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MEMOIRS

OF

WILLIAM GODWIN.

William Godwin was born at Wisbeach, in Cambridgeshire, 3d March, 1756. His grandfather had been a dissenting minister in London. His father was also a clergyman. In the year 1760 the father removed with his family to a village about sixteen miles north of Norwich, where he presided over a congregation. William was one of many children, neither the eldest nor the youngest among them. Very early, even in childhood, he developed that love of acquirement and knowledge which stamped his future career. In the year 1767 he was placed with a private tutor at Norwich, for the purposes of classical education. Mr. Godwin has very recently published a work, "Thoughts on Man, his Nature, Productions, and Discoveries," which contains various interesting particulars respecting himself. From this we learn that he had in youth "a prominent vein of docility." He adds, "Whatever it was proposed to teach me that was in any degree accordant with my constitution and capacity, I was willing to learn." He continues, "I was ambitious to be a leader, and to be regarded by others with feelings of complacency." From these circumstances, it is evident that Mr. Godwin was not one of those youths who, strenuously active and eager in the pursuit of some peculiar knowledge of their own selection, rebel against authority, and are tortured by the regular application required to the commonplace routine of education. Reason and a love of investigation were the characteristics of Godwin, even in

boyhood, added to what he himself describes as "a sort of constitutional equanimity and imperturbableness of temper."

In the year 1773 Mr. Godwin was placed at a college for dissenters at Hoxton, for the purpose of being educated for the church. Dr. Kippis and Dr. Rees were two of the principal professors at this college; and the tenets in vogue there inclined to Unitarianism. Mr. Godwin had been bred a Calvinist, and was the farthest in the world from that temper of mind which is blown about by every new wind of opinion. Opposition made him more tenaciously cling to his own turn of thinking, and adhere to the persuasion in which he had been brought up. In the year 1778 he became minister to a congregation not far from the metropolis. He continued in the exercise of the duties of a clergyman for five years; after which he gave it up in the year 1783, and came to reside in London, where he became an author, at once subsisting by the fruits of his pen, and educating himself by its exercise for those works of genius and immortality which he was destined to produce. He soon became distinguished among his contemporaries, and frequented the society of many of the political leaders of the day, among whom Fox and Sheridan held the first rank. Added to this was a literary circle formed of men of talent and genius. While at college, Mr. Godwin describes himself as reading "all sorts of books, on every side of any important question, that were thrown in his way;" among these he was peculiarly attracted by the Roman historians, and in particular by Livy. These works made him early in life a republican in theory. The French Revolution which broke out in 1789, when he was already engaged in his career as an author, turned his attention still more definitely to political subjects. Discussion on various points—discussion animated by the living drama of change enacted in France, and warmed by the animated hopes and fears of the parties—was, far more than now, the order of the day in society; and Godwin, intimately connected with the whigs of this country, found himself more than ever roused to investi

gate the momentous topic of the liberty of nations. The result of his meditations and his labours was "Political Justice," published early in the year 1793. At once the book and its author rose to a place of eminence in the public eye. The daring nature of his tenets,—the energetic, yet unaffected flow of his eloquence,—the heartfelt sincerity and love of truth that accompanied his disquisitions,—seemed as by magic to throw down a thousand barriers, and to level a thousand fortifications which had hitherto defended and kept secure the inner fortresses of public prejudices or opinions. Mild and benevolent of aspect, gentle and courteous of manner, the author himself presented a singular contrast in appearance to the boldness of his speculations. But beneath this apparent quiescence there was a latent fire; his intellect was all animation; he never receded from contest, or declined argument; and he derived extreme pleasure from this exercise of the powers of his mind.

Early in the following year Mr. Godwin again appeared as an author; "Caleb Williams" was published—a novel, which, in spite of the brilliant works of the same species which have since adorned our literature, still holds its place, and has been frequently, and we are apt to believe irrevocably, pronounced the best in our language. It raised Godwin's reputation to the pinnacle. All that might have offended, as hard and republican in his larger work, was obliterated by the splendour and noble beauty of the character of Falkland.

Towards the end of this year Mr. Godwin's talents were called forth on a still more conspicuous arena. Several of his friends or associates were arrested by the policy of Mr. Pitt, and accused of high-treason. Boldly speculative, and frankly avowing his opinions, Mr. Godwin was nevertheless practically attached to moderate measures, and adhered to the party of the whigs in preference to that of the agitators of the day. He believed that amelioration was more facile than reconstruction, and loved reformation better than destruction. It was not so with his familiars. Societies were formed for the purpose of disseminating his

opinions, and holding up the equalizing principles of the French revolution. Holcroft was one of the most sturdy among these; a man of singular integrity and talent, but unrefined and self-educated. He had besides a violence of temper which hurt the cause he fancied himself energetically advancing. He, together with Horne Tooke, Thelwal, Hardy, and others, formed the Constitutional and the London Corresponding Societies; and these men, with eight more of their associates, were imprisoned in the Tower and arraigned as traitors. As Godwin did not belong to their societies, he was exempted; but if Pitt had succeeded in convicting these men, he would scarcely have escaped. In October, 1794, Judge Eyre gave the charge to the grand jury. This excited considerable attention, and was followed instantly by Godwin's "Cursory Strictures" upon it. He sent the first half of this to his friend Perry of the Morning Chronicle, for insertion in that paper. Perry requested to have it entire, and printed the whole in one day's paper. It appeared afterward as a pamphlet, and is a composition of the most animated and conclusive nature. It was supposed to have greatly influenced the event of the prosecutions, and to have contributed mainly to the acquittal of the accused.

Hardy, Horne Tooke, and Thelwal were put on their trial, and found "Not guilty." Government then abandoned the rest of the prosecutions. It was on this occasion, when Holcroft, being liberated, left the dock, and, crossing the court, took his seat beside Godwin, that Sir Thomas Lawrence made a spirited sketch of them in profile (now in the possession of Francis Broderip, Esq.), which is one of his happiest efforts, and is a singularly interesting record; the bending, meditative figure of Godwin contrasting most happily with the upright, stern, and "knock-me-down" attitude and expression of his friend.*

* Lawrence very much valued this sketch, and wished to repurchase it from its possessor. Besides this, he drew another portrait of Godwin, now in the possession of Dr. Batty. But the best portrait of the author, and one of the best among modern pictures, is one painted by Northcote in 1800. It is strikingly like and characteristic, with an air of mildness and contemplation, yet fervour. This portrait is in the possession of Mr. Godwin himself.

After this period, Mr. Godwin was chiefly occupied in literature, by preparing the various editions of "Political Justice." He frequented still more constantly the society of Lord Lauderdale, Fox, and Sheridan. It was not until 1797 that he published "The Enquirer," a work consisting of essays, developing under various aspects the tenets of his greater work. In one thing, from his very first outset as an author, Godwin held himself fortunate: this was in his publisher. Robinson has often been mentioned as a man of extreme liberality; towards Mr. Godwin he always acted in a way at once to encourage, facilitate, and recompense his labours.

Towards the beginning of the year 1797, Godwin married Mary Wollstonecraft. The writings of this celebrated woman are monuments of her moral and intellectual superiority. Her lofty spirit, her eager assertion of the claims of her sex, animate the "Vindication of the Rights of Woman;" while the sweetness and taste displayed in her "Letters from Norway" depict the softer qualities of her admirable character. Even now, those who have survived her so many years never speak of her but with uncontrollable enthusiasm. Her unwearied exertions for the benefit of others, her rectitude, her independence, joined to a warm, affectionate heart, and the most refined softness of manners, made her the idol of all who knew her. Mr. Godwin was not allowed long to enjoy the happiness he reaped from this union. Mary Wollstonecraft died the 10th September, 1797, having given birth to a daughter, the present Mrs. Shelley.

The next work of Mr. Godwin was the romance of "St. Leon," published in 1799. The domestic happiness he had enjoyed colours and adorns the scenes of this book; and the high idea of the feminine character which naturally resulted from his intercourse with the ornament of her sex, imparted dignity and grandeur to the character of the heroine of this work. In eloquence, and interest, and deep knowledge of human nature, St. Leon takes a first place among imaginative productions.

In 1800 Mr. Godwin visited Ireland. He resided

while there principally with Curran, and associated intimately with Grattan, and all the other illustrious Irish patriots. In 1801, Mr. Godwin again married a widow lady of considerable personal attractions and accomplishments. The sole offspring of this marriage was a son, born in 1803. In the same year he published the "Life of Chaucer," a work displaying accurate research and refined taste, and presenting at once a correct and animated picture of the times of the poet. This was followed in 1804 by a third novel, entitled "Fleetwood," characterized by elegance of style and force of passion; less striking, perhaps, than his former works of imagination, yet not less full of beauty and interest.

After this period, Mr. Godwin rested for a considerable interval from his literary labours, being chiefly occupied by various exertions and speculations for the maintenance of his family. The "Essay on Sepulchres," published in 1808, stands a solitary record that the fire still burnt pure and undiminished, though concealed. In 1816 he visited Edinburgh, where he formed an acquaintance with Walter Scott and other celebrated Scotch writers; and here also he entered into a treaty with Mr. Constable, the bookseller, for the composition of a new novel. "Mandeville," published in 1817, was the result. We here trace the mellowness of ripened years; the reading, the study, the careful polish of maturity, adorning, but not diminishing the untamed energy and eloquence of his earlier works. Solemn and tragic as is the groundwork of "Mandeville," it surpasses, we almost venture to say, all Mr. Godwin's productions in grace of diction and forcible development of human feeling. About this time Mr. Godwin sustained a great personal loss in the death of Mr. Curran. Their friendship was of many years' standing; and since Curran's retirement from public life and residence in London, they had been drawn closer together than ever.

In 1820, his work in opposition to and refuting the opinions of Malthus appeared. Fervently attached to all that is lofty, independent, and elevating in his speculations on human society, Godwin strenuously

controverted the degrading, hard, and demoralizing tenets of the author of the Essay on Population. His book, exact in logic and powerful in eloquence, would probably have been considered as a complete answer to his adversary, did not Malthus's notions favour so memorably the vices of the great and all that is rotten in our institutions. After this, Mr. Godwin was occupied several years in writing "The History of the Commonwealth of England." The four volumes of which this work is composed were published in the years 1824, 1826, 1827, and 1828. It is accurate, which, in an historical work, is a quality that deserves primary consideration. It is besides eloquent, philosophical, and, above all, abounds in new and valuable research. As a real and true detail of events as they occurred, and a tracing of events to their primary causes, it far excels any other English historical work that we possess.

In 1830 Mr. Godwin published "Cloudesley," his last novel, a book whose charm goes to the heart. The spirit of virtue and love is its soul. It breathes peace to all men, and a fervid attachment to all that bears the human form. Nothing can excite greater interest, emanating, as it does, from one who has spent a long life in this centre of civilization, and who, amid all the trials, experiences, and attendant disappointments which must have checkered his intercourse with his species, still sees in man all that is noble, inspiriting, and worthy to be loved.

This, too, is the spirit that animates the work to which we have before alluded as of recent publication. Humanity may cite his "Thoughts on Man," and so answer the aspersions of Swift and others of his school, proudly founding upon the sentiments of that book the tower of their hope. The divine charity of the Sermon on the Mount finds a human echo in its pages, which breathe such admiration and love for man as must elevate the desponding, confound the misanthrope, and add for ever dignity and grace to our species.

Perhaps it may be averred, that since the days of the ancient Greek philosophers, no man has imbodied

so entirely the idea we conceive of those heroes of mind as the subject of this Memoir. Like them, he has forgotten the grandeur of the world in the more elevating contemplation of the immaterial universe. The universe of thought has been that in which he had ambition to reign; and many and various are the conquests he has made in that eternal country. He has bestowed on us a whole creation of imaginary existences, among whom, when we name Falkland, we select the being of fancy which is at once the most real and the most grand that has appeared since Shakspeare gave a "local habitation" to the name of Hamlet. As a speculative writer, he is the mighty parent of all that the reformers of the day advance and uphold. As an historian, he is deeply imbued with the dignity of his subject, and unwearied in his endeavours to ascertain the truth. As an essayist (his latest labour of authorship), he is unequalled for novelty of thought, closeness of reasoning, and purity, vigour, and elegance of style. As a moral character, his reputation is unblemished. He stands, in simplicity of wisdom and consistency of principle, the monument of the last generation, extending into this the light of a long experience, and ornamenting our young and changeful literature with the profounder and loftier views of a more contemplative era.

CRITICISM

ON

THE NOVELS OF GODWIN.

Few authors have the faculty of awakening and arresting the attention like Mr. Godwin. He never fails to excite in us the emotion he wishes, and that without resorting to marvellous or overstrained incidents or language. He has a might almost magical over our sympathies. He describes a damp and comfortless morning, and we are out under the cold, drizzly dawn. He talks of Switzerland—of the lake of Uri—and the mountains and the waters are before us. He tells a tale of injustice and oppression, and every feeling of indignant resistance stirs within us. He holds up to our unmitigated hatred and contempt the wanton and brutal tyrant; and unlocks the sacred fountain of our tears for the helpless and the orphan, for the unresisting, the neglected, and the misused.

Mr. Godwin does not deal much in imagination, and is seldom purely descriptive; though we repeat, that when he is so his power does not desert him, as may be seen (to best advantage, we think) in "Fleetwood." The principal object of his study and contemplation is man the enemy of man. Do we not remember to have seen an edition of "Caleb Williams" with these lines for a motto?—

> Amid the woods the tiger knows his kind;
> The panther preys not on the panther brood;
> Man only is the common foe of man."

Life seems to have been but the instrument to burn this truth into the soul of our author. He reads Fox's

Book of Martyrs, and the History of the Inquisition; and imagines himself now torturer, and now sufferer. He gets up, goes abroad into "the throng miscalled society," sees only its errors and its vices, its knaves and its dupes; and writes as if little or nothing else was in existence. He has visions of misery, from deserted childhood starving in strange streets, to the head that has become white in the solitude of a dungeon. We always thought a great deal of the brutality even of Mr. Tyrrel gratuitous, in spite of the morbid irritability of spirit under which he suffers; though certainly the character is imbodied with terrible power, and might stand for a real personage. It is an attribute, indeed, of Mr. Godwin, that he tells you his tale like one who remembers, not invents. Thus his story becomes not the relation of a looker-on, however acute and powerful, but is "compact" of words hot from the burnt and branded heart of the miserable sufferer. It is this quality which makes Gines, the thief and Bow-street runner, a terrific being; Williams himself, not Mr. Godwin, talks to you about him; and, good God! how awful is his omnipresence to the poor fellow! Noiseless, swift, invisible, he seems to ride upon the clouds, and blast his victim like the blight which falls upon vegetation from the air.

