pristine state.

Cava, who had fainted during the scene that had passed in the cavern, was called to recollection by the loud claps of thunder that rattled over her head; still pressing her cross to her lips, or bosom, she rose softly from the rock, and advanced a few steps towards the mouth of the recess, hoping to fly, now that it was nearly dark in the cave, save when vivid flashes of lightning filled it with a momentary brightness; but soon the princess recoiled with horror, as a sudden flash entering the cavern, shewed the breathless body of the stranger stretched upon the ground. He had silently fallen, unseen by Rodrigo, till the heavenly fire pointed to where he lay. The king, who for some minutes had been surrounded by darkness, could scarcely believe his senses, when he saw at his feet his unfortunate victim. Struck with momentary remorse, he forgot the phantom, he forgot the visions he had seen, and flinging himself on his knees by the inanimate corse, he lamented the cruel treatment he had given him; and the unstable and quick changing nature of Rodrigo, which often fluctuated between virtue and vice, was now softened to pity and remorse; he raised the dead body in his arms, he groaned aloud, he besought his pardon, and impiously called on Heaven to witness his innocence of the murder of his friend.

Cava saw all that passed from where she stood concealed, and exerting the strength of mind and body she was mistress of, she determined to attempt her escape. She hoped, during the violence of Rodrigo's grief, she should be able to quit the cavern unmolested. Drawing her pilgrim's hat as far over her fair forehead as she had the power to do, wrapping her mantle round her, and her dagger naked in her hand, supplicating Heaven to protect her, with a firm step she issued from her dark retreat; and keeping a fixed eye on Rodrigo, for she was to pass near him, she advanced to the outlet of the cavern; the noise she could not avoid making drew the attention of the king; at first he believed the phantom was returned, and he was about to address it; but a sudden stream of light from the full moon just emerged from a dark cloud, surrounding the beautiful figure of Cava as she glided along the pavement, the wondering Rodrigo instantly recognized the well-known lovely form; believed it her ghost come to accuse him of her fate, and to add another horror to the night. The dead body fell from his grasp, and he started from his kneeling posture. Rodrigo's mind was neither influenced by religion or superstition; he believed no god, he feared no devil; and soon recovering his wonted energy (though his frame shook with surprise, doubt and anxiety, the transient idea of its being the ghost of the princess that he beheld hastening towards the mouth of the cavern,

was lost in the hope of finding her a real substance. All the remorse that had seized him, all the tenderness that had filled his heart at the loss of Egilone, vanished in a moment; he rather rejoiced that his hymeneal bands had been torn asunder; he considered himself free; the delusions of the fiend had turned his thoughts to the overthrow of his enemies, to a recovered kingdom, which he would lay at Cava's feet, and never quit her till she consented to be his. All these delightful, vain ideas passed in quick succession through his brain; and he prepared to pursue the princess. He had attempted to seize her mantle, as she swiftly passed near him towards the entrance of the cave, but the dead body lay between them; as Rodrigo stretched over it, the lightning ceased, the moon hid her head behind a cloud, and the cavern became dark as Erebus. The king stumbled; he lay stretched on the body of his unhappy friend; something like fear knocked at his breast; he did not allow it entrance; but strove to disentangle himself, vowing to pursue and conquer. Cava, perceiving her advantage, lost no time in flying from her enemy.

As soon as she had freed herself from the cavern, she plainly discerned a path leading through the wood; she cared not where it conducted her, so it led her from the king; the hurricane was over; the thunder had ceased to roar; but at every moment pale lightning crossed her path, and a small and heavy rain penetrated the thick foliage under which she passed; but fearless of the lightning's glare or the abundant shower, she run with velocity through the windings of the wood, and soon found it a complete labyrinth, and she feared she had got at no great distance from the cave.

She sought a straiter and more direct road; none was visible; and it was quite impossible, should she quit that she had taken, to make her way through the trees and underwood with which she was environed. In deep anguish, but not allowing herself to despair, with a quick and light step she traversed the damp and slippery path before her, lending an attentive ear to every noise. She heard nothing but the rain pattering above her—as she advanced, the hooting of an owl startled her; all the feathered tribe but this bird of night was silent—amid the wood, all had found shelter from the pitiless storm.

