

THE
IRISH GUARDIAN,
OR,
ERRORS OF ECCENTRICITY.
VOLUME THE SECOND.

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OR,
ERRORS OF ECCENTRICITY.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

BY

MRS. MACKENZIE.

WHY I can smile, and murder while I smile!
And cry content to that which grieves my heart;
And frame my face to all occasions.
I can add colours to the cameleon,
And wet my cheek with artificial tears.
SHAKESPEAR.

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CHAP. IX.

SUCCESSFUL TREACHERY.

As we wish to avoid any affectation of mystery in the events before us, however those events may appear in the first instance, (connected as they are with others of a domestic and political nature; and as they were subjects of terror, pity, and indignation to many distinguished families in Portugal, who suffered about the middle of the last century, in the persons, estates, and characters of their dearest relatives,) it may be necessary to investigate what actuated the fawning hypocritical Polygon, and induced him to commit deeds of such nefarious villainy, as we shall have occasion to detail; and also to state the circumstances that enabled him to triumph over a gentleman of high birth, honourable principles, and sound reason.

Great, indeed, must have been Sir Henry Tillotson's necessity for an agent which could enforce him as it were, to go along with a wretch so mean in his notions, so puerile in the sentiments he ventured to express, and so very unlike in manners and appearance to his unhappily deceived employer; joining to, as the Baronet did, with such a character, in promoting the misery of a young couple, whose claims upon Sir Henry Tillotson's protection warranted more generous treatment. It has already appeared that the infamous Polygon would stick at nothing to gratify an avarice that strengthened with his years, and admitted no opponent in his bosom, but the one which offered no violence to this ruling vice; since his design upon Anica's hand kept but an inferior pace with those upon her fortune. Accident, or rather the operation of an almighty Providence, for some awfully wise purpose, had introduced this fellow to the presence of Sir Henry Tillotson; who having heard him formerly mentioned by the curate of Amesbury as one not wholly unacquainted with Captain Derrick, and a trader to the different ports of Lisbon and the Brazils, thought he could with *his* assistance, effect a total separation between the unfortunate couple. It was impossible for a gentleman so truly liberal in his notions, to bear the narrow souled observations and awkward deportment of Isaac Polygon, without secretly despising the emissary he felt half afraid to trust: yet, as a tool in the hands of an artist, he found his assistance indispensable. Lady Tillotson knew not how to endure a society for which she conceived a sincere antipathy, nor could she reconcile Sir Henry's fine qualities with the predelection he shewed for a fellow so truly his opposite. The Baronet saw, and allowed for this very natural dislike; nor did he once attempt to overcome it, as *her* presence was by no means necessary to his schemes.

However, it was not till after the union took place, which he so ardently deprecated, that Sir Henry ventured to open his intentions to Isaac; nor till that indefatigable mortal had learned enough from Rachel, formerly housekeeper to Mr. Dawson, that her young mistress was gone to London with the Irish Captain, and that Mr. Signor De Lima had been at Amesbury with a gentleman in black. Convinced by this

important intelligence of Polygon's sincerity, as well as capability as to the service he required, Sir Henry disclosed his intention of sending that gentleman to the Brazils, as there were circumstances occurring in his situation, as the husband of Almeria, too horrible to be permitted; therefore a little deception must be practised to separate the culpable pair. "At present," added the self deluded Baronet, "I do not chuse to send him to Lisbon: it is too near home: besides there exists at present an objection to that measure which cannot be removed, and which might endanger his liberty, if not his life! On *you*, therefore, I depend not only to accompany him to Pernambuco, but to secure his residence in that town till certain difficulties are removed." While Polygon gave a hearty acquiescence to the Baronet's request, his whole sordid soul was absorbed by a hope, the completion of which would render him greatly independent: a hope which the *name* of De Lima encouraged. It was true that Sir Henry *had* received a vague report of the suspicions Portugal entertained respecting the death of its sovereign, but he knew not that emissaries were actually dispatched to the different European states to imprison all strangers of Portuguese descent, whose names corroborated with those contained in a list given to each of the detestable informers employed on that horrid business. With one of these villains Isaac had formerly been well acquainted; nay, he had assisted our man of science in some of his dishonest transactions.

As it was the interest of all concerned in this cruel commission to extend their pursuits in every direction, the coffee-houses and taverns were particularly attended; and at one of the former Jacobus Storace congratulated himself on the discovery of his old friend; but cautious from a consciousness of guilt, Polygon's retreat kept pace with Storace's advances; till hoping some benefit from his companion's evident disposition to be communicable, Isaac ventured to close with him, and they immediately adjourned to a tavern, where, over a flask of the best claret, Jacobus, who was well aware of his quondam friend's will to do wrong, if the good *he* worshipped could possibly arise from any erring measures, entrusted him with his errand to London, and even put into his hand the fatal list. Although strongly tempted to draw with this fellow in the precious mischief, he remitted not his usual caution; and even expressed a sort of compassion for the fate of those implicated in the black mandate! nay, he absolutely forced a tear, while dwelling upon the dreadful lot of those who might be convicted. Jacobus received the tear and reflection with a grin of contempt, which he took no pains to conceal; Polygon saw his mistake, and dropped the veil in time.—The flask was replaced: a sumptuous supper followed at the informer's expence, and Isaac, (after copying the list) engaged to give a good account of several therein specified; of these De Lima was one. The name struck him as being familiar to his imagination, although he could not exactly say where he had heard it used, till Sir Henry furnished him with the clue by which he was enabled to identify the unhappy Frederico, whose situation in St. James's Street was made known to this infernal accomplice; and a scheme was immediately planned, which would, if effected involve in it De Lima's destruction as the design and apparent consequence of the Baronet's wishes.

It has already been premised, that the devoted Portuguese had mentioned a promise given to attend some friends but recently arrived at the Lothian Hotel: here he met with several people whose appearance by no means corroborated with his idea of what gentlemen *should be*; but their errand was of a nature to preclude suspicion, while a recital of the circumstances which composed it, roused every feeling of anxiety and

tenderness. From the representation of the people, it appeared that a younger brother of the deceased Count De Lima who had, as it was supposed, lost his life when a very young man in the East Indies, but that, as it afterwards proved, he recovered of his wounds, and had been detained as a prisoner till fourteen months previous to the present era. They then went on to state that wholly ignorant both of Joseph's intended assassination in the year 1758, and the suspicions recently entertained by his daughter, he had unconsciously announced his claim to the Lima estates as a relative not only to that house, but those of D'Aveiro and De Tavora. In consequence he was arraigned, imprisoned, and *put to the question*. On *this part of the business* Jacobus, who was the narrator, dwelt with unnecessary prolixity,—not a tear or groan supposed to be excited by the torturing rack but what was fully described; and when he had wound up De Lima's feelings to a pitch nearly beyond endurance, he concluded this part of his tale with informing him, that notwithstanding the pain and excessive debility arising from corporeal sufferings, he had been enabled by the assistance of Jacobus, whose father had been entrusted with the care of the prisoner, to escape any further trial of his bodily strength and mental fortitude, by being put on board a vessel in the Tagus at midnight, which sailing immediately without a passport, luckily got out of the river before it was missed.—“And where,” said the heart struck De Lima, “*is this dear tortured relative?*” “Waiting” replied Jacobus, “opposite a place called Deptford, where the ship is moored, and where he impatiently expects the only relation who now dares to acknowledge him.”

The caution which had in a degree governed De Lima's engagements since his marriage, was wholly suspended; and he readily consented to meet Jacobus in two hours at Irongate, from whence they were to be conveyed to the ship. They then separated: when it immediately occurred to our bewildered youth, to ask Derrick's company upon the painful expedition; but unwilling to leave his wife without a protector, and equally so to give her any unnecessary disturbance, he settled to conceal the whole matter from both, till enabled to prepare her for a scene so inimical to her tender spirits, till he knew the extent of what might be required of him.

Thus then, was the noble victim trepanned by his belief of a story, the fallacy of which might have easily been detected by any one less impetuously guided by the impulse of the moment. To describe his horror, his indignation, when undeceived, will be best effected by a detail of future consequences: it may only be necessary at present to say, that in three weeks from the execution of this diabolical act, he was landed in Lisbon, and committed to a person equal in the security of its internal contrivances to that in which his wretched ancestors had formerly been shut up. Perhaps even Polygon himself, if fully aware of the fatal mischief his destable avarice would produce, might have shrunk from the prosecution of his infernal plan, since to gain money was his sole aim in this business; actuated by no *malice prepense*, urged by no inducement but that of accumulating riches, he had proceeded to lengths which had *not* the destruction of another for its object, but *only* the aggrandizement of himself. If then, the terrible certainty of De Lima's intended sufferings, was sufficient to extort a feeble pang of pity from Isaac Polygon, what would Sir Henry Tillotson's agonies have been, if made acquainted with the effect of his misguided confidence? Even the necessity of separating a couple whom he sincerely esteemed, was dreadful in the extreme; nor could any motive short of that which impelled him to such severity, justify what he had done, or reconcile his upright principles to the sad necessity. Terrible indeed was the circumstance which

enforced it, as committed to him by the deceased Count De Lima, from whom he learned the following particulars: namely, That it had been *his* unhappy fortune in early life, to fix upon Alzira Gonsales, a woman of various accomplishments, as his future Countess: his suit was accepted by the lady, and De Lima felt no difficulty in announcing his wishes to her father, a rich old Castilian of Burgos, who very well satisfied to see his daughter a countess, authorized De Lima's addresses by his cheerful suffrage. In consequence of this arrangement, Don Arthurio made the most splendid preparations for Alzira's nuptials, at his country seat near Valladolid, on the banks of the little river Pisuerga, in Old Castile; while De Lima collected a numerous train of visitors to do honour to the marriage. Among these appeared the Marquis De Tavora, and Duke D'Aveiro, who was nearly allied to De Tavora and Count De Lima.—Impetuous, amorous, and preferring the Spanish ladies to those of Portugal, the Marquis could not behold Alzira without emotion; and devoid of every principle of honourable friendship, he scrupled not to make such proposals on his own behalf, as shook the integrity even of an old *Castilian*: his daughter rejected De Tavora's offer with disdain, but overawed by a tyrannical despot, she submitted to become the wife of a father's unjust choice.

The consequences of this vile duplicity to De Lima, was a long and settled illness, which prevented the accomplishment of his intention to avenge so gross an insult; and when recovered to a perfect sense of the injury such an attempt would do his still beloved Alzira, the generous Count dropped every revengeful resolution; and after three years had elapsed, found charms sufficient in the sister of the Marchioness to compensate, in a degree, for the loss of her who still occupied his warmest affections. Don Arthurio, Alzira's father, rejoiced to find an affair which he dreaded would be productive of some terrible event, was likely to terminate so favourably, gave a glad consent to the marriage; and De Lima continued at Lisbon, till the horrible conspiracy which implicated the safety of all De Tavora's relations, induced him to conceal himself from those who were employed in tracing the steps of such as were suspected. That Alzira had lost an infant son through the carelessness of its attendants, or rather terror, in consequence of the fatal earthquake in 55, he had heard with inexpressible pain: he also knew that she had borne a female child about two or three years previous to her own cruel catastrophe; which child had been given by its nurse's husband, (when the Marquis De Tavora's family was imprisoned) to a person exactly tallying with Derrick's description. Struck to the soul, by an event so perfectly agreeing with that which gave the little Sothades to his knowledge, Sir Henry made no scruple of telling the Count De Lima all he knew of Abraham Dawson's foreign protegée; and the Count decidedly pronounced her to be the identical offspring of his lamented Alzira. This eclarcissement which took place about the time of Frederico being adopted by his uncle, did not produce equal advantages to Almeria; as a female, Patrick Derrick, who was unmarried, could not protect her in Portugal so certainly as Sir Henry *might* do in England; and although the Baronet conceived there was but little doubt of her claims on the late unfortunate Marchioness De Tavora, yet it *was* possible she might be Duke D'Aveiro's offspring, whose very name was odious to Count De Lima; for the Duke had been the leading conspirator in the fatal attack which involved Alzira and her husband, with two of her children, (who were executed with their parents) in that most horrid catastrophe.

With an eye to this possibility, Sir Henry was commissioned to keep the innocent creature at a frigid distance, till De Lima could discover her real descent; and this he

thought he had done a few months previous to Sir Henry's arrival in Lisbon, after that nobleman's supposed decease; but fearful of exposing her to those dangers her relatives had experienced, he had left no document of that discovery to the Baronet. However he forgot not to charge the nurse, by whose means the birth of Almeria had been ascertained, to inform his friend of those particulars, with a strict order to keep the brother and sister apart, till the death of Joseph should render an acknowledgement of their connexions no longer dangerous, well knowing the affectionate impetuosity of Frederico, and how very unable he would be to conceal his love and admiration for a creature so fascinating.— True, she was announced to Derrick by the name of D'Aveiro as *he* thought, but the variation was so trifling, that Patrick might easily mistake De Tavora for that of D'Aveiro.

It would doubtless have been extremely agreeable to the woman who had this commission to execute, to visit England, and embrace the dear creature so miraculously preserved; but for that time she was spared the pleasure, as her finances, through the Count's rather sudden decease, would not allow of such an indulgence, and she was obliged to hazard this important intelligence by the very means De Lima so much dreaded to employ. Sir Henry upon the receipt of this unhappy confirmation, felt a poignant disquietude; for owing to Laura the nurse's successful attempts to see the Baronet in Portugal, and to secure a passage to England, her account did not reach him till Frederico's attachment to Almeria amounted to conviction. With such a dreadful impression upon his mind, it seemed impossible to Sir Henry to act otherwise than he did; since to entrust Lady Tillotson, the good Curate, or his adopted child and De Lima, with his real motives for setting his face against this union, would have militated against his high sense of honour; and, when convinced of the terrible consequence of this forbearance, he could only endeavour to extenuate his error by the means already described.

The sudden abdication of Mrs. Cleveland from his family, did not occasion him that acute pain which a doubt that she had joined her husband would have done; for tolerably well convinced that she could not follow him, the Baronet had only to lament the loss of a young creature whom he really loved, and whose society gave to Lady Tillotson a delight she could not cease to regret, when so unexpectedly deprived of it. With an eye to the hope of reclaiming that sweet society, she had accompanied the Baronet to town, who being informed by Polygon, of Almeria's residence, meant to offer her an assylum at Wallbrook Tower, when assured of De Lima's departure; and this plan was to have taken place on the day succeeding his accidental meeting with her in Bridge street. Disappointed, then, in this part of his scheme, Sir Henry staid no longer in London than was necessary to the hope they both encouraged that she might return; but time as it gradually extinguished that hope, pointed out the necessity of leaving town; and the well meaning pair quitted it with a melancholy impression, suggested indeed by her ladyship, that the helpless wanderer to whom every part of the metropolis was comparatively strange, might have fallen into bad hands; or still worse, have terminated her sorrows by a violent death. To these notions Sir Henry opposed every argument his good sense could furnish; and though far from satisfied with her strange elopement, contrived by several well managed appeals to his Lady's reason, to deprive these fearful forebodings of their greatest bitterness.

Although not entirely pleased with Polygon's return, Sir Henry upon the whole felt grateful for his services; and thrown off of his guard by the success of this plan, he dropped a hint respecting the affinity of the wretched couple, which to Polygon was a mine of intelligence; but many circumstances were necessary to spring it to advantage. At present, his voyage to Lisbon claimed immediate attention; where he had not long arrived, when by a line from Sir Henry he was made acquainted with Mrs. Cleveland's elopement; and meeting with Derrick not long after, accompanied by such an interesting youth, whose mysterious story and feminine appearance, it gave rise to indefinable suspicions. Isaac employed every engine his crooked politics could furnish, to investigate a matter which Derrick's odd expressions and blundering attempts to conceal a secret, soon made no secret at all; and Polygon began to calculate the advantages this discovery might produce. That the search set on foot for every descendant from De Tavora extended to both sexes he well knew; but as he had been instructed by Jacobus, that no act of violence would be inflicted upon a female branch, he soon settled with those feelings that were once feebly excited by De Lima's fate, not to let a mistaken tenderness interfere with his interest. In consequence, he once more sought his good friend Jacobus, to whom he related the circumstance which threw Mrs. Cleveland within his knowledge, and also the grounds he went upon for supposing she had married her brother. The detestable informer instantly caught at intelligence so agreeable to *his* hope of further profit, after assuring Polygon her imprisonment must conclude with her examination, entreated him to intrust the person of that helpless innocent to himself and another wretch, his equal in villany.

CHAP. X.

DECEIT IN LOVE.

WE have already stated the keenness of Mrs. Cleveland's disappointment on the morning of her intended elopement with Signor Jerome; also how inefficient were her attempts to trace it to its source. The mystery too of Polygon's appearance in the hall at a time so unusual for him to quit his bed, with his evident confusion at being discovered in conversation with two such suspicious beings, were circumstances which created additional surprise and terror; and the few hours of disturbed repose that followed those uneasy reflections, were embittered by visions of an alarming nature, to which the view of Derrick at her chamber door gave a welcome interruption. From him she learned that "*cunning Isaac* had insinuated his belief of Cavalier Jerome's being in custody of those keen-scented blood hounds who were running up and down the country in pursuit of food for their masters." Stunned with this cruel information, and scarcely able to endure her mental sufferings, Mrs. Cleveland looked the picture of despair; she was now too fatally certain that Polygon *had* overheard them on the preceding day, and that the foreboding appearance of the dreadful triumvirate which she so recently beheld, was in consequence of a plan laid to ensnare the generous Portuguese; struck with a thought so horrible, she felt as if the fangs of tyranny were already fixed in *her* heart. With a heavy sigh, and in an attitude of fervent entreaty, she requested the Captain to excuse her presence at the breakfast table; but Patrick would listen to no evasion of his wishes:—"Sure now, my little girl, you wouldn't go to blow yourself quite up, for what will the *owld* viper think if *** but I tell you what it is" interrupting himself with a droll cast of features that very ill accorded with the intelligence he had brought, "I have got a nice *cat* for this man of science that shall tickle his conscience, I warrant him; but not a lash will tell unless *you* are present to give them effect, so try to put on a fair-weather countenance and come down."—"For pity's sake dear uncle, spare your jests for the present, and permit me to remain in this room at least till I can adopt the means you recommend;—my heart is bursting, and my tears *will* flow for the fate of that invaluable friend, who, like every one that interests themselves in my fate, is sure to suffer for his disinterested kindness."—"Nonsense, you talk like a fool, child! aye, indeed—no, no, *let the scald horse wink*, as *Otello*, the blackymoor said, *but honest white's not ashamed of his colour*; so prithee come down, and *niver* trust me if I don't shew *owld Isaac* as pretty sport as he would wish to see on a summer's day, honey."

Convinced from common experience that this *correct* vendor of Shakespear's phrases would carry his point, she accompanied him to the *borander*, where the family usually sat to take their breakfast, where a new apprehension took possession of her mind, as she beheld the low triumph that lurked in Polygon's eye, when he mentioned Jerome's capture as the current topic of the morning, for it seemed to announce *her* fate as involved in his; and she absolutely threw a look of agony towards the door, as it opened to an anti-room, in fearful expectation of the entrance of Polygon's tremendous satellites; but as nothing of that kind occurred, she recovered recollection enough to shift the subject of her dread, to that which Derrick's threatened *cat* and *nine tails* created; whose laughing expressive countenance formed a striking contrast to that of his artful

antagonist, who began an elaborate description of a transit of Venus which either had, (or was soon expected) to take place. Derrick listened, impatient to begin the operation of the *cat*; while his eye as anxiously turned now towards the street, now to the door, when Almeria surprised at his apparent neglect of an opportunity to laugh at the astronomer, contrived to obtain the lovely young Signora's attention by a constrained effort to converse.

Heedless of Polygon's rising anger at this visible neglect of his ignorant disquisition, Francisca happy to be the object of the English youth's attention, uttered several fearless sarcasms upon her uncle's subject, when a sudden exclamation from Anica, who sat near the window, alarmed the company, and before she could well account for it, Derrick darted from his seat, rushed into the anti-chamber, and re-entered accompanied by Signor Jerome, who cheerfully advancing saluted the company with that high grace so natural to him as a soldier and gentleman.

Overwhelmed with confusion, (which our Irishman was preparing to increase), Polygon stammered out something that he hoped might pass for congratulation; while his nieces, with Almeria, offered a more sincere tribute of their joy for the escape which they supposed him so providentially to have experienced. These effusions of pleasure were soon interrupted by Derrick, who brimful of his intended scheme, abruptly addressed the object of his justly provoked satire with "Why what's the matter *owld* one? sure now you look as if some unlucky counter breeze had checked your rapid course towards the latitude of a certain hot climate, your sails are all aback man, but *niver* heed, the *divil* will have his due yet; you'll soon get out of shoal water, and then hey for the port of * * *—By the mast-head, Charles," turning from his mortified adversary, "*My cat* has tickled the *owld* fellow's conscience a bit, though I despair of bringing it to life!" "Let me tell you, Mr. Derrick," cried the solemn deceiver, "I shall no longer suffer *my* house to be contaminated by such profaneness."—"No! why then leave it yourself, and it will be as *clane* as ever, sure." Polygon would not suffer an interruption, for he dreaded what might follow; but went on, "yes, sir, you are a disgrace to, to"—"The sciences Mr. Aldebaran, hay! sure now, and which of the stars were *you* consulting when you made over this gentleman to the claws of your *owld* friend? sure now, neither Mars nor Venus would have any thing to do in Beelzebub's compact: no, no, it was Plutus, that *mortal divil*, shaped your course, and Satan filled the sails; and if a nice little angel," pointing upwards, "had not directed that same breeze to drive your vessel upon another tack, why Signor Jerome must have"—"Must have, what sir," repeated the enraged Polygon, "what have *I* to do with the Cavalier's danger, and what particular cause can you have for addressing *me* so rudely upon the subject?" "Particular cause! oh no, indeed, 'tis a general cause; 'tis the cause of humanity; one that will obtain no relief in *your* court of conscience, *owld* Midas." There was such a forcible expression in the loud tones which conveyed this spirited reproof, so much generous indignation in the eye that flushed its angry beams upon the pitiful object of it, that while Polygon shrunk beneath the pointed attack, Signor Jerome mechanically extended his arms towards his animated friend, who eagerly catching his hand, and shaking it with more than his usual vehemence, protested he would lose *more* than his life's blood in defending such a noble fellow from the gripe of a monster more eager for prey than a *Newfoundland* bear, who had lived by sucking his paws and licking the ice a whole Lapland winter.