We have said that Mr. Godwin seldom resorts to "marvellous or overstrained incidents or language;" once, however, he has imagined and placed a character in "impossible situations." St. Leon becomes the possessor of the philosopher's stone, the inheritor of exhaustless wealth, and of the power of renewing his age. He is himself, of course, an impossibility; but the want of truth is confined purely to the character; for every thing which befalls him is human, natural, and possible. How minute, how pathetic, how tragical is the detail of the gradual ruin which falls on this weak, devoted man, up to its heart-breaking consummation in the death of the noble *Marguerite de Damville!* How tremendous and perfect is his desolation after voluntarily leaving his daughters, and cutting the last thread which binds him to his kind! "I saw

my dear children set forward on their journey, and I knew not that I should ever behold them more. I was determined never to see them again to their injury; and I could not take to myself the consolation, on such a day, in such a month, or even after such a lapse of years, I shall again have the joy to embrace them. In a little while they were out of sight, and I was alone." How complete is the description of his escape from the procession of the Auto-da-Fé; of his entrance into the Jew's house; his fears; his decaying strength, just serving to make up the life-restoring elixir; the dying taper; the insensibility; the resurrection to new life, and the dayspring of his young manhood! How shall we speak of the old man, the bequeather of the fatal legacy to St. Leon, and his few fearful words: "Friendless, friendless—alone, alone!" Alas! how terrible to imagine a being in possession of such endowments, who could bring himself to think of death! able to turn back upon his path and meet immortal youth, to see again the morning of his day, and find in renewed life and beauty a disguise impenetrable to his former enemies; yet, in the sadness of his experience, so dreading the mistakes and persecution of his fellow-men, as to choose rather to lie down with the worm, and seek oblivion in the seats of rottenness and corruption.

One of the most remarkable ways in which the faculty of Mr. Godwin is evinced is the "magnitude and wealth" of his detail. No single action or event that could possibly, in such circumstances as he imagines, heighten the effect, is omitted. In this he resembles Hogarth; but he is *always* tragical, producing his end altogether without ludicrous contrasts, or the intervention of any thing bordering on the humorous. Mere mental imbecility is not to be found in the pictures of Mr. Godwin; his characters are people who analyze their own minds, and who never act from want of understanding, right or wrong. Indeed, they are too conscious,—like that young rogue Charles de St. Leon, for instance, who seems to do every thing with a truly French eye to effect.

If we were asked to name the work of this writer

which had pleased us the most, we should say "Fleetwood." This will appear strange to the majority of readers, no doubt; but with many beauties, it has fewer defects. In "Fleetwood" we have no drawbacks. The story of *Ruffigny* is a sort of epitome of our author; it contains all that he can do. And then the *Macneils*—we mourn for them as for dear friends. *Mary Fleetwood* is the best feminine delineation to be found in the works of fictitious narration. She is a copy of *Desdemona*, with a husband much farther advanced in life than herself, made jealous of a youthful cousin by an elder and designing one. Young, beautiful, loving, confiding, she would be all that the heart of man could desire in a wife; but then she is a little over-conscious of her own excellences, and a little too ready, not only to *think*, but to *say*, how very unreasonable her husband is, when he becomes uneasy and jealous of her "innocent sallies" with younger men. "Alas, my love, let me assure you that you do not know what you want. I am young. Fleetwood, you might have married an old woman if you had pleased." The same objection might be urged, indeed, against all this gentleman's female creations. They have too keen a sense of the "Rights of Woman." They waste away, it is true, and even die, from the irritation brought on by the behaviour of their husbands; but they take care to let him feel that they are not ignorant of the cause of their disease. They are very different, and, in our opinion, very inferior beings to Helen, or Imogen, or Desdemona.

In the general style of his novels, particularly in those parts which are descriptive of mental suffering, Godwin puts on a tone of apathy and unconcern, as though he feared to urge you into a state of feeling that would "hear no more"—as though he wished not to "cancel the bond" that "keeps you pale" and immoveable—till the agony of his heart, repressed, but not subdued, was poured out, and the wretched recital finished.

PREFACE

BY THE AUTHOR.

THE following narrative is intended to answer a purpose more general and important than immediately appears upon the face of it. The question now afloat in the world respecting THINGS AS THEY ARE is the most interesting that can be presented to the human mind. While one party pleads for reformation and change, the other extols in the warmest terms the existing constitution of society. It seemed as if something would be gained for the decision of this question, if that constitution were faithfully developed in its practical effects. What is now presented to the public is no refined and abstract speculation; it is a study and delineation of things passing in the moral world. It is but of late that the inestimable importance of political principles has been adequately apprehended. It is now known to philosophers, that the spirit and character of the government intrudes itself into every rank of society. But this is a truth highly worthy to be communicated to persons whom books of philosophy and science are never likely to reach. Accordingly, it was proposed, in the invention of the following work, to comprehend, as far as the progressive nature of a single story would allow, a general review of the modes of domestic and unrecorded despotism by which man becomes the destroyer of man. If the author shall have taught a valuable lesson, without

subtracting from the interest and passion by which a performance of this sort ought to be characterized, he will have reason to congratulate himself upon the vehicle he has chosen.

May 12, 1794.

THIS Preface was withdrawn in the original edition, in compliance with the alarms of booksellers. "Caleb Williams" made his first appearance in the world in the same month in which the sanguinary plot broke out against the liberties of Englishmen, which was happily terminated by the acquittal of its first intended victims, in the close of that year. Terror was the order of the day; and it was feared that even the humble novelist might be shown to be constructively a traitor.

October 29, 1795.

ADVENTURES

OF

CALEB WILLIAMS.

CHAPTER I.

My life has for several years been a theatre of calamity. I have been a mark for the vigilance of tyranny, and I could not escape. My fairest prospects have been blasted. My enemy has shown himself inaccessible to entreaties, and untired in persecution. My fame, as well as my happiness, has become its victim. Every one, as far as my story has been known, has refused to assist me in my distress, and has execrated my name. I have not deserved this treatment. My own conscience witnesses in behalf of that innocence, my pretensions to which are regarded in the world as incredible. There is now, however, little hope that I shall escape from the toils that universally beset me. I am incited to the penning of these memoirs only by a desire to divert my mind from the deplorableness of my situation, and a faint idea that posterity may by their means be induced to render me a justice which my contemporaries refuse. My story will, at least, appear to have that consistency which is seldom attendant but upon truth.

I was born of humble parents, in a remote county of England. Their occupations were such as usu-

ally fall to the lot of peasants, and they had no portion to give me, but an education free from the usual sources of depravity, and the inheritance, long since lost by their unfortunate progeny! of an honest fame. I was taught the rudiments of no science, except reading, writing, and arithmetic. But I had an inquisitive mind, and neglected no means of information from conversation or books. My improvement was greater than my condition in life afforded room to expect.

There are other circumstances deserving to be mentioned as having influenced the history of my future life. I was somewhat above the middle stature. Without being particularly athletic in appearance, or large in my dimensions, I was uncommonly vigorous and active. My joints were supple, and I was formed to excel in youthful sports. The habits of my mind, however, were to a certain degree at war with the dictates of boyish vanity. I had considerable aversion to the boisterous gayety of the village gallants, and contrived to satisfy my love of praise with an unfrequent apparition at their amusements. My excellence in these respects, however, gave a turn to my meditations. I delighted to read of feats of activity, and was particularly interested by tales in which corporeal ingenuity or strength are the means resorted to for supplying resources and conquering difficulties. I inured myself to mechanical pursuits, and devoted much of my time to an endeavour after mechanical invention.

The spring of action which, perhaps more than any other, characterized the whole train of my life, was curiosity. It was this that gave me my mechanical turn; I was desirous of tracing the variety of effects which might be produced from given causes. It was this that made me a sort of natural

philosopher; I could not rest till I had acquainted myself with the solutions that had been invented for the phenomena of the universe. In fine, this produced in me an invincible attachment to books of narrative and romance. I panted for the unravelling of an adventure with an anxiety perhaps almost equal to that of the man whose future happiness or misery depended on its issue. I read, I devoured compositions of this sort. They took possession of my soul; and the effects they produced were frequently discernible in my external appearance and my health. My curiosity, however, was not entirely ignoble: village anecdotes and scandal had no charms for me: my imagination must be excited; and when that was not done, my curiosity was dormant.

The residence of my parents was within the manor of Ferdinando Falkland, a country squire of considerable opulence. At an early age I attracted the favourable notice of Mr. Collins, this gentleman's steward, who used to call in occasionally at my father's. He observed the particulars of my progress with approbation, and made a favourable report to his master of my industry and genius.

In the summer of the year ——, Mr. Falkland visited his estate in our county after an absence of several months. This was a period of misfortune to me. I was then eighteen years of age. My father lay dead in our cottage. I had lost my mother some years before. In this forlorn situation I was surprised with a message from the squire, ordering me to repair to the mansion-house the morning after my father's funeral.

Though I was not a stranger to books, I had no practical acquaintance with men. I had never had occasion to address a person of this elevated rank, and I felt no small uneasiness and awe on the

present occasion. I found Mr. Falkland a man of small stature, with an extreme delicacy of form and appearance. In place of the hard-favoured and inflexible visages I had been accustomed to observe, every muscle and petty line of his countenance seemed to be in an inconceivable degree pregnant with meaning. His manner was kind, attentive, and humane. His eye was full of animation; but there was a grave and sad solemnity in his air, which, for want of experience, I imagined was the inheritance of the great, and the instrument by which the distance between them and their inferiors was maintained. His look bespoke the unquietness of his mind, and frequently wandered with an expression of disconsolateness and anxiety.

My reception was as gracious and encouraging as I could possibly desire. Mr. Falkland questioned me respecting my learning, and my conceptions of men and things, and listened to my answers with condescension and approbation. This kindness soon restored to me a considerable part of my self-possession, though I still felt restrained by the graceful, but unaltered dignity of his carriage. When Mr. Falkland had satisfied his curiosity, he proceeded to inform me that he was in want of a secretary, that I appeared to him sufficiently qualified for that office, and that, if, in my present change of situation, occasioned by the death of my father, I approved of the employment, he would take me into his family.

I felt highly flattered by the proposal, and was warm in the expression of my acknowledgments. I set eagerly about the disposal of the little property my father had left, in which I was assisted by Mr. Collins. I had not now a relation in the world upon whose kindness and interposition I had any direct claim. But, far from regarding this deserted

situation with terror, I formed golden visions of the station I was about to occupy. I little suspected that the gayety and lightness of heart I had hitherto enjoyed were upon the point of leaving me for ever, and that the rest of my days were devoted to misery and alarm.

My employment was easy and agreeable. It consisted partly in the transcribing and arranging certain papers, and partly in writing from my master's dictation letters of business, as well as sketches of literary composition. Many of these latter consisted of an analytical survey of the plans of different authors and conjectural speculations upon hints they afforded, tending either to the detection of their errors, or the carrying forward their discoveries. All of them bore powerful marks of a profound and elegant mind, well stored with literature, and possessed of an uncommon share of activity and discrimination.

My station was in that part of the house which was appropriated for the reception of books, it being my duty to perform the functions of librarian as well as secretary. Here my hours would have glided in tranquillity and peace, had not my situation included in it circumstances totally different from those which attended me in my father's cottage. In early life my mind had been much engrossed by reading and reflection; my intercourse with my fellow-mortals was occasional and short. But, in my new residence, I was excited by every motive of interest and novelty to study my master's character; and I found in it an ample field for speculation and conjecture.

His mode of living was in the utmost degree recluse and solitary. He had no inclination to scenes of revelry and mirth. He avoided the busy haunts of men; nor did he seem desirous to compensate

for this privation by the confidence of friendship. He appeared a total stranger to every thing which usually bears the appellation of pleasure. His features were scarcely ever relaxed into a smile, nor did that air which spoke the unhappiness of his mind at any time forsake them: yet his manners were by no means such as denoted moroseness and misanthropy. He was compassionate and considerate for others, though the stateliness of his carriage and the reserve of his temper were at no time interrupted. His appearance and general behaviour might have strongly interested all persons in his favour: but the coldness of his address, and the impenetrableness of his sentiments, seemed to forbid those demonstrations of kindness to which one might otherwise have been prompted.

Such was the general appearance of Mr. Falkland: but his disposition was extremely unequal. The distemper which afflicted him with incessant gloom had its paroxysms. Sometimes he was hasty, peevish, and tyrannical; but this proceeded rather from the torment of his mind than an unfeeling disposition; and when reflection recurred he appeared willing that the weight of his misfortune should fall wholly upon himself. Sometimes he entirely lost his self-possession. and his behaviour was changed into phrensy: he would strike his forehead, his brows became knit, his features distorted, and his teeth ground one against the other. When he felt the approach of these symptoms, he would suddenly rise, and, leaving the occupation, whatever it was, in which he was engaged, hasten into a solitude upon which no person dared to intrude.

It must not be supposed that the whole of what I am describing was visible to the persons about him; nor, indeed, was I acquainted with it in the extent here stated but after a considerable time, and in

gradual succession. With respect to the domestics in general, they saw but little of their master. None of them, except myself, from the nature of my functions, and Mr. Collins, from the antiquity of his service and the respectableness of his character, approached Mr. Falkland but at stated seasons and for a very short interval. They knew him only by the benevolence of his actions, and the principles of inflexible integrity by which he was ordinarily guided; and though they would sometimes indulge their conjectures respecting his singularities, they regarded him upon the whole with veneration, as a being of a superior order.

One day, when I had been about three months in the service of my patron, I went to a closet, or small apartment which was separated from the library by a narrow gallery that was lighted by a small window near the roof. I had conceived that there was no person in the room, and intended only to put any thing in order that I might find out of its place. As I opened the door, I heard at the same instant a deep groan, expressive of intolerable anguish. The sound of the door in opening seemed to alarm the person within; I heard the lid of a trunk hastily shut, and the noise as of fastening a lock. I conceived that Mr. Falkland was there, and was going instantly to retire; but at that moment a voice, that seemed supernaturally tremendous, exclaimed, "Who is there?" The voice was Mr. Falkland's. The sound of it thrilled my very vitals. I endeavoured to answer, but my speech failed, and being incapable of any other reply, I instinctively advanced within the door into the room. Mr. Falkland was just risen from the floor upon which he had been sitting or kneeling. His face betrayed strong symptoms of confusion. With a violent effort, however, these symptoms vanished, and in-

stantaneously gave place to a countenance sparkling with rage. "Villain!" cried he, "what has brought you here?" I hesitated a confused and irresolute answer. "Wretch!" interrupted Mr. Falkland, with uncontrollable impatience, "you want to ruin me. You set yourself as a spy upon my actions; but bitterly shall you repent your insolence. Do you think you shall watch my privacies with impunity?" I attempted to defend myself. "Begone, devil!" rejoined he. "Quit the room, or I will trample you into atoms." Saying this, he advanced towards me. But I was already sufficiently terrified, and vanished in a moment. I heard the door shut after me with violence; and thus ended this extraordinary scene.

I saw him again in the evening, and he was then tolerably composed. His behaviour, which was always kind, was now doubly attentive and soothing. He seemed to have something of which he wished to disburthen his mind, but to want words in which to convey it. I looked at him with anxiety and affection. He made two unsuccessful efforts, shook his head, and then putting five guineas into my hand, pressed it in a manner that I could feel proceeded from a mind pregnant with various emotions, though I could not interpret them. Having done this, he seemed immediately to recollect himself, and to take refuge in the usual distance and solemnity of his manner.