"I cannot," said Cava mentally, "be far distant from some building that may protect, may hide me till the morning from the beasts of the forest, and from more savage man. This bird cannot be of ill omen to me; I will hope its cry will for once bear a different interpretation." She still traversed the path—a large opening in the trees gave a lurid light, and she discovered at some distance a large building, seemingly in decay; with hasty step she advanced towards it; with ardent gaze she fixed her eyes on its protecting turrets, for there she hoped to find security from the fiend that harassed her. The bird of night shrieked from the tottering battlements, and seemed to warn her of danger. As she advanced, the night cleared, the moon threw off her dark mantle, and again rode bright in the heavens, attended by her starry train—the loud winds were hushed—the rain had ceased, and the desolate wandering Cava found herself close to the entrance of the ruined castle. A wide hall presented itself; part was lit by the moonbeams, part lay in shade; she ventured in; she crossed half its marble pavement—she stopt, and with careful eyes examining this spacious dilapidated structure, saw no soul was near; and finding a staircase led from each extremity of the hall to the upper apartments, she believed that for the rest of the night she should find security in one of them; and coming to the foot of the stairs on her right hand, she was going to ascend them, when finding them in a perilous state of decay, she turned round to pass to that on the left, which at a distance appeared more firm; scarcely had she done so, when she heard the loud opening of a door, and

from a lower apartment at the extremity of the hall, rushed the haughty Rodrigo, and with rapid strides advanced towards her—terror gave her wings; she now almost flew up the broken stairs she had the moment before been fearful of ascending. The king in full pursuit called on her to stop, as she valued her life. She regarded not life, was she to fall into his power, and continued her flight, till she landed safely on the uppermost step; her light weight, added to her quick motion, had scarcely pressed the dilapidated stairs; they just vibrated under her, but she passed them in safety; and unable to proceed farther, leaned almost breathless on the balustrade. The king, urged by passion, madness and revenge, pursued her; he reached the middle of the staircase, though at every step they shook under his lofty and majestic figure; and just as his wicked and vain hope led him to all he wished, the frail and mouldering structure gave way under his feet, and he was precipitated to the bottom, and thrown far into the middle of the hall, while some of the marble fragments rolled over him, and left him fainting on the pavement, and so severely wounded, he was unable to rise.

Cava, who was flying through the open galleries, nearly hopeless of escape, hearing the crash of the staircase and the groans of the tyrant, ventured to turn round, and saw, with gratitude to Heaven, the entire demolition of the stairs; and stepping forward, she beheld Rodrigo stretched senseless on the pavement below.

This was the moment granted by Heaven for flight; but how could she now descend? where was it possible to find a safe passage from the ruined chambers? Eager to quit the castle, and dreading, should Rodrigo recover from his swoon, he might find some means to reach her, she flew from room to room, and passed through ruined chambers, filled with rubbish, fallen beams, and shattered furniture; she made her way over all, in search of a staircase. She discovered one at the end of a long gallery, and darted towards it with transport. Alas! what was her disappointment when she found, that instead of leading her to the bottom of the building, it wound round the inside of a tower, that was still in some preservation, and must lead her to the battlements!

The princess believing she should be safer there than in the desolated chambers, swiftly ascended the stairs, and perceiving a trap-door open, she hailed it as a good omen; and passing through it, found herself under the broad canopy of heaven, on the top of an old tower. She examined the trap-door; it was in good condition, and had strong bolts; she made use of all her strength to lower and fasten it; she succeeded; and weary and faint, sat down upon the battlements.

It was still night, and she dreaded the dawn of day, lest should the king revive, he might discover her retreat. She looked on the forest as it lay dark beneath her; she trembled, when measuring by her eyes the trees with the lofty tower; she saw how high its battlements rose, and how vain her hope must be of descending from the outside.—“Then I shall die here,” she cried. “Oh! my God, if it be thy will, I am content; but hear the petition of thy servant, and save me from Rodrigo.”

Oppressed in mind, weary from bodily exertion, she leaned for support against the battlements: as she sat resting her wan cheek on her hand, and in silence weeping her hard fortune—

“And listens to a heavy sound,
That moans the messy turrets round:
Is it the wind that swings the oaks?”

Is it the echo from the rocks?"

she heard a sound; she started from her seat; she looked forward from the battlements—

"'Tis not the wind that swings the oaks;
'Tis not the echo from the rocks."

Cava distinctly heard human voices beneath the tower: at first her dread of Rodrigo suggested to her to draw back from sight, but she was convinced it was not his voice she heard; and stretching as far over the battlements as she could venture to do, without losing her poize, she beheld, to her unspeakable delight, her little guide, with his friend the young shepherd, at the foot of the tower where she stood. They were in deep discourse, lamenting their having lost her during the storm, and searching all round the dreary mansion, in the hope she might have taken shelter under its ruins.

The princess was now all anxiety to draw their attention. She feared she was too much elevated above them, for her weak voice to be heard below. Her garments were dark, and should they look up, they might not, by the doubtful light, be certain they beheld her whom they sought; they might not think it possible she could reach the battlements; or superstition might, in the minds of the untutored boys, transform her into a spirit of the night, and send them terrified from the ruins.