Derrick was not very happy in this similitude, but the circumstance of the preceding night had not only thrown him completely from his guard, but confounded his ideas; and during this natural triumph, even the interest of his poor little girl was forgotten; who saw in *his* countenance a fund of restrained information; in the Cavalier's, a mixture of admiration and apprehension; and in Polygon's, an encrease of malignity towards herself. That Jerome *had* been in some signal danger she could easily credit, and that it had fallen upon him at the moment of giving the signal she doubted not; but by what means liberated, or *why* he should again commit himself to the power of a man against whom he had formed a decided ill opinion, she could not ascertain. In the conversation that followed the last stroke of Derrick's daring imagination, she traced a fearlessness of deportment which though natural to *him*, could not do away her fears for his future safety; and in the slow, sullen, cold replies of Polygon, when obliged to answer, she read something of the deep workings of his plotting heart. Involved therefore in such a perplexed train of ideas, she could no longer support even the appearance of a tranquility so foreign to her feelings, and sat heedless of Patrick's occasional gibes, the pleasant effusions of her favourite Francisca, or the sensible and tempered observation of the Cavalier; till awakened from her reverie by that gentleman's motion to depart, she found new cause for uneasiness in the very particular glance he threw, first upon the door, and then towards *her*; this look she thought signified a wish to speak to her, and she immediately arose to attend him, till perceiving an eye which her indignant imagination likened to that of a basilisk fixed upon them both, she shrunk back irresolute and trembling. Jerome penetrated her motive and passing as near as prudence would allow the seat to which she was returning, whispered a few words calculated to strengthen every fear, and throw into confusion a mind already struggling with inexplicable terrors,—“*Escape, no matter where or how?*” “Good God,” exclaimed the unfortunate Almeria, “what expressions are those: *escape*; alone, unprotected, for so it seems I am requested to do, what *can* he mean?” and then bursting into tears, she dropped into a chair in the garden, whither she retired, when Derrick, who accompanied the Cavalier, had left the house; where she remained in the full indulgence of unrestrained sorrow, for it now appeared to her distracted sense, that impressed by the dread of future evil, Jerome had given up any further intention to serve her; and upon Derrick, though his affection and fidelity were absolutely unquestionable, she dared not place any dependance;—loquacious, open, disdaining to qualify when prudence itself demanded it, he had already she feared, contributed to Polygon's suspicions of her situation, and even took a mischievous delight in defying the man to whose power he had so incautiously committed her.

Aware of these dangerous propensities, neither Jerome or herself had entrusted him with their luckless plan; convinced they could undeceive him time enough to prevent any mischief ensuing from his incautious indignation, when her absence should be first discovered, they had settled to inform him in a way and at a time that should not subject him to Polygon's penetrating eye. Was it possible then, to advise with, or even communicate to that thoughtless man, the intelligence so evidently intended to be conveyed, without his knowledge? “Alas, no!” said the desolate creature, “alone—in an enemy's country, which is hostile to my safety—unfitted by sex and disposition to endure even the distresses I have already encountered—an embargo laid upon my escape from this place—where shall I shape my dangerous course?—Snatched from certain

destruction by one generous being—supported, and for some time protected by that worthy soul, I am now called upon to leave him, uncertain of my fate! Yet, ‘*escape*, no matter where or how.’—Ah! who can say I *shall* escape; gentle Francisca, from thy native tenderness much might be expected; but oh! with what propriety could I make a confession so repugnant to the female character.”

Almeria’s apostrophe now received an unexpected interruption from the object of her perplexed thoughts, the amiable S-forza; and here we may find a new motive for Polygon’s dislike of his helpless inmate, who, wholly unconscious of the mischief she had occasioned, had given much of her time and attention to Francisca; whose cheerfulness, and excessive partiality to our supposed midshipman, naturally created a strong interest in Mrs. Cleveland’s bosom. This, the jealous eye of Polygon discovered while uncertain of Almeria’s sex; and although when he became more convinced of the harmlessness of such an attachment, every fear of such an attachment became truly ridiculous; yet he could not behold with patience the lively Signora’s preference, for he dared not undeceive her. It is true, that his had long fallen upon the languishing Anica; but wearied by her melancholy gloom and cold disgust, he turned his thoughts towards her more sprightly sister; and without making his intentions known, waited till his once dreaded rival should have quitted the Casa. Devoid of any suspicion so degrading to her personal charms, Francisca committed herself most completely in her ridicule of Polygon, and affectionate manners to Mrs. Cleveland; who, hardly aware of the station she so imperfectly filled, received these pleasant testimonies of her friend’s regard with reciprocal good will. Thus deluded we can scarcely wonder at the Signora’s pursuit of her supposed lover, to the seat which was so placed as to exclude the appearance of any one till they were close to it: indeed she had heard enough of Almeria’s soliloquy, to strengthen her opinion of the young officer being absolutely enslaved. It was a moment big with importance to both. The gaiety of the enamoured maid was softened into a graceful timidity; a rosy blush marked the delight with which she accepted part of the garden chair; while overcome with the pain of arranging in her tortured bosom, the various sensations arising from fears encouraged, hope delayed, and the vexatious difficulties her awkward disguise continually produced, the object of the Signora’s hope betrayed a confusion but too likely to countenance it. To entrust the enamoured Portuguese with the truth of her terrible situation, was a scheme that promised a probable relief to her difficulties, and was the first idea that occurred to her bewildered imagination, when she beheld her, impatient (as it should seem) to offer that consolation her heart demanded. She even ventured to detain the willing hand which trembled to the pressure;—a thousand nameless indications of success gave courage to her apprehensive heart in Francisca’s manner, her features, and the broken voice in which she ventured by way of relief to her anxious doubts to express her pleasure at the escape of Signor Jerome. “Yes,” replied our agitated heroine, “he *has escaped*; but there still remains a victim to—to—dare I say,—to your guardian’s cruel policy?—One who must, without your generous assistance, be reduced to a state far worse than death itself.” None but a creature determined to translate the most improbable hint in her own favour, could have given this speech a meaning so wide of its true import. That victim in Francisca’s opinion, was her youthful lover, who possibly had mentioned his pretensions to Polygon, and they were refused. The blush which had left her animated countenance, again

returned, while she flatteringly declared her resolution to defeat the tyrant's malicious views in whatever sense they might implicate the happiness of one so dear to her.

"Ever kind and considerate Signora," returned the delighted creature, "I am *not* deceived in the sentiment I had formed of your tenderness for a poor devoted wanderer; you will assist me to counteract the schemes of a monster, whose aim is to unite me, in one fatal irreparable ruin, with the object of my every hope, every wish, every idea of pure felicity.—Without whose society, not all the world calls pleasure, can produce a moment's satisfaction.—With it, O Francisca!" dropping her head upon the shoulder of her empassioned auditor, "with it, light, life, joy, would bless my gloomiest hours. To gain this object, I have precipitated myself into dangers which no description can magnify, and the bitterest disappointment succeeds my endeavours to recover it." "What then *is* your particular intention, my inestimable friend," asked the enraptured Signora, who could scarcely restrain her joy at this equivocal encouragement of her fondest expectations. "First, to explain my real situation to you, with the motives that induced me to adopt it; and those which have obliged me to continue a disguise so hateful in appearance:" a *disguise*, thought Francisca, "Love," continued Mrs. Cleveland, "love for the worthiest, the best of human beings." The tear which now trembled on her cheek, the blush which added lustre to her brilliant eye, as she pronounced a word so tender, served but to increase her deluded companion's delirium, for were they not appropriated to *her* as the forerunner of a confession she momentarily expected. "The sad destiny of this dear object, with an eager though painful desire to discover relatives now perhaps amenable to a dreadful sentence, have not only thrown me into a line disgraceful to delicacy,"—again, *delicacy*, thought Francisca, might not that word too be spared; Almeria continued, "but into the power of a man who has, I greatly dread, been instrumental to the misfortunes of that being."

"Too true indeed," cried Signora S-forza, bursting into tears, "too true, my friend, he *has* behaved most vilely, and we are not the only victims to his avarice and malice; but I interrupt your communication."—"The discovery I am meditating," replied Mrs. Cleveland, who knew not how to word it, "must be followed by"—"One of another nature," said the vindictive Polygon, who had overheard enough to heighten his resolution against Almeria, and create something extremely unlike affection in conduct towards Francisca; "By all the sciences, you are a forward young baggage, Signora, and"—"And what, *owld* Vulcan, hay?" retorted the Captain, as he bounced upon the unfortunate Isaac, whom he had traced to the unlucky recess: "What I warrant you are in a fume, and for nothing at all, at all; O but I see how it is now,—a transit of Venus over the sun; or mayhap, Mars and her goddessship in conjunction, and you are studying to make a *gowlden* net for the poor things out of some *cast iron*? O, well, *niver* heed: all's well that ends well!"

Without noticing Derrick's unapt observation, Mr. Polygon after throwing a diabolical look upon Patrick and his protegée, withdrew (but not without a little resistance, which our Irishman longed to strengthen) the indignant Francisca from her real friends, and left the one to her comfortless reflections, the other to a fresh display of his talents at good humoured ridicule and awkward consolation. His attempt at the latter had Jerome's liberation for its object, which he said was owing to the following circumstance, namely; A disinclination in himself to quit a party, whose wit and libations to the *jolly dog* Bacchus he had enjoyed, till a visit from the hyenas, as he called the

government spies, induced them to separate; and after awhile, he strolled down to the vineyards, as was his usual custom, where he had not continued many minutes, when the approach of two men dragging another towards a solitary house, appropriated at that time to the purpose of confining state prisoners previous to their first examination, induced him to take a nearer survey of the unhappy person thus forcibly compelled. It was the Cavalier: who spoke somewhat indignantly to Derrick, when he addressed him. However, it was the immediate determination of poor Patrick to deliver him from those blood hounds; which, in consequence of personal courage and great muscular strength, he soon effected; and sent, as he expressed himself, the cowardly dogs with hanging ears and bloody noses to their dens. "But why, my dear sir, did the Cavalier again hazard his safety, by venturing among those who would undoubtedly try more certain means to secure him, if they could produce any proof of his criminality, and how came he at first to be committed to their power?" "At first! why that was his own fault, d'ye see; and as for his coming hither this afternoon, mayhap it was to please me, to mortify Signor grey beard, and upon my conscience his other reason was, to tell *you* some great *secret*, honey."

Almeria comprehended the nature of Jerome's errand, and silently blessed that generosity which prompted him to defy such signal danger: she could now account too for his mysterious caution, and hasty departure; but these were subjects too sacred for Derrick's animadversions, and she resumed the conversation with a wish to know *why* the Signor should look indignantly upon one to whom he owed his recent deliverance.

"*Why!*" answered the Irishman, looking most expressively foolish, "why, for the matter of that, it was odd enough to be sure; but if *owld* fellows will go a serenading"—
"Serenading, Captain, pray explain yourself?" "Well, and if I do, will you forgive me?" "Forgive you! most certainly; since I am sure if you injured a friend, it would be unknowingly." "Injure! sure now and you ought to know, that if the heart of a sailor is bent on a good action, he'll make his way though the wind were fully in his teeth, and this was my case, honey; and now I'll tell you all about it: Well then, just as I was coming along by that same square just by, with the crabbed name, I saw a fellow in a great dark black capota and a *gutter* or *flute* in his hand, faith and I don't know which now, but its all one, being both wind instruments, for the air that goes into the one and out of tother makes them both alike; sure now and I didn't like his *gait* as he stood leaning against a rail, for I thought his face, which was covered with a great black handkerchief, looked pretty much like their what d'ye call 'em *bravadoes*: well, just in the *nick*, comes up two of that *owld gontlemin's* body-guards,—(Mr. Nick's, I mean,) but before they came near, I put a civil question to my musical knight; when instead of answering, for he neither heard nor saw me, he threw some gravel against one of Isaac's windows, which to be sure didn't look very well, and then I suppose seeing me advance, he would have slipped away, but I stopped him in the square, and he gave me *such a douse of the chops*; then it was that the *divil's* body-guards came up, who seeing the blow, would have taken my part, but I pegged away till they bid me desist; and oh! to be sure now, and I wasn't ready to hang myself when the prisoner said 'You have ruined a friend!' but as I say, who'd have expected to a seen a starched stately *owld* Cavalier, playing tweedle dee and tweedle dum, to some of cunning Isaac's tawney spalpeens, or what is rather more likely, to his pretty Francisca!" "O then." cried Almeria, whose agony made her incautious, "it was to *you*, my dear mistaken friend, I owed a

disappointment that cost me so dear.”—“Cost *you*? why it cost nobody any thing but me; and I am sure when I knew it was Jerome, it cost me many a salt tear.” “But why not endeavour to rescue him then?” “Why! why because I saw *owld* Polygon, with two other ill looking fellows, dart out upon the luckless Signor; and five to two made the odds too powerful; but when I met them by the vineyards, O to be sure little Patrick didn’t do his best.”

Almeria, with all her strong affection for this amiable character, could not help bitterly lamenting that trait in it which, for aught she knew, might eventually prove the destruction of herself and those she loved. However, to remonstrate or condemn was equally useless; and she took the first opportunity of retiring to her room, for the purpose of arranging another and still more hazardous plan than that her thoughtless friend had so recently overturned. To expect the assistance of Francisca, was an idea she dared not encourage;—impetuously attached to her cause, and competent in some instances to resolute deeds, that spirited girl was still a minor, still a ward of, and dependant upon, the wary Polygon; against whom the shafts of her ridicule had flown harmless, while armed *only* with satirical points; but he would certainly oppose a tolerated authority to every scheme that carried on its face an open defiance of his interest or pleasure. From *her* interference, then, nothing was to be hoped; and it rested wholly with Mrs. Cleveland to accelerate the means of her departure: again, the warning of the Cavalier pressed upon her anxious heart,—that heart which trembled to the awful sounds, as they seemed repeatedly to strike the chords of memory. Bred by the pure and guileless Abraham in all the simplicity of our protestant faith, and taught in every exigence to carry her petitions to that court, where true christianity was sure of encouragement, she had in all her succeeding distresses submitted her cause to an unerring judge. Even now, when dangers accumulated on every side; when her highest expectations were founded upon the hope of returning to that country she had hazarded so much to quit; her search after her natural friends suspended, if not for ever prevented; her design of seeking the object of a most tender attachment totally superceded; no probable means of escaping a criminal process against her own person;—even now, so prevalent are good habits, she forgot not to pass a few precious minutes in the exercise of prayer and praise.—Thus strengthened, her task appeared to lose some of its difficulties, her fortitude revived, her powers of reflection grew clearer, and the prospect of remaining for some time exposed to the miseries arising from a detection, lost somewhat of its horrors: no longer time, then, was to be given to self commiseration: she was to act for herself; and the wardrobe again became subject to a fresh examination.

Anica’s English dress, however, according with Almeria’s sense of delicacy, comfort, and convenience, offered no protection against illiberal attentions; her own, so well known to Polygon and his emissaries, could not be thought of.—How then was a difficulty so serious in its consequences to be annihilated? Several suits presented themselves, but all equally improper. At last, as her eager eye dwelt with minute inspection upon the different contents, it caught the view of a plain brown garment beneath the bottom slider, when drawing it forth, it appeared to be the dress of a female pilgrim. Certainly, even *that* would carry an appearance of singularity, at a period when superstition was beginning to lose its ground in many places, and vows to perform a painful pilgrimage, became of less consequence; still the habit preserved its sacred influence, and Almeria had reason to hope, that under its powerful shelter, she might

elude any particular examination. Hastily, therefore, she set about transferring the cockle shells which were sewed about the cape, to a large hat that lay upon the tester of her bed apparently unregarded, and after as much preparation as was necessary to her purpose, she ventured once more into Polygon's presence. He was alone, and performed the duties of hospitality with a silent reluctance.

Mrs. Cleveland, wisely considering the necessity of partaking of the refreshments before her, accepted his coldly offered viands; and even forced herself to appear not only tranquil, but grateful for his niggardly attention. There is at all times something so irresistibly attractive in the soft manners of the young and lovely, as to create even in the most fastidious, a momentary pleasure; but although his pensive guest exerted herself to obtain his approbation, Polygon while he felt his rigid temper unbend, and even his stern countenance relax into an awkward smile, preserved his diabolical intentions in their utmost rigour. He could even join in conversation, counterfeit a reciprocity of sentiment, and even affect a parity of thinking with a sweet and lovely creature, whom he was plotting to destroy. The melancholy cast of her features, which indicated a deep seated sorrow, moved not the wretch whose dreadful machinations had given them that turn: her situation so inimical to delicacy, so heavily distinguished by various dangers, produced no real compunction in his bosom; and when he returned her polite wish of a safe *repose*, he scarcely endured a pang from the baleful consideration, that he was about springing a mine, which must effectually and perpetually destroy *hers*.

Almeria felt a degree of happiness in a release from the society she detested, and immediately set about altering her dress; there was imminent hazard in leaving her masculine habit behind, she was therefore obliged to cover it with the pilgrim's, and once more sat down to wait for an opportunity to quit a habitation so pregnant with evils. The friendship of Francisca bore hard upon her feelings, and she wished to have taken a tender leave of that amiable girl, whose extraordinary behaviour to Mrs. Cleveland, considered as a man, must in circumstances less overwhelming, have excited some very particular animadversions; for the present, she could only place it to the account of national fire, and a wish to mortify her guardian. Leaving, therefore, this subject to a future discussion, our poor intended wanderer adverted to the business which gave a tremour to her heart, and filled every thought with the magnitude of its design.

CHAP. XI.

EFFECTS OF CRITICAL FORTITUDE.

AS the nights were still excessively sultry, there were some doubts of Polygon's retiring soon enough to permit of Mrs. Cleveland's reaching the vineyards before daylight; for although she could promise herself no safety so near the city, she recollected several little cottages, in one of which she might be permitted to stay till night should again render her progress less difficult. Without a certain object in view, without any knowledge of the geography of Portugal, she had some indistinct design of passing its frontiers into Spain; she had heard of mountains to cross, which seemed impossible to her delicate frame;—but a trial must be made, and that immediately. To the heavy step of Isaac, as he slowly ascended the oaken staircase, her throbbing bosom responded; the echo of his closing door electrified her disordered nerves, while the indications of the house being soon in a state of perfect stillness, communicated an inferior degree of agitation to her limbs, which partly subsiding with the cause, left her at liberty to settle, (as near as the case would admit) or, rather reduce to practice her plan of operations. Again, then, she sunk upon her knees, while a fervent but brief ejaculation to heaven for its direction, produced a gleam of fortitude which, if not equal to the trying occasion, at least enabled our anxious heroine to make the dreaded experiment, and she ventured to uncloset the heavy door, when a strong flash of lightning, which filled the hall and gallery with its sulphureous scent, threatened once more to defeat her intentions, and to render her resolution incompetent to the task of braving these elementary terrors.

From a window that admitted the bright exhalation, Almeria beheld a succession of heavy clouds, to which repeated flashes gave a lurid and deep crimson appearance; but stimulated by no common motive, and preferring any situation short of dishonour, to that of remaining under Polygon's roof, she hastily passed the oaken staircase, while her whispering steps, as she lightly tripped along, created a momentary alarm; but heedless of a burst of thunder which really shook the old Casa, she advanced to a door that Jerome had pointed out on the former occasion, which opening to a court secured by high walls, was seldom fastened; at the further end of which was a low arch, partly filled with rubbish, but not so as to prevent an agile person from making their way through it. Arrived at the door, Almeria, with her hand placed upon a light bolt, was in the act of drawing it back, when a low sound from the gallery she had quitted, induced her to turn a fearful glance that way, and the figure of a man to whom her terror gave the hated form of Polygon, again revived her dread of nameless evils;—to stir even from the spot would have been the certain means of detection, and to remain promised no greater degree of safety. Silent, then, she watched his progress between the pillars of the corridor, but as he slowly wound down the unsteady stairs, which shaken by the great earthquake, trembled beneath his step, she felt both her courage and strength ready to forsake her, and in almost unconscious resignation awaited his arrival; but a momentary hope played about her heart as she perceived him cautiously walk towards the great entrance, for the purpose, as she fervently prayed, of quitting the house,—open the door, and—but who can express her disappointment, when he immediately closed it again, and returned with the same two ill-looking fellows she had seen him with on the foregoing morning,—

ascend the stairs, and stop before her apartment. In this instance her perception was assisted by the incessant flashes, although they had not discovered *her* to Polygon; and still further, they helped her to descry a lattice belonging to a window on the opposite side, which, unhinged from its situation by a strong wind, seemed to offer a possibility of escape.

Stealing, therefore, cautiously beneath the open gallery, till she arrived at a part from whence she could not be discerned by those above, Almeria ventured to creep towards the window, and lightly removing the lattice, as it depended only by one hinge, she easily obtained a footing upon the jamb, and soon found herself in comparative security, although exposed to a hurricane that nearly deprived her of any power to contend against it. However, she exerted her utmost strength and courage to keep her feet, and proceeded with all the resolution she could assume along the gloomy deserted streets; till leaving the city behind her, and rendered almost breathless by the opposing winds, the distressed creature began to hope her progress would meet with no farther interruption, and she slackened her pace; yet continually throwing her anxious looks upon the road she had passed. Even the pitiless storm she recollected had been of service in preventing those amorous serenaders (who chose to express their passion by that ancient custom,) from performing their wonted service; and it as effectually deprived the love-lorn warblers from passing any time amongst the vineyards, to which she was hastening. It was now, while a tear of gratitude for her unhopd escape suffused her cheek, she blessed the chance or rather providence, which discovered to her a habit so serviceable as the pilgrim's garment; for added to its usefulness as a disguise, its course thick texture was of real service in keeping out much of the heavy rain that followed, and she once more encouraged the faint dawning of a hope *which ever springs within the human breast*.*

Pursuing, then, her course towards the east, she was soon gratified by the tender tint of opening day; this gave her additional satisfaction, and she entered the treillages that supported innumerable vines with a sensation bordering upon pleasure. True, they hung in great disorder, and in many places had been torn from their support by that furious wind which had levelled the heavy clusters to the ground, whose delicate stems were ill calculated for an attack so rude; yet the mischief was reparable, and the scene still picturesque: she even found an inclination to taste those charming productions, and proved in their cooling sweetness an unexpected refreshment. Already the cottages were in sight, in one of which she had planned to stop till the shades of night should render her departure less hazardous.

Already the industrious vine dressers had left their beds to repair the ravages of the cruel tempest; and Almeria beheld in their active efforts a strong contrast to the poor inhabitants of Lisbon, who in the midst of luxurious plenty, suffered the diligent stranger to carry off the profit themselves might have reaped; if, instead of thrumming an old guittar before the doors of their miserable dwellings, they had put a helping hand to the ripened harvest. It also brought to her recollection, that indolence and pride so often manifested in their hiring a market woman to follow them with the morsel they disdained to carry; while the haughty fool strutted on before, his ragged capota thrown over his arm to expose an old and rusty spado, as it dangled in useless state from a leathern belt. But these were reflections which she soon discarded;—at less than three miles distant from

* Dr. Young.

her bitter enemy, with a weight of grief pressing upon her weakened mind she found little leisure for contemplation. The fatigue too, of two night's almost sleepless anxiety, pressed hard for indulgent respite; but her natural timidity, which had yielded to the desperate effort that freed her from Polygon's power, again returned as she slowly passed the little assylum of a family, who were in the act of training those vines nearest to their abode.