I easily understood that secrecy was one of the things expected from me; and, indeed, my mind was too much disposed to meditate upon what I had heard and seen, to make it a topic of indiscriminate communication. Mr. Collins, however, and myself happened to sup together that evening, which was but seldom the case, his avocations obliging him to be much abroad. He could not help observing an

uncommon dejection and anxiety in my countenance, and affectionately inquired into the reason. I endeavoured to evade his questions, but my youth and ignorance of the world gave me little advantage for that purpose. Besides this, I had been accustomed to view Mr. Collins with considerable attachment, and I conceived from the nature of his situation that there could be small impropriety in making him my confidant in the present instance. I repeated to him minutely every thing that had passed, and concluded with a solemn declaration, that, though treated with caprice, I was not anxious for myself; no inconvenience or danger should ever lead me to a pusillanimous behaviour; and I felt only for my patron, who, with every advantage for happiness, and being in the highest degree worthy of it, seemed destined to undergo unmerited distress.

In answer to my communication, Mr. Collins informed me that some incidents, of a nature similar to that which I related, had fallen under his own knowledge, and that from the whole he could not help concluding that our unfortunate patron was at times disordered in his intellects. "Alas!" continued he, "it was not always thus! Ferdinando Falkland was once the gayest of the gay. Not indeed of that frothy sort who excite contempt instead of admiration, and whose levity argues thoughtlessness rather than felicity. His gayety was always accompanied with dignity. It was the gayety of the hero and the scholar. It was chastened with reflection and sensibility, and never lost sight either of good taste or humanity. Such as it was, however, it denoted a genuine hilarity of heart, imparted an inconceivable brilliancy to his company and conversation, and rendered him the perpetual delight of the diversified circles he then willingly frequented. You see nothing of him, my

dear Williams, but the ruin of that Falkland who was courted by sages and adored by the fair. His youth, distinguished in its outset by the most unusual promise, is tarnished. His sensibility is shrunk up and withered by events the most disgustful to his feelings. His mind was fraught with all the rhapsodies of visionary honour; and, in his sense, nothing but the grosser part, the mere shell of Falkland, was capable of surviving the wound that his pride has sustained."

These reflections of my friend Collins strongly tended to inflame my curiosity, and I requested him to enter into a more copious explanation. With this request he readily complied; as conceiving that whatever delicacy it became him to exercise in ordinary cases, it would be out of place in my situation; and thinking it not improbable that Mr. Falkland, but for the disturbance and inflammation of his mind, would be disposed to a similar communication. I shall interweave with Mr. Collins's story various information which I afterward received from other quarters, that I may give all possible perspicuity to the series of events. To avoid confusion in my narrative, I shall drop the person of Collins, and assume to be myself the historian of our patron. To the reader it may appear at first sight as if this detail of the preceding life of Mr. Falkland were foreign to my history. Alas! I know from bitter experience that it is otherwise. My heart bleeds at the recollection of his misfortunes, as if they were my own. How can it fail to do so? To his story the whole fortune of my life was linked; because he was miserable, my happiness, my name, and my existence have been irretrievably blasted.

CHAPTER II.

Among the favourite authors of his early years were the heroic poets of Italy. From them he imbibed the love of chivalry and romance. He had too much good sense to regret the times of Charlemagne and Arthur. But while his imagination was purged by a certain infusion of philosophy, he conceived that there was in the manners depicted by these celebrated poets something to imitate, as well as something to avoid. He believed that nothing was so well calculated to make men delicate, gallant, and humane, as a temper perpetually alive to the sentiments of birth and honour. The opinions he entertained upon these topics were illustrated in his conduct, which was assiduously conformed to the model of heroism that his fancy suggested.

With these sentiments he set out upon his travels, at the age at which the grand tour is usually made; and they were rather confirmed than shaken by the adventures that befell him. By inclination he was led to make his longest stay in Italy; and here he fell into company with several young noblemen whose studies and principles were congenial to his own. By them he was assiduously courted, and treated with the most distinguished applause. They were delighted to meet with a foreigner who had imbibed all the peculiarities of the most liberal and honourable among themselves. Nor was he less favoured and admired by the softer sex. Though his stature was small, his person had an air of uncommon dignity. His dignity was then heightened

by certain additions which were afterward obliterated, —an expression of frankness, ingenuity, and unreserve, and a spirit of the most ardent enthusiasm. Perhaps no Englishman was ever in an equal degree idolized by the inhabitants of Italy.

It was not possible for him to have drunk so deeply of the fountain of chivalry without being engaged occasionally in affairs of honour, all of which were terminated in a manner that would not have disgraced the Chevalier Bayard himself. In Italy, the young men of rank divide themselves into two classes,—those who adhere to the pure principles of ancient gallantry, and those who, being actuated by the same acute sense of injury and insult, accustom themselves to the employment of hired bravoes as their instruments of vengeance. The whole difference, indeed, consists in the precarious application of a generally received distinction. The most generous Italian conceives that there are certain persons whom it would be contamination for him to call into the open field. He nevertheless believes that an indignity cannot be expiated but with blood, and is persuaded that the life of a man is a trifling consideration, in comparison of the indemnification to be made to his injured honour. There is, therefore, scarcely any Italian that would upon some occasions scruple assassination. Men of spirit among them, notwithstanding the prejudices of their education, cannot fail to have a secret conviction of its baseness, and will be desirous of extending as far as possible the cartel of honour. Real or affected arrogance teaches others to regard almost the whole species as their inferiors, and of consequence incites them to gratify their vengeance without danger to their persons. Mr. Falkland met with some of these. But his undaunted spirit and resolute temper gave him a decisive advantage even in such perilous ren-

counters. One instance, among many, of his manner of conducting himself among this proud and high-spirited people it may be proper to relate. Mr. Falkland is the principal agent in my history; and Mr. Falkland in the autumn and decay of his vigour, such as I found him, cannot be completely understood without a knowledge of his previous character, as it was in all the gloss of youth, yet unassailed by adversity, and unbroken in upon by anguish or remorse.

At Rome he was received with particular distinction, at the house of Marquis Pisani, who had an only daughter, the heiress of his immense fortune, and the admiration of all the young nobility of that metropolis. Lady Lucretia Pisani was tall, of a dignified form, and uncommonly beautiful. She was not deficient in amiable qualities, but her soul was haughty, and her carriage not unfrequently contemptuous. Her pride was nourished by the consciousness of her charms, by her elevated rank, and the universal adoration she was accustomed to receive.

Among her numerous lovers, Count Malvesi was the individual most favoured by her father, nor did his addresses seem indifferent to her. The count was a man of considerable accomplishments, and of great integrity and benevolence of disposition. But he was too ardent a lover to be able always to preserve the affability of his temper. The admirers whose addresses were a source of gratification to his mistress, were a perpetual uneasiness to him. Placing his whole happiness in the possession of this imperious beauty, the most trifling circumstances were capable of alarming him for the security of his pretensions. But most of all he was jealous of the English cavalier. Marquis Pisani, who had spent many years in France, was by no

means partial to the suspicious precautions of Italian fathers, and indulged his daughter in considerable freedoms. His house and his daughter, within certain judicious restraints, were open to the resort of male visitants. But, above all, Mr. Falkland, as a foreigner, and a person little likely to form pretensions to the hand of Lucretia, was received upon a footing of great familiarity. The lady herself, conscious of innocence, entertained no scruple about trifles, and acted with the confidence and frankness of one who is superior to suspicion.

Mr. Falkland, after a residence of several week at Rome, proceeded to Naples. Meanwhile, certain incidents occurred that delayed the intended nuptials of the heiress of Pisani. When he returned to Rome, Count Malvesi was absent. Lady Lucretia, who had been considerably amused before with the conversation of Mr. Falkland, and who had an active and inquiring mind, had conceived, in the interval between his first and second residence at Rome, a desire to be acquainted with the English language, inspired by the lively and ardent encomiums of our best authors that she had heard from their countryman. She had provided herself with the usual materials for that purpose, and had made some progress during his absence. But upon his return she was forward to make use of the opportunity, which, if missed, might never occur again with equal advantage, of reading select passages of our poets with an Englishman of uncommon taste and capacity.

This proposal necessarily led to a more frequent intercourse. When Count Malvesi returned, he found Mr. Falkland established almost as an inmate of the Pisani palace. His mind could not fail to be struck with the criticalness of the situation. He was perhaps secretly conscious that the qualifications of the Englishman were superior to his own; and he

trembled for the progress that each party might have made in the affection of the other, even before they were aware of the danger. He believed that the match was in every respect such as to flatter the ambition of Mr. Falkland; and he was stung even to madness by the idea of being deprived of the object dearest to his heart by this tramontane upstart.

He had, however, sufficient discretion first to demand an explanation of Lady Lucretia. She, in the gayety of her heart, trifled with his anxiety. His patience was already exhausted, and he proceeded in his expostulation, in language that she was by no means prepared to endure with apathy. Lady Lucretia had always been accustomed to deference and submission; and, having got over something like terror, that was at first inspired by the imperious manner in which she was now catechised, her next feeling was that of the warmest resentment. She disdained to satisfy so insolent a questioner, and even indulged herself in certain oblique hints calculated to strengthen his suspicions. For some time she described his folly and presumption in terms of the most ludicrous sarcasm, and then, suddenly changing her style, bade him never let her see him more except upon the footing of the most distant acquaintance, as she was determined never again to subject herself to so unworthy a treatment. She was happy that he had at length disclosed to her his true character, and would know how to profit of her present experience to avoid a repetition of the same danger. All this passed in the full career of passion on both sides, and Lady Lucretia had no time to reflect upon what might be the consequence of thus exasperating her lover.

Count Malvesi left her in all the torments of phrensy. He believed that this was a premeditated

scene, to find a pretence for breaking off an engagement that was already all but concluded; or, rather, his mind was racked with a thousand conjectures: he alternately thought that the injustice might be hers or his own; and he quarrelled with Lady Lucretia, himself, and the whole world. In this temper he hastened to the hotel of the English cavalier. The season of expostulation was now over, and he found himself irresistibly impelled to justify his precipitation with the lady, by taking for granted that the subject of his suspicion was beyond the reach of doubt.

Mr. Falkland was at home. The first words of the count were an abrupt accusation of duplicity in the affair of Lady Lucretia, and a challenge. The Englishman had an unaffected esteem for Malvesi, who was in reality a man of considerable merit, and who had been one of Mr. Falkland's earliest Italian acquaintance, they having originally met at Milan. But, more than this, the possible consequence of a duel in the present instance burst upon his mind. He had the warmest admiration for Lady Lucretia, though his feelings were not those of a lover; and he knew that, however her haughtiness might endeavour to disguise it, she was impressed with a tender regard for Count Malvesi. He could not bear to think that any misconduct of his should interrupt the prospects of so deserving a pair. Guided by these sentiments, he endeavoured to expostulate with the Italian. But his attempts were ineffectual. His antagonist was drunk with choler, and would not listen to a word that tended to check the impetuosity of his thoughts. He traversed the room with perturbed steps, and even foamed with anguish and fury. Mr. Falkland, finding that all was to no purpose, told the count that, if he would return to-morrow at the same hour, he would attend

him to any scene of action he should think proper to select.

From Count Malvesi Mr. Falkland immediately proceeded to the palace of Pisani. Here he found considerable difficulty in appeasing the indignation of Lady Lucretia. His ideas of honour would by no means allow him to win her to his purpose by disclosing the cartel he had received; otherwise that disclosure would immediately have operated as the strongest motive that could have been offered to this disdainful beauty. But, though she dreaded such an event, the vague apprehension was not strong enough to induce her instantly to surrender all the stateliness of her resentment. Mr. Falkland, however, drew so interesting a picture of the disturbance of Count Malvesi's mind, and accounted in so flattering a manner for the abruptness of his conduct, that this, together with the arguments he adduced, completed the conquest of Lady Lucretia's resentment. Having thus far accomplished his purpose, he proceeded to disclose to her every thing that had passed.

The next day Count Malvesi appeared, punctual to his appointment, at Mr. Falkland's hotel. Mr. Falkland came to the door to receive him, but requested him to enter the house for a moment, as he had still an affair of three minutes to despatch. They proceeded to a parlour. Here Mr. Falkland left him, and presently returned leading in Lady Lucretia herself, adorned in all her charms, and those charms heightened upon the present occasion by a consciousness of the spirited and generous condescension she was exerting. Mr. Falkland led her up to the astonished count; and she, gently laying her hand upon the arm of her lover, exclaimed with the most attractive grace, "Will you allow me to retract the precipitate haughtiness into

which I was betrayed?" The enraptured count, scarcely able to believe his senses, threw himself upon his knees before her, and stammered out his reply, signifying that the precipitation had been all his own, that he only had any forgiveness to demand, and, though they might pardon, he could never pardon himself for the sacrilege he had committed against her and this godlike Englishman. As soon as the first tumults of his joy had subsided, Mr. Falkland addressed him thus:—

"Count Malvesi, I feel the utmost pleasure in having thus by peaceful means disarmed your resentment, and effected your happiness. But I must confess, you put me to a severe trial. My temper is not less impetuous and fiery than your own, and it is not at all times that I should have been thus able to subdue it. But I considered that in reality the original blame was mine. Though your suspicion was groundless, it was not absurd. We have been trifling too much in the face of danger. I ought not, under the present weakness of our nature and forms of society, to have been so assiduous in my attendance upon this enchanting woman. It would have been little wonder, if, having so many opportunities, and playing the preceptor with her as I have done, I had been entangled before I was aware, and harboured a wish which I might not afterward have had courage to subdue. I owed you an atonement for this imprudence.

"But the laws of honour are in the utmost degree rigid; and there was reason to fear that, however anxious I were to be your friend, I might be obliged to be your murderer. Fortunately, the reputation of my courage is sufficiently established, not to expose it to any impeachment by my declining your present defiance. It was lucky, however, that in our interview of yesterday you found me

alone, and that accident by that means threw the management of the affair into my disposal. If the transaction should become known, the conclusion will now become known along with the provocation, and I am satisfied. But if the challenge had been public, the proofs I had formerly given of courage would not have excused my present moderation; and, though desirous to have avoided the combat, it would not have been in my power. Let us hence, each of us, learn to avoid haste and indiscretion, the consequences of which may be inexpiable but with blood; and may Heaven bless you in a consort of whom I deem you every way worthy!"

I have already said that this was by no means the only instance, in the course of his travels, in which Mr. Falkland acquitted himself in the most brilliant manner as a man of gallantry and virtue. He continued abroad during several years, every one of which brought some fresh accession to the estimation in which he was held, as well as to his own impatience of stain or dishonour. At length he thought proper to return to England, with the intention of spending the rest of his days at the residence of his ancestors.

CHAPTER III.

From the moment he entered upon the execution of this purpose, dictated, as it probably was, by an unaffected principle of duty, his misfortunes took their commencement. All I have further to state of his history is the uninterrupted persecution of a malignant destiny, a series of adventures that seemed

to take their rise in various accidents, but pointing to one termination. Him they overwhelmed with an anguish he was of all others least qualified to bear; and these waters of bitterness, extending beyond him, poured their deadly venom upon others, I being myself the most unfortunate of their victims.