They now advanced close under the tower where she stood; she called them by their names; they heard her not; her voice, faint from her fatigue, terror and languor, died upon the wind, that at the instant swept round the castle. Wringing her hands in agony, she waved her mantle over the dark walls; and untying her pilgrim's hat, she dropt it just at the feet of her little guide. At first she saw him recoil with surprise as it fell before him; while his less-timid companion, stooping, lifted it from the ground; and finding it belonged to the pilgrim, gave a joyful shout, which was repeated by the boy; they waved it in the air; and looking up, they made signs to the princess, which she did not understand. She again called to them; they appeared not to hear, or listen to her; and soon, to her inexpressible horror, they were out of sight. She again sat down on the cold stone, and covering her face with her hands, she believed herself now completely abandoned by the whole world; and a death-like languor pervaded her frame; the dews of night fell heavy on her bare head; and her loose mantle fluttered in the rising blast. Her soul, as well as her lovely form, was chilled; and she hoped that death would soon put an end to every hope and every fear. From this torpor she was roused by a noise at the trap-door, and a violent effort to break it open—"It is the tyrant," exclaimed she, rising suddenly from her seat; "he shall not enter this last retreat of the wretched, if these hands have power with these fragments to secure the entrance."

Moving with velocity towards the trap-door, she was just about to roll some stones upon it that lay near her, when it was forced open, and there stood before her, not the tyrant, but the young shepherd and her little guide. Too happy for her words to find utterance, she affectionately seized their hands, and burst into tears.

"Fear nothing, dear lady," cried her guide; "we have found you, thank the Virgin; and we will now see you in safety to the hermitage; it is very near."

"Come, lady," said the shepherd, "don't linger here; the savage man lies groaning in the hall; and looks so fierce and terrible, we had best avoid him, if possible."

“Do not let us pass near him,” said the princess; “can you not find another way out of this castle?”

“We certainly shall, dear lady,” answered her guide, looking affectionately at her, and placing on her head her pilgrim’s hat, which she had dropt to him from the battlements; he feared she might suffer from the want of it, and held it exultingly in his hand, as he came upon the tower.

“Lead me, lead me,” said the princess, “from this terrible castle; I am drenched with rain, and half dead with hunger and fatigue.”

“Sweet lady, we know every winding of the old ruin; you shall be beyond it in a few seconds.”

They then hurried her through the trap-door down the narrow stairs she had ascended in such terror, traversed a gallery, and opening a door in it which the princess had not perceived, they passed a flight of steps, which led from the tower into the wood; and from thence took the direct path to the hermitage, leaving Rodrigo to groan unpitied in the distant hall. Cava again leaned on the arms of her rustic and faithful friends, and learned from them, that after she had fled through the forest, they fearing she might be lost in it, die of hunger, or be devoured by the wolves, had determined that the violence of the storm should not force them to quit it till they had found her.—“I should have been a wretch, lady,” said the young shepherd, “had I left you here, and gone home to my father’s cot to sleep in peace, while you, who had been so generous and good to me, might have lost your life in so dreadful a hurricane as we have had to-night. I believe some devil was at work to raise the storm.”

“And so do I too,” said the little guide. “Dear lady, I was afraid a thunderbolt, or a flash of lightning (for I never saw such) might lay your pretty head low; but, thank the saints, we have you safe, and we will deliver you so to the good hermit; and then I will go home with Carl, stay with him to-night, and pray for you till I fall asleep.”

“Sweet boy,” answered the princess, “I earnestly pray you may ever continue good and innocent as you now are. Remember me, my child, when I am far distant; accept this as a memorial of my affection, and the gratitude I feel for your conduct towards me this night;” then drawing from her bosom a rich ruby cross, the one she had pressed to her lips in Rodrigo’s cavern, she hung it, with a gold chain to which it was fastened, round his neck, saying—“Remember thy Creator in the days of thy youth, and when thou art old, he will not depart from thee.”

“Sweet lady,” answered the grateful boy, tears swimming in his eyes, “if ever I am inclined to do wrong, I will think of you; I will look on this cross, and then surely I shall continue good.”

They had now got almost close to the hermitage; it was built on the side of a hill, and almost hid in trees. A faint light streamed through a narrow window, and fell upon a large cross, that was erected before the door. The steps that led to the hermitage were steep: from the entrance you had an extensive view of the country round; and any person who approached it was seen from a great distance.

The young shepherd, as they came to the bottom of the steps, which led winding round the hill, exclaimed—“There is the holy man; I see him at prayers at this lone hour of the night, at the outside of his door, kneeling before the cross.”

“Then farewell, my kind friends,” cried the princess, “I am now safe; you need not ascend the steps; I can make myself known to the hermit; depart, my friends, to your

peaceful homes; while my life is spared, I shall remember you both, with gratitude and affection; to night you have saved my life." She now placed some gold in the hands of each.

The laid hold on her pilgrim's cloak; they kissed it with reverence; they entreated she would allow them to watch all night at the foot of the hill. She would not hear of it, but besought them to return to their cottage; and should they meet him whom they had left in the hall of the castle, she desired they would not give him the smallest information respecting her.

They faithfully promised what she asked: they watched till she had safely ascended the hill, then took their homeward path; and sorrowfully left the lovely being, who had gained, in so short a time, their pity, admiration, and love.

END OF VOL. IV.

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