Surprised at an appearance so seldom exhibited amongst them, the children left their employment to gaze at the melancholy pilgrim, who in faint accents saluted the nearest in St. Anthony's name; while a sudden blush passed along her faded cheek, at the idea of a deception her sincerity could not justify. Happily for her present design, the man who overheard her benediction, was a bigot of the first order;—often had he detailed to his astonished auditors St. Anthony's sermon to the little fishes, a tradition which he most devoutly credited: a pilgrim then upon her journey to the shrine of that precious saint, was a being inferior only to the object of her worship; and Juan in an attitude nearly approaching to adoration, entreated the willing wanderer to follow his wife, who would accommodate her with a bed and such refreshment as his poor hut could afford. Thankful for an offer so friendly and unexpected, she entered with Diana, and cheerfully accepted some goat's milk and bread, nor fastidiously refused the mean and scarcely decent couch, which Juan had distinguished by the name of bed. Here a difficulty of no small magnitude presented itself: Diana, who imagined her sacred guest must have suffered from the heavy rain, begged she would permit her to hang up her hat and weeds to dry, which a bright sun that had then advanced some degrees above the horizon would soon effect;—this was impossible, unless she could elude the good woman's curiosity; who observing Almeria's reluctance to part with her dress, offered a gown of her own to supply its place.

As the little back room where she was to repose could not be overlooked, Mrs. Cleveland thought she might venture to accept the gown; indeed a plan now suggested itself of still greater consequence than a dry garment;—Diana, it was possible, would for a couple of moidores (which she could very well spare) supply her also with linen sufficient to render the hateful masculine disguise she still wore, totally unnecessary. To a request of this nature, Diana demurred: she had *so* little for herself, and that little was *so* mean,—but if the holy pilgrim would put up with one article of a sort, she would try to oblige her. The simple creature then set about to muster up the particulars her guest had named, who returning with them to her poor cabin, gladly assumed a habit so congenial to her sense of propriety; when hastily tying up her rejected dress, she delivered her outside garment to Diana with the promised gold, and then prepared to avail herself of the comfort a quiet sleep she trusted would procure.

Scarcely had three hours elapsed since this harassed wanderer placed herself upon the hard mattress, when the voice of Diana, as if answering some one superior to herself, created a degree of uneasiness. She listened: and again Diana spoke with a certain air of positiveness, devoid of that humility she at first replied with: "I tell you *no*, Signor," was her third repetition, "I know nothing about your runaway sparks; we have nobody here but a poor pilgrim who is travelling to the shrine of our blessed St. Anthony;—see her! no, not for a moidore! she is very ill, and must not be disturbed.—I wish, Juan," speaking to her husband, as he stood at some little distance, "I wish you would give the Signor his answer; here he is teasing me about a young spark that has left his friends; now St.

Anthony” curtseying at the repetition of a name, her spouse held in such veneration, “can testify that no such person ever came here.” To this assertion some objection was made in an inarticulate voice, which called forth Diana’s indignation against unbelievers and troublesome Signors, who could not take an answer; and then turning him over to Juan’s management, she went to inform the good pilgrim of what she had heard.

To Almeria’s enquiry respecting this unwelcome interrupter, which was couched in such trembling accents, as would have betrayed her to any one less discriminating, Diana could only reply, that he was a strange looking Signor, covered with a large handsome capota, under which she verily believed he held a poignard, for she saw something like a great knife glitter in his hand.

Mrs. Cleveland was now confirmed in her belief that she was pursued, and felt an emotion of grateful piety towards that pitying providence which had suggested the idea of changing her apparel, and most likely had by that means preserved *herself* even from the cottager’s suspicions. In a low voice, she then went on to enforce the necessity of Diana’s silence respecting her temporary abode with them. This was readily engaged for by her friendly entertainer, who running hastily to a small window, exclaimed “Yonder he goes: see, pilgrim, there he is, just with outside the north treillage.—See how he looks back and loiters: and there, I declare, he has met another stranger, who seems talking with Carlo, Anthony, Lissardo, and I know not who besides:—aye, aye, I thought as much, it bodes no good;—they are gone off together, hand in glove, as we say.” As Diana’s bulky frame completely filled up the little recess which contained the broken casement, Almeria could derive no benefit from the efforts she made to obtain a view of that simple matron’s disturbers; and could only judge from *her* description, that the one was Isaac Polygon who had so closely followed her; the other, she thought, *might* be a friend of that treacherous mortal. At any rate, this portentous appearance would enhance her difficulty of proceeding unsuspected; and the course she contemplated to pursue, seemed totally beyond her ability to undertake. An attempt to reach Badajos, which was her first intention, now wore a discouraging aspect; even her departure from Juan’s cottage she now considered as replete with dangers; and the evening had already given a gloomy tint to the distant hills before she could resolve to scale their trackless heights.

Too anxious to get the repose so necessary for one who might seek in vain for such another hospitable roof, our poor traveller quitted her couch to watch the declining sun, as it hung over the country she dreaded, yet wished to reach. It is true, she thought, that in Spain I may be safe from those terrible persecutions, which my native country meditates against a harmless life; but ah! this country, fatal as it is to my interests, contains an object dear, ah! how very dear to my aching heart. In flying to yonder nation, I leave—a suffering, imprisoned,—O no, perhaps a martyred husband!—friends, who have evinced the most tender attachment to my cause;—relatives, that one day, when the cloud a jealous government has drawn before their smiling prospects, may be able to acknowledge the helpless Almeria. Yet to stay,—to resign myself a willing victim to diabolical baseness, Who among those valued beings would be gratified by such a sacrifice?—In Spain, unnoticed and unknowing, I may at least be safe; and in substituting St. Jago for St. Anthony, may find my little wants supplied, till enabled to arrive either at St. Lucar or Cadiz; where some favorable opportunity may present itself to facilitate my passage to England;—England! that dear, that friendly island where I have passed so many peaceful happy years. Retrospection then became too painful for further

indulgence, and her tears, which still continued to flow from a sad recollection of her friends and the unhappy Frederico, still streamed with unrestrained impetuosity; while the lovely scenes which were spread beneath her eye, appeared one mass of undistinguished confusion. However, it now became necessary to put in practice her intention of undertaking a journey, which was to separate her from all the ties of love and friendship; or rather, prevent the possibility of knowing the fate of her sincerely lamented Cleveland. True, she was not totally without money; but with such an undertaking in prospect, and without a friend on whom she could draw for a supply, it became extremely necessary to preserve some pecuniary resource should her claims as a pilgrim be denied by those whose prudence or avarice set at nought the authority either of St. Jago or St. Anthony.

Thus meditated our traveller, as she watched the mists that arose from the little rills, which intersecting each other, were cut for the purpose of conveying water among the numerous vines. They were signals for her departure, and she quitted her apartment to plunge into unknown difficulties. Surprised as Diana and her husband *might* be at Almeria's intimation of her design, their reverence for St. Anthony prevented the questions they would have put; indeed, Juan settled it with his curiosity that, to travel only by night, was a clause in her vow; and he respectfully accompanied her several miles, without committing himself in St. Anthony's estimation by one improper observation. From the eminence on which she parted with her kind conductor, Mrs. Cleveland caught a faint view of Lisbon, Bellisle, and their environs; even Cabo de Roco partly exhibited its whitened top, as the moon's clear beams touched its various protuberances. Beneath her feet, in the valley of Shelloes, the nightingales continued to pour their melodious strains; and on a rising ground, near a clump of cork trees, she beheld the stately remains of a Moorish palace; the marble pillars of which gave a striking variety to the deep masses of shade which the neighbouring wood occasioned. The sumptuous ruin detained her eye, while an agonizing pang shot through her heart; for she had *heard* of this building in a way calculated to inspire the most awful ideas. It *had* been a summer residence for a Moor of quality, previous to their expulsion from Spain and Portugal; who used it only when the excessive heats made an excursion to the north of Morocco particularly agreeable; and for many years after the conquest, remained in a declining state, till a nobleman of the house of Tavora pleased with its situation, repaired it; and it was only in consequence of that fatal edict, which comprised all the estates of the last Marquis, that it was reduced to such a mutilated appearance. Amongst the ignorant and superstitious, a report had recently been circulated that it was nightly visited by the late owner, in a supernatural way; and she recollected Francisca's ridicule of Polygon, who had mentioned this circumstance in a way that indicated his belief of the report. Juan too, while pointing out the path she was to take, charged her to descend a winding path leading from the melancholy ruin.

Perhaps the idle legend in other instances, might have produced a discredit of its truth equal with that of the Signora's, but impressed by an affecting notion that it *might* have been the temporary abode of *her* father also; a solemn terror stole upon her mind, and she turned with disgust from the dismal contemplation. Yet, said reason, if I could discard those timid apprehensions and pass a few hours, at least till the dawn, even in that desolate place, it would be preferable to exploring yonder lonely plains, where neither hut or shelter of any kind holds out a hope of safety. In this instance, reason failed with her of its usual effect; she turned another look towards the cork wood, nor felt the smallest

inclination to explore its desolate interior, to which the sombre tint of those aged trees communicated a dark and solemn appearance. The Moorish ruin too, whose sullen bosom once sheltered those lamented progenitors now mouldering in dust,—Could she venture within or near its delapidated walls? How very impossible, thought the irresolute Almeria, it will be to repose in an edifice whose history comprises such circumstances; how awful the desolation I must witness, if in compliance with the advice so reluctantly given by Juan, I should defy the legendary story he so awkwardly touched upon, and wait beneath that tottering roof till morning shall render my progress less difficult. She was then within full view of that inauspicious building: her eye unsteadily glancing over the declining pediment, as it hung ready to overwhelm the curious gazer, abruptly changed its object, and she attempted to take another direction, but there was no visible path, owing to the brush-wood that grew over it. The ground too, was so unequal as to form several little reservoirs for the rain that had so recently fallen; so as to make any other tract both inconvenient and uncertain, except that which led to the subject of her not unreasonable terror. Again she turned, and threw an anxious look upon its mouldering walls, and still her reluctance to pass a night within their gloomy environs grew stronger.

The uncommonly severe destiny which had thrown our forlorn wanderer into situations so inimical to common life, did not bring with it a sufficient share of stoicism, romantic courage, or apathy. She was in every proper light a truly modest female. Every step that untoward destiny had urged her to take, which was not sanctioned by the approbation of feminine delicacy, struck a pang to her heart, which the most imperious necessity failed to ameliorate. Too young to have imbibed the lofty sentiment of a proud Portuguese in a censurable degree, and thrown even in a state of infancy, into a train of education the most unfitly calculated for those scenes she was so soon to realise, no wonder her apprehensive heart should anticipate horrors yet unexperienced, or, that her fears should urge her to return back to Juan's cottage, and venture a discovery which she trembled but to think upon, rather than encounter evils still superior to death itself.

CHAP. XII.

NEW TRIALS

THUS determined, Almeria again attempted to quit the dreary wood, and comfortless prospect of passing some hours in the dismal Casa; when a sudden emotion, too dignified by its motive to arise from caprice, induced her to pause a moment upon the arrangement she was making:—would the once dear instructor of her infant years, were he then in being, admit that excuse her fears suggested for plunging into certain dangers? Was it possible, that a dread of supernatural appearances should obtain power sufficient to make her slight others so truly formidable?—Blush, Almeria, she mentally exclaimed, for a conduct which *he* so good, so venerated, would have highly condemned; nor let another thought so puerile, weaken or set aside thine important design; nor forget to *whom* thou didst commit thy cause. Yes, Powers of Benevolence, and she clasped her hands in all the energy of genuine piety, I feel most painfully the effects of a foolish superstition; it clings to my nature; it exerts a tyrannical sway over the understanding which *ye* have enlightened; but it shall *not* prevail, it shall *not* overcome the principles so early implanted by a gracious Providence. With a resolution strengthened by these and similar reflections, Mrs. Cleveland again turned her steps towards the once dreaded Casa; whose contour lost much of the chilling influence it so lately acquired in her well regulated mind; and in this victory over a natural propensity, she evinced the consequence of early and well grounded cautions, for Mr. Dawson had ever made the existence of ghosts, &c. the theme of his keenest ridicule, serious expostulation, and unequivocal contempt.

Recovering sufficient fortitude for what she still considered as a trial, Mrs. Cleveland entered the solemn recess by an airy hall which opened to the east, carefully avoiding that part which reason pointed out as insecure. The steps, the pillars, were all of polished granite. The ceiling of this still beautiful apartment, exhibited in its remaining light, yet rich ornaments, a taste that would not have disgraced the greatest modern artist; and although the impervious shades without had thrown a gloom upon our wondering pilgrim's spirits, she found nothing within to correspond with that sombre prospect;—no dark passages, dreary damp dungeons, or blood-stained walls detained her curious eye, all was light and cheerful. The bright beams of the moon, which now pervaded many of the eastern windows, (for it was only that side she ventured to explore) rendered Juan's lamp and tinder box which he had given her, nearly useless; and as she remarked the tolerable degree of preservation every ornament stood in, her heart reminded her, that *there* the Tavora family had probably passed some pleasant months; and while she paced the marble pavement, or viewed the bason which once received the waters of a refreshing fountain, she sighed to the memory of those who had long since their first formation, received a superior pleasure in contemplating its more perfect state.

To enjoy a degree of comfort in this lonely place, was quite beyond Mrs. Cleveland's hope; but to while away those hours which remained, she had recourse to her little basket, and eat her grapes and bread in tolerable tranquility; a book too, which was a gift from Signora Francisca, offered its mite of consolation, and placing herself upon a low bench that ran round the hall, or rather vestibule, she felt herself insensibly attracted by its subject, nor found the smallest difficulty in reading by moonlight; till fatigued with

her walk, her former fears, and even her intense application, Almeria felt an irresistible desire to sleep; but unused to repose *Al fresco*, and aware of the consequences resulting from an exposure to the night air, she ascended a light staircase, and cautiously entering a magnificent bed-chamber, beheld to her great satisfaction, a bed in the Moorish style; the hangings of which, though torn and spoiled, exhibited a fresh proof of elegance, and were the only remaining traces of its superb adornments. Commending then her innocent soul to that protection she so constantly invoked, she gave way to the momentary indulgence; which indeed was *but* momentary, for her eyes were scarcely closed, when a slight noise induced her to turn a look towards the part from whence it came, and she beheld with a terror too acute for description, a figure enveloped in a loose garment slowly cross the spacious room as if fearful of disturbing her, and then disappear by a door on the opposite side. Convulsively agonized by a sight so appalling, and with only one idea present to her affrighted imagination, (for of supernatural appearances she thought not) Polygon and his criminal pursuers occupying her whole soul, she darted from the bed and was making her way to the stairs, when casting a look upon the window near which she was obliged to pass, our terrified wanderer beheld the object of her alarm slowly walking through the court, on that side leading to Juan's cottage. Convinced from this that he had not seen her, and also that he was about to quit the place, she paused in almost breathless agitation till he had gradually descended from her view; but in contradiction to her hope that a pursuit after *her* was not his motive for visiting the dilapidated dwelling, she observed him *anxiously* surveying the northern front, for so her fears interpreted his settled gaze, as he stood near the angle which soon after hid him from her sight. That he should pass through the room in which she must be exposed to any common observer,—that he should quietly leave the old palace without any particular search, and yet prove by his earnest examination of it at last, that he encouraged suspicions of a tendency destructive to her safety, were circumstances from which Almeria deduced a sweet proof, that she was guided and protected by that superintending Benevolence she had so often experienced; and after a short but fervent ejaculation and prayer for a continuance of heaven's undeserved bounty, she turned her thoughts upon the surest method of avoiding this dreaded being. Short sighted woman! for once thy prudence and excessive caution defeated a great exertion in thy favour, for in thine eagerness to avoid an unwelcome disturber thou didst prolong the fears and terrors which he could have soothed and lessened! but we must not anticipate. In Juan's description of a path he sedulously implored her to shun, he had pointed the necessity of going through a hall, at one end of which a few steps descended into what *had* been an extensive garden, 'And still where many a garden flower grew wild.' This she was also to cross, to where a ruined gateway opened upon a private road leading towards the frontiers of Spain.

Recollecting therefore these hints, and availing herself of a brightening dawn, Mrs. Cleveland prepared to quit her dangerous assylum, when suddenly missing the small bundle that contained her masculine disguise, she was again obliged to revisit the deserted chamber, for to leave it behind might empower its finder to trace her rout, should that finder be one of Polygon's emissaries; but it was no where to be found:—the book too, that she had thrown into her little basket was gone likewise. Perhaps they were left below, and indeed she did not remember taking them up with her,—again she was disappointed; and although exceedingly disturbed at the idea of leaving such a clue to her flight, she dared not waste any more time in fruitless search, but hastily repaired to the

vast and weedy inclosure, which still bore the vestiges of formal parterres, strait walks profusely sheltered by overshadowing trees, and hedges once clipped with tasteless nicety, that exhibited an appearance no longer exactly correct, but wild and uncouth; while the boundaries of the whole, marked by ivy-covered walls, were too imperfect to keep out the nightly prowler, or mid-day wanderer.

Following Juan's description, Almeria soon entered a rough but visible road, apparently intended for the use of those who in higher times inhabited the palace. In this she continued, till perceiving it led towards one rather too public for her purpose, she struck into a broken irregular track, which there was a probability to hope would not deviate very much from the one she meant to explore. It was then she began to feel the loss of her little viands that Diana had culled from her dried stores, of a peculiar kind of fish very much admired by the Portuguese; to these were added coarse bread, a flask of wine, and a cup: Mrs. Cleveland was truly mortified to lose a basket, the contents of which might have lasted till she had found an opportunity of replenishing it.

The sun already began to exert his influence on her sandy path, and soon dried up the remaining traces of the heavy rain; neither tree nor shrub appeared to offer that shelter she began to want;—it was all one wide and scorching waste; nor could the earth itself afford a momentary relief to her aching eye, returning as it did the refracted beam. Advanced to the brow of a hill, she sat down on its sunless side, under the faint hope of succour; for she could easily perceive, through vast clouds of dust that were caught in whirling eddies, and which however did not diminish the excessive heat, a drove of mules approaching, while the sound of their bells met her ear; but to her utter disappointment, they kept on their steady course for Lisbon, and Almeria found her utmost fortitude insufficient to prevent a dread of suffering even by famine. Yet the consolation she derived from eluding her enemy's pursuit, allayed, if it could not destroy her most foreboding fear: but how little did she at that time suppose, that in her successful flight from Polygon's hateful Casa, she had fled from a *friend* who could have protected her; or, that in her subsequent escape from a supposed villain at the Moorish palace, she had thrown fresh obstacles in her path to an honourable family.

It was indeed a cruel certainty, that Polygon grounded his intention of securing her person on the preceding night to that of her elopement, upon Derrick's unconscious remarks, and the conversation he overheard between her and Jerome; but misled by her feminine appearance that night, and luckily (so she thought) mistaking her for Francisca, he suspended his design, and the following one was fixed upon for the horrible business; for the conversation the Signora held with her supposed lover had likewise reached his ear, and quickened in a considerable degree his nefarious resolution. *How* they missed their prey we have already recited; but they were not the only people who had to lament her departure, for Jerome, who truly understood the scope of Isaac's designs, and who in consequence of that knowledge, had too hastily given Almeria the intimation she so precipitately obeyed, immediately repented the abrupt procedure; while with a brave contempt of that dreadful punishment attached to a suspicion of abetting treason, he formed the desperate resolution of rescuing her, if possible from Isaac's power; and this he thought *might* be accomplished by watching at her window for the light which would give him notice of her retiring, but in consequence of his being visibly dogged by a suspicious looking figure, he took so large a circuit to elude the object of his fear, that he arrived not at her residence till the very moment she had left it; and after waiting for a

considerable period, he was driven from his post by Polygon and his satellites, whose manner as they hastily separated, seemed to denote disappointment and confusion. To return to his occupation of watching for Mrs. Cleveland would have been totally useless, and he retired excessively mortified at his ill success; but too earnest in the cause of suffering innocence to take any repose, he staid no longer in his noble assylum than to make a necessary alteration in his appearance, and once more bent his steps to Polygon's Casa.

The family were just assembled at the breakfast table: a heavy gloom overspread Francisca's features, while her eyes as she sternly fixed them upon her detested guardian, flashed with the most contemptuous disdain; Anica sat as usual, listless, indisposed, and inattentive. With a heart foreboding every evil to Almeria, Signor Jerome ventured an enquiry respecting the cause of his young friend's absence; but before he could receive the answer which Polygon was evidently framing to assist his own purpose, Derrick joined the ill matched society: when looking earnestly round, *he* also put a similar question to Francisca:—"Ask your friend, Signor, *my* guardian" and haughtily she spoke, "may be competent to answer your question." "My *friend!* that's a good one, Signora; but what I warrant now *owld* Vulcan can't bear the sight of our little man till he had finished his *gowlden* net for the loving pair; however I'll unmoor the lazy varlet:" and then nodding to his favourite Francisca, he immediately arose to execute his threat, when Polygon advancing with a slow step and awkward solemnity of aspect, told him all enquiry was useless; for that in consequence, as *he* imagined, of some private agreement between that youth and his imprudent nieces, he had left the house before day-light, and doubtless the indelicate Francisca knew pretty well where to find him. "No, savage!—monster!—hell-hound!" exclaimed the half frantic Derrick, "it is *you* and your infernal companions only that can do that;" and then flying upon the trembling deceiver, whose collar he grasped with inconceivable violence, while his shook his retreating frame in all the agony of raging passion, "Tell me," he went on, "in what dungeon,—with what miscreants have you hid that incomparable creature?—blood-thirsty wretch, where is her husband? you, who inveigled away that fine spirited fellow; you, who"—"Forbear, my dear Sir," interrupted Jerome, perceiving Derrick had alarmed Francisca with his hint about Mrs. Cleveland's husband, "forbear to"—"O but I won't forbear, Mr. Cavalier, I tell you what it is now, if the breath was out of my body I wouldn't forbear, till this villain (again shaking the speechless Polygon) has confessed what he has done with my *swate* dear little, *swate* love;—I know—I know" and he sobbed with rage and tenderness, "I know she is confined in some cursed dark dungeon, where they will rack every bone in her tender body!" "*She?*" repeated Francisca, "of whom do you talk?" "O no matter, honey, this *owld* varlet could tell well enough if he would but *spake*." "But he cannot speak, Captain," cried Anica, whose soft heart felt for the terrible situation of her guardian, "his life is in danger; you will suffocate him!" "No matter, my pretty dear, and if I did; and yet by my *sowl* now, it would be a pity to rob Jack Ketch of his fees:—*Spake* then, shark, and tell us where we may find my precious Charles?"—"Charles! in the name of all that is dear to you, explain yourself Captain?"

Derrick, who now found that he had raised a spirit of painful curiosity in Francisca's bosom, would have retracted; but Polygon in the bitterness of revenge for the injury he had received, and again possessed of the power of speech, accused Patrick of encouraging a young traitress, and smiling malignantly upon Francisca, told her not to

trust in appearances for the future. Derrick was again upon the point of flying at his detested enemy, but Jerome interfered with a resolution that afforded Isaac an opportunity to escape. "Yes," said the enraged Irishman, "for once the *owld* monster is right; for my poor little *swate* midshipman is a woman indeed; but all's one for that Signora, she would have made you a very good wife!" Francisca could scarcely bear her sensations when apprised of an incident so fatal to her hopes; and regardless of the well-meaning Derrick's awkward attempts to reconcile her to this discovery, she left the room with Anica, to Jerome and his almost distracted friend, who immediately promulged his intentions to pursue her to the world's end, and *beyond* it, till he should find her.