The person in whom these calamities originated was Mr. Falkland's nearest neighbour, a man of estate equal to his own, by name Barnabas Tyrrel. This man one might at first have supposed of all others least qualified from instruction, or inclined by the habits of his life, to disturb the enjoyments of a mind so richly endowed as that of Mr. Falkland. Mr. Tyrrel might have passed for a true model of the English squire. He was early left under the tuition of his mother, a woman of narrow capacity, and who had no other child. The only remaining member of the family it may be necessary to notice was Miss Emily Melville, the orphan daughter of Mr. Tyrrel's paternal aunt; who now resided in the family mansion, and was wholly dependent on the benevolence of its proprietors.

Mrs. Tyrrel appeared to think that there was nothing in the world so precious as her hopeful Barnabas. Every thing must give way to his accommodation and advantage; every one must yield the most servile obedience to his commands. He must not be teased or restricted by any forms of instruction; and of consequence his proficiency, even in the arts of writing and reading, was extremely slender. From his birth he was muscular and sturdy; and, confined to the *ruelle* of his mother, he made much such a figure as the whelp-lion that a barbarian might have given for a lapdog to his mistress.

But he soon broke loose from these trammels,

and formed an acquaintance with the groom and the gamekeeper. Under their instruction he proved as ready a scholar, as he had been indocile and restive to the pedant who held the office of his tutor. It was now evident that his small proficiency in literature was by no means to be ascribed to want of capacity. He discovered no contemptible sagacity and quick-wittedness in the science of horseflesh, and was eminently expert in the arts of shooting, fishing, and hunting. Nor did he confine himself to these, but added the theory and practice of boxing, cudgel play, and quarter-staff. These exercises added tenfold robustness and vigour to his former qualifications.

His stature, when grown, was somewhat more than five feet ten inches in height, and his form might have been selected by a painter as a model for that hero of antiquity whose prowess consisted in felling an ox with his fist, and devouring him at a meal. Conscious of his advantage in this respect, he was insupportably arrogant, tyrannical to his inferiors, and insolent to his equals. The activity of his mind being diverted from the genuine field of utility and distinction, showed itself in the rude tricks of an overgrown lubber. Here, as in all his other qualifications, he rose above his competitors; and if it had been possible to overlook the callous and unrelenting disposition which they manifested, one could scarcely have denied his applause to the invention these freaks displayed, and the rough, sarcastic wit with which they were accompanied.

Mr. Tyrrel was by no means inclined to permit these extraordinary merits to rust in oblivion. There was a weekly assembly at the nearest market-town, the resort of all the rural gentry. Here he had hitherto figured to the greatest advantage as grand-master of the *coterie*, no one having an equal share of opu-

lence, and the majority, though still pretending to the rank of gentry, greatly his inferior in this essential article. The young men in this circle looked up to this insolent bashaw with timid respect, conscious of the comparative eminence that unquestionably belonged to the powers of his mind; and he well knew how to maintain his rank with an inflexible hand. Frequently indeed he relaxed his features, and assumed a temporary appearance of affableness and familiarity; but they found by experience that if any one, encouraged by his condescension, forgot the deference which Mr. Tyrrel considered as his due, he was soon taught to repent his presumption. It was a tiger that thought proper to toy with a mouse, the little animal every moment in danger of being crushed by the fangs of his ferocious associate. As Mr. Tyrrel had considerable copiousness of speech, and a rich, but undisciplined imagination, he was always sure of an audience. His neighbours crowded round, and joined in the ready laugh, partly from obsequiousness, and partly from unfeigned admiration. It frequently happened, however, that in the midst of his good-humour, a characteristic refinement of tyranny would suggest itself to his mind. When his subjects, encouraged by his familiarity, had discarded their precaution, the wayward fit would seize him, a sudden cloud overspread his brow, his voice transform from the pleasant to the terrible, and a quarrel of a straw immediately ensue with the first man whose face he did not like. The pleasure that resulted to others from the exuberant sallies of his imagination was, therefore, not unalloyed with sudden qualms of apprehension and terror. It may be believed that this despotism did not gain its final ascendency without being contested in the outset. But all opposition was quelled with a high hand by this rural Antæus.

By the ascendency of his fortune and his character among his neighbours, he always reduced his adversary to the necessity of encountering him at his own weapons, and did not dismiss him without making him feel his presumption through every joint in his frame. The tyranny of Mr. Tyrrel would not have been so patiently endured, had not his colloquial accomplishments perpetually come in aid of that authority which his rank and prowess originally obtained.

The situation of our squire with the fair was still more enviable than that which he maintained among persons of his own sex. Every mother taught her daughter to consider the hand of Mr. Tyrrel as the highest object of her ambition. Every daughter regarded his athletic form and his acknowledged prowess with a favourable eye. A form eminently athletic is, perhaps, always well-proportioned; and one of the qualifications that women are early taught to look for in the male sex is that of a protector. As no man was adventurous enough to contest his superiority, so scarcely any woman in this provincial circle would have scrupled to prefer his addresses to those of any other admirer. His boisterous wit had peculiar charms for them; and there was no spectacle more flattering to their vanity, than seeing this Hercules exchange his club for a distaff. It was pleasing to them to consider, that the fangs of this wild beast, the very idea of which inspired trepidation into the boldest hearts, might be played with by them with the utmost security.

Such was the rival that Fortune, in her caprice, had reserved for the accomplished Falkland. This untamed, though not undiscerning brute, was found capable of destroying the prospects of a man the most eminently qualified to enjoy and to communicate happiness. The feud that sprung up between them

was nourished by concurring circumstances, till it attained a magnitude difficult to be paralleled; and, because they regarded each other with a deadly hatred, I have become an object of misery and abhorrence.

The arrival of Mr. Falkland gave an alarming shock to the authority of Mr. Tyrrel in the village assembly, and in all scenes of indiscriminate resort. His disposition by no means inclined him to withhold himself from scenes of fashionable amusement; and he and his competitor were like two stars fated never to appear at once above the horizon. The advantages Mr. Falkland possessed in the comparison are palpable; and had it been otherwise, the subjects of his rural neighbour were sufficiently disposed to revolt against his merciless dominion. They had hitherto submitted from fear, and not from love; and if they had not rebelled, it was only for want of a leader. Even the ladies regarded Mr. Falkland with particular complacency. His polished manners were peculiarly in harmony with feminine delicacy. The sallies of his wit were far beyond those of Mr. Tyrrel in variety and vigour; in addition to which they had the advantage of having their spontaneous exuberance guided and restrained by the sagacity of a cultivated mind. The graces of his person were enhanced by the elegance of his deportment; and the benevolence and liberality of his temper were upon all occasions conspicuous. It was common indeed to Mr. Tyrrel, together with Mr. Falkland, to be little accessible to sentiments of awkwardness and confusion. But for this Mr. Tyrrel was indebted to a self-satisfied effrontery, and a boisterous and overbearing elocution, by which he was accustomed to discomfit his assailants; while Mr. Falkland, with great ingenuity and candour of mind, was enabled by his ex-

tensive knowledge of the world, and acquaintance with his own resources, to perceive almost instantaneously the proceeding it most became him to adopt.

Mr. Tyrrel contemplated the progress of his rival with uneasiness and aversion. He often commented upon it to his particular confidants as a thing altogether inconceivable. Mr. Falkland he described as an animal that was beneath contempt. Diminutive and dwarfish in his form, he wanted to set up a new standard of human nature, adapted to his miserable condition. He wished to persuade people that the human species were made to be nailed to a chair, and to pore over books. He would have them exchange those robust exercises which make us joyous in the performance, and vigorous in the consequences, for the wise labour of scratching our heads for a rhyme and counting our fingers for a verse. Monkeys were as good men as these. A nation of such animals would have no chance with a single regiment of the old English votaries of beef and pudding. He never saw any thing come of learning but to make people foppish and impertinent; and a sensible man would not wish a worse calamity to the enemies of his nation, than to see them run mad after such pernicious absurdities. It was impossible that people could seriously feel any liking for such a ridiculous piece of goods as this outlandish foreign-made Englishman. But he knew very well how it was: it was a miserable piece of mummery that was played only in spite of him. But might his soul be for ever blasted if he were not bitterly revenged upon them all!

If such were the sentiments of Mr. Tyrrel, his patience found ample exercise in the language which was held by the rest of his neighbours on the same subject. While he saw nothing in Mr. Falkland

but matter of contempt, they appeared to be never weary of recounting his praises. Such dignity, such affability, so perpetual an attention to the happiness of others, such delicacy of sentiment and expression! Learned without ostentation, refined without foppery, elegant without effeminacy! Perpetually anxious to prevent his superiority from being painfully felt, it was so much the more certainly felt to be real, and excited congratulation instead of envy in the spectator. It is scarcely necessary to remark, that the revolution of sentiment in this rural vicinity belongs to one of the most obvious features of the human mind. The rudest exhibition of art is at first admired, till a nobler is presented, and we are taught to wonder at the facility with which before we had been satisfied. Mr. Tyrrel thought there would be no end to the commendation; and expected when their common acquaintance would fall down and adore the intruder. The most inadvertent expression of applause inflicted upon him the torment of demons. He writhed with agony, his features became distorted, and his looks inspired terror. Such suffering would probably have soured the kindest temper; what must have been its effect upon Mr. Tyrrel's, always fierce, unrelenting, and abrupt?

The advantages of Mr. Falkland seemed by no means to diminish with their novelty. Every new sufferer from Mr. Tyrrel's tyranny immediately went over to the standard of his adversary. The ladies, though treated by their rustic swain with more gentleness than the men, were occasionally exposed to his capriciousness and insolence. They could not help remarking the contrast between these two leaders in the fields of chivalry, the one of whom paid no attention to any one's pleasure but his own, while the other seemed all good-humour and benevo-

lence. It was in vain that Mr. Tyrrel endeavoured to restrain the ruggedness of his character. His motive was impatience, his thoughts were gloomy, and his courtship was like the pawings of an elephant. It appeared as if his temper had been more human while he indulged in its free bent, than now that he sullenly endeavoured to put fetters upon its excesses.

Among the ladies of the village-assembly already mentioned there was none that seemed to engage more of the kindness of Mr. Tyrrel than Miss Hardingham. She was also one of the few that had not yet gone over to the enemy, either because she really preferred the gentleman who was her oldest acquaintance, or that she conceived from calculation this conduct best adapted to ensure her success in a husband. One day, however, she thought proper, probably only by way of experiment, to show Mr. Tyrrel that she could engage in hostilities, if he should at any time give her sufficient provocation. She so adjusted her manœuvres as to be engaged by Mr. Falkland as his partner for the dance of the evening, though without the smallest intention on the part of that gentleman (who was unpardonably deficient in the sciences of anecdote and match-making) of giving offence to his country neighbour. Though the manners of Mr. Falkland were condescending and attentive, his hours of retirement were principally occupied in contemplations too dignified for scandal, and too large for the altercations of a vestry, or the politics of an election-borough.

A short time before the dances began, Mr. Tyrrel went up to his fair inamorata, and entered into some trifling conversation with her to fill up the time, as intending in a few minutes to lead her forward to the field. He had accustomed himself to

neglect the ceremony of soliciting beforehand a promise in his favour, as not supposing it possible that any one would dare dispute his behests; and, had it been otherwise, he would have thought the formality unnecessary in this case, his general preference to Miss Hardingham being notorious.

While he was thus engaged Mr. Falkland came up. Mr. Tyrrel always regarded him with aversion and loathing. Mr. Falkland, however, slided in a graceful and unaffected manner into the conversation already begun; and the animated ingenuousness of his manner was such as might for the time have disarmed the devil of his malice. Mr. Tyrrel probably conceived that his accosting Miss Hardingham was an accidental piece of general ceremony, and expected every moment when he would withdraw to another part of the room.

The company now began to be in motion for the dance, and Mr. Falkland signified as much to Miss Hardingham. "Sir," interrupted Mr. Tyrrel abruptly, "that lady is my partner."—"I believe not, sir; that lady has been so obliging as to accept my invitation."—"I tell you, sir, no. Sir, I have an interest in that lady's affections; and I will suffer no man to intrude upon my claims."—"The lady's affections are not the subject of the present question."—"Sir, it is to no purpose to parley. Make room, sir!"—Mr. Falkland gently repelled his antagonist. "Mr. Tyrrel!" returned he, with some firmness, "let us have no altercation in this business: the master of the ceremonies is the proper person to decide in a difference of this sort, if we cannot adjust it: we can neither of us intend to exhibit our valour before the ladies, and shall therefore cheerfully submit to his verdict."—"Damn me, sir, if I understand—" "Softly, Mr. Tyrrel; I intended you no offence. But, sir, no man shall

prevent my asserting that to which I have once acquired a claim!"

Mr. Falkland uttered these words with the most unruffled temper in the world. The tone in which he spoke had acquired elevation, but neither roughness nor impatience. There was a fascination in his manner that made the ferociousness of his antagonist subside into impotence. Miss Hardingham had begun to repent of her experiment, but her alarm was speedily quieted by the dignified composure of her new partner. Mr. Tyrrel walked away without answering a word. He muttered curses as he went, which the laws of honour did not oblige Mr. Falkland to overhear, and which indeed it would have been no easy task to have overheard with accuracy. Mr. Tyrrel would not, perhaps, have so easily given up his point, had not his own good sense presently taught him, that, however eager he might be for revenge, this was not the ground he should desire to occupy. But, though he could not openly resent this rebellion against his authority, he brooded over it in the recesses of a malignant mind; and it was evident enough that he was accumulating materials for a bitter account, to which he trusted his adversary should one day be brought.

CHAPTER IV.

This was only one out of innumerable instances, that every day seemed to multiply, of petty mortifications which Mr. Tyrrel was destined to endure on the part of Mr. Falkland. In all of them Mr.

Falkland conducted himself with such unaffected propriety, as perpetually to add to the stock of his reputation. The more Mr. Tyrrel struggled with his misfortune, the more conspicuous and inveterate it became. A thousand times he cursed his stars, which took, as he apprehended, a malicious pleasure in making Mr. Falkland, at every turn, the instrument of his humiliation. Smarting under a succession of untoward events, he appeared to feel, in the most exquisite manner, the distinctions paid to his adversary, even in those points in which he had not the slightest pretensions. An instance of this now occurred.

Mr. Clare, a poet whose works have done immortal honour to the country that produced him, had lately retired, after a life spent in the sublimest efforts of genius, to enjoy the produce of his economy, and the reputation he had acquired, in this very neighbourhood. Such an inmate was looked up to by the country gentlemen with a degree of adoration. They felt a conscious pride in recollecting that the boast of England was a native of their vicinity; and they were by no means deficient in gratitude when they saw him, who had left them an adventurer, return into the midst of them, in the close of his days, crowned with honours and opulence. The reader is acquainted with his works: he has, probably, dwelt upon them with transport; and I need not remind him of their excellence: but he is, perhaps, a stranger to his personal qualifications; he does not know that his productions were scarcely more admirable than his conversation. In company he seemed to be the only person ignorant of the greatness of his fame. To the world his writings will long remain a kind of specimen of what the human mind is capable of performing; but no man perceived their defects so acutely as he, or

saw so distinctly how much yet remained to be effected: he alone appeared to look upon his works with superiority and indifference. One of the features that most eminently distinguished him was a perpetual suavity of manners, a comprehensiveness of mind, that regarded the errors of others without a particle of resentment, and made it impossible for any one to be his enemy. He pointed out to men their mistakes with frankness and unreserve: his remonstrances produced astonishment and conviction, but without uneasiness, in the party to whom they were addressed: they felt the instrument that was employed to correct their irregularities, but it never mangled what it was intended to heal. Such were the moral qualities that distinguished him among his acquaintance. The intellectual accomplishments he exhibited were, principally, a tranquil and mild enthusiasm, and a richness of conception which dictated spontaneously to his tongue, and flowed with so much ease, that it was only by retrospect you could be made aware of the amazing variety of ideas that had been presented.