While Jerome was combating this useless rashness with a coolness that made a prominent part in his character, his eye fell upon a small paper, which in his scuffle with the Irishman, had escaped Polygon's bosom; he snatched it up, ran over the contents, and catching Derrick's hand, bid him take comfort, for Mrs. Cleveland was not in her enemies power: a violent exclamation composed of various joyous expletives, followed this discovery on the part of Patrick; but the Cavalier alive to every contingency, and dreading that power which in Polygon's hands might eventually procure their own destruction, forcibly dragged away his reluctant companion, who pleaded but for one moment just to touch up the old sinner, and congratulate him upon the loss he had so unluckily gained, in missing the great reward he had *secured* for nabbing his poor little prisoner; this our Cavalier would by no means admit of, but urged the necessity of seeking her immediately, lest, ignorant of the country, beset as it was with spies of different descriptions, she might fall into hands equally pernicious with those she had just escaped. Derrick grumbled, but soon grew reconciled to Jerome's plan; namely, to separate for the present to avoid suspicion, and afterwards to make the utmost speed by different circuits towards the vineyards, enquiring in a guarded way as they passed along, for the object of their pursuit. The latter part of this arrangement was performed by Patrick exactly in his usual stile, and might have produced the most distressing consequences, but as nobody *had* seen "*A pretty little smock-faced maid, just run away from her guardian, and one owld Polygon that ought to be hanged for his wickedness, and who by the by was nothing at all at all but a poor girl that was come to Lisbon to look for her husband,*" he was *lucky* enough (using his own expression) to hear nothing about her; nor was the Cavalier still more successful; attracted by the appearance of Juan's cottage, its distance from Lisbon, and privacy of situation so well adapted for Almeria's purpose, he was induced to parley with Diana, who so abruptly answered his cautious enquiries; when keenly hurt by the disappointment of the hope he had ventured to encourage, Jerome hastened to join his equally luckless friend, whom he discovered at a little distance with a croud of peasants about him, whose curiosity was highly raised by Derrick's strange manners and still stranger questions. It now occurred to this deep discriminator of events, that Polygon had thrown that paper in their way merely to mislead their search; the very thought was madness,—he would go back, he would tear the secret from his black corrupted heart, he would set fire to the palace, and burn the jealous nonsensical queen and all her crew! Jerome gave way to the storm, convinced that these ridiculous threats had no other witnesses.—Indeed the suggestion Patrick stumbled upon was not so extremely absurd; it was even probable, but no use *could* be made of it. It now behoved them both to provide for their own security.

To render the Cavalier, who had fought and bled for his country, an object of suspicion to government, was not to be easily accomplished; yet it had been proved that the influence of a private enemy implicated his safety, though it became evident upon consideration that no cognizance of his conduct was taken in a public way; or Jerome might some time since have experienced the danger attending his open partiality to a supposed enemy.

However there was now no doubt, but Polygon would employ every power his cunning, malice, and interested liberality could procure, to render them both amenable to the death-dealing decrees of an arbitrary court: and when Derrick exhausted by his violence, permitted Jerome to deliver his opinion, he was astonished to hear him urge the utility of putting themselves beyond the reach of their common enemy. This advice but ill accorded with Patrick's intention of searching the country for his protégée, nor could he reconcile it with the warmth his friend had ever shewn in her interest; Jerome allowed his inference, and even admitted its propriety, while he pointed out a method by which their design might be forwarded in its first intention.—“I have two friends” said that good man, “among our menial attendants who will be proud to serve me: they are discreet and perfectly equal to the business I shall require of them; not a nook in Lisbon, or its environs, but is well known to them; and the enquiries I shall put *them* upon making for our poor little wanderer, will neither be attended with danger to her, or inconvenience to themselves; nor if she have changed her dress, will it make against my plan, as their conduct as to that point will make a part of their instructions. For *your* safety, I would propose your residence in *my* apartment till this storm has passed us.—*There* unknown as to persons, connexions, and designs, you will be perfectly safe at *least* while *I* remain unimpeached.”

Derrick did not heartily relish this mode of proceeding, nor could properly appreciate that exalted friendship which went such lengths to prove its existence; however, as his fertile, though somewhat bewildered brain could suggest no better mode just then, he shook Jerome's hand in token of consent, and each taking the way they came, (although not till Derrick had promised to keep silence upon every subject respecting his lovely friend) these noble supporters of virtue in distress, measured slowly and reluctantly their sorrowful steps to the handsome edifice which lifted its magnificent front above the vale beneath.

CHAP. XIII.

MYSTERIOUS INTERPOSITION.

IN her hasty flight from that room in which Almeria beheld the alarming appearance, that had driven her from the quiet repose so necessary to her languid state, her eye was attracted by a small piece of paper, which notwithstanding her motives for a speedy flight, she almost unconsciously thrust into her bosom, without bestowing a look upon its contents; indeed it had totally escaped her memory, till she found leisure for contemplation upon past events, when upon drawing a handkerchief from the fold of her habit, the paper came with it. The few words it contained certainly added to her perplexity, and were written in English to the following effect: "Make use of the enclosed bills, they are designed to assist a lovely pilgrim in her tedious journey." Alas, for Mrs. Cleveland, this envelope was unaccompanied by any other proof of the author's kindness, than those few words; but she suddenly recollected the strange appearance in the old edifice, and thought without exactly knowing her own motives for such an absurd suspicion, that it augured no good to her cause. Indeed she had a faint notion of more paper lying near the bed, but that terror which forced her away without farther consideration, made her neglect every thing except the few lines, which actuated by the motion of her loose garment, had obtruded itself upon her notice. However this was no time to encourage useless surmises or suggestions, she therefore dismissed every subject but that of securing to herself a safe passage to the frontiers.

To await in listless inactivity the approach of that relief which now became indispensable to Mrs. Cleveland's support, was totally contrary to the principles she possessed: true, her eye had been fixed upon the caravan of mules, till their retrograde direction defeated the hope she so recently formed of being assisted by the drivers, in tracing out a ready path to Cadiz; for after full deliberation, she determined to reach that port if possible, as being in her estimation the surest place to meet with a vessel bound for England; but as she properly considered that the lonely path she meant to pursue, would make against her wishes to meet with the support, her neglect of Diana's present made absolutely of consequence to her comfort, and the no less important instruction as to the road she must take, our melancholy traveller quitted her station, and turned her feeble steps to the very track she had been so solicitous to shun; but protected by her habit and humble demeanor, she did not find all the difficulty she expected in following this newly adopted plan.

Her eagerness while at Lisbon to attain some knowledge of the country language now found its usefulness, and her petitions for succour were easily understood. Determined to avoid every species of useless duplicity, she told a short and simple story to those who were rather particular in their enquiries, varying as occasions demanded, the few incidents it contained; but it was chiefly to those whose situation rendered them jealous of any innovator, and to the inquisitive nun or curious friar, her artless tale was told; who in return for the assylum they granted, expected some interesting communication. Indeed the interior of a monastery did not in the opinion of a sincere protestant, hold out attractions equal with the shed of a poor goatherd or humble shepherd, whose charitable contributions demanded no other reward than a short prayer

or benediction; while, if indulged with the hard mattress and gloomy cell, she was obliged to sacrifice a part of the repose she so much needed, to the insatiable curiosity of a discontented recluse, in numberless replies to the most perplexing questions. In this way our poor pilgrim completed her troublesome journey, when as a compensation for many temporary inconveniences, she was gratified by a luxurious view of Cadiz bay, its crowded city, the bridge which separates it from the continent, and various relics of ancient magnificence: on all sides the view was grand, and from several points boundless; but while her heart expressed its pious gratitude to that providence who had thus safely conducted her from a country so dangerous to her peace, it dwelt with incontrollable pangs upon the precious object it might still contain.

Unable to dwell upon a theme so dear, so tender, so sadly sweet, Mrs. Cleveland turned her attention upon the scenes before her; that heat, which three weeks before was a formidable objection to her travelling by mid-day, now lost all power to molest her; and during the last sixty miles of her journey, performed upon the mule of a charitable pedlar, whose husband was disabled through indisposition from making his usual circuit, she had experienced something of a Portuguese winter: but on the morning of her separation from her kind companion, who did no business at Cadiz, she felt a renovation of those glowing beams, although in a milder degree, and invited by the still verdant shade of some noble trees, she placed herself beneath them. Nor was Mrs. Cleveland the only tenant of this sweet recess, which was enlivened not only by the sportive gambols of several kids, but the sounds of a guitar, whose rustic notes seemed to add fresh vigour to the harmless animals as they bounded along the sheltered glade. It was a scene entirely adapted to our wanderer's love of the truly simple; but to Almeria, every sound was inharmonious, every indication of lively mirth an implied insult upon her feelings: yet she stopped, and gazed with a listless attention, dropping her little mite into the coarse musician's hand, as she passed to another spot.—“Happy mendicant! whose only care is to provide by thine uncultivated talent, the scanty morsel which nature requires, how far removed is *thy* situation from the miserable abode of splendid guilt, or the unquietness resulting from corroding passions in a higher sphere!”

A deep sigh interrupted this apostrophe, which Mrs. Cleveland upon turning suddenly round, discovered to proceed from a stranger, who till then she had not noticed. Her first impulse was to rise and depart; but detained by a somewhat too important to be termed curiosity, and no longer afraid of pursuit or detection, she sat attentive, though not observably so, to his motions; as he now assumed a restless demeanor, now fixed an earnest look upon her pensive countenance, while her eye sunk under the ardent gaze. His person, although extremely thin, was elegant and manly; his dress, full regimentals, as worn by a superior officer in the Spanish service; his features handsome, and touched with a spirit bordering upon fierceness, while an air of abstraction stole over them. After he had sufficiently considered the pilgrim's person, giving her a full opportunity to make the above remarks, it would have been extremely practicable, so she imagined, to leave this interesting object to his own cogitations; but there was an impulse, an indefinable reason yet prevailing to detain her. Inured of late to scenes bordering upon the romantic, which had in some degree conquered her native timidity, she felt half inclined to await the issue of this unexpected interview; and turned her attention to a little kid which had fearlessly sprung into her lap. Its gambols caught the stranger's eye; he approached to stroke the beautiful creature; Almeria arose, sat it down, and was retiring; he touched her

hand with respect; she drew it away; “I disturb you, pilgrim?” Mrs. Cleveland attempted to pass him in silence,—again he repeated “I disturb you, pilgrim?” she looked at him with terror. His voice so different to that in which he pronounced the simple apostrophe; his eye, so much resembling one she could not forget; with the corresponding eagerness in his features, created suspicions she would have given worlds to dismiss.

As if sensible of an impropriety in his manner and address, the Cavalier assumed a milder deportment, while he entreated her not to leave him; but still his tones, his countenance reminded her of some half forgotten object, when struck with the similitude of *her* features to those of some he too well remembered, he suddenly asked her business at Cadiz, and to what shrine she had been journeying; Almeria replied in trembling accents, her fortitude and curiosity vanished together, and she plainly perceived he did not credit the tale she falteringly delivered. “You are acquainted, then,” he cried, “with the present situation of the poor creatures devoted to the wheel in Portugal, for the sole crime of deriving their origin from De Tavora’s martyred race?” This question operated like thunder upon her feelings: it gave to her view the husband of her love, suffering perhaps at that very instant, the death he hinted at, she could scarcely sustain herself, but sunk again upon the seat she had quitted, while her interrogator placed himself beside her, watching with eager inquietude every turn of her innocent countenance; when varying his question, he again addressed her, “You are doubtless in the secret of some of those unhappy individuals; perhaps some dear tried friend,—a revered relative it may be; for I am impelled to believe that sweet averted eye, those touching features betray an affinity to that devoted race. Perhaps, then, in the hope of deprecating a fate which maugre every endeavour, is now on the point of being fulfilled; perhaps, I say, an uncle, a brother, a husband,”—Almeria started aghast at this dreadful appeal to her sensibility, wounded as it was by real and excruciating fears, and settling a look of piercing anguish upon his face, betrayed by her visible emotion, the interest she took in all that concerned the subject of his interrogation; while he thus continued, “A *husband*, I repeat, betrayed, deceived, torn from the dear partner he adored, sentenced to pass the few weeks allotted by his merciless, his unjust judges, in a cold damp turret, without even the consolation of knowing he is so near that tender faithful wife.”—“For mercy’s sake forbear,” said the maddening creature, “touch not the dreadful picture with tints so horrid! question not *me* upon a theme *you* so well understand, but drop the veil which a cruel mystery interposes between us. Yes, you know me, you contemplate in this haggard appearance, a descendant from that beloved family; *my* origin, my connexions, my business in Portugal, are all well known to you;—say then,” and she arose with a wild empassioned eagerness, “Say, I do not stand before the hermit of the rock? he who once”—“Question me not, pilgrim; who ever I am must still remain a secret: suffice it to say, I am *your* friend, and have power sufficient in *these* dominions to protect you from every evil. Long have your steps been watched by me: I traced you from that miscreant Polygon’s Casa; I saw you in the desolate apartment near Lisbon, I, although powerless for various reasons in Portugal, secretly followed your footsteps hither. United in one cause, our destinies still are different;—peace, elegance, and all the comfort your agitated mind can enjoy, shall be your immediate lot; for *me* remain fresh dangers, undoubted hardships, and it may be a cruel death; yet such is my doom, nor can I controvert it. I must return to Lisbon; on my presence depends perhaps the fate most dear to you, every moment teems

with something analogous to that fate;—go, present these tablets as directed, be cautious in your communications: but we will depart together.

“To the left of the road by which you came, lies the town of Tavora; there, in a noble house belonging to—I need not say who,” here he sighed bitterly, “you may be safe, notwithstanding it is in the Portuguese dominions; for the inhabitants of that charming retreat are not of a description to excite suspicion. Had I overtaken you sooner it would have accelerated this arrangement; but that kindness which accommodated you with a carriage from Bugstrow hither, defeated the purpose of disclosing my intentions respecting your destination, for apprehensive of a pursuit, I was obliged to stop for two days at a small Cabaret. I see you are incredulous, no wonder; there is a mystery in my request which demands explanation; at present it must be withheld. Of this be certain, that the confidante of Signor Jerome Pasado, the admirer of your friendly protector Captain Derrick, and the fond participator of De Lima’s sorrows, will never disgrace his claim to honour, humanity, or the delicate attention *your* situation inspires.” “Enough, O! enough, mysterious stranger,” cried the still more bewildered pilgrim, “lead me, conduct me wherever your superior knowledge of my sad situation shall point! Brought hither by the hand of Omniscience; preserved amidst the difficulty of exploring an unknown country, it would be impious to doubt even where explanation is denied. To *you*, as to the agent of that superintending power, I commit my future destiny, and will endeavour to repress every improper enquiry into the motive of such an extraordinary interference.”

Satisfied with this unsuspecting dependance upon his integrity, the stranger lost no time in stating to her such of his intentions as respected her present accommodation and retrograde journey to Tavora. Fatigued, and exhibiting every testimony of a way-worn traveller, Mrs. Cleveland ventured to hint the necessity of repose and an improvement in her appearance, before she quitted the village, towards which he was slowly conducting her. “Repose, my young friend, seems absolutely necessary to your exhausted spirits; but—” here he hesitated, “but as I could wish myself to present you to the Baron, the time required for that purpose will totally disarrange my plans; as for your pilgrim’s dress, it will maintain the importance of the wearer with every true catholic. However, as our journey (lying as it does) over those mountains that skirt the road by which you came, must be performed upon mules, and will take at least three days to accomplish, I believe I must give up my favorite design, and commit you to the care of a respectable guide, who will observe my request with the exactness of probity itself.”

Much as Almeria might wish to avail herself of *his* protection, to distrust whom seemed an act of impiety, she felt a certain satisfaction in the idea of indulging without restraint the reflections this singular encounter excited. Acceding therefore to his plan, she accompanied him to a tolerable handsome inn, whose master he intended to engage for her guide; but still counselled her not to drop her pilgrim’s habit till circumstances should render it entirely necessary. Here then, after taking uncommon pains to render her future journey perfectly convenient to herself, he left the wondering Mrs. Cleveland with a reluctance, for which not all her utmost endeavours could account; not staying to partake even of the elegant dinner that was placed before her, with a respect equalling that usually paid by Spaniards to females of distinguished rank. From the landlord, who submissively informed her he was to be her guide on this occasion, she attempted to gain a little information of her quondam friend. Durandor, who stared at a question which he seemed not to comprehend: namely, If he had ever seen the Cavalier before? she repeated

it, but could gain no satisfactory answer. "The Cavalier was a noble generous man, he had paid him beforehand for the pilgrim's journey; and charged him to accommodate her with every luxury that could be obtained in that lonely road; she was also to stay at his house, till she should incline to leave it; he was more than satisfied for any expence she might incur." Still her question remained unanswered; and it appeared to her that he either knew nothing of this singular being, or had unconquerable reasons for pleading ignorance.

Thus foiled in her very natural wish to know to whom she was obliged, Almeria's next business was to account, if possible, for her strong emotions of terror at their first interview; his knowledge of her friends, her husband; his hints of the hazard he ran in returning to Lisbon; his pursuit of her, and extraordinary silence when crossing the room she reposed in; the disguise he then wore, and his motives for it were circumstances to which a full consideration gave no solution. That his features, his voice, reminded her of Favorita, did in a slight degree justify the anxiety they occasioned; but where was the venerable beard, the stooping gait, full grizzled brow, and snowy locks, which gave that hermit an appearance so venerable? On the contrary his whiskers still preserved their sable hue, his person was erect, his movements agile and graceful;—no, in this supposition she was mistaken; the mysterious stranger had indeed mentioned his intimacy with Jerome, whose pity and respect for the hermit she well remembered, in her first interview with that gentleman; nor had she forgotten his hints of Favorita's uncommon misfortunes; yet it was equally possible for Jerome to regard the Spanish officer, as to love the half deranged hermit. There was nothing then in this circumstance to encourage her wavering opinion, for do what she could, ideas *would* sometimes arise to shake her belief. At any rate these truths were clearly evident, that the interest both of Almeria and her husband was incontestibly dear to her unknown benefactor; that he possessed wealth, if not publicity of character sufficient to serve her essentially, that his power over a respectable branch of her family was forcible enough to secure even to a poor pilgrim, attention, esteem, and tenderness, for of this he had positively assured her.

Fatigued with these various and unsatisfactory observations, our perplexed emigrant attempted to silence them by courting that repose she so much wanted; nor was she disappointed; her rest was refreshing, and prolonged to a late hour: nay, so much was she recovered by several regular meals and a second night's abode at the little village, as to feel herself adequate to the journey her strange adviser so earnestly recommended. Although Mrs. Cleveland had occasionally been conveyed a few miles upon the back of that naturally sluggish animal a mule, its motion caused neither fear nor weariness; very slow and generally very obstinate are those belonging to a common carrier, regardless of either goad or voice; but those employed by Durandor were of a different description,—stately, spirited, and disdaining manual discipline, they travelled with a pace that required both steadiness and courage in the female rider; and she had to pass along several abrupt eminences before she felt her fears subside, which were particularly excited by the manner of their descent; when it was usual for them upon approaching the edge of a difficult declivity, to snort, tremble, and stand almost motionless, as if contemplating the danger before them; then drawing their hinder feet in close contact with those in front, they would slide in a firm and steady attitude, over those places which were too steep to admit of a common pace. On these extraordinary occasions, her guide urged Almeria to sit perfectly still, nor attempt to dismount, as there was no other method of descending in

safety, and she would soon be freed from the necessity of travelling in that awkward manner, as the country for many miles round Tavora might be, nay he knew it was, passable for a chaise.

The respectful deference of Durandor towards our heroine, his prudence in selecting frequent places of accommodation for her, and the very short stages they made, were circumstances exceedingly grateful to his passenger; who felt very little more than ideal inconvenience in her progress through dreary forests, wide sandy heaths, and close lonely lanes, where notwithstanding their apparent desolation, the goatherd's shed, the shepherd's hut, and now and then an obscure wine-house presented, at no very fatiguing distances, an humble shelter to a weary sojourner.

Upon the third evening of Almeria's peregrination, she beheld with feelings of a contradictory nature, the spires and edifices of Tavora, as they skirted the farthest edge of an extensive horizon, gilded by the side-long beams of a setting sun. Durandor, who approached to take her from the mule, for they were arrived at the first post-house she had seen, congratulated her on her entrance into Algarve, and the comfortable exchange she would make of his hard trotting mule for a good carriage; and left it to her choice to proceed, or stop in that pleasant spot till morning. "Algarve!" repeated she in a trembling accent, "then I am once more in Portugal?" "Ce, Signora, certamente," said Durandor, "and by St. Jago no great catch neither; give me the poorest cot at Cadiz, rather than the royal palace at Bellem!" "You are a *Spaniard* Durandor, and I do not wonder at your preference." Durandor shrugged up his shoulder, but chose not to enter into his motives for what appeared to be something more than a national dislike to the inhabitants of Algarve.

After a sleepless night employed in reflections upon the scene she was about to engage in,—reflections that partook more of the corrosive than lenient quality, Mrs. Cleveland prepared for a visit which common delicacy considered in an intrusive light; true, she was bid to prepare herself as a welcome and readily accepted guest. The tablets were to be her passport, but of their contents she was no judge; they were inclosed in a vellum case with golden clasps, that shut with a spring. She had never unclosed them,—but was there an impropriety in so doing? she took them from her pocket, and timidly unclasped the case. Her mysterious friend had in a succeeding conversation on that subject hinted, that she was to do so, this had fled from her memory by some unaccountable means, till the present moment: she touched the spring, and the tablets appeared, but very carefully secured. In a part of the outside case were some papers folded pretty thick, which upon opening them proved to be several bills upon the English Factors at Lisbon, and were equal to ready money in any part of Portugal. They were enveloped by a paper containing the following words, and apparently written by the same hand that traced those lines Almeria had brought from the Moorish ruin: "Once you refused the little mite offered to a helpless pilgrim; if not refused, I fear it was overlooked in your hurry to quit a faithful friend, who found it near a small basket on the spot; but I am discovering too much.—Accept then, a trifle similar to that so unfortunately rejected. It is the gift of—perhaps a relative to whom, *one* only, if he yet exists in this unpitiful world, can be dearer than the gentle, the lovely—Oh! name so fatal, yet so dear, I dare not articulate or trace it!—Deliver these tablets with that sweet confidence innocence inspires, but be cautious neither to ask or answer any questions leading to *your* situation, as you value the existence of Frederico de Lima."