Mr. Clare certainly found few men in this remote situation that were capable of participating in his ideas and amusements. It has been among the weaknesses of great men to fly to solitude, and converse with woods and groves, rather than with a circle of strong and comprehensive minds like their own. From the moment of Mr. Falkland's arrival in the neighbourhood, Mr. Clare distinguished him in the most flattering manner. To so penetrating a genius there was no need of long experience and patient observation to discover the merits and defects of any character that presented itself. The materials of his judgment had long since been accumulated; and, at the close of so illustrious a life, he might almost be said to see through nature at a

glance. What wonder that he took some interest in a mind in a certain degree congenial with his own? But to Mr. Tyrrel's diseased imagination, every distinction bestowed on his neighbour seemed to be expressly intended as an insult to him. On the other hand, Mr. Clare, though gentle and benevolent in his remonstrances to a degree that made the taking offence impossible, was by no means parsimonious of praise, or slow to make use of the deference that was paid him for the purpose of procuring justice to merit.

It happened at one of those public meetings at which Mr. Falkland and Mr. Tyrrel were present, that the conversation, in one of the most numerous sets into which the company was broken, turned upon the poetical talents of the former. A lady, who was present, and was distinguished for the acuteness of her understanding, said, she had been favoured with a sight of a poem he had just written, entitled *An Ode to the Genius of Chivalry*, which appeared to her of exquisite merit. The curiosity of the company was immediately excited, and the lady added, she had a copy in her pocket, which was much at their service, provided its being thus produced would not be disagreeable to the author. The whole circle immediately entreated Mr. Falkland to comply with their wishes, and Mr. Clare, who was one of the company, enforced their petition. Nothing gave this gentleman so much pleasure as to have an opportunity of witnessing and doing justice to the exhibition of intellectual excellence. Mr. Falkland had no false modesty or affectation, and therefore readily yielded his consent.

Mr. Tyrrel accidentally sat at the extremity of this circle. It cannot be supposed that the turn the conversation had taken was by any means agreeable to him. He appeared to wish to withdraw

himself, but there seemed to be some unknown power that, as it were, by enchantment, retained him in his place, and made him consent to drink to the dregs the bitter potion which envy had prepared for him.

The poem was read to the rest of the company by Mr. Clare, whose elocution was scarcely inferior to his other accomplishments. Simplicity, discrimination, and energy constantly attended him in the act of reading, and it is not easy to conceive a more refined delight than fell to the lot of those who had the good fortune to be his auditors. The beauties of Mr. Falkland's poem were accordingly exhibited with every advantage. The successive passions of the author were communicated to the hearer. What was impetuous, and what was solemn, were delivered with a responsive feeling, and a flowing and unlaboured tone. The pictures conjured up by the creative fancy of the poet were placed full to view, at one time overwhelming the soul with superstitious awe, and at another transporting it with luxuriant beauty.

The character of the hearers upon this occasion has already been described. They were, for the most part, plain, unlettered, and of little refinement. Poetry in general they read, when read at all, from the mere force of imitation, and with few sensations of pleasure; but this poem had a peculiar vein of glowing inspiration. This very poem would probably have been seen by many of them with little effect; but the accents of Mr. Clare carried it home to the heart. He ended: and as the countenances of his auditors had before sympathized with the passions of the composition, so now they emulated each other in declaring their approbation. Their sensations were of a sort to which they were little accustomed. One spoke, and

another followed by a sort of uncontrollable impulse; and the rude and broken manner of their commendations rendered them the more singular and remarkable. But what was least to be endured was the behaviour of Mr. Clare. He returned the manuscript to the lady from whom he had received it, and then, addressing Mr. Falkland, said, with emphasis and animation, "Ha! this is as it should be. It is of the right stamp. I have seen too many hard essays strained from the labour of a pedant, and pastoral ditties distressed in lack of a meaning. They are such as you, sir, that we want. Do not forget, however, that the Muse was not given to add refinements to idleness, but for the highest and most invaluable purposes. Act up to the magnitude of your destiny."

A moment after Mr. Clare quitted his seat, and with Mr. Falkland and two or three more withdrew. As soon as they were gone, Mr. Tyrrel edged farther into the circle. He had sat silent so long that he seemed ready to burst with gall and indignation. "Mighty pretty verses!" said he, half talking to himself, and not addressing any particular person: "why, ay, the verses are well enough. Damnation! I should like to know what a ship-load of such stuff is good for."

"Why, surely," said the lady who had introduced Mr. Falkland's ode on the present occasion, "you must allow that poetry is an agreeable and elegant amusement."

"Elegant, quotha!—Why, look at this Falkland! A puny bit of a thing! In the devil's name, madam, do you think he would write poetry if he could do any thing better?"

The conversation did not stop here. The lady expostulated. Several other persons, fresh from the sensation they had felt, contributed their share.

Mr. Tyrrel grew more violent in his invectives, and found ease in uttering them. The persons who were able in any degree to check his vehemence were withdrawn. One speaker after another shrunk back into silence, too timid to oppose, or too indolent to contend with the fierceness of his passion. He found the appearance of his old ascendency; but he felt its deceitfulness and uncertainty, and was gloomily dissatisfied.

In his return from this assembly he was accompanied by a young man, whom similitude of manners had rendered one of his principal confidants, and whose road home was in part the same as his own. One might have thought that Mr. Tyrrel had sufficiently vented his spleen in the dialogue he had just been holding. But he was unable to dismiss from his recollection the anguish he had endured. "Damn Falkland!" said he. "What a pitiful scoundrel is here to make all this bustle about! But women and fools always will be fools; there is no help for that! Those that set them on have most to answer for; and most of all, Mr. Clare. He is a man that ought to know something of the world, and past being duped by gewgaws and tinsel. He seemed, too, to have some notion of things: I should not have suspected him of hallooing to a cry of mongrels without honesty or reason. But the world is all alike. Those that seem better than their neighbours are only more artful. They mean the same thing, though they take a different road. He deceived me for a while, but it is all out now. They are the makers of the mischief. Fools might blunder, but they would not persist, if people that ought to set them right did not encourage them to go wrong."

A few days after this adventure Mr. Tyrrel was surprised to receive a visit from Mr. Falkland. Mr.

Falkland proceeded, without ceremony, to explain the motive of his coming.

"Mr. Tyrrel," said he, "I am come to have an amicable explanation with you."

"Explanation! What is my offence?"

"None in the world, sir; and for that reason I conceive this the fittest time to come to a right understanding."

"You are in a devil of a hurry, sir. Are you clear that this haste will not mar, instead of make an understanding?"

"I think I am, sir. I have great faith in the purity of my intentions, and I will not doubt, when you perceive the view with which I come, that you will willingly co-operate with it."

"Mayhap, Mr. Falkland, we may not agree about that. One man thinks one way, and another man thinks another. Mayhap I do not think I have any great reason to be pleased with you already."

"It may be so. I cannot, however, charge myself with having given you reason to be displeased."

"Well, sir, you have no right to put me out of humour with myself. If you come to play upon me, and try what sort of a fellow you shall have to deal with, damn me if you shall have any reason to hug yourself upon the experiment."

"Nothing, sir, is more easy for us than to quarrel. If you desire that, there is no fear that you will find opportunities."

"Damn me, sir, if I do not believe you are come to bully me."

"Mr. Tyrrel! sir—have a care!"

"Of what, sir?—Do you threaten me? Damn my soul! who are you? what do you come here for?"

The fieriness of Mr. Tyrrel brought Mr. Falkland to his recollection.

"I am wrong," said he. "I confess it. I came for purposes of peace. With that view I have taken the liberty to visit you. Whatever therefore might be my feelings upon another occasion, I am bound to suppress them now."

"Ho!—Well, sir: and what have you further to offer?"

"Mr. Tyrrel," proceeded Mr. Falkland, "you will readily imagine that the cause that brought me was not a slight one. I would not have troubled you with a visit, but for important reasons. My coming is a pledge how deeply I am myself impressed with what I have to communicate.

"We are in a critical situation. We are upon the brink of a whirlpool which, if once it get hold of us, will render all further deliberation impotent. An unfortunate jealousy seems to have insinuated itself between us, which I would willingly remove; and I come to ask your assistance. We are both of us nice of temper; we are both apt to kindle, and warm of resentment. Precaution in this stage can be dishonourable to neither; the time may come when we shall wish we had employed it, and find it too late. Why should we be enemies? Our tastes are different; our pursuits need not interfere. We both of us amply possess the means of happiness; we may be respected by all, and spend a long life of tranquillity and enjoyment. Will it be wise in us to exchange this prospect for the fruits of strife? A strife between persons with our peculiarities and our weaknesses includes consequences that I shudder to think of. I fear, sir, that it is pregnant with death at least to one of us, and with misfortune and remorse to the survivor."

"Upon my soul, you are a strange man! Why trouble me with your prophecies and forebodings?"

"Because it is necessary to your happiness!

Because it becomes me to tell you of our danger now, rather than wait till my character will allow this tranquillity no longer!

"By quarrelling we shall but imitate the great mass of mankind, who could easily quarrel in our place. Let us do better. Let us show that we have the magnanimity to contemn petty misunderstandings. By thus judging we shall do ourselves most substantial honour. By a contrary conduct we shall merely present a comedy for the amusement of our acquaintance."

"Do you think so? there may be something in that. Damn me if I consent to be the jest of any man living."

"You are right, Mr. Tyrrel. Let us each act in a manner best calculated to excite respect. We neither of us wish to change roads; let us each suffer the other to pursue his own track unmolested. Be this our compact; and by mutual forbearance let us preserve mutual peace."

Saying this, Mr. Falkland offered his hand to Mr. Tyrrel, in token of fellowship. But the gesture was too significant. The wayward rustic, who seemed to have been somewhat impressed by what had preceded, taken as he now was by surprise, shrunk back. Mr. Falkland was again ready to take fire upon this new slight, but he checked himself.

"All this is very unaccountable," cried Mr. Tyrrel. "What the devil can have made you so forward, if you had not some sly purpose to answer, by which I am to be overreached?"

"My purpose," replied Mr. Falkland, "is a manly and an honest purpose. Why should you refuse a proposition dictated by reason and an equal regard to the interest of each?"

Mr. Tyrrel had had an opportunity for pause, and fell back into his habitual character.

"Well, sir, in all this I must own there is some frankness. Now I will return you like for like. It is no matter how I came by it, my temper is rough, and will not be controlled. Mayhap you may think it is a weakness, but I do not desire to see it altered. Till you came, I found myself very well: I liked my neighbours, and my neighbours humoured me. But now the case is entirely altered; and, as long as I cannot stir abroad without meeting with some mortification in which you are directly or remotely concerned, I am determined to hate you. Now, sir, if you will only go out of the county or the kingdom, to the devil, if you please, so as I may never hear of you any more, I will promise never to quarrel with you as long as I live. Your rhymes and your rebusses, your quirks and your conundrums, may then be every thing that is grand for what I care."

"Mr. Tyrrel, be reasonable! Might not I as well desire you to leave the county, as you desire me? I come to you, not as to a master, but an equal. In the society of men we must have something to endure, as well as to enjoy. No man must think that the world was made for him. Let us take things as we find them; and accommodate ourselves as we can to unavoidable circumstances."

"True, sir; all this is fine talking. But I return to my text: we are as God made us. I am neither a philosopher nor a poet, to set out upon a wild-goose chase of making myself a different man from what you find me. As for consequences, what must be must be. As we brew we must bake. And so, do you see? I shall not trouble myself about what is to be, but stand up to it with a stout heart when it comes. Only this I can tell you, that as long as

I find you thrust into my dish every day, I shall hate you as bad as senna and valerian. And damn me if I do not think I hate you the more for coming to-day in this pragmatical way, when nobody sent for you, on purpose to show how much wiser you are than all the world besides."

"Mr. Tyrrel, I have done. I foresaw consequences, and came as a friend. I had hoped that, by mutual explanation, we should have come to a better understanding. I am disappointed; but, perhaps, when you coolly reflect on what has passed, you will give me credit for my intentions, and think that my proposal was not an unreasonable one."

Having said this Mr. Falkland departed. Through the interview he, no doubt, conducted himself in a way that did him peculiar credit. Yet the warmth of his temper could not be entirely suppressed: and even when he was most exemplary, there was an apparent loftiness in his manner that was calculated to irritate; and the very grandeur with which he suppressed his passions operated indirectly as a taunt to his opponent. The interview was prompted by the noblest sentiments; but it unquestionably served to widen the breach it was intended to heal.

For Mr. Tyrrel, he had recourse to his old expedient, and unburthened the tumult of his thoughts to his confidential friend. "This," cried he, "is a new artifice of the fellow to prove his imagined superiority. We knew well enough that he had the gift of the gab. To be sure, if the world were to be governed by words, he would be in the right box. Oh yes, he had it all hollow! But what signifies prating? Business must be done in another guess way than that. I wonder what possessed me that I did not kick him! But that is all to come. This is only a new debt added to the

score, which he shall one day richly pay. This Falkland haunts me like a demon. I cannot wake but I think of him. I cannot sleep but I see him. He poisons all my pleasures. I should be glad to see him torn with tenter-hooks, and to grind his heartstrings with my teeth. I shall know no joy till I see him ruined. There may be some things right about him; but he is my perpetual torment. The thought of him hangs like a dead weight upon my heart, and I have a right to shake it off. Does he think I will feel all that I endure for nothing?"

In spite of the acerbity of Mr. Tyrrel's feelings, it is probable, however, he did some justice to his rival. He regarded him, indeed, with added dislike; but he no longer regarded him as a despicable foe. He avoided his encounter; he forbore to treat him with random hostility; he seemed to lie in wait for his victim, and to collect his venom for a mortal assault.

CHAPTER V.

It was not long after that a malignant distemper broke out in the neighbourhood, which proved fatal to many of the inhabitants, and was of unexampled rapidity in its effects. One of the first persons that was seized with it was Mr. Clare. It may be conceived what grief and alarm this incident spread through the vicinity. Mr. Clare was considered by them as something more than mortal. The equanimity of his behaviour, his unassuming carriage, his exuberant benevolence and goodness of heart, joined with his talents, his inoffensive wit, and the

comprehensiveness of his intelligence, made him the idol of all that knew him. In the scene of his rural retreat, at least, he had no enemy. All mourned the danger that now threatened him. He appeared to have had the prospect of long life, and of going down to his grave full of years and of honour. Perhaps these appearances were deceitful. Perhaps the intellectual efforts he had made, which were occasionally more sudden, violent, and unintermitted than a strict regard to health would have dictated, had laid the seed of future disease. But a sanguine observer would infallibly have predicted, that his temperate habits, activity of mind, and unabated cheerfulness, would be able even to keep death at bay for a time, and baffle the attacks of distemper, provided their approach were not uncommonly rapid and violent. The general affliction, therefore, was doubly pungent upon the present occasion.