What a redundant light did these few words throw upon the mystery of the Moorish ruin. Doubtless *he* it was who left the papers for her acceptance, and to answer the most benevolent purpose. He had returned after her departure, and had discovered the notes and basket; in short, this stranger so dreaded, so carefully shunned, was her sylph,—her guardian angel. So spoke the language of enthusiastic gratitude, and to his prudence she would confide her dearest interests. Such a friend as this, she mournfully thought, would have been the generous inconsiderate Derrick, had the strength of his understanding equalled the goodness of his heart; such a friend as this was Signor Jerome Passado, as far as the limits of his power extended. In Abraham Dawson I found the protector of my infant state, the enlightener of my mind. From Lady Tillotson's precepts and example, I caught a share of those accomplishments so necessary to every female, whom the Almighty has placed above mediocrity. From Sir Henry Tillotson * * * here the current of her reflections was interrupted, for she scarcely knew whether to rate him as a friend or enemy; and she finished the list of her benefactors with her hapless Frederico, and an ardent petition to heaven to bless those who yet remained on earth to exercise their benevolence. A fresh subject now occupied her anxious moments: Durandor respectfully presented himself, with the information that a chaise waited to carry her to Baron de Lima's; "And see Donna," said the officious attendant, advancing to the window, "about seven miles off you may perceive several vanes, glittering in the morning sun, they belong to the Baron's Casa, which we may reach very easily some time before dinner." Almeria thought little of the vanes, the Casa, or the dinner;—he had mentioned a name which spoke unutterable things to her throbbing heart.

There was a connexion, then, in the events which had led her from England to the bosom of her husband's family. By them she should be beloved, encouraged, protected; and this effect would be produced by the mysterious management of her wonderful friend. But how could she receive as a stranger, the blessings her heart would throb to acknowledge in the person of Frederico de Lima's wife? yet she *had* promised to observe a punctual silence upon every subject relative to her past sorrows; it was the only sacrifice her *Spanish* protector demanded for the essential obligations already conferred, and all those she was taught to expect. This request too, involved her husband's safety; and should she, *could* she refuse it?—No. Obedience, unlimited and unconditional, was resolved upon, and in this conquest she experienced that grateful sensation resulting from a laudable self denial.

While thus employed in this important arrangement, Almeria had not attended to Durandor's absence; who supposing she was ready to depart, directly retired for the purpose of ordering the carriage; and which, upon her looking from the window, she perceived was drawn up to receive her, the careful guide standing by his mules, as if ready to attend her. Pleased with this sedulous attention, our pilgrim immediately descended, and with a smile of approbation suffered him to place her in the chaise. Durandor seemed to enjoy the honour, and respectfully bowing, said he was to see her safe to the Baron's; again she smiled, and thanked him for his punctual care, and the carriage drove off. But Mrs. Cleveland was fated to endure a little procrastination which her present situation made extremely unwelcome, and this originated in the carelessness of her guide, who checking his mule somewhat too freely, the ungovernable animal plunged and threw his rider against the chaise, with a force that made Almeria tremble for his life; however it proved upon examination that the bruises he had received were no

ways dangerous, and a few hours rest would restore him sufficiently to renew his journey. Pacified by this assurance, the anxious traveller consented to return to the inn she had but just quitted, and wait till the following morning, when Durandor hoped he should be able to attend her, as she could not think of introducing herself at the Baron's, without *one* person at least by whom she was not totally unknown.

To a female who had faced disappointment and mortification in their most gloomy colours, this accident ought not to have borne a grievous aspect; but just on the eve of proving either the truth or falsehood of her mysterious friend's promises, every hour seemed to threaten fresh evils, and she passed the intermediate time in a painful uncertainty; till awakened from useless retrospection which had employed an uncomfortable night, by a message from her guide, importing his ability to accompany her, Almeria shook off a part of that anxiety which had so completely broken her rest, and once more prepared for a visit that was intended to determine her future fate.

CHAP. XIV.

CONTRASTS OF SITUATION.

AS the distance from the inn to that noble Casa, Durandor had pointed out upon the northern horizon, and which was the old Baron de Lima's residence, hardly exceeded the muleteer's calculation, Mrs. Cleveland soon distinguished its stately front, and glittering windows, with an emotion ill suited to the composure she struggled to attain. It was indeed an epoch in her existence that demanded great fortitude to meet; and to a naturally timid spirit held out a very formidable appearance; nay, her expectations had assumed a new and still more serious aspect, and she beheld her chaise stop before the spacious court, with a prevailing idea that she should meet with a stern repulse. Durandor was already alighted, and crossing the court, had entered a noble hall before she could dismiss this notion; however his absence was of short duration, for he soon reappeared with a female of a serious, but benign aspect, reading a note, which it was apparent she had received from the guide; and courteously advancing, extended her hand to assist the trembling Almeria to alight, and as she conducted her along the broad walk, welcomed her to Tavora, in a way that was at once humble, affectionate, and encouraging. At their entrance to the house they were stopped by Durandor, who with the formal politeness of a true Spaniard, and quite unlike the generality of his profession, pronounced his farewell with a bent knee, then remounting his mule, followed the chaise, and both were quickly out of sight. The poor pilgrim sighed as her eye followed the faithful creature, and would have thought even *his* presence a relief to the awkwardness of her situation; but she *was* to be thrown entirely into a strange society, and her task was—submission.

Perceiving the various hues that shaded Almeria's cheek, her considerate conductor led her into a small room, where several elegant refreshments were spread upon a side table; and she tenderly pressed her almost fainting guest to partake of them, assuring her at the same time, that she should not be introduced to the Baron till her spirits were more tranquilized. Mrs. Cleveland held out the important tablets, timidly hinting they were only intended for the Baron, and burst into tears: the woman refused to take them. "I know" she said, "they belong to my lord or the young Signora, and consequently must not be tendered by any hand but yours;" adding, "I can allow for your confusion, gentle pilgrim, but here it is unnecessary, you are expected by the Baron; he will receive you as his child, for so I am taught to believe. Already he knows of your arrival, and was made to understand by a messenger who came yesterday, that you were just at hand, and was quite impatient at your delay; by what means you became known to him I am unable to judge. Be cheerful then, Signora, in the certainty that while a resident in this house, you will taste of peace, comfort, and affluence." "Wonderful, most wonderful" cried the still weeping lady, "are the ways of Omnipotence! my heart overflows with extatic adoration of that power who has led me through such perils to the hoped for enjoyment of sincere friendship! Signora, you are possibly unacquainted with * * but pardon me, I knew not you were engaged;" looking towards the woman, and discovering her to be busily employed in the utterance of an Ave Maria, while she dropped her beads to mark the revolving moment, in earnest pity for the poor heretic

whose short effusion of genuine piety, was undistinguished by any attention either to the beads or cross which hung to her girdle; disgracing by this neglect the character she had assumed.

Unconscious of her error, Almeria omitted to retrieve it, and the Signora shook her head, while in an under tone she prayed for the conversion of her new guest; whose situation in any other catholic family, might have produced a summons from the dreadful inquisition, for daring to adopt a sacred garb while her heart rejected the holy tenets of the mother church. Struck with a sudden sense of her danger, Mrs. Cleveland *would* have apologized; but happily for her sincerity, which any attempt to temporize *must* have injured, she was prevented from that hateful necessity by the entrance of a graceful figure; who approaching with a tender and winning action, warmly embraced the disconcerted pilgrim, whom she saluted with the epithet of her dear and ardently expected friend, and then turning to the pious matron “You do wrong, Stephania, in thus detaining the Signora, when you must be sensible of my lord’s eagerness to welcome her to Tavora! Come, come, no apologies, Signora,” observing Mrs. Cleveland to drop a conscious eye upon her soiled habit, “we know what it is to travel; my grandfather is impatient and particularly wishes to behold you in this dress. After dinner, Stephania will assist you in making every necessary alteration. Yes, yes, I can guess at your reluctance to appear before the Baron, but we have no time for the indulgence of false delicacy.” So saying, she led her astonished visitor to an apartment so superior to any she had seen either in England or Portugal, that it increased the difficulty of appearing, as a total stranger, before the possessor of a room so stately; but ere she was aware, she found her entire admiration engaged by the noble figure that met her eye as she timidly entered, who rising from a black velvet sofa, embossed with crimson, bid her welcome to Tavora, and gave to her amazed sense all she had ever imagined of patriarchal grace.

There was a dignity tempered by an indefinable tenderness mixed in his impressive address, when Laurana presented Mrs. Cleveland as his much expected guest, nor could she avoid respectfully lifting his palsied hand to her lips, as he frankly presented that venerable token as a sincere welcome. “Sweet creature,” said the noble veteran, “that countenance is a sufficient recommendation, I ask no other;” then looking at his grand-daughter, “Thy opinion coincides with mine, Laurana, can I be mistaken? observe the contour, nay, select any particular feature,—the aqueline nose, those eyes, that pensive shade which softens the brilliant assemblage,—yes, she doubtless resembles that valued portrait.” In following the bent of his tearful eye, Almeria discovered a fine picture which hung exactly opposite the sofa, and was immediately struck with the similarity he had noticed. It was that of a female in a kneeling attitude, her whole countenance touched with an air of pious resignation; her figure, fragile to an extreme; her complexion, colourless and sickly: what a trial to our poor pilgrim’s fortitude was this resemblance and the Baron’s affecting comparison; but she remembered her promise and—was silent.

As if conscious of the temptation he had placed in her way by these incautious observations, the Baron and Laurana adverted to different subjects, and exerted their utmost endeavours to lessen the distance her timid modesty imposed. This attention was not lost upon the grateful auditor, she listened, smiled and gazed, and even found a moment for comparison, while her delighted eye reposed itself upon the once majestic figure of the aged nobleman, during a pause in the conversation. How very different,

thought she, are my present emotions to those respectively excited by the treacherous Polygon, Favorita, or the Spanish unknown; those belonging to the latter objects were composed of equal gratitude, but not entirely devoid of terror, and a slight shade of suspicion. To my veneration for the hermit were attached (in consequence of his subsequent manner) fear and horror; while hatred and insuperable contempt, struggled with an unsurmountable dread of his power, distinguished every idea relative to Polygon and his designs: *Now*, I feel no sensation but such as are the offspring of veneration, duty, and boundless gratitude. Had it pleased heaven to have given me a filial claim to this revered being,"—Laurana spoke, the chain of meditation was broken, and she made herself tolerably well understood, while pouring forth her ardent thanks for the unparalleled kindness expressed by her new and generous protectors.

Desirous to relieve the Baron and his evident favorite from the oppression of feelings which soared almost beyond human nature, Laurana after a short, but elegant dinner, drew aside the half reluctant pilgrim to take her *sieste*, a custom which she said was never omitted by her grandfather; and frankly owned it would be equally desirable to herself: "and this time" she good humouredly added, "you and Stephania may employ to a more useful purpose, for I believe the natives of more northern climates do not give into the indolent habits of our luxurious nation." Almeria bowed her assent, and gracefully retired to obey Laurana's request, when having finished her toilet she accompanied the housekeeper in a tour through the apartments of state; where a profusion of velvet, damask and gilded furniture of different descriptions, denoted the heavy taste of a preceding century. On the first floor of that superb mansion, Mrs. Cleveland found her admiration irresistibly engaged by a saloon which occupied the whole front of Tavora castle, and commanded a distant view of the bay of Cadiz; this circumstance excited some surprise to Almeria, who had been three days upon the road from that city, (at least its environs) but she considered the difficulties of her progress, and her wonder ceased. While employed in admiring the almost invaluable busts, statues, pictures, and richly painted ceiling of this splendid apartment, she was joined by the feeble Baron and his grandchild, who both expressed great satisfaction in meeting her there; and attended with evident delight to the proofs she gave of an elegant, yet unstudied taste in her strictures upon the objects before her; but upon her stopping to contemplate a magnificent organ, Baron de Lima, who had placed himself upon an arm chair near the instrument, asked if she knew much of music? a deep blush and an expressive negative was her answer. "But you *do* play, I am convinced," said Laurana, "and as my lord is passionately fond of that divine science, we shall expect you to oblige us." "Thou art too peremptory, my child, thy expressions savour a little too much of the romantic; I love a simple ballad, dear girl, particularly several of the Scottish airs;—now, if thou *canst* oblige an old man?"—

If our heroine excelled in any of those accomplishments, Lady Tillotson had so assiduously secured to her possession, music had the preeminence. An amateur in the science, her Ladyship found in Mrs. Cleveland's equally enthusiastic attention, a very high gratification; who thus prepared to express her fervent wish to please, immediately selected a guitar from the numerous instruments that were fancifully, but tastily disposed about the organ, and sung that sweetly pathetic air in the Gentle Shepherd, "*When hope was quite sunk*," in a way which shewed how much she was affected by the words. Towards the close of the last verse, her voice faltered, and the tears she could no longer restrain, fell in large drops upon her trembling fingers; which her venerable auditor

observing, he tenderly wiped them from her burning cheek, saying “I understand these precious tokens of tortured sensibility, but have patience thou daughter of affliction, submit cheerfully to the decrees thou canst not alter, and remember that even in *this* aged breast, hope yet struggles for life; numerous are the wounds she has received, yet, though faint and almost expiring, she keeps her doubtful station.” The action, the words, the humid tear which accompanied them, contributed to throw Almeria from her guard; “Tell me,” she cried, “you whose unexampled reception of a desolate being, whose wonderful condescension to the creature of mystery and obscurity, say, in pity to the feelings which all this tender goodness serves but to strengthen, Say, to what am I indebted for * * *” Laurana caught the unfinished sentence, and smilingly added—“For an act of common benevolence; but cease to indulge *improper* wishes, since they cannot be gratified without distressing (here she threw her eye upon the Baron, and assumed a serious aspect) that best of men.” Mrs. Cleveland felt the reproach, and although she burned to ask how they obtained a knowledge of the name she went by, no longer suffered her painful curiosity the gratification of an indulgence, that must be productive of violence to her better principles.

The good nobleman beheld and understood her confusion, and again wiped the tears from her averted eyes, while his grand-daughter considerably placed herself at the organ, and executed some of Handel’s most difficult compositions, with a taste and spirit that gained the sincerest applause from her little audience. From this period the grand saloon was visited daily, where Almeria and Laurana by their sedulous endeavour to sooth and enliven the weariness of decrepid old age, procured to themselves that sweet satisfaction resulting from a wish to oblige, and be useful.

Attached to the English, through motives which he chose not to disclose, the Baron de Lima found in our heroine’s beautiful recitation of the poets and historians of that country, a very strong gratification of his favorite propensity; and though a strict catholic, tasted a pure delight in the compositions of Milton and Dr. Young. At times indeed, he would listen to Shakespeare’s charming language, the nervous and sublime of Pope, with the soft-touching melodious harmony of Thompson, with the ear of a connoisseur.

While Mrs. Cleveland silently congratulated herself upon her ability to lessen, in some degree, that strong anxiety which, do what they could, obtained but too often a distinguished power over her benefactor. There was too, she sometimes imagined, a shade of melancholy in Laurana’s features that bespoke interior grief; and these symptoms seemed to acquire new force, when contemplating either *her* countenance, or that portrait’s, which it was plain they thought she resembled; but these were topics too dangerous even for mental discussion, and might hazard the sincerity of her intention to preserve her promise given to the unknown. Indeed, there were advantages in her present situation which made considerable amends for the sacrifice of an inquisitive spirit: too long in the habit of according to manners dissimilar to the delicacy of her sentiments and her sex, she could not help enjoying the striking contrast of situation; and daily recovered in company so congenial to her native manners, that propriety of conduct she so much approved. The violence so recently done to that propriety, was no more; no longer cast into scenes that required instant courage, calm fortitude, sound health, and almost manly strength, she felt once more her claim to elegant attention and respectful treatment completely established. True, she had never experienced any of the superfluous

indulgencies of high life, but there was something in her present enjoyments extremely consonant to the idea she had formed of exalted birth, and she almost wondered at the facility with which she arose to the sphere she there filled. Called into public life, for after a few days passed in recovering her spirits and appearance, the Baron insisted upon his two girls going into company, Almeria moved with equal grace and ease; and the lovely English-woman did credit to that country of which she was supposed to be a native; but in this society she sometimes suffered considerable mental anguish, when separated from Laurana. The disturbance at Lisbon had reached the frontiers, and daily accounts were transmitted of new proscriptions, seizures of suspected persons, and the severities endured by those who had been put to the question; it was even hinted in the absence of her friends, that some one of *her* family was in daily expectation of a death upon the wheel.

On these occasions, our wretched heroine could scarcely bear her own sensations; but she suffered in secret: and it was even possible, that the restraint she was obliged to endure, might in some instances be of use in urging the necessity of that fortitude her uncommon situation demanded. Yet, notwithstanding these occasional interruptions to her comfort, her heart would not resist the attacks made upon its sensibility in other instances: that Laurana was unhappy she too easily discovered; that the venerable Baron's ill concealed anxiety arose from the same source, she as readily understood: nor could she doubt the cause, although unacquainted with its component circumstances. From the suspicions which were attached to a family of which she chose to persuade herself they made a part, it appeared they derived the uneasiness she deplored; and to ameliorate which, Almeria dedicated her utmost powers, nor were her affectionate endeavours unappreciated.

Thus passed the first month of her abode at Tavora: during which interval, her person had fully regained its former elegance, her eyes their accustomed brilliancy, and her manners somewhat of their usual interest. To say she was *happy* in a state of separation from a husband she adored, (to say nothing of the excruciating circumstances attending that separation,) would be to reflect upon the instability of an affection which had defied innumerable attacks upon its purity and consistency; but candour obliges us to own Mrs. Cleveland felt a considerable abatement of that poignant grief which attached itself to her solitary reflections, under a strong idea that her mysterious friend had some interest in his fate. Her gratitude too was engaged by every tie to exert itself, by soothing the evident sorrows of her new and venerable benefactor; and in this laudable employment she lost many hours of cruel forebodings and fruitless repinings, so that although her apprehensions were by no means destroyed, they were not in such perpetual exercise; and while every degree of gaiety was banished from her heart and countenance, they both at times assumed the sober calmness of submission, in which state we shall leave her for the present, and return to the melancholy period of her beloved husband's enforced departure for that shore, where suspicious barbarity waited to deprive him of all the happiness he had so vainly hoped to secure.

CHAP. XV.

THE PORTUGUESE TREPANNED.

AS we have already described that horrid deception which had been but too successfully practised upon Signor Frederico de Lima, we shall follow him to the boat which he was taught to believe would convey him to a dear and suffering relative. Had this noble Portuguese imbibed the common prejudices, or rather necessary prudence of a cautious Englishman, it is probable he would have found room for suspicion in the constrained manners of his companions, and their awkward observations, which would have betrayed them to any one less involved in deep meditation, which had more of his Almeria's doubts upon this unpleasant absence for its subject, than even the interview he was about to have with a near and suffering relative. Thus anxiously engaged, he noticed not the lapse of time till they ranged alongside the San Juan, and De Lima was requested to take the chair, which was already on the gunwale awaiting his arrival. Unsuspicious of the smallest deception he readily complied, and was conducted to the cabin with a respectful solemnity, perfectly suited to the supposed occasion, where refreshments of various kinds were immediately offered to his acceptance, which he courteously refused; and turning to a small state room, separated by a glass door from the cabin, he was about to open it, when some person within drew a green curtain before the door as if to prevent any object being seen beyond it. Surprised to find the lock did not yield to his hand, Signor De Lima demanded the cause, and was answered by Captain Da Costa, that he imagined Signor Joseph had fallen into a doze, consequently must not be disturbed. "And this sleep" cried De Lima, "is it to be of any continuance?" "I fear not, Signor, he seldom sleeps long; but do take some wine, a few minutes can make little difference; poor gentleman! his sufferings are so very acute, that I always feel happy when he can partially forget them." De Lima took the wine, and accepted some rich cake, but exhibited several marks of impatience at being thus detained; nor attended to the Captain's volubility, while he incessantly urged him to mend his draught; when a low faint groan from the little recess revived his faculties, which insensibly in the last quarter of an hour had sunk under a drowsy stupor. "A few minutes longer, Signor," said his companion, "and you may be admitted: he is about awaking, but till his perception is perfectly restored, it might be dangerous to intrude." "Yes," replied De Lima, his voice sinking gradually, "yes, as you say, it might—O yes, it might be dangerous.—I shall not—nay, somehow I *cannot*—What is this come over—over me?—Strange!—Do tell me?"—

What De Lima *would* have known, he had no power to disclose; a heavy sleep benumbed his senses, nor did he regain them till the following day had drawn to a close, when he found himself stretched upon a small but elegant cabin bed, with no other light than what was communicated by the green waxen taper, which, placed for security in a sort of sconce, diffused its rays over the little spot he occupied. Sick, weak, and giddy, he yet suffered under the effects of a powerful opiate, which had been administered in the wine: a confused idea of his motive for visiting the San Juan floated in his brain, till recollection slowly returning, brought with it some very horrible suspicions, which were strongly supported by the unsteady motion of the vessel, which had already quitted the Thames, and was then in sight of Margate.

Alarmed beyond measure, at an incident so fatal to his intentions of an immediate return to Mrs. Cleveland, the terrified De Lima attempted to spring from his bed, but to his utter surprise found himself forcibly withheld, nor could he gain the use even of his hands, which were pinioned to his sides. Unacquainted with the English method of confining maniacs, he knew not that this inability to remove, arose from the operation of a strait-waistcoat, for such in fact it was; but when in reply to his violent demand for liberty, the Captain, accompanied by as many as could crowd in, entered the state room, and persuaded him, in a tone he could not mistake, to submit to the treatment necessary to his unhappy case, the truth with all its terrible concomitants flashed upon his mind.—He was betrayed,—he was torn from his adored wife,—thrown into the power of Polygon and his emissaries, who, it was possible, were sending *him* over to realize the scene which Jacobus had feigned to have been endured by an uncle, whose existence he then more than doubted. Yet, could Sir Henry Tillotson, the zealous friend of his youth, could *he* join in a scheme so diabolical, merely to separate him from the idol of his affections, and punish with a cruel death a fault so venial? These questions, rapid, wrathful, and clothed in terms common to insanity, served but to confirm, in the minds of those to whom his real situation was unknown, the truth of what Captain Da Costa had previously advanced; and they attended in pitying silence to De Lima's fierce adjurations for an answer, till exhausted by the still lurking effects of his soporific draught, the weakness arising from unusual abstinence, and his violent efforts to obtain attention, and free himself from coercive bondage, he sunk into a sullen unresisting apathy; and the treacherous Da Costa congratulated Jacobus, who had not shewn his face, upon the full success of their villanous plot. Yet *one* achievement was wanting to confirm it in its complete extent: their captive refused every kind of sustenance, nor were they properly acquainted with the means necessary to enforce it; and to lose him before they could procure testimonials of his safe arrival in Lisbon, would be to lose the rewards annexed to that important clause. However, this fear was gradually done away by the prisoner himself, who taking advantage of the solitude he was left to enjoy, began coolly to reflect upon the consequences of a resistance which nature, reason, policy, and religion combated with resistless energy.—If they *indeed* believed him to be insane, would not such opposition strengthen their opinion, and countenance every step they might take to conquer his obstinacy? At present he was totally in their power, and to provoke them could answer no salutary purpose; these, added to other reflections created by the above considerations, induced him to partake, although in very sparing quantities, of the refreshments constantly tendered to him; and Jacobus, with his contemporary, rejoiced in this fortunate coincidence with their wishes.

Once, when Da Costa under the false persuasion of his derangement, ventured to give a hint of his assurance of its truth, Frederico, who had anxiously waited the welcome opportunity, attempted to convince him of that impolitic cruelty, which subjugated the heir of a noble house to their nefarious designs; one too, whose means and will to reward him for any act of kindness, were so greatly superior to those of his vile employers, and immediately making use of an opportunity so un hoped for, stated, with a mild yet penetrating expression, the wretchedness his absence would occasion to the woman he loved better than life. Da Costa listened in frigid silence to a representation which had all the advantages of sober truth to recommend it; but when De Lima caught his hand with an earnest almost affectionate, and conjured him while a tear would burst its way, To

have compassion upon an unhappy man, who was deprived even of the common rights of humanity, and urged him as he hoped for pity and pardon hereafter, not to suffer his judgement to be warped by wilful horrid prejudices, the softened Portuguese could no longer stand the test of such an appeal to his feelings and his reason, but stammered out something like an apology for a conduct he dared not justify, nor could effectually excuse. Indeed there is no saying to what lengths his pity might have extended, if the watchful Jacobus (who did not heartily approve of something Da Costa had let fall, respecting their right to detain an innocent person by means so unwarrantable) had not shewn himself at the door of the state room, and by a concerted signal summoned his companion to an immediate audience.

However this incautious appearance served to convince De Lima that his case was hopeless, since Jacobus, whom he had not seen since his voyage commenced, was an inmate of the same vessel. True, Da Costa was undeceived respecting the plea of insanity, nor could any longer pretend to give credit to a fabrication so notorious; but the Signor saw too plainly that *he* was but an agent in the dreadful business, nor dared to act independent of that wretch's instructions. All resistance then, till they arrived at their destined port, he rationally concluded would only tend to heighten that severity which already extended to the deprivation of sufficient air and common exercise. To obtain a higher degree of both, became his next consideration; yet how to smother the just indignation his swelling heart encouraged, was an effort scarcely to be supported, but it *must* be attempted if he wished for a present alleviation of his misery. Da Costa heard his petition on this head with visible uneasiness, for he had no hope to give. "You do not answer me, Captain Da Costa," said De Lima, "from a *maniac*, such a request as I have made must in the very nature of it meet with a repulse; but *you* know, as well as *Signor Jacobus*, (De Lima could hardly articulate the odious name without giving it a deserved accompaniment) "yes, I repeat, Signor Jacobus knows also I am no maniac;—why then these coercive bonds?" looking down upon the strong ligaments which confined him to his chair, for they had spared him the terrible inconvenience of the strait-waistcoat while sitting up; "And why am I deprived of air sufficient to give that appetite you are so solicitous to gratify? Fear not any further interrogations respecting the source of this violence, I ask only a mitigation of it; for the rest * * *" here his voice trembled, his cheek assumed a faint tint that banished for a moment its cardaverous hue, and his eyes sparkled with a wild emotion; but conscious, that every indication of passion would be improved by his gaolers, into symptoms of returning delirium, he soon checked the noble emanation, his voice sinking into a cadence of mild entreaty, and his countenance recovering its sickly appearance.

In reply to all he could urge, Da Costa briefly answered, That it was a subject which required consideration, nor could he make a promise which rested with—Here he stopped: but he was fully understood by De Lima, who entreated him to lose no time in making his suit known to those who had his conscience in keeping. Without noticing this concluding sarcasm, which came uncalled for, the Captain retired, after promising to use his utmost endeavours to obtain a part, if not the whole, of Signor Lima's request; whose soul revolted against the necessity of submitting to a plebeian agent, employed, as was most probable, by a creature equally low and vile. For much reflection had convinced him, that to Polygon's artifice was owing his present situation; rightly judging, that however particular motives might have induced Sir Henry Tillotson to admit of Isaac's

agency, he would have detested the means that monster had adopted, and this idea, which Frederico gladly welcomed, blunted in some measure, the keenness of other sensations.

Many hours had passed in tedious succession before our unhappy prisoner received an answer to his petition: but on the following morning he had the satisfaction of feeling it complied with in its fullest extent, with only one reservation; namely, that in his airings upon deck, he should preserve an absolute silence. To a being subject for five days to a perpetual confinement, this indulgence was happiness, and he determined to comply with the very letter of the injunction; nor was there much to sacrifice in this observance, for under the notion of a decided insanity, not a man could venture near him, and the hour allotted for his morning and evening promenades, was noted by an unusual silence among the sailors; who dreaded to irritate the supposed madman by the bustle which generally distinguishes those noisy veterans.

Uncertain though expecting the worst, De Lima beheld the rock of Lisbon with no genial emotion; nor, while sailing up the Tagus could his eye dwell with peculiar interest upon the stately edifices which here and there assumed, although unfinished, an air of improved grandeur; rising as they did upon the ruins of those the earthquake had destroyed: but when the palace of his revered ancestors (as he had been told to consider them) caught his wandering vacant look, he felt pangs too severe for description. There, in that noble square, thought he, the generous friend of my youth received a helpless orphan, and taught him lessons of ambition; and yonder, on that desolate spot to the left, stood the Casa of another relative. Perhaps *my* fate may be similar to his; unhappy De Tavora! wretched family! sacrificed,—all sacrificed to vindictive suspicion: thy sufferings perhaps perpetuated in your descendants. Ah! 'tis doubtless so!—a boat puts from the shore, filled too with Alguazils;—yes, De Lima, thou must complete the horrid climax: may thy life be the last sacrifice to arbitrary, groundless suspicion!” He had time for no more: the officers who were put on board, advanced with much respect, and upon his reply to their question, that he was called Frederico De Lima, he was requested to accompany them to the boat; which upon his immediate compliance, made directly for the strand, near which a carriage waited to convey him to his dreary habitation.

De Lima could have spared the company of Jacobus upon this cruel occasion, who with Da Costa, attended him to the prison; the latter, (although it was extremely inconvenient to quit his vessel till she was safely moored,) being obliged to obey his contemporary's *order*, for such in fact it was, while his heart trembled for an unhappy man, whom he had in conjunction with Jacobus so basely trepanned; but no such proper feelings gave a pang to this fellow's heart; *his* aim was like that of Polygon,—to accumulate wealth, no matter by what source it was obtained. Upon a wretch so devoid of common humanity, De Lima turned an eye of calm, sullen indignation; while a look of complacency, when directed to Da Costa, credited by a friendly farewell, testified his sense of that person's humane treatment. If Da Costa found occasion from his late prisoner's situation, for self accusation, how much was that remorse heightened when he beheld the dark and lonely tower, which an Alguazil pointed out in the distance as set apart by government for the reception of traitors, those however who were amenable to suspicion. *That* tower so dreaded by the sympathizing Da Costa, who had formerly endured its solemn horrors in a short but terrible confinement, was to be the residence of his *hapless* victim; *that* tower, whose deep recesses and silent chambers were calculated to deprive innocence itself of its sweet companion, hope; but retrospection afforded not a

glimpse either of consolation or self acquittal to Da Costa. He could only reflect and regret; and when their carriage rolled under the well fortified gateway, and a huge portcullis dropped with a harsh grating noise, he lifted a conscious eye to De Lima, whose pale features exhibited the symptoms of despair, while he tendered a trembling hand as a token of perfect reconciliation to the man he could not but suspect as the contributor to his destruction. Storace beheld this triumph, over justly excited hatred, with the cold sneer of contempt; and after seating himself upon a stone bench, till the chief gaoler retired with his prisoner, he again joined his associate, and waiting till the portcullis which had been dropped by mistake, was again slowly raised, they directly quitted the gloomy enclosure.

In Frederico's passage to the circular apartment prepared for his reception, he observed several soldiers placed as centinels on the different landings, which were each lighted by a single lamp, that threw a gloomy expression upon the features of those guards. In the octangular room below, he also beheld a similar appearance, and shuddered at the heavy sounds that were occasioned by the fastening of some prodigious bars, which belonged to the great door, and closed immediately after the prisoner's entrance. In this tower, once distinguished as the west wing of a noble mansion, was collected every engine of punishment or security that could either alarm or appal. Its windows sunk deep into a wall not less than seven feet thick, were too small to be of use to the interior rooms, encumbered too as they were with thick iron bars and broad lattices, which greatly added to its sombre effect; while chains, axes, and other instruments of torture, seemed, as they depended from the ceiling, or were hung against the walls, as if studiously exhibited to obtain by terror, what might be refused by lenient methods.

Sickening with a variety of emotions, De Lima turned from this horrid collection, and silently followed his conductor till he reached a room which perfectly corresponded with the hall below; it was inferior in dimensions, and furnished only with a low iron bedstead, thin mattress, and scanty coverlet; and lighted by one window of equal size to those he had noticed. Deprived by this hopeless prospect of a speedy release from his misery, De Lima wept in the bitterest anguish; nor heeded the presence of his companion, who eyed him with a keen regard, which gradually softened into a tender pity. "I cannot do you much service Signor," said the humane gaoler, "you are brought hither upon a treasonable charge, and I dare not shew you the indulgencies common to offenders of an inferior stamp; but all unnecessary rigour shall be avoided by me, and every civility attended to, compatible with *my* character as a liege subject to his catholic majesty." As this declamation was couched in terms, which De Lima had no reason to expect, from one, whose office was seldom distinguished for urbanity or polished manners, he felt a little consolation in the idea that he was not consigned over to brutish ignorance; and perceiving Jeronymo had quietly seated himself upon the iron bedstead on which *he* reclined, imagined it could do his cause no harm in committing the whole of it to this new confidant; and after making a proper apology for the trouble he was about to give, ventured to detail in general terms, the events of the past twelvemonth, with his decided opinion of those to whom he attributed his present confinement. Jeronymo listened with a visible degree of uneasiness, often casting his eye towards the door, which being unclosed, admitted a view of three armed centinels, pacing backwards and forwards in the short passage, but he kept a determined silence, till his prisoner perceiving the restlessness of his manner, and in full possession of the motive which created it, suddenly

ceased; and had the mortification to see Jeronymo depart without a single observation upon the tale he had heard, and with a sort of instinctive terror saw his place supplied by those ferocious looking guards, whose constant revolutions about, or across the narrow limits of his chamber, indicated an impatience which he very naturally accounted for; but after the lapse of three hours, they were relieved by three more, who preceded an inferior attendant bearing such conveniences as De Lima stood in need of, in a room which was destined to be his continual residence; added to these little comforts, was a plentiful supply of wholesome food by another hand—a flask of rich wine, with grapes, &c.

If Jeronymo in his strange departure had evinced an unexpected inattention to his prisoner, the omission was well supplied by this bountiful present, for such De Lima thought it must be, as it ill accorded with his treatment in other respects; and he received it with a grateful sense of Jeronymo's liberality. After a tolerable meal to which long fasting gave a zest, he but seldom enjoyed, he courteously offered a cup of wine to his reluctant guards, whose features indicated some surprise at their prisoner's generosity; but they severally rejected his bounty, being evidently mistrustful of each other, while they eyed the sparkling liquor, in silent vexation. Again he tendered it to their acceptance, assuring them that pity for their disagreeable situation, was his sole inducement to make the request. Still they spoke not: but when De Lima approached him who was nearest, he did not decline the flowing cup, and they all followed so good an example.

Thus passed the hours till the clanking of bolts and bars gave notice of night-fall; and he received a fresh mortification in the entrance of a man bearing several heavy chains, which, without offering the smallest apology, he immediately fastened upon the unhappy captive, who had just thrown himself across the bed; to which he was secured by one of larger dimensions, which were made fast to a ring on each side the bedstead, after twice passing round his body. The guards were then relieved by others, and De Lima felt indeed what it was to be subjugated to the power of his most catholic majesty, under the imputation of treasonous practices. In this dreadful treatment, he beheld Jeronymo's circumscribed power, and properly appreciated that goodness, which shewed itself in a liberal attention to his diet and accommodation, while it proved his inability to change the established usages of a state prison.

CHAP. XVI.

HOPE DESTROYED.

THUS effectually prevented by a policy which provided against every contingency, from the slightest prospect of emancipation, De Lima saw the gloomy days advance and retire, without varying either his dread of the future, or sad retrospection of past events. To sleep under the pressure of heavy chains and in one uneasy attitude was impossible; consequently the anguish of his mind, which no alleviating circumstances could lessen, obtained its full force in those long, long hours of bodily torment; and he eagerly watched the early dawn with involuntary pleasure, as it brought a tardy relief to his intolerable confinement; for when the first change of guard took place, he was permitted to rise, and the galling weight of his nightly bonds supplied by a light fetter, which did not hinder that repose he tried to take in the day. Thus passed a succession of several weeks, during which he never heard the sound of a human voice but in low and sullen whispers, excepting his own, when he had occasion to address his stern companions; for Jeronymo,—the humane Jeronymo, from whose kind attention he derived a hope of seeing him in future, had never broke, by his welcome presence, the gloomy monotony which distinguished the revolving hours; but when De Lima, from repeated disappointments, was sunk into an apathy bordering upon despair, he was suddenly roused by the extraordinary conduct of a centinel, who several times officiously jostled him in his usual circumlocutions; when finding he had obtained the prisoner's notice, the soldier suddenly stopped apparently to examine his fetters, at the same time fixing a penetrating eye upon his companions movements. Convinced that this officiousness was artificial, De Lima carefully attended to its consequence, nor was he deceived; for the fellow slipped a small piece of paper beneath the mattress, bidding him read it, while the guard was changing, as the little bustle it occasioned would prevent any observation. This our poor captive speedily accomplished, and found it to contain a brief injunction to be prepared for an unexpected visitor. The idea of Jeronymo's presence (for not a doubt remained upon Frederico's mind, as to the specified visitor) gave him real pleasure, and he waited in hourly expectation of his arrival; but as the night advanced, this idea faded, and he submitted to his usual state of coercion with inexpressible dejection. All now became solemnly silent; the guards were retired, but no clashing of arms announced the entrance of others, and for the first time during his imprisonment, he felt the faint satisfaction of venting his excessive anguish without a witness.

Thus involved in painful meditation, De Lima watched the progress of a brilliant moon, as it darted its gently moving ray along the opposite wall, through a narrow window above his bed; but the gleam was transitory, and slowly retiring, left him in almost total darkness. It was like the departure of a friend to our wretched hero. There was a melancholy pleasure in contemplating the pure beam which stole away that gratification with its cheering light; but still his eye dwelt upon the wall, when he beheld it again illuminated; but the light was confused, feeble, and unsteady. He then found it to proceed from a shaded lamp, which completely shrouded the figure who bore it. De Lima gazed in deep amazement, anxiously watching its slow approaches, and the name of Signor Jeronymo burst from his lips. The hood was then taken from the lamp by its

bearer, who leaning over his bed, and steadily examining his features, immediately convinced him of his error.

The form of this midnight visitor possessed a dignity, of which his uncouth dress could not deprive him; his face was pale, and touched with the softest traces of pity; his eyes were full of tears, which slowly dropped upon the exhausted countenance he was contemplating; deep sighs burst from his bosom, but when his trembling hand fell upon the horrid chain, he visibly shuddered, exclaiming, "Oh tremendous God! can this be possible?" De Lima could no longer endure the painful sensations which this stranger created, and he conjured him to declare the purpose of his visit. "My purpose, dear unhappy victim, was to give you consolation; but while thus manacled, thus oppressed, under what appearance can it be administered?" A tone so soft, so piercing, so impressively sweet, had never reached our hero's feelings since last he heard his Almeria's melodious voice; but it was the tone of an entire stranger; however it went to his heart, and grateful for this truly unexpected sympathy, he attempted to press the fingers, which still grasped convulsively the confining iron. This was but an effort, for her could not reach them, which the stranger perceiving, stooped to kiss De Lima's emaciated hand, pressing it eagerly to his heart, and expressing his abhorrence of this cruel treatment, in terms of passionate indignation; then addressing the captive, whose astonishment momentarily increased, "Thou knowest me not, poor hapless prisoner, nor dare I lift the veil of mystery from my name and actions; yet powerless as I comparatively am in this place, I will prove myself thy friend; Jeronymo is *not* thine enemy, through him I will contrive at least to lighten thy bonds, and release thee from the society of harsh unfeeling guards; but remember, Jeronymo must not be seen in this business: already thou hast enquired for him, thou didst wrong; be cautious, be resigned: I will see thee again." With this laconic adieu, De Lima was obliged to be satisfied, and beheld the last dull gleam of his shaded lamp, with the reluctance he would have felt at parting with a certain good.

An appearance so extraordinary, and so indefinable, as this was to Frederico, and the evident participation of the stranger in his sorrows, were circumstances which completely awakened him from the stupor of despondency. That he held a place of importance in the state, or that he was distinguished by high birth and an exalted character, was indisputable; since no one, he thought who was undistinguished by either of those claims, could procure the indulgencies *he* had engaged for; *why* that power should be employed in *his* favour, *why* the commiserating tear should flow for *his* sufferings, or *why* a stranger should exhibit such marks of indignation against *his* persecutors, was a mystery which no art could develop, or any hope of investigation encourage to explore. De Lima strove therefore to dismiss the subject, contenting himself with the solid advantages secured to him by this interference.—Certainly his guards remitted not their diligence, but they paraded the passage instead of Frederico's apartment; and at night he was released from coercive constraint, and permitted to sleep with no other restraint than bolts and bars. For several nights following this happy change, he kept at different periods, an anxious eye upon the spot where he had first beheld the feeble lamp's propitious ray; nor was it till the fifth, from that on which he first appeared, that the stranger approached, while his light step scarcely interrupted the silence of midnight: De Lima received him with grateful rapture, and pointing to his comfortable bed, warmly reminded his benefactor that he could then enjoy the blessing of

repose in consequence of that tenderness which was thus exerted in his favour, adding an eager wish to know the name of one so great, so good. "Be not inquisitive," replied this man of mystery, "men call me Signor Douro, but a name in this instance imports nothing, since it is easy to adopt one; *I* came to hear *thy* history not to give my own.—Say then, canst thou entrust?" "*My* history," repeated De Lima, "yes, or my life to such a friend." "Be brief then Signor, nor let a recital of thy troubles overcome thy fortitude, they may be great, but there are degrees of comparison to which all thou canst have endured are trifling." This was an assertion not easily admitted by Frederico, but he respected the author of it, and passed it over in silence.

To the account he had so eagerly requested, Signor Douro gave what may not unaptly be called an agonizing attention; but when he described Sir Henry Tillotson's strong objection to his union with Almeria, a certain fierceness flushed the stranger's countenance; it was not indignation, but a compound of indistinguishable emotions; emotions, which upon an elaborate description of Mrs. Cleveland's person and supposed affinity to the Tavora or Aveiro family, stiffened into horror. At one moment he uttered an execration against Polygon and his coadjutors; at another, De Lima could distinguish the tenderest blessing upon his lovely wife steal from Douro's lips; nor did he affect to smother the sigh or check the tear which this sad story excited. Thus passed the hours so dear to our poor prisoner, who felt from happy experience, the inexpressible difference of conversing at his bodily ease with a zealous friend, and wearing away the tedious nights under an oppressive weight of galling chains and mental agony, while the Signor was declaiming in solemn accents and energetic language against De Lima's base betrayers, that Signor observed, with some surprise, the peculiarity of his dress or rather disguise: it was neither that of a priest or pilgrim, but an odd mixture of both; a large hat ornamented with shells added to a friar's garb, gave him a most fantastical appearance. His age seemed not to exceed fifty years, but the apparently shaven crown, which discovered itself by an accidental displace of the hat, determined De Lima respecting his visitor's profession.—Yes, he held a distinguished post in the Casa Misericordia, and had thus exerted himself from the most exalted motive, his dress indeed was a stumbling block to this opinion, but that was of little consequence. With the above arrangement our Signor endeavoured to satisfy himself, passing over the many objections, a cool imagination would have opposed, and he beheld Signor Douro's departure with a filial regret; waiting in listless languor for the welcome hour which should again be enlivened by a presence so truly desirable; for he was told to expect his nightly visits, till circumstances should render them either dangerous or unnecessary;—but this was a state of comparative tranquility which promised no long duration, and was interrupted by a notice from his guard to prepare for an examination, which, even an imperfect knowledge of judicial proceedings told him had been astonishingly delayed.

To add to De Lima's uneasiness upon this important intelligence, he was suffered, to pass the preceding night without seeing the supposed friar, and once more felt his fortitude give way, when by the bustle which reached his ears from below, he was taught to expect the entrance of those who were to conduct him from prison. In this he was not disappointed; Jeronymo appeared, and courteously saluting him, delivered an order to the agitated man, commanding his immediate appearance. De Lima would have acknowledged his gratitude to Jeronymo, for the comforts he had enjoyed through his means, but was repulsed by a frown so stern, that it chilled the warmth of a heart eager to

offer the only tribute left within its power; and he bowed respectfully, but in frigid silence, when that cautious being told him the Alguazils and soldiers waited his leisure. A few minutes brought them to the hall appropriated for his examination, where he found several severe, but not noble looking Signors, who were employed to take his examination.

Convinced of the power which simple truth obtains with real integrity, De Lima related in the plainest language, the circumstances which had delivered him over to a jurisdiction respectable in itself, but against which, as an innocent person, he strenuously protested. A deep silence followed this strong appeal to their feelings, whether as judges, accusers, or men, independent of the forms and usages of criminal courts. With the numerous audience, his affecting and nervous representation gained a full and decided credence: they pitied the sufferings they could not relieve, and waited in anxious suspense, the issue of an event which involved so many important considerations; nor was the calm impressive countenance of the implicated criminal beheld without tender admiration.

At length, after several whispering sentences had passed between the chief examiner and his assistants, he addressed De Lima in the following manner: "YOU, Frederico de Lima, sometime since stiled Frederico Cleveland, are brought here to answer a charge, supported by His Catholic Majesty, King of Portugal and the Algarves, Lord of Guinea and the Navigations, Conquests, and Commerce in Ethiopia, Arabia, Persia, India, &c. which implicates you in the general charge of treason, brought against the family of which you are supposed to be a member, a family whose horrid and dreadful conspiracy against Our Sovereign Lord the late Joseph, in the year 1758, was most justly and condignly punished; and whose descendants, notwithstanding that great and awful example, are suspected of completing the detestable business by procuring His Majesty's premature death. We do not accuse you, the said Frederico de Lima, of actually assassinating the deceased; but we are led to hold this opinion, that during your former residence in Lisbon, you did, in conjunction with the late Count De Lima, now suffering for his diabolical proceedings, the king's physician, and many others, imagine, contrive, and complete that most hellish act, by treacherously infusing, or cause to be infused in his usual medicines, drugs of a deadly potent nature. This Charge, we are bound to declare, cannot be invalidated by the artful sophistry you have adopted; better proofs must be adduced, before we are authorized to clear you from the dreadful imputation; every attempt at your own justification will be totally useless." Perceiving De Lima about to take advantage of a momentary pause, "You have already pleaded not guilty, this is one step towards a second examination; for the present you must withdraw, and wait till we have collected a body of witnesses sufficient to establish your innocence, or confirm your guilt: and you Jeronymo Morviedro, are charged upon peril of your life, to have your prisoner in safe keeping, conforming in his *treatment*, remember, to the general customs of our state prisons, whether it respects his diet, confinement, or seclusion from every suspicious visitor."