But no one was so much affected as Mr. Falkland. Perhaps no man so well understood the value of the life that was now at stake. He immediately hastened to the spot; but he found some difficulty in gaining admission. Mr. Clare, aware of the infectious nature of his disease, had given directions that as few persons as possible should approach him. Mr. Falkland sent up his name. He was told that he was included in the general orders. He was not, however, of a temper to be easily repulsed; he persisted with obstinacy, and at length carried his point, being only reminded, in the first instance, to employ those precautions which experience has proved most effectual for counteracting infection.

He found Mr. Clare in his bed-chamber, but not in bed. He was sitting in his night-gown at a bureau near the window. His appearance was composed and cheerful, but death was in his

countenance. "I had a great inclination, Falkland," said he, "not to have suffered you to come in; and yet there is not a person in the world it would give me more pleasure to see. But, upon second thoughts, I believe there are few people that could run into a danger of this kind with a better prospect of escaping. In your case, at least, the garrison will not, I trust, be taken through the treachery of the commander. I cannot tell how it is that I, who can preach wisdom to you, have myself been caught. But do not be discouraged by my example. I had no notice of my danger, or I would have acquitted myself better."

Mr. Falkland, having once established himself in the apartment of his friend, would upon no terms consent to retire. Mr. Clare considered that there was perhaps less danger in this choice than in the frequent change from the extremes of a pure to a tainted air, and desisted from expostulation. "Falkland," said he, "when you came in, I had just finished making my will. I was not pleased with what I had formerly drawn up upon that subject, and I did not choose in my present situation to call in an attorney. In fact, it would be strange if a man of sense, with pure and direct intentions, should not be able to perform such a function for himself."

Mr. Clare continued to act in the same easy and disengaged manner as in perfect health. To judge from the cheerfulness of his tone and the firmness of his manner, the thought would never once have occurred that he was dying. He walked, he reasoned, he jested, in a way that argued the most perfect self-possession. But his appearance changed perceptibly for the worse every quarter of an hour. Mr. Falkland kept his eye perpetually fixed upon him, with mingled sentiments of anxiety and admiration.

"Falkland," said he, after having appeared for a short period absorbed in thought, "I feel that I am dying. This is a strange distemper of mine. Yesterday I seemed in perfect health, and to-morrow I shall be an insensible corpse. How curious is the line that separates life and death to mortal men! To be at one moment active, gay, penetrating, with stores of knowledge at one's command, capable of delighting, instructing, and animating mankind, and the next, lifeless and loathsome, an encumbrance upon the face of the earth! Such is the history of many men, and such will be mine.

"I feel as if I had yet much to do in the world; but it will not be. I must be contented with what is past. It is in vain that I muster all my spirits to my heart. The enemy is too mighty and too merciless for me; he will not give me time so much as to breathe. These things are not yet at least in our power: they are parts of a great series that is perpetually flowing. The general welfare, the great business of the universe, will go on, though I bear no further share in promoting it. That task is reserved for younger strengths, for you, Falkland, and such as you. We should be contemptible indeed if the prospect of human improvement did not yield us a pure and perfect delight, independently of the question of our existing to partake of it. Mankind would have little to envy to future ages, if they had all enjoyed a serenity as perfect as mine has been for the latter half of my existence."

Mr. Clare sat up through the whole day, indulging himself in easy and cheerful exertions, which were perhaps better calculated to refresh and invigorate the frame than if he had sought repose in its direct form. Now and then he was visited with a sudden pang; but it was no sooner felt, than he seemed to rise above it, and smiled at the impotence of these

attacks. They might destroy him, but they could not disturb. Three or four times he was bedewed with profuse sweats; and these again were succeeded by an extreme dryness and burning heat of the skin. He was next covered with small livid spots: symptoms of shivering followed, but these he drove away with a determined resolution. He then became tranquil and composed, and after some time decided to go to bed, it being already night. "Falkland," said he, pressing his hand, "the task of dying is not so difficult as some imagine. When one looks back from the brink of it, one wonders that so total a subversion can take place at so easy a price."

He had now been some time in bed, and, as every thing was still, Mr. Falkland hoped that he slept; but in that he was mistaken. Presently Mr. Clare threw back the curtain, and looked in the countenance of his friend. "I cannot sleep," said he. "No, if I could sleep, it would be the same thing as to recover; and I am destined to have the worst in this battle.

"Falkland, I have been thinking about you. I do not know any one whose future usefulness I contemplate with greater hope. Take care of yourself. Do not let the world be defrauded of your virtues. I am acquainted with your weakness as well as your strength. You have an impetuosity, and an impatience of imagined dishonour, that, if once set wrong, may make you as eminently mischievous as you will otherwise be useful. Think seriously of exterminating this error!

"But if I cannot, in the brief expostulation my present situation will allow, produce this desirable change in you, there is at least one thing I can do. I can put you upon your guard against a mischief I foresee to be imminent. Beware of Mr. Tyrrel.

Do not commit the mistake of despising him as an unequal opponent. Petty causes may produce great mischiefs. Mr. Tyrrel is boisterous, rugged, and unfeeling; and you are too passionate, too acutely sensible of injury. It would be truly to be lamented, if a man so inferior, so utterly unworthy to be compared with you, should be capable of changing your whole history into misery and guilt. I have a painful presentiment upon my heart, as if something dreadful would reach you from that quarter. Think of this. I exact no promise from you. I would not shackle you with the fetters of superstition; I would have you governed by justice and reason."

Mr. Falkland was deeply affected with this expostulation. His sense of the generous attention of Mr. Clare, at such a moment, was so great as almost to deprive him of utterance. He spoke in short sentences, and with visible effort. "I will behave better," replied he. "Never fear me! Your admonitions shall not be thrown away upon me."

Mr. Clare adverted to another subject. "I have made you my executor; you will not refuse me this last office of friendship. It is but a short time that I have had the happiness of knowing you; but in that short time I have examined you well, and seen you thoroughly. Do not disappoint the sanguine hope I have entertained!

"I have left some legacies. My former connexions, while I lived amid the busy haunts of men, as many of them as were intimate, are all of them dear to me. I have not had time to summon them about me upon the present occasion, nor did I desire it. The remembrance of me will, I hope, answer a better purpose than such as are usually thought of on similar occasions."

Mr Clare, having thus unburthened his mind,

spoke no more for several hours. Towards morning Mr. Falkland quietly withdrew the curtain, and looked at the dying man. His eyes were open, and were now gently turned towards his young friend. His countenance was sunk, and of a deathlike appearance. "I hope you are better," said Falkland in a half-whisper, as if afraid of disturbing him. Mr. Clare drew his hand from the bedclothes, and stretched it forward; Mr. Falkland advanced, and took hold of it. "Much better," said Mr. Clare, in a voice inward and hardly articulate; "the struggle is now over; I have finished my part; farewell! remember!" These were his last words. He lived still a few hours; his lips were sometimes seen to move; he expired without a groan.

Mr. Falkland had witnessed the scene with much anxiety. His hopes of a favourable crisis, and his fear of disturbing the last moments of his friend, had held him dumb. For the last half-hour he had stood up, with his eyes intently fixed upon Mr. Clare. He witnessed the last gasp, the last little convulsive motion of the frame. He continued to look; he sometimes imagined that he saw life renewed. At length he could deceive himself no longer, and exclaimed, with a distracted accent, "And is this all?" He would have thrown himself upon the body of his friend; the attendants withheld, and would have forced him into another apartment. But he struggled from them, and hung fondly over the bed. "Is this the end of genius, virtue, and excellence? Is the luminary of the world thus for ever gone? Oh, yesterday! yesterday! Clare, why could not I have died in your stead? Dreadful moment! Irreparable loss! Lost in the very maturity and vigour of his mind! Cut off from a usefulness ten thousand times greater than any he had already exhibited! Oh, his was a mind to have

instructed sages, and guided the moral world! This is all we have left of him! The eloquence of those lips is gone! The incessant activity of that heart is still! The best and wisest of men is gone, and the world is insensible of its loss!"

Mr. Tyrrel heard the intelligence of Mr. Clare's death with emotion, but of a different kind. He avowed that he had not forgiven him his partial attachment to Mr. Falkland, and therefore could not recall his remembrance with kindness. But if he could have overlooked his past injustice, sufficient care, it seems, was taken to keep alive his resentment. "Falkland, forsooth, attended him on his deathbed, as if nobody else were worthy of his confidential communications." But what was worst of all was this executorship. "In every thing this pragmatical rascal throws me behind. Contemptible wretch, that has nothing of the man about him! Must he perpetually trample upon his betters? Is everybody incapable of saying what kind of stuff a man is made of? caught with mere outside? choosing the flimsy before the substantial? And upon his deathbed too!—[Mr. Tyrrel, with his uncultivated brutality, mixed, as usually happens, certain rude notions of religion.]—Sure the sense of his situation might have shamed him. Poor wretch! his soul has a great deal to answer for. He has made my pillow uneasy; and, whatever may be the consequences, we have to thank him for them."

The death of Mr. Clare removed the person who could most effectually have moderated the animosities of the contending parties, and took away the great operative check upon the excesses of Mr. Tyrrel. This rustic tyrant had been held in involuntary restraint by the intellectual ascendency of his celebrated neighbour; and, notwithstanding the general ferocity of his temper, he did not appear till

lately to have entertained a hatred against him. In the short time that had elapsed from the period in which Mr. Clare had fixed his residence in the neighbourhood to that of the arrival of Mr. Falkland from the Continent, the conduct of Mr. Tyrrel had even shown tokens of improvement. He would indeed have been better satisfied not to have had even this intruder into a circle where he had been accustomed to reign. But with Mr. Clare he could have no rivalship; the venerable character of Mr. Clare disposed him to submission: this great man seemed to have survived all the acrimony of contention, and all the jealous subtleties of a mistaken honour.

The effects of Mr. Clare's suavity, however, so far as related to Mr. Tyrrel, had been in a certain degree suspended by considerations of rivalship between this gentleman and Mr. Falkland. And, now that the influence of Mr. Clare's presence and virtues was entirely removed, Mr. Tyrrel's temper broke out into more criminal excesses than ever. The added gloom which Mr. Falkland's neighbourhood inspired overflowed upon all his connexions; and the new examples of his sullenness and tyranny which every day afforded reflected back upon this accumulated and portentous feud.

CHAPTER VI.

The consequences of all this speedily manifested themselves. The very next incident in the story was in some degree decisive of the catastrophe. Hitherto I have spoken only of preliminary matters, seemingly unconnected with each other, though leading to that state of mind in both parties which had such fatal effects. But all that remains is rapid and tremendous. The death-dealing mischief advances with an accelerated motion, appearing to defy human wisdom and strength to obstruct its operation.

The vices of Mr. Tyrrel, in their present state of augmentation, were peculiarly exercised upon his domestics and dependants. But the principal sufferer was the young lady mentioned on a former occasion, the orphan daughter of his father's sister. Miss Melville's mother had married imprudently, or rather unfortunately, against the consent of her relations, all of whom had agreed to withdraw their countenance from her in consequence of that precipitate step. Her husband had turned out to be no better than an adventurer; had spent her fortune, which, in consequence of the irreconcilableness of her family, was less than he expected, and had broken her heart. Her infant daughter was left without any resource. In this situation the representations of the people with whom she happened to be placed prevailed upon Mrs. Tyrrel, the mother of the squire, to receive her into her family. In equity, perhaps, she was entitled to that portion of

fortune which her mother had forfeited by her imprudence, and which had gone to swell the property of the male representative. But this idea had never entered into the conceptions of either mother or son. Mrs. Tyrrel conceived that she performed an act of the most exalted benevolence in admitting Miss Emily into a sort of equivocal situation, which was neither precisely that of a domestic, nor yet marked with the treatment that might seem due to one of the family.

She had not, however, at first been sensible of all the mortifications that might have been expected from her condition. Mrs. Tyrrel, though proud and imperious, was not ill-natured. The female who lived in the family in the capacity of housekeeper was a person who had seen better days, and whose disposition was extremely upright and amiable. She early contracted a friendship for the little Emily, who was indeed for the most part committed to her care. Emily, on her side, fully repaid the affection of her instructress, and learned with great docility the few accomplishments Mrs. Jakeman was able to communicate. But, most of all, she imbibed her cheerful and artless temper, that extracted the agreeable and encouraging from all events, and prompted her to communicate her sentiments, which were never of the cynical cast, without modification or disguise. Besides the advantages Emily derived from Mrs. Jakeman, she was permitted to take lessons from the masters who were employed at Tyrrel Place for the instruction of her cousin; and, indeed, as the young gentleman was most frequently indisposed to attend to them, they would commonly have had nothing to do, had it not been for the fortunate presence of Miss Melville. Mrs. Tyrrel therefore encouraged the studies of Emily on that score; in addition to which she imagined that this

living exhibition of instruction might operate as an indirect allurement to her darling Barnabas, the only species of motive she would suffer to be presented. Force she absolutely forbade; and of the intrinsic allurements of literature and knowledge she had no conception.

Emily, as she grew up, displayed an uncommon degree of sensibility, which under her circumstances would have been a source of perpetual dissatisfaction, had it not been qualified with an extreme sweetness and easiness of temper. She was far from being entitled to the appellation of a beauty. Her person was *petite* and trivial; her complexion savoured of the *brunette;* and her face was marked with the small-pox, sufficiently to destroy its evenness and polish, though not enough to destroy its expression. But though her appearance was not beautiful, it did not fail to be in a high degree engaging. Her complexion was at once healthful and delicate; her long dark eyebrows adapted themselves with facility to the various conceptions of her mind; and her looks bore the united impression of an active discernment and a good-humoured frankness. The instruction she had received, as it was entirely of a casual nature, exempted her from the evils of untutored ignorance, but not from a sort of native wildness, arguing a mind incapable of guile itself, or of suspecting it in others. She amused, without seeming conscious of the refined sense which her observations contained; or rather, having never been debauched with applause, she set light by her own qualifications, and talked from the pure gayety of a youthful heart acting upon the stores of a just understanding, and not with any expectation of being distinguished and admired.