A deadly frown accompanied this closing injunction; nor was it hard to perceive that a check was meant to be given by it to the chief gaoler's humanity, and De Lima dreaded he should feel its effects in future.

The court was then formally discharged, while the audience (who had listened to a pompous harangue, in which the declaimer apparently consulted his own consequence,

rather than the prisoner's case, his feelings, or common justice,) departed with a strong conviction on their minds of that innocence which no formal prolixity could injure.

It was a matter of astonishment to De Lima, to hear the common etiquette of a court inverted as it were,—no witnesses summoned, and the prisoner's defence *preceding* his accusation; but he justly considered it as a necessary step, previous to a more decisive examination, and strove to dismiss the strange occurrence from his mind, as far as respected its irrelevancy. Indeed he found but little difficulty in the attempt; a new load of calamity hung heavy upon his heart: Jeronymo could no longer wink at the visits of Douro,—would no longer be permitted to furnish his table with its usual refreshments; his state of coercion would doubtless be re-enforced, and to complete the climax, Almeria, that precious subject of his keenest regrets, *she* it was but too apparent, must have been made acquainted with his terrible destiny long ere that period, and doubtless was wasting in mournful dejection, those days to which they had mutually referred, as replete with rational felicity.

De Lima had indeed but too much ground for present apprehension; Jeronymo's countenance no longer struggled to conceal the smile of benevolence under a repulsive aspect,—no longer tempered his bodily sufferings by the comforts of a plentiful table; even the conveniencies he had of late enjoyed were removed, and he was reduced to the sad situation at first designed him. The effects of such undeserved cruelty, added to the painful retrospection and continued absence of Signor Douro, soon produced a melancholy consequence. Confinement, abstinence, and solitude, interrupted only by the sullen manners of his periodical guards, brought on an epileptic affection; and during its lucid intervals, a general debility prevailed through his whole system, which threatened to annihilate those faculties once so vigorous.

To leave our poor sufferer in a state so wretched, can only be excused by the necessity of recurring to that in which we left his anxious wife.

CHAP. XVII.

FRESH SURPRISES.

ALTHOUGH the agitation of Mrs. Cleveland's mind prevented that natural relish for polite society, which is generally prevalent with untried youth, she permitted not her private griefs to interfere when called upon to join the gay circle, composed of several British families, whose acquaintance Laurana loved to cultivate; nor did the too visible depression of a loaded heart, obtain sufficient power over her well-regulated principles, to refuse the transitory consolation those pleasant resources afforded. In Laurana she beheld an example she was sedulous to follow: that young creature evidently struggled under a calamity which she strove to conquer; yet, thought our reflecting heroine, how prudently does she adopt the readiest method for expunging a sense of irredemiable calamity! What an example for me to shun that solitude I once coveted, which feeds the sorrow it meant to soothe. Certainly *her* sufferings must be inferior to mine, but does it follow that *** Here Almeria could draw no satisfactory conclusion, for her decision representing the magnitude of Laurana's troubles was undeterminable, and she mentally continued.—The Baron too, one cause I should suppose gives birth to the sigh that heaves *his* aged bosom, and dims his child's mild eye; yet had they *my* motive for anguish, *** She could proceed no further in her reflections: a tender recollection broke the link that connected them, her colour heightened, her frame trembled, and the tenderly regretted object of every cherished idea, stood before her mind's eye, in all the interesting gracefulness which formerly distinguished his manly form and features, destroying at once the barrier she strove to place between a rational self denial, and high wrought feelings. This indulgence so dangerous to the resolution she was trying to assume, was happily interrupted by her young friend, who entered with cards of invitation to a select party for the ensuing evening. Mrs. Cleveland felt relieved by what Laurana delicately stiled an intrusion, and gave a willing assent to the gay arrangements.

As the season was passed for the association of dancing or groupes, in the vineyards, their scenes of amusement were transferred to the illuminated drawing room, where every splendid conveniency did credit to the liberal Dr. Canter, physician at that period to the Factory, excepting that of a glowing fire, a sight which renders a convivial meeting doubly cheerful in a more northern situation; but the stoves were so contrived between the walls as to supply a necessary warmth to the apartments; while the song, the dance, added to the amusement of cards, furnished sufficient gratification even to those whose residence in Britain, had taught them to enjoy the comforts of a social fireside.

Among the numerous strangers who were employed in an English country dance, Mrs. Cleveland noticed two ladies at some distance below her, with an idea that she had met them somewhere previous to the present moment. She neglected the dance, and gazed in silent attention; when Laurana, next to whom she stood, led by her earnest look and inquisitive aspect, pointed them out as a couple of young folks entrusted to the doctor's care by a friend who had taken them from the power of an unprincipled guardian. Almeria was indeed awakened to an extraordinary degree of curiosity by this account, and found herself irresistibly drawn towards them, when she was soon near

enough to discern in the faded countenance of one, the features of Anica S-forza: while in the sprightly look of her companion, she recognized her quondam admirer Signora Francisca. To meet with friends from whom she had received various acts of disinterested kindness, and in a situation which permitted a retaliation, animated her sincere heart with a pleasure which nothing but a dread of meeting with Polygon could allay; for in the hurry of the moment she adverted not to Laurana's intelligence respecting their emancipation from his power; and threw a look of wild anxiety about the room, while she shuddered to encounter an aspect so fatal to her safety; but Signora Francisca suddenly recollecting features so highly appreciated under a masculine disguise, approached in a sweet confusion: and a satisfactory explanation ensued, when it appeared from Anica's account, (for her sister was too much embarrassed to speak upon the subject) That a relative to her deceased aunt had come forward in the hope of establishing their claim to that fortune which Polygon withheld; but that he had artfully evaded every legal attempt to procure justice, and triumphed in an usurped authority. When their cousin finding his strenuous endeavours unequal to the talents of a villain, not only advised the injured girls to quit his boasted protection, but actually accompanied them to Tavora; where the good Dr. Canter had a country seat, and to which he occasionally retired; nor had they known a pecuniary inconvenience this worthy physician could supply.

This little narrative, which was given in Laurana's presence, who had withdrawn, accompanied by her new friends to another room, afforded that amiable young creature an ample gratification, and she congratulated them with real pleasure. Francisca with her sister, gratefully received this testimony of a generous heart, when the former on whose brow hung a consciousness of indelicacy from the recollection of certain transactions, turning towards Mrs. Cleveland, asked if she could guess to whom they were primarily indebted for their present freedom? As Almeria was a perfect stranger to every Portuguese who could be supposed to interfere in such a cause, she negatived the question, and confessed her ignorance of more than two or three natives of Portugal, who could be supposed capable of such benevolence, and those—Here she stopped and sighed to the memory of Signor Jerome; while a tear stole to her eye at the recollection of her beloved husband. Francisca smilingly observed, that Mrs. Cleveland was not partial to the citizens of Lisbon, nor could *she* attribute the act in question to one of *them*; "But what think you," added she, "of the dear blundering romantic Derrick, for it is to him we primarily owe our present happiness, and this through what in *his* situation was certainly an imprudent interference; proving the strength of that philanthropy which could defy danger in its ugliest form. However his wild scheme failed not of its purpose, and I trust he reaps the reward of his generosity, independent of those fears we entertained for his safety."

As a repetition of the circumstances attending Derrick's interposition, would have broke in upon the amusements of the day, it was settled to defer a full communication till the following morning, when our two Signora's in compliance with Laurana's eager request, which was as earnestly seconded by Almeria, agreed to take an early dinner at the Casa De Lima. They then rejoined the sprightly assembly with hearts alive to the unexpected acquisition they had made to their respective society. Agreeably to the engagement so pleasing to both parties, Francisca and her sister were punctual to the moment; and as soon as the little etiquette of presenting them to the venerable Baron was concluded, Almeria, whose heart made the eulogium upon her favourite Derrick's merits,

which her lips confirmed, entreated Anica would gratify them with the expected detail; Anica smiled, but referred to her sister, as being more perfect in the talent of description, as well as in adopting the manners of those two opposites, Derrick and Polygon; to which her excellent memory could add the whole of their conversation. Francisca laughingly accused the still drooping invalid of a propensity to laziness, and then began with observing,

“That in consequence of her guardian’s discovery of a conversation, (here she coloured very high, looking half apprehensively at Mrs. Cleveland,) not calculated for his ear, he had confined the sisters to their chamber; nor were they released till *your* departure (addressing herself to Mrs. Cleveland) prevented the possibility of a similar offence: when, as we were sitting in the white parlour, which you know commands a corner view of the Terrieres de Passe, we were astonished to see the moveable lattice softly drawn aside, and Captain Derrick’s good-humoured phiz thrust far enough forward to gain a view of those within; when Mr. Polygon, who caught a glance of the luckless intruder, as he sat indolently inclined against my chair, hastily retired to send some one, as we imagined, to detain him; but Derrick had decamped, nor did we see him again till a circumstance occurred which rendered his presence doubly distressing.” As Francisca could not for obvious reasons give the whole of what the circumstance she alluded to contained, we will give it in our own words.

From what this sprightly historian related, it appeared that this portentous meteor, as his adversary stiled him, emerged from his late eclipse; and with such a turbid aspect as foreboded a malign intent, commanded the young people to shun every probability of being surprised in that sort of way, by such a rude being: but Derrick (whose business at the window was merely to speak to the sisters if possible unnoticed) was not to be awed from his purpose, which Polygon’s chilling frown and bustling importance, could not defeat. Dissatisfied however with Patrick’s appearance, and who from his long absence, he heartily hoped was in the hands of government, and eager to try the success of a plan which he feared that unlucky Irishman might circumvent, he determined to put it off no longer, and urged Francisca to meet him in the identical spot, where he once discovered her and Almeria in close conversation. Although extremely averse from a tête-a-tête, with a creature she detested, prudence forbid her denial to this request; and with a reluctance that discovered itself in the tardy step and sullen features, Francisca obeyed the creeping despot. It was true that he had figured as a husband, uncle, and guardian, in her family; and in each of those situations aided by art, effrontery and positiveness, frequently gained his point; but as a *lover*—a whining swain—no, there he was materially deficient; for neither the turged language, and scientific bombast which distinguished his usual address, or that creeping circumlocution he sometimes found necessary to his purpose, were calculated for the approbation of a woman of spirit. Yet Polygon had no choice. He was determined to bring that cause to a final issue, which common prudence would have given up without a trial: and after a preamble, he ventured by obscure hints and awkward phrases, to touch upon his sentiments in favour of his sprightly ward, owing (as he declared) to her situation as an heiress, which exposed her to the attempts of every fortune-hunting jackanapes in the kingdom of Portugal. Nay, for the matter of that, Captain Derrick’s rudeness that morning was rather suspicious, and he should not wonder if * * *—what suspicions Polygon had taken up respecting Derrick, continued for the present a secret to our astonished Signora; who interrupting him with a constrained smile

and mock humility, asked an explanation of what she could neither understand or appropriate; adding, if it were his intention to bespeak her pity against his next gouty paroxysm, he might certainly command it; further than that, she could not extend his wish for this private assignation.

Polygon could scarcely pass over without resentment, this wilful misapplication of his purpose; but suppressing every notice of her flippancy, he made an attack upon what he conceived to be her most vulnerable part, sacrificing to that vanity he thought she possessed, an apparent sincerity; and without arrogating to herself the full possession of those attributes, Francisca was dignified with Juno's majesty, Minerva's wisdom, the beauty of Venus, and Diana's chastity, before she could disclaim her title to the grand assemblage. However while Polygon stopped to collect new flowers of rhetoric, she contrived to give such a turn to the unmeaning hyperboles, as overwhelmed him with confusion; veiling her cutting satire under the mask of pity for his intellectual derangement; nothing short of which she said could justify the rant he had treated her with. After *such* a reception of his *tender* disclosure, Polygon felt the impossibility of continuing the charge, and was meditating how to effect an honourable retreat, when the approach of his arch tormentor Derrick, increased the rage of an embittered spirit, who in his wild idea of true benevolence, adverted not to the danger of reconnoitering his enemy's premises, but boldly attacked the foe in his retirement. To retreat and leave Francisca with one she professed to love (for something of that sort had escaped during her phillipics) could not be thought of; and he waited to indulge his half stiled acrimony upon an object he so cordially hated. Derrick, without understanding the cause of Isaac's sullen manners, and Francisca's ill concealed mirth, began his customary remarks upon the would be philosopher; and likened his grim visage to the head of an old Saracen: "Or," rejoined Francisca, "an owl by day-light." "Oh, by my conscience now, you pay him a great compliment; an owl indeed! yes, honey, but"—"Signora," said the passionate Polygon, "however the folly and vanity of your sex may plead privilege, I cannot allow it to my own; therefore, if Mr. Derrick means any thing more, by these repeated attacks upon my patience, than the display of his own malicious ignorance, I must insist upon satisfaction." "*Satisfaction*, little Isaac? with all my heart; chuse your weapons, honey, and I'm your man." "Truce with these threats, my valorous Dons," said the half-serious Francisca, who did not altogether approve of Derrick's careless manners, which might, she began to think, stimulate her ancient admirer to some covert of deadly revenge;—"Truce, my dear Captain," she repeated, "to this violent display of your redoubtable courage; and you, my old guardy, be more moderate, and try to make allowance for your poor ward's flippant expressions." "Allowance for what? a tongue that is the precise type of the perpetual motion; or that roguish twist of the features which you cannot disguise, while posting full sail into the gulph of folly, as your favorite *porpoise* would express it, and making me run the gauntlet of your impertinence: no madam, I can support this insolence no longer." "O but you must now, little Isaac, or perchance the *porpoise* may come athwart your hawser, and overset that Dutch fly boat of yours; at any rate, an Irishman's heart may be allowed to speak what his tongue cant utter; and talk with his fingers; and if they don't write a receipt in full upon your musty chaps, may they never handle a rogue again."

"Come sir," cried the Signora, addressing herself to Polygon, who seemed half choked with the rage he now feared to vent, "be reconciled to the Captain; you did not

always view his blunders in a serious light.” “*Me, reconciled?*—yes, when a trapezium resembles a rhombus, or an ellipsis a triangle; why is it harder to convince a blockhead of his ignorance and rudeness, than to calculate the solid inches in our mundane system, or measure the mausoleum of King Ptolemy with a yard of twine.” At the conclusion of this elaborate nonsense, he rushed by Francisca with an aspect of bitter indignation, and bestowed upon Derrick a glance replete with malice; who recovering from the paroxysm of mirth which Isaac’s disappointment and mortification had raised, (for his business with Francisca had been partly understood by Anica, who on seeing Patrick, had sent him to the recess in full possession of *her* suspicions,) the friendly Irishman unfolded to his young friend the purpose of his errand, disclosing all he knew of Polygon’s duplicity, and urging the necessity of an application to some one powerful enough to protect the injured girls.

After a hasty acknowledgment for his disinterested kindness, Francisca immediately referred her generous friend to Count Carlos, her mother’s cousin, though with a faint prospect of his successful interference; at the same time agreeing with Derrick, that policy, totally independent of affection, had induced the treacherous guardian to aim at the security of *her* person, as an indemnity for the fortunes of both. She then urged the Captain to beware of those arts, which doubtless had involved the helpless Almeria in his toils. Derrick had scarcely patience to attend to the tender caution, so eagerly did he look forward to an interview with Count Carlos, forgetting even the common forms of civility; and Francisca beheld him making his way over the myrtle hedges, and slight treillage that supported a beautiful vine, but impeded his passage, with an ardent wish that the good he aimed to secure for others, might return in tenfold blessings upon his own head.

To Derrick’s impetuous display of Polygon’s baseness, Count Carlos listened in silent attention. He had encouraged suspicions which this accusation strengthened; and Patrick had the supreme delight to learn even in the deep retirement, to which he immediately returned, those incidents respecting the sisters already explained.

To a character so warm, blundering, and truly original, Laurana gave its full importance: delicate, and ever accustomed to the usages of high life, she yet found much to admire in this noble Irishman, whose principles, words, and actions, however awkwardly displayed, always pointed to the exercise of real philanthropy; and Almeria heard with a delight that expressed itself in tears of grateful recollection, that lady’s panegyric upon the *friend indeed*.

As the circle of Mrs. Cleveland’s valuable acquaintance was so desirably increased, she found still less opportunity for the indulgence of painful reflection, and acceded with cheerful patience to the arguments which both Francisca and her sister offered in favour of an opinion they had adopted, that through Derrick’s unwearied efforts, added to those of Signor Jerome, her husband would be safely restored to her affectionate heart. But these conversations were held in Baron de Lima’s and Laurana’s absence, for Mrs. Cleveland committed to these worthy females, her motives for preserving a rigid silence upon every subject relative to her former life; and while they vainly attempted to solve the Spanish officer’s mysterious manners, agreed to the necessity of a strict concealment. As no enquiries hitherto occurred that implicated Almeria’s safety, or that of her young companions, she beheld the season of melody and beauty advance, with a serenity arising from present comparative ease and encouraged

hope.—A serenity she had not for a long period so completely enjoyed; but again, the restlessness of her destiny prevailed, and fresh trials were preparing for her fortitude.

Accustomed to meet her ancient friend in the saloon at a stated hour, she had just sat down to the organ, and was indulging a tender impulse excited by a little Spanish air, when the entrance of Laurana suspended the sad emotion. Her hurried step and pale disordered countenance would have passed unnoticed, excepting by an affectionate address, if she had not exhibited still more extraordinary symptoms of grief, and reluctance to disclose some terrible intelligence; and the first idea was, that the aged Baron was no more; but when in faltering accents, she hinted her suspicion, Laurana replied with an agonized sigh and uplifted hands, “Ah! would to heaven, he was indeed at peace; or that his generous hospitality had not cost him so dear; but read, unhappy wanderer, and own we have cause to wish that you had never seen the devoted creature before you—Is it not so, Signora? Read—read, dear ill-fated woman, and judge for yourself!”

With trembling fingers and death-like cheek, Mrs. Cleveland took the fatal scroll, which contained the following denunciation:

“If the lives of Baron de Lima and his family, be estimated in any degree above that of the unprincipled emigrant, commonly entitled Almeria, or Charles Cleveland, by whom he has been so mysteriously, so artfully deceived, even to the protecting a person inimical to the interest of our most excellent government, he will abandon that unhappy creature to her fate; over which hangs a cloud, which must involve in the same fearful destiny, *all* whose mistaken generosity shall lead them to reject this friendly warning.—No time should be lost in tardy deliberation.”

Overwhelmed by a stroke for which she was totally unprepared, the wretched sufferer obtained a moment’s respite in the torpor of despair, which seized her reasoning faculties, and she held the paper seemingly unconscious of its cruel contents; while Laurana, who had no consolation to offer, beheld her with a commiserating, yet half suspicious aspect; till roused by a message from the Baron to attend him, they slowly prepared to obey the summons, the poor victim waving her hand with an air of silent respect, to the woman who had till that dreadful moment treated her with an attention perfectly sisterly. But if *her* countenance had announced, in a slight degree, the effect of this barbarous billet, *that* of the Baron’s immediately impressed the horror of conviction upon the heart of his so lately admired favorite; and she immediately saw in the timidity of age, which so easily admits the reality of a suspected evil, her immediate dismissal. “Yes,” she cried, as if complying with an oral command, “Yes, venerable man of mystery, you *shall* be obeyed: this treacherous act is only another proof that no one *can* interfere to soften the calamities I am bound to endure, without partaking of them. Adieu then, still beloved, still revered friends of my heart! and accept my grateful acknowledgments for the undeserved attentions I have met with.—Once more I must commence a weary pilgrimage!” Here her tears expressed the pang this thought occasioned, when the penetrated nobleman gently asked, why she accused *him* of mystery? when it was but too probable the present evil originated in her own reserve.

“If” she hastily replied, “my gracious lord can account for his poor dependant’s recommendation here, that question would be needless;—bound by the most solemn adjuration to keep every part of my former conduct, sufferings, or connexions, from this family, on pain of certain evil; and justified in my concealment by your tacit countenance

of it, Was *I* to blame in preserving my integrity, and copying your own example? How did my heart long to be acquainted with your motives for comparing these care-worn features to that mild interesting portrait;" lifting her swimming eyes to the picture she loved to contemplate, "and how was my fortitude tried in submitting to the injunctions of an unknown! but I am encroaching upon a promise which still remains in force. Once more then, adieu, for ever!"—"Not yet, not yet," said the sobbing Baron, whose tears evinced his reluctance to part with her, and holding out his feeble hand, as she was about to leave him, "there can be no material danger in a few hours delay: it is not thus we ought to part with one, of late so much confided in, so much beloved! Speak, Laurana? Detain this poor unfortunate at least till some plan is fixed upon for her future safety.—My child," and he drew the afflicted Almeria to his bosom, "Canst thou forgive that cold insensibility which casts thee thus upon an unfeeling world?"

Unable to bear this affecting address, she could only kiss his venerable cheek in speechless anguish; and drawing away the hand he held, abruptly, retired to her chamber to consider, if possible, the steps she must take for her own security, and that of her kind benefactor; who in the ardour of returning confidence, lost a part of the fears which had given to his features, the repulsive turn that had quickened and decided Almeria's resolution. But with Laurana, the same fears preserved their force; and she retired to assist her poor friend, under the terrible impression of seeing her snatched from the being, who in such an instance would be unable even to preserve himself from equal destruction. A very little time sufficed for the arrangement of the toilet; but who can do justice to a description of those emotions which shook our hapless pilgrim's heart, when she re-assumed the holy weed; for in that cruel exigence she could adopt no better plan. Forced from the honourable protection, the delicate attentions, and magnificent assylum of her venerable entertainer, to brave again the fatigue and dangers, to which the indulgencies she had recently enjoyed, rendered her unequal; her footsteps no longer watched by the eye of mysterious friendship; possessed indeed of money, there was little room to dread a repetition of the inconveniences she had endured; but might not that wealth be a snare which she must conceal from prying eyes?

Again a message from the Baron demanded her presence, and by a violent effort Mrs. Cleveland subdued her acute feelings, and passed the hours till evening approaching, in supporting that good man's spirits, by making light of her own calamity; when pursuant to his earnest request, she settled to hire a mule, which should convey her a second time, beyond that dreaded country; and once more arose to take a solemn leave of her still sympathizing friends, when she was interrupted by the entrance of Stephania; who informed her lord, she had seen a close carriage drive into the front court, from which three men, habited in black, were just descending as she left the window.

This intelligence, which excited a general consternation, was soon confirmed by the appearance of those very men in Baron de Lima's sitting room; one of whom presented a paper to the astonished Almeria. They wore black habits of a peculiar make, their faces were entirely concealed by a sort of Persian hood, which fell loosely about the shoulders, and the word "*Irresistible*" appeared in large characters upon their prodigious hats.

A visit so singular, would have led the horror struck Baron to suppose they were Familiars belonging to the Inquisition; but the time and public manner of this visit discountenanced that horrible idea. However there was something extremely terrific in

the solemn silence which followed their admission, and Almeria's countenance while she perused the awful mandate; but when one of them offered his hand to lead her away, the scene became inexpressibly affecting;—she could only articulate the word *betrayed*, when she fell senseless from the man's grasp. Her venerable protector unconsciously called for assistance, while Laurana, who had dreaded the result of the morning's information, sunk upon her knees to entreat their pity for that miserable victim; but no other answer followed her tender petition, than these horrid words, written upon a slip of paper, which was held up to her eyes,

“*Amenable to the most Holy Office.*”

“*Betrayed indeed!*” cried the distressed Laurana, as she turned, and threw herself into her grandfather's arms, to avoid the sight of her still inanimate friend, who was immediately conveyed to the coach by those messengers of evil, and without any molestation; so much were the servants awed by this foreboding appearance; Almeria leaving her new friends a prey to sincere grief for an event so unforeseen, and so truly to be regretted; and by whom, strange as it may appear, she had been welcomed, caressed, and all but adored. Prepared they had certainly been, to receive her as a most interesting acquisition to their little circle; but they knew less of her origin, than even Almeria herself. That this extraordinary reception was secured by the recommendation of her unknown friend, was fully evident; although from what concealed cause he obtained an influence so forcible, she could not penetrate. The singular resemblance between her features, and those of the portrait, could not fail of exciting an ardent wish to trace the source; but in the bosom of her venerable benefactor, it created a still more affecting sensation; who felt as a parent, for such in fact he was to its charming original, and was too painfully conscious, that her life had been sacrificed to a series of distresses too acute to be borne with *unshaken* fortitude. Yet he would not indulge the slightest hope that she bore any relation to that lamented being; but her air, her temper, person, and voice, all contributed to encourage the painfully delicious sentiment. How much, then, must he be mortified, when this pilgrim so warmly recommended, endeared by the amazing similarity, so valuable for those graces and excellencies, which daily unfolded themselves, that *she* should become an object of calumny,—of horrid suspicions; and finally, be amenable to a tribunal, whose power could make the stoutest heart, when subjugated to it, tremble.

All this, so inexplicable, yet so true, gave to the Baron's reflections a pang he could well have spared; but she was gone: no earthly interest could avail in her behalf. She must stand or fall by the degree of despotic tyranny, which admitted of no appeal; and the only consolation (if that might be called such which derived itself from the ruin of so sweet a creature) arose from the very natural dictate of self preservation, which taught the Baron to hope, that the shaft had spent its force without implicating his family in its mischievous effects. If the pungent reflections which Mrs. Cleveland's forced absence occasioned, *could* have been more acutely felt by the Baron, the distress of the Sforzas, who arrived about an hour after her departure, must have sharpened them.

From a window where Francisca generally passed her mornings, she had been shocked by a view of the persecuting Polygon, as he walked with an uneasy step along a chequered marble pavement, beneath the portico of a church that fronted Dr. Canter's

Casa. Convinced from this dreadful appearance, that he knew of their assylum, she gently closed the lattice, and flew to inform the unsuspecting Anica, who ventured to approach the obscured window; when from a cool and steady examination of his gestures, she did not scruple to affirm, that he had no suspicion of their actual residence. Somewhat comforted by this assurance, her sister attempted to quell the violence of her *own* emotions, and sat down where she could not be discovered, to try at the development of *his*. It was soon evident that Anica was right in her conjecture; for he never raised his eye from the pavement, except with an expression of anguish, that denoted some extraordinary circumstance, and then dropping it again, as though in hopeless despondency; when suddenly glancing towards the open country, he darted away, and they beheld him no more.

To their benevolent friend, Dr. Canter, Anica related this unpleasant incident, and when she concluded, the good man sighed bitterly; and looking about with the air of one who would not be overheard, told them that he certainly belonged to the Inquisition, several of whose officers had been seen near the Casa de Lima. This intelligence increased their perplexity, but it was not till the Doctor was convinced by ocular demonstration, that those harpies were on their way back, that he permitted the Signoras to visit their friends, for whose safety he began to entertain a thousand fears.

To describe the horror which almost benumbed their senses, when Laurana, with tears and sighs, informed them of Almeria's terrible situation, would be impossible. From Derrick they had learned the character of him, whom they freely accused as the author of this new calamity; and unable to command their agonizing feelings, the unhappy sisters departed, overwhelmed with the keenest distress.

CHAP . XVIII.

A CALL FOR RESIGNATION.

TO account for the fresh persecution our heroine was fated to suffer, we must advert to some few particulars, which transpired after her escape from Polygon's house; whose confusion at the disappointment of his artful plans, may be easily supposed; nor could it be equalled, but by the indignation that Patrick's rough attack induced upon that, and a succeeding occasion; and from that period, revenge in its dreadful latitude, became the darling passion of his soul, precluding the operation of every other. Even avarice itself became subordinate to this propensity; and to forward his detestable purposes, without publicly appearing in the treacherous business, called for the exertion of his leading talent, deception. The situation of Father Jerome, his character and well known principles, had hitherto defied every attempt to involve him in the suspicion of the day; but his well known steady attachment to Almeria, a protestant, a supposed criminal, and implicated in a horrible crime; his concealment of Derrick at the hospital, his openly expressed opinion of Polygon's active enmity against the supposed midshipman; *were* circumstances which he thought *might* lead to the success of a project he had in contemplation; and without further delay, he gave in the name of Almeria Cleveland, a protestant, to the *Most Holy Tribunal*, as one amenable to its censures, in having contracted a marriage with her own brother, who was a strict catholic till that event took place; and who then lay under sentence of death, for conspiring with, and covertly abetting those who were reasonably suspected of accelerating the death of his Most Faithful Majesty Joseph late King of Portugal; at the same time accusing the unfortunate Derrick and Jerome Passado, of comforting and protecting the said Almeria in her pernicious actions. But no sooner did this wretched man perceive his designs succeed, for he was immediately summoned to an audience, than the terrors of his guilty soul became nearly insupportable.—The place, its inhabitants, the appearance of those formidable men who took his deposition, all taken together, gave him more of the appearance of a prisoner than an accuser. Their questions too, puzzled and confounded him; for his interrogators were penetrating sensible people, and unlike the generality of that court: proving by their moderation a better title to the general one of *Most Merciful*, than any other of their order, and would not admit of any evidence that was not decisively clear; giving a greater advantage to the unhappy accused, than would be allowed by any *Spanish* court.

From all the Grand Inquisitor could collect, he encouraged a doubt of Polygon's incentive to this destructive appeal. His confusion when ordered to declare what that incentive was, gave him no interest with the Father; but on one point he had so fully insisted, namely, the horrid charge of incest, that his evidence was admitted; and the Familiars, who were scarcely ever foiled in the most difficult researches, received the fatal commission to secure Almeria Cleveland, Jerome Passado, and Patrick Derrick, to answer certain points of accusation laid against the said Almeria Cleveland.

As Polygon had described in his deposition, the person of that unhappy innocent, and her disguise, which she had dropped when she left his house, so he had also mentioned the loss of the pilgrim's habit, which, upon searching her apartments, he

immediately missed; and by his indefatigable, though secret enquiries, had traced her flight to the vineyards, where he lost all further hope of pursuit; but the Familiars had surer success, and Polygon upon his second appearance in their awful court, was informed of her place of residence, and permitted, nay commanded to accompany her pursuers for the purpose of identifying her person. To add to the pangs of a conscience already touched with a sense of the irreparable mischief he had occasioned, this vindictive wretch was struck with a repetition of a low and half stifled groan, followed by several sobs and inarticulate murmurs, which seemed to proceed from a neighbouring chamber, but he dared not venture a question respecting its cause; however, although he still felt a cordial hatred against the victims of his malice, so much did he repent the part he had acted, as to form a resolution of giving the unoffending Almeria a chance of escape; proving, in this instance, the influence which an exhibition of present calamity has upon a heart not totally abandoned to hardened vice.

Had Polygon been fully acquainted with the dangerous effects of tampering with inquisitorial power, he would not have ventured such a step; but, as all he knew of it consisted in vague reports, added to the little he had heard and seen, he determined upon the method already described; wording the billet so artfully, as to put Almeria upon her guard, gratify his wish of rendering her present assylum useless, and acquit himself of a charge, which even his very convenient conscience could not justify, that of giving her up to a tribunal, compared to whose generally merciless decrees, those of a civil government are mild in the extreme.

For the fate of Derrick or the Cavalier, his remorse was not awakened; as *they* were merely accused of countenancing the offender; and this opinion, which originated in the ignorance we have mentioned, prevented every shade of compunction. What then were his sensations, after contriving to send his billet unnoticed, to see his disagreeable companions prepare for their infernal visit? Already was he heartily sickened of such dismal society. Their constant taciturnity, tremendous appearance, and still more tremendous employment, gave them the looks and manners of demons; but when they returned accompanied by the still senseless victim, his agonies were great indeed. Her pale and piteous aspect, her attitude, as she reclined upon the bosom of a Familiar, their sullen command to him to join them in the coach, which stopped at a lone house where they had left this tardy sinner, to execute their horrid office, completely overpowered him, and his trembling legs failed to support him; but awed by a black and threatening frown, he made another effort; and when Mrs. Cleveland recovered from her torpid state, the first object which met her eye was—Isaac Polygon. Confused as her ideas were, she soon recovered perception enough to see the bitterness of her fate in all its terrific points; and the look she gave her betrayer, sunk deep into his soul. To enter into conversation with the beings who surrounded her, was an effort she could not make. It was enough to find herself associated with what Derrick would have denominated the *Blood-Hounds* of St. Dominick; for she recollected the fatal scroll that announced their horrible errand, and which she had received from one of them at Tavora; but what connection there could be between Polygon's concerted plan against her, and the cause of her attainder by the inquisition, was an enquiry which was unequal to the state of her bewildered faculties; and she saw herself completely miserable, without any prospect of mortal interference. Subject to the influence of a long suspected enemy; thrown into the hands of wretches whose cruelty was proverbial in protestant countries; ignorant of all that was to follow,

although dreading the worst; without the comfort of one sympathizing friend; travelling she knew not whither, in comparative gloom, for there was no light to relieve the horrors of midnight, but what arose from a small lamp, which fixed to the back of the carriage, gleamed with a pale trembling ray upon the faces of those before her; faint too from want of nourishment, and yet loathing the refreshment they silently offered; with all these accumulated sorrows, how little did she suppose that the guilty Polygon was still more wretched than herself; or that the tremor of his voice, and deadly hue of his cheek, originated in pity for *her* sufferings, horror of his other fellow travellers, and a too late repentance for the wickedness of his conduct.

After a melancholy journey of several hours, our poor hapless heroine was told, or rather commanded, to alight at the door of a lonely house: which she did, assisted by one of her sullen guards. Cold was the breath of the morning; a heavy mist which whitened the ground, and hung upon every object within her view, gave an aspect of desolation to the dreary scene; but the blaze of a wood fire, which warmed the cottage, if it failed to enliven her weary spirits, spoke better things to her companions; and while they made a brisk application to a rich olio that smoked upon the dirty table before them, she ventured to solicit a cup of coffee. A look from one of the officers was sufficient: the landlady, who was busily engaged in supplying the table, left her employment, and leading Almeria to an inner room, pointed to a mattress, upon which she gladly threw herself; and in somewhat less than an hour, the woman returned with coffee, biscuit, dried grapes, and wine. There was something in this delicate attention, so contrary to the cold repulsive behaviour of her conductors, that almost shook her opinion of their characters. There was also a degree of respect, not unmixed with pity, in the countenance of her female attendant, that encouraged her to ask if she was acquainted with her customers in the outer room. Had the terrified creature beheld a serpent, she could not have expressed stronger symptoms of affright; but she spoke not: Mrs. Cleveland repeated her question, which the appearance of a Familiar at the door effectually silenced. “You are to *eat*, not *talk*,” said the tyrant. Mrs. Cleveland heaved an agonized sigh, but submitted.

In this way she passed four days of cruel anxiety. Their stages were not long, but a continual supply of mules rendered the journey no otherwise tedious, than what was occasioned by the fears, doubts, and harassing forebodings, which rendered life itself a burthen to the helpless prisoner; but when on the last night of her sad pilgrimage, she alighted at the great door of St. Dominick’s church, which she had formerly been shewn as belonging to the court of inquisition, her terrors equalled any thing she had ever before experienced upon her own account; and the few minutes that passed before they were admitted, were never afterwards recollected without a sense of exquisite misery. She could even fancy the hollow moan of air that streamed through the enormous key-hole, warned her of tormenting sufferings; but when the door was opened, and the gloomy aisle which led towards a low arch at the farther end, extended in solemn obscurity before her, Almeria shrunk from her conductor; looking round in hopeless agony even for that countenance, which among those so much more ferocious, lost some of its guilty character. But her humid eyes encountered only objects of abhorrence. Polygon was no where to be seen; and she was commanded to advance towards a door that opened within the arch already mentioned; and was lighted by a single lamp, sufficiently luminous to throw an imperfect gleam upon the passage beyond. Unconsciously, Almeria attempted a faint resistance, when she had reached the entrance of those subteranean apartments, that

ran under the edifice and part of a square adjoining, entreated that pity from her guards of which they barely knew the name: "I cannot!" cried the wretched prisoner, "I cannot enter yon horrid place; and see" pointing to two men completely disguised in dark woollen garments, "they come to drag me to prison and to death; Have mercy! O, in pity to an unoffending wretch, have mercy!" Her imagination then became so entirely bewildered, as she perceived herself seized and rudely drawn forward by those very beings, that she no longer retained any perception of her situation; nor knew for a long interval (as it afterwards appeared) how or in what manner she became subject to inquisitorial power, till awakened to a painful sense of excessive debility, she possessed a faint recollection of the past; but found no clue to guide her desultory ideas from external objects, being involved in total darkness, and a silence more awful than pleasant even to *her* weak state, reduced as she was to infantine weakness; for the slightest movement was attended with an agony so acute, and every nerve seemed touched with such extreme sensibility, that our unhappy heroine, as the power of recognition strengthened, concluded her present dreadful feelings originated in an actual infliction of inquisitorial torture; which she was led to imagine had been administered during her torpid state, as also, that her revival was owing to the pungent sensations it awakened.

Thus persuaded, the poor invalid uttered a feeble groan, while the slow tear stole from her half closed eye; when the sound of a light step passing near her bed, kindled a desperate hope, that though in excessive obscurity, she was not utterly forsaken. The darkness too suddenly abated, and her weakened optics traced a female form in the distance; she also discovered herself to be in a decent well furnished room, her bed surrounded by white linen, and all she could discern about her wore the appearance of neatness and comfort. Still her pains encouraged the notion that she *had* been a sufferer by penal torture, and she ventured a question upon that subject to the woman, who was then bending over her with a look of tender concern. "No Signora," replied the affectionate creature "you was brought hither immediately after you fainted in the church of our most holy tribunal;" devoutly crossing herself, "and as a high fever and strong delirium succeeded, Doctor Patinho applied several blisters, which I suppose has occasioned the excessive misery you seem to be in; but take courage, you will soon be better, and"—Here she was suddenly stopped by the entrance of a tall figure, whose garments spoke his profession, and Almeria shrunk from the sight of one whose outward garb was calculated to terrify her weakened spirit. The stranger beheld her agitation, and in words of the softest and most benevolent import, strove to calm her fears. She listened, trembled, but insensibly found her horrors at this interview abate; and as he proceeded, they gradually sunk into a mild confidence in her visitor. "You have been basely treated my poor child, but a signal punishment awaits, nay, has already fallen upon your persecutor; already he feels the pangs of a conscience awakened to a sense of enormous guilt. Be patient then, well have you sustained the overwhelming power of an adverse fate, but be not inquisitive as to future events: great and solemn mysteries are upon the eve of explanation. There are yet hopes of a happy termination to the wrongs you have endured, and not yours only, but those of your suffering Frederico. *He* has friends; *you* have friends, whose power will, I trust, crush the malevolence of demons, for who but demons could fabricate such mischief. I see the spirit of curiosity arising to that languid eye; you almost disbelieve the romance of your past life. The incidents are so singular, and so seldom occurring in the common course of things; but what is improbable, argues

not impossibility: *my* interference as an inquisitor, (for enough have you seen of our attendants to understand *my* sacred calling) may doubtless appear extraordinary; but it is an inconsiderable addition to the wonders by which you are surrounded. At present it is a security for your safety, your peace, your life: hereafter it may be of consequence to your happiness. Adieu, then, my child, and rest secure from future disturbances. When this cruel indisposition has given way to convalescence, you will be removed to a little habitation near Belem; where, in a retired spot, you may be enabled to recover tranquillity sufficient to establish the health that has received a shock so severe. Depress not therefore the elasticity of hope, by that enemy of human enjoyments, despondency; and particularly its dreadful offspring—despair!”

“An *Inquisitor*?” faintly responded the amazed invalid, “One whose confessed employment is to punish errors not cognizable by civil jurisdiction; whose severity is proverbial, whose dark proceedings render him obnoxious to every province within his power, by *him* am I bid to look up for the choicest blessings! Say then, O man of mystery, What is thy motive for this astonishing kindness; And who art thou, that has snatched a devoted creature from the jaws of destruction?” “How natural is this inquiry in one so persecuted, so tantalized: but, my daughter, I fear your fortitude;—I fear your debilitated state would not be equal to a further disquisition, or perhaps I might in part explain.—In part did I say! little, very little satisfaction could *all* I have *now* in my power to communicate, afford to an inquisitive spirit.” “Oh for that little!” exclaimed the impatient Almeria, whose strong hope of understanding her wonderful informer, gave a momentary vigour to her voice, “Tell me but in part, and I solemnly engage to avoid any further enquiry.”

While she was urging her important petition, the self named Inquisitor, who, previous to this conversation had discharged her nurse from her immediate attendance, arose slowly from the stool on which he had seated himself, and placing a candle fronting the bed, again advanced, while Mrs. Cleveland watched his every motion with eager attention. He then threw off the awful symbols of his profession, and Mrs. Cleveland beheld—in the dress—features—and form of a Portuguese Inquisitor, her sympathizing, warm protector,—the Spanish Officer! his countenance touched with gayer animation than when she saw him last, but equally informed with the warmest traits of affection. And can it be, thought Almeria, as she gazed upon a being so justly dear to her, do I indeed behold again that interesting friend? Yes, it is him! and she held out the hand nearest to him, as if to acknowledge the gratitude his presence awakened; but the effort was feeble, while the joy that throbbed tumultuously at her heart, deprived her of every power of exertion, and she sunk backwards, insensible. Her fit was of short duration, but sufficiently long to procure a heavy disappointment of every further hope; for upon her recovery, Almeria found her benefactor’s place supplied by several female attendants; and when she questioned them about him, was told that he had entered their sitting room with a look of tender apprehension, informing them of their lady’s sudden fit, and charging them to use every effort to revive her; that he then hastened to a close carriage which waited for him at a small distance out of sight.

The helpless Almeria sighed, but remembered her former engagements to this unaccountable being, as well as his present injunction “not to be inquisitive;” and felt encouraged to continue her confidence in professions which his former and recent conduct so well justified. Relying also upon his assurance of further protection, she

quietly submitted to the exigencies of her situation; and in about three weeks from her first arrival at this little assylum, which was seated in the environs of Lisbon, she thought her strength tolerably equal to the journey she was to undertake.

With a mind still alive to the ultimate cause of her keenest regret, Mrs. Cleveland beheld the walls and turrets of his *Most Faithful Majesty's* palace at Bellem, in a state of terror, which the appearance of Mary Frances Isabella, his niece and consort, contributed to strengthen, as she approached a window which commanded the road; while justly considering that woman's ridiculous suspicions, as the leading event to her husband's cruel imprisonment, she found a degree of relief when she no longer beheld that arbitrary dispenser of such an undeserved punishment; while soothed by a contemplation of the country before her, she enjoyed a temporary suspension of certain forebodings, which *would* intrude as imperious circumstances demanded.

If any part of Portugal could justly claim admiration, it was the valley into which they were descending. Not yet subject to the intense heats that rendered it an arid waste in summer, she noticed the early tints of infant spring, which hung upon every reviving plant, with a pleasing interest; as they contrasted, by their tender green, the bold yet lively hue of myrtle, and those oderiferous productions which defy the imperfect winter. Her residence too, which Lisetta remarked among the distant vineyards, had every charm to attract a feeble invalid, when renovated strength should permit her to ramble among its sweet inclosures, that were equally secured from a scorching sun, or the chilling air of December. But this prospect on a nearer approach lost some of its charms, for she grew fatigued almost to insensibility, and gladly retired to a plain but excellent bed, to which upon their arrival, she was conducted by Lisetta; and on the following evening, was able to visit every part of this sweet dwelling, with a pleasure she had but seldom known;— frequently breaking into a grateful apostrophe to that Providence, which had empowered its noble agent to secure to her an assylum from the storm, that still raged against, and threatened to desolate the family of which she was taught to imagine herself a branch.

Alone, or at least apart from any desirable society, Almeria's meditations frequently turned upon the dear friends she had left at Tavora. For the excellent Baron she had imbibed a very high degree of veneration, and placed his conduct towards her in the most exalted light.—The portrait too, to whose features she bore, even in her *own* estimation, a most astonishing likeness; and the marked attention of Laurana and her grandfather, as they pointed out the similarity, failed not occasionally to stimulate a curiosity that she sometimes felt concerned not to have gratified; while at others, she rejoiced in a self denial so laudable. For their visible melancholy she could not fully account; little suspecting the full source of a sorrow so mysterious, or, that Laurana beheld in that picture a beloved and invaluable parent, who was torn from her at a time when she was just old enough to feel her loss, with all its bitter consequences. The grief too, of Francisca and Anica for her enforced departure, would, she justly imagined, unite them more frequently in one cause with Laurana; and while Almeria enjoyed the advantages of a peaceful security, she glanced occasionally at those refinements of polished life, which rendered her residence at Tavora so truly pleasing. The few, but tranquil walks about that city, which were varied by a vast inequality of surface—the bold acclivity, or rapid descent—the broad plain, and deep defile, had been equally explored by this child of nature, and equally admired.

In the present instance, those amusements, had they offered themselves in a similar degree, were in some measure interdicted not only by her fears of a discovery, but in the caution which Lisetta practised; who, although particularly careful to oblige and indulge her amiable mistress, never once mentioned the comforts of salubrious air and gentle exercise; and even went so far as to say, when Mrs. Cleveland expressed a desire to enter the vineyard in which the casa stood, that “she believed the most holy father did not intend—that is—did not suppose the Signora would be well enough to ***” “I understand you, Lisetta; it is enough: I shall not put your sincerity to the test, and am extremely well satisfied to remain where I am.” Lisetta expressed her gratitude for this condescension, and the subject dropped: while Mrs. Cleveland contented herself with enjoying the noontide sun, as it called into bloom the eglantines which waved about her latticed window.

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