The death of her aunt made very little change in her situation. This prudent lady, who would

have thought it little less than sacrilege to have considered Miss Melville as a branch of the stock of the Tyrrels, took no more notice of her in her will than barely putting her down for one hundred pounds in a catalogue of legacies to her servants. She had never been admitted into the intimacy and confidence of Mrs. Tyrrel; and the young squire, now that she was left under his sole protection, seemed inclined to treat her with even more liberality than his mother had done. He had seen her grow up under his eye, and therefore, though there were but six years difference in their ages, he felt a kind of paternal interest in her welfare. Habit had rendered her in a manner necessary to him, and in every recess from the occupations of the field and the pleasures of the table, he found himself solitary and forlorn without the society of Miss Melville. Nearness of kindred, and Emily's want of personal beauty, prevented him from ever looking on her with the eyes of desire. Her accomplishments were chiefly of the customary and superficial kind, dancing and music. Her skill in the first led him sometimes to indulge her with a vacant corner in his carriage, when he went to the neighbouring assembly; and, in whatever light he might himself think proper to regard her, he would have imagined his chambermaid, introduced by him, entitled to an undoubted place in the most splendid circle. Her musical talents were frequently employed for his amusement. She had the honour occasionally of playing him to sleep after the fatigues of the chase; and, as he had some relish for harmonious sounds, she was frequently able to sooth him by their means from the perturbations of which his gloomy disposition was so eminently a slave. Upon the whole, she might be considered as in some sort his favourite. She was the mediator to whom his tenants and domes-

tics, when they had incurred his displeasure, were accustomed to apply; the privileged companion, that could approach this lion with impunity in the midst of his roarings. She spoke to him without fear; her solicitations were always good-natured and disinterested; and when he repulsed her, he disarmed himself of half his terrors, and was contented to smile at her presumption.

Such had been for some years the situation of Miss Melville. Its precariousness had been beguiled by the uncommon forbearance with which she was treated by her savage protector. But his disposition, always brutal, had acquired a gradual accession of ferocity since the settlement of Mr. Falkland in his neighbourhood. He now frequently forgot the gentleness with which he had been accustomed to treat his good-natured cousin. Her little playful arts were not always successful in softening his rage; and he would sometimes turn upon her blandishments with an impatient sternness that made her tremble. The careless ease of her disposition, however, soon effaced these impressions, and she fell without variation into her old habits. A circumstance occurred about this time which gave peculiar strength to the acrimony of Mr. Tyrrel, and ultimately brought to its close the felicity that Miss Melville, in spite of the frowns of fortune, had hitherto enjoyed. Emily was exactly seventeen when Mr. Falkland returned from the Continent. At this age she was peculiarly susceptible of the charms of beauty, grace, and moral excellence, when united in a person of the other sex. She was imprudent, precisely because her own heart was incapable of guile. She had never yet felt the sting of the poverty to which she was condemned, and had not reflected on the insuperable distance that custom has placed between the opulent and the poorer

classes of the community. She beheld Mr. Falkland, whenever he was thrown in her way at any of the public meetings, with admiration; and, without having precisely explained to herself the sentiments she indulged, her eyes followed him through all the changes of the scene with eagerness and impatience. She did not see him, as the rest of the assembly did, born to one of the amplest estates in the county, and qualified to assert his title to the richest heiress. She thought only of Falkland, with those advantages which were most intimately his own, and of which no persecution of adverse fortune had the ability to deprive him. In a word, she was transported when he was present; he was the perpetual subject of her reveries and her dreams; but his image excited no sentiment in her mind beyond that of the immediate pleasure she took in his idea.

The notice Mr. Falkland bestowed on her in return appeared sufficiently encouraging to a mind so full of prepossession as that of Emily. There was a particular complacency in his looks when directed towards her. He had said in a company, of which one of the persons present repeated his remarks to Miss Melville, that she appeared to him amiable and interesting; that he felt for her unprovided and destitute situation; and that he should have been glad to be more particular in his attention to her, had he not been apprehensive of doing her a prejudice in the suspicious mind of Mr. Tyrrel. All this she considered as the ravishing condescension of a superior nature; for, if she did not recollect with sufficient assiduity his gifts of fortune, she was, on the other hand, filled with reverence for his unrivalled accomplishments. But, while she thus seemingly disclaimed all comparison between Mr. Falkland and herself, she probably cherished a con-

fused feeling as if some event, that was yet in the womb of fate, might reconcile things apparently the most incompatible. Fraught with these prepossessions, the civilities that had once or twice occurred in the bustle of a public circle, the restoring her fan which she had dropped, or the disembarrassing her of an empty teacup, made her heart palpitate, and gave birth to the wildest chimeras in her deluded imagination.

About this time an event happened that helped to give a precise determination to the fluctuations of Miss Melville's mind. One evening, a short time after the death of Mr. Clare, Mr. Falkland had been at the house of his deceased friend in his quality of executor, and, by some accidents of little intrinsic importance, had been detained three or four hours later than he expected. He did not set out upon his return till two o'clock in the morning. At this time, in a situation so remote from the metropolis, every thing is as silent as it would be in a region wholly uninhabited. The moon shone bright; and the objects around being marked with strong variations of light and shade, gave a kind of sacred solemnity to the scene. Mr. Falkland had taken Collins with him, the business to be settled at Mr. Clare's being in some respects similar to that to which this faithful domestic had been accustomed in the routine of his ordinary service. They had entered into some conversation, for Mr. Falkland was not then in the habit of obliging the persons about him by formality and reserve to recollect who he was. The attractive solemnity of the scene made him break off the talk somewhat abruptly, that he might enjoy it without interruption. They had not ridden far before a hollow wind seemed to rise at a distance, and they could hear the hoarse roarings of the sea. Presently the sky on one side assumed the appear-

ance of a reddish brown, and a sudden angle in the road placed this phenomenon directly before them. As they proceeded it became more distinct, and it was at length sufficiently visible that it was occasioned by a fire. Mr. Falkland put spurs to his horse; and, as they approached, the object presented every instant a more alarming appearance. The flames ascended with fierceness; they embraced a large portion of the horizon; and, as they carried up with them numerous little fragments of the materials that fed them, impregnated with fire, and of an extremely bright and luminous colour, they presented some feeble image of the tremendous eruption of a volcano.

The flames proceeded from a village directly in their road. There were eight or ten houses already on fire, and the whole seemed to be threatened with immediate destruction. The inhabitants were in the utmost consternation, having had no previous experience of a similar calamity. They conveyed with haste their moveables and furniture into the adjoining fields. When any of them had effected this as far as it could be attempted with safety, they were unable to conceive any further remedy, but stood wringing their hands, and contemplating the ravages of the fire in an agony of powerless despair. The water that could be procured, in any mode practised in that place, was but as a drop contending with an element in arms. The wind in the mean time was rising, and the flames spread with more and more rapidity.

Mr. Falkland contemplated this scene for a few moments, as if ruminating with himself as to what could be done. He then directed some of the country people about him to pull down a house, next to one that was wholly on fire, but which itself was yet untouched. They seemed astonished at a direction which implied a voluntary destruction of

property, and considered the task as too much in the heart of the danger to be undertaken. Observing that they were motionless, he dismounted from his horse, and called upon them in an authoritative voice to follow him. He ascended the house in an instant, and presently appeared upon the top of it, as if in the midst of the flames. Having, with the assistance of two or three of the persons that followed him most closely, and who by this time had supplied themselves with whatever tools came next to hand, loosened the support of a stack of chimneys, he pushed them headlong into the midst of the fire. He passed and repassed along the roof; and, having set people to work in all parts, descended in order to see what could be done in any other quarter.

At this moment an elderly woman burst from the midst of a house in flames: the utmost consternation was painted in her looks; and, as soon as she could recollect herself enough to have a proper idea of her situation, the subject of her anxiety seemed, in an instant, to be totally changed. "Where is my child?" cried she, and cast an anxious and piercing look among the surrounding crowd. "Oh, she is lost! she is in the midst of flames! Save her! save her! my child!" She filled the air with heart-rending shrieks. She turned towards the house. The people that were near endeavoured to prevent her, but she shook them off in a moment. She entered the passage; viewed the hideous ruin; and was then going to plunge into the blazing staircase. Mr. Falkland saw, pursued, and seized her by the arm; it was Mrs. Jakeman. "Stop!" he cried, with a voice of grand yet benevolent authority. "Remain you in the street! I will seek, and will save her!" Mrs. Jakeman obeyed. He charged the persons who were near to detain her; he in-

quired which was the apartment of Emily. Mrs. Jakeman was upon a visit to a sister who lived in the village, and had brought Emily along with her. Mr. Falkland ascended a neighbouring house, and entered that in which Emily was by a window in the roof.

He found her already awaked from her sleep; and, becoming sensible of her danger, she had that instant wrapped a loose gown round her. Such is the almost irresistible result of feminine habits; but, having done this, she examined the surrounding objects with the wildness of despair. Mr. Falkland entered the chamber. She flew into his arms with the rapidity of lightning. She embraced and clung to him, with an impulse that did not wait to consult the dictates of her understanding. Her emotions were indescribable. In a few short moments she had lived an age in love. In two minutes Mr. Falkland was again in the street with his lovely half-naked burthen in his arms. Having restored her to her affectionate protector, snatched from the immediate grasp of death, from which, if he had not, none would have delivered her, he returned to his former task. By his presence of mind, by his indefatigable humanity and incessant exertions, he saved three-fourths of the village from destruction.

The conflagration being at length abated, he sought again Mrs. Jakeman and Emily, who by this time had obtained a substitute for the garments she had lost in the fire. He displayed the tenderest solicitude for the young lady's safety, and directed Collins to go with as much speed as he could, and send his chariot to attend her. More than an hour elapsed in this interval. Miss Melville had never seen so much of Mr. Falkland upon any former occasion; and the spectacle of such humanity, delicacy, firmness, and justice in the form of man, as he crowded

into this small space, was altogether new to her, and in the highest degree fascinating. She had a confused feeling as if there had been something indecorous in her behaviour or appearance when Mr. Falkland had appeared to her relief; and this combined with her other emotions to render the whole critical and intoxicating.

Emily no sooner arrived at the family mansion than Mr. Tyrrel ran out to receive her. He had just heard of the melancholy accident that had taken place at the village, and was terrified for the safety of his good-humoured cousin. He displayed those unpremeditated emotions which are common to almost every individual of the human race. He was greatly shocked at the suspicion that Emily might possibly have become the victim of a catastrophe which had thus broken out in the dead of night. His sensations were of the most pleasing sort when he folded her in his arms, and fearful apprehension was instantaneously converted into joyous certainty. Emily no sooner entered under the well-known roof than her spirits were brisk, and her tongue incessant in describing her danger and her deliverance. Mr. Tyrrel had formerly been tortured with the innocent eulogiums she pronounced of Mr. Falkland. But these were tameness itself, compared with the rich and various eloquence that now flowed from her lips. Love had not the same effect upon her, especially at the present moment, which it would have had upon a person instructed to feign a blush, and inured to a consciousness of wrong. She described his activity and resources, the promptitude with which every thing was conceived, and the cautious but daring wisdom with which it was executed. All was fairy-land and enchantment in the tenor of her artless tale; you saw a beneficent genius surveying and controlling

the whole, but could have no notion of any human means by which his purposes were effected.

Mr. Tyrrel listened for a while to these innocent effusions with patience; he could even bear to hear the man applauded by whom he had just obtained so considerable a benefit. But the theme by amplification became nauseous, and he at length with some roughness put an end to the tale. Probably, upon recollection, it appeared still more insolent and intolerable than while it was passing; the sensation of gratitude wore off, but the hyperbolical praise that had been bestowed still haunted his memory, and sounded in his ear;—Emily had entered into the confederacy that disturbed his repose. For herself, she was wholly unconscious of offence, and upon every occasion quoted Mr. Falkland as the model of elegant manners and true wisdom. She was a total stranger to dissimulation; and she could not conceive that any one beheld the subject of her admiration with less partiality than herself. Her artless love became more fervent than ever. She flattered herself that nothing less than a reciprocal passion could have prompted Mr. Falkland to the desperate attempt of saving her from the flames; and she trusted that this passion would speedily declare itself, as well as induce the object of her adoration to overlook her comparative unworthiness.

Mr. Tyrrel endeavoured at first with some moderation to check Miss Melville in her applauses, and to convince her by various tokens that the subject was disagreeable to him. He was accustomed to treat her with kindness. Emily, on her part, was disposed to yield an unreluctant obedience, and therefore it was not difficult to restrain her. But upon the very next occasion her favourite topic would force its way to her lips. Her obedience

was the acquiescence of a frank and benevolent heart; but it was the most difficult thing in the world to inspire her with fear. Conscious herself that she would not hurt a worm, she could not conceive that any one would harbour cruelty and rancour against her. Her temper had preserved her from obstinate contention with the persons under whose protection she was placed; and, as her compliance was unhesitating, she had no experience of a severe and rigorous treatment. As Mr. Tyrrel's objection to the very name of Falkland became more palpable and uniform, Miss Melville increased in her precaution. She would stop herself in the half-pronounced sentences that were meant to his praise. This circumstance had necessarily an ungracious effect; it was a cutting satire upon the imbecility of her kinsman. Upon these occasions she would sometimes venture upon a good-humoured expostulation:—"Dear sir! well, I wonder how you can be so ill-natured! I am sure Mr. Falkland would do you any good office in the world:"—till she was checked by some gesture of impatience and fierceness.

At length she wholly conquered her heedlessness and inattention. But it was too late. Mr. Tyrrel already suspected the existence of that passion which she had thoughtlessly imbibed. His imagination, ingenious in torment, suggested to him all the different openings in conversation, in which she would have introduced the praise of Mr. Falkland, had she not been placed under this unnatural restraint. Her present reserve upon the subject was even more insufferable than her former loquacity. All his kindness for this unhappy orphan gradually subsided. Her partiality for the man who was the object of his unbounded abhorrence appeared to him as the last persecution of a malicious destiny.

He figured himself as about to be deserted by every creature in human form; all men, under the influence of a fatal enchantment, approving only what was sophisticated and artificial, and holding the rude and genuine offspring of nature in mortal antipathy. Impressed with these gloomy presages, he saw Miss Melville with no sentiments but those of rancorous aversion; and, accustomed as he was to the uncontrolled indulgence of his propensities, he determined to wreak upon her a signal revenge.

CHAPTER VII.

Mr. Tyrrel consulted his old confidant respecting the plan he should pursue; who, sympathizing as he did in the brutality and insolence of his friend, had no idea that an insignificant girl, without either wealth or beauty, ought to be allowed for a moment to stand in the way of the gratifications of a man of Mr. Tyrrel's importance. The first idea of her now unrelenting kinsman was to thrust her from his doors, and leave her to seek her bread as she could. But he was conscious that this proceeding would involve him in considerable obloquy; and he at length fixed upon a scheme which, at the same time that he believed it would sufficiently shelter his reputation, would much more certainly secure her mortification and punishment.

For this purpose he fixed upon a young man of twenty, the son of one Grimes, who occupied a small farm, the property of his confidant. This fellow he resolved to impose as a husband on Miss

Melville, who, he shrewdly suspected, guided by the tender sentiments she had unfortunately conceived for Mr. Falkland, would listen with reluctance to any matrimonial proposal. Grimes he selected as being in all respects the diametrical reverse of Mr. Falkland. He was not precisely a lad of vicious propensities, but in an inconceivable degree boorish and uncouth. His complexion was scarcely human; his features were coarse, and strangely discordant and disjointed from each other. His lips were thick, and the tone of his voice broad and unmodulated. His legs were of equal size from one end to the other, and his feet misshapen and clumsy. He had nothing spiteful or malicious in his disposition, but he was a total stranger to tenderness; he could not feel for those refinements in others of which he had no experience in himself. He was an expert boxer: his inclination led him to such amusements as were most boisterous; and he delighted in a sort of manual sarcasm, which he could not conceive to be very injurious, as it left no traces behind it. His general manners were noisy and obstreperous; inattentive to others; and obstinate and unyielding, not from any cruelty and ruggedness of temper, but from an incapacity to conceive those finer feelings that make so large a part of the history of persons who are cast in a gentler mould.

Such was the uncouth and half-civilized animal which the industrious malice of Mr. Tyrrel fixed upon as most happily adapted to his purpose. Emily had hitherto been in an unusual degree exempted from the oppression of despotism. Her happy insignificance had served her as a protection. No one thought it worth his while to fetter her with those numerous petty restrictions with which the daughters of opulence are commonly tormented. She had the wildness, as well as the delicate frame,

of the bird that warbles unmolested in its native groves.

When, therefore, she heard from her kinsman the proposal of Mr. Grimes for a husband, she was for a moment silent with astonishment at so unexpected a suggestion. But as soon as she recovered her speech, she replied, "No, sir, I do not want a husband."

"You do! Are not you always hankering after the men? It is high time you should be settled."

"Mr. Grimes! No, indeed! when I do have a husband, it shall not be such a man as Mr. Grimes neither."

"Be silent! How dare you give yourself such unaccountable liberties?"

"Lord, I wonder what I should do with him. You might as well give me your great rough water-dog, and bid me make him a silk cushion to lie in my dressing-room. Besides, sir, Grimes is a common labouring man, and I am sure I have always heard my aunt say that ours is a very great family."

"It is a lie! Our family! have you the impudence to think yourself one of our family?"

"Why, sir, was not your grandpapa my grandpapa? How then can we be of a different family?"

"From the strongest reason in the world. You are the daughter of a rascally Scotchman, who spent every shilling of my aunt Lucy's fortune, and left you a beggar. You have got a hundred pounds, and Grimes's father promises to give him as much. How dare you look down upon your equals?"

"Indeed, sir, I am not proud. But, indeed, and indeed, I can never love Mr. Grimes. I am very happy as I am: why should I be married?"

"Silence your prating! Grimes will be here this afternoon. Look that you behave well to him. If

you do not, he will remember and repay, when you least like it."

"Nay, I am sure, sir—you are not in earnest?"

"Not in earnest! Damn me, but we will see that. I can tell what you would be at. You had rather be Mr. Falkland's miss, than the wife of a plain downright yeoman. But I shall take care of you.—Ay, this comes of indulgence. You must be taken down, miss. You must be taught the difference between high-flown notions and realities. Mayhap you may take it a little in dudgeon or so; but never mind that. Pride always wants a little smarting. If you should be brought to shame, it is I that shall bear the blame of it."

The tone in which Mr. Tyrrel spoke was so different from any thing to which Miss Melville had been accustomed, that she felt herself wholly unable to determine what construction to put upon it. Sometimes he thought she had really formed a plan for imposing upon her a condition that she could not bear so much as to think of. But presently she rejected this idea as an unworthy imputation upon her kinsman, and concluded that it was only his way, and that all he meant was to try her. To be resolved, however, she determined to consult her constant adviser, Mrs. Jakeman, and accordingly repeated to her what had passed. Mrs. Jakeman saw the whole in a very different light from that in which Emily had conceived it, and trembled for the future peace of her beloved ward.

"Lord bless me, my dear mamma!" cried Emily (this was the appellation she delighted to bestow upon the good housekeeper), "you cannot think so? But I do not care. I will never marry Grimes, happen what will."

"But how will you help yourself? My master will oblige you."

"Nay, now you think you are talking to a child indeed. It is I am to have the man, not Mr. Tyrrel. Do you think I will let anybody else choose a husband for me? I am not such a fool as that neither."

"Ah, Emily! you little know the disadvantages of your situation. Your cousin is a violent man, and perhaps will turn you out of doors, if you oppose him."

"Oh, mamma! it is very wicked of you to say so. I am sure Mr. Tyrrel is a very good man, though he be a little cross now and then. He knows very well that I am right to have a will of my own in such a thing as this, and nobody is punished for doing what is right."

"Nobody ought, my dear child. But there are very wicked and tyrannical men in the world."

"Well, well, I will never believe my cousin is one of these."

"I hope he is not."

"And if he were, what then? To be sure I should be very sorry to make him angry."

"What then? Why then my poor Emily would be a beggar! Do you think I could bear to see that?"

"No, no. Mr. Tyrrel has just told me that I have a hundred pounds. But if I had no fortune, is not that the case with a thousand other folks? Why should I grieve, for what they bear and are merry? Do not make yourself uneasy, mamma. I am determined that I will do any thing rather than marry Grimes; that is what I will."

Mrs. Jakeman could not bear the uneasy state of suspense in which this conversation left her mind, and went immediately to the squire to have her doubts resolved. The manner in which she proposed the question sufficiently indicated the judgment she had formed of the match.

"That is true," said Mr. Tyrrel, "I wanted to speak to you about this affair. The girl has got unaccountable notions in her head, that will be the ruin of her. You perhaps can tell where she had them. But, be that as it will, it is high time something should be done. The shortest way is the best, and to keep things well while they are well. In short, I am determined she shall marry this lad; you do not know any harm of him, do you? You have a good deal of influence with her, and I desire, do you see, that you will employ it to lead her to her good; you had best, I can tell you. She is a pert vixen! By-and-by she would become a whore, and at last no better than a common trull, and rot upon a dunghill, if I were not at all these pains to save her from destruction. I would make her an honest farmer's wife, and my pretty miss cannot bear the thoughts of it!"

In the afternoon Grimes came according to appointment, and was left alone with the young lady.

"Well, miss," said he, "it seems the squire has a mind to make us man and wife. For my part, I cannot say I should have thought of it. But, being as how the squire has broke the ice, if so be as you like of the match, why I am your man. Speak the word; a nod is as good as a wink to a blind horse."

Emily was already sufficiently mortified at the unexpected proposal of Mr. Tyrrel. She was confounded at the novelty of the situation, and still more at the uncultivated rudeness of her lover, which even exceeded her expectation. This confusion was interpreted by Grimes into diffidence.

"Come, come, never be cast down. Put a good face upon it. What though? My first sweetheart was Bet Butterfield; but what of that? What must be must be; grief will never fill the belly. She

was a fine strapping wench, that is the truth of it! five foot ten inches, and as stout as a trooper. Oh, she would do a power of work! Up early and down late; milked ten cows with her own hands; on with her cardinal, rode to market between her panniers, fair weather and foul, hail, blow, or snow. It would have done your heart good to have seen her frost-bitten cheeks, as red as a beefen from her own orchard! Ah! she was a maid of mettle; would romp with the harvestmen, slap one upon the back, wrestle with another, and had a rogue's trick and a joke for all round. Poor girl! she broke her neck down-stairs at a christening. To be sure I shall never meet her fellow! But never you mind that; I do not doubt that I shall find more in you upon further acquaintance. As coy and bashful as you seem, I dare say you are rogue enough at bottom. When I have touzled and rumpled you a little, we shall see. I am no chicken, miss, whatever you may think. I know what is what, and can see as far into a millstone as another. Ay, ay; you will come to. The fish will snap at the bait, never doubt it. Yes, yes, we shall rub on main well together."

Emily by this time had in some degree mustered up her spirits, and began, though with hesitation, to thank Mr. Grimes for his good opinion, but to confess that she could never be brought to favour his addresses. She therefore entreated him to desist from all further application. This remonstrance on her part would have become more intelligible, had it not been for his boisterous manners and extravagant cheerfulness, which indisposed him to silence, and made him suppose that at half a word he had sufficient intimation of another's meaning. Mr. Tyrrel, in the mean time, was too impatient not to interrupt the scene before they could have time to proceed far

in explanation: and he was studious in the sequel to prevent the young folks from being too intimately acquainted with each other's inclinations. Grimes, of consequence, attributed the reluctance of Miss Melville to maiden coyness and the skittish shyness of an unbroken filly. Indeed, had it been otherwise, it is not probable that it would have made any effectual impression upon him; as he was always accustomed to consider women as made for the recreation of the men, and to exclaim against the weakness of people who taught them to imagine they were to judge for themselves.

As the suit proceeded, and Miss Melville saw more of her new admirer, her antipathy increased. But, though her character was unspoiled by those false wants, which frequently make people of family miserable while they have every thing that nature requires within their reach, yet she had been little used to opposition, and was terrified at the growing sternness of her kinsman. Sometimes she thought of flying from a house which was now become her dungeon; but the habits of her youth, and her ignorance of the world, made her shrink from this project, when she contemplated it more nearly. Mrs. Jakeman, indeed, could not think with patience of young Grimes as a husband for her darling Emily; but her prudence determined her to resist with all her might the idea on the part of the young lady of proceeding to extremities. She could not believe that Mr. Tyrrel would persist in such an unaccountable persecution, and she exhorted Miss Melville to forget for a moment the unaffected independence of her character, and pathetically to deprecate her cousin's obstinacy. She had great confidence in the ingenuous eloquence of her ward. Mrs. Jakeman did not know what was passing in the breast of the tyrant.

Miss Melville complied with the suggestion of her mamma. One morning, immediately after breakfast, she went to her harpsichord, and played one after another several of those airs that were most the favourites of Mr. Tyrrell. Mrs. Jakeman had retired; the servants were gone to their respective employments. Mr. Tyrrel would have gone also; his mind was untuned, and he did not take the pleasure he had been accustomed to take in the musical performances of Emily. But her finger was now more tasteful than common. Her mind was probably wrought up to a firmer and bolder tone, by the recollection of the cause she was going to plead; at the same time that it was exempt from those incapacitating tremors which would have been felt by one that dared not look poverty in the face. Mr. Tyrrel was unable to leave the apartment. Sometimes he traversed it with impatient steps; then he hung over the poor innocent whose powers were exerted to please him; at length he threw himself in a chair opposite, with his eyes turned towards Emily. It was easy to trace the progress of his emotions. The furrows into which his countenance was contracted were gradually relaxed; his features were brightened into a smile; the kindness with which he had upon former occasions contemplated Emily seemed to revive in his heart.

Emily watched her opportunity. As soon as she had finished one of the pieces, she rose and went to Mr. Tyrrel.

"Now, have not I done it nicely? and after this will not you give me a reward?"

"A reward! Ay, come here, and I will give you a kiss."

"No, that is not it. And yet you have not kissed me this many a day. Formerly, you said you loved me, and called me your Emily. I am sure you did

not love me better than I loved you. You have not forgotten all the kindness you once had for me?" added she, anxiously.

"Forgot? No, no. How can you ask such a question? You shall be my dear Emily still!"

"Ah, those were happy times!" she replied, a little mournfully. "Do you know, cousin, I wish I could wake, and find that the last month—only about a month—was a dream?"

"What do you mean by that?" said Mr. Tyrrel, with an altered voice. "Have a care! Do not put me out of humour. Do not come with your romantic notions now."

"No, no: I have no romantic notions in my head. I speak of something upon which the happiness of my life depends."

"I see what you would be at. Be silent. You know it is to no purpose to plague me with your stubbornness. You will not let me be in a good humour with you for a moment. What my mind is determined upon about Grimes all the world shall not move me to give up."

"Dear, dear cousin! why, but consider now. Grimes is a rough, rustic lout, like Orson in the story-book. He wants a wife like himself. He would be as uneasy and as much at a loss with me, as I with him. Why should we both of us be forced to do what neither of us is inclined to? I cannot think what could ever have put it into your head. But now, for goodness' sake, give it up! Marriage is a serious thing. You should not think of joining two people for a whim, who are neither of them fit for one another in any respect in the world. We should feel mortified and disappointed all our lives. Month would go after month, and year after year, and I could never hope to be my own, but by the death of a person I ought to love. I am

sure, sir, you cannot mean me all this harm. What have I done, that I should deserve to have you for an enemy?"

"I am not your enemy. I tell you that it is necessary to put you out of harm's way. But, if I were your enemy, I could not be a worse torment to you than you are to me. Are not you continually singing the praises of Falkland? Are you in love with Falkland? That man is a legion of devils to me! I might as well have been a beggar! I might as well have been a dwarf or a monster! Time was when I was thought entitled to respect. But now, debauched by this Frenchified rascal, they call me rude, surly, a tyrant! It is true that I cannot talk in finical phrases, flatter people with hypocritical praise, or suppress the real feelings of my mind. The scoundrel knows his pitiful advantages, and insults me upon them without ceasing. He is my rival and my persecutor; and, at last, as if all this were not enough, he has found means to spread the pestilence in my own family. You, whom we took up out of charity, the chance-born brat of a stolen marriage! you must turn upon your benefactor, and wound me in the point that of all others I could least bear. If I were your enemy, should not I have reason? Could I ever inflict upon you such injuries as you have made me suffer? And who are you? The lives of fifty such cannot atone for an hour of my uneasiness. If you were to linger for twenty years upon the rack, you would never feel what I have felt. But I am your friend. I see which way you are going; and I am determined to save you from this thief, this hypocritical destroyer of us all. Every moment that the mischief is left to itself, it does but make bad worse; and I am determined to save you out of hand."

The angry expostulations of Mr. Tyrrel sug-

gested new ideas to the tender mind of Miss Melville. He had never confessed the emotions of his soul so explicitly before; but the tempest of his thoughts suffered him to be no longer master of himself. She saw with astonishment that he was the irreconcilable foe of Mr. Falkland, whom she had fondly imagined it was the same thing to know and admire; and that he harboured a deep and rooted resentment against herself. She recoiled, without well knowing why, before the ferocious passions of her kinsman, and was convinced that she had nothing to hope from his implacable temper. But her alarm was the prelude of firmness, and not of cowardice.

"No, sir," replied she, "indeed I will not be driven any way that you happen to like. I have been used to obey you, and in all that is reasonable I will obey you still. But you urge me too far. What do you tell me of Mr. Falkland? Have I ever done any thing to deserve your unkind suspicions? I am innocent, and will continue innocent. Mr. Grimes is well enough, and will no doubt find women that like him; but he is not fit for me, and torture shall not force me to be his wife."

Mr. Tyrrel was not a little astonished at the spirit which Emily displayed upon this occasion. He had calculated too securely upon the general mildness and suavity of her disposition. He now endeavoured to qualify the harshness of his former sentiments.

"God damn my soul! And so you can scold, can you? You expect everybody to turn out of his way, and fetch and carry, just as you please? I could find in my heart—but you know my mind. I insist upon it that you let Grimes court you, and that you lay aside your sulks, and give him a fair hearing. Will you do that? If then you persist in your wilfulness, why there, I suppose, is an end

of the matter. Do not think that anybody is going to marry you, whether you will or not. You are no such mighty prize, I assure you. If you knew your own interest, you would be glad to take the young fellow while he is willing."

Miss Melville rejoiced in the prospect, which the last words of her kinsman afforded her, of a termination at no great distance to her present persecutions. Mrs. Jakeman, to whom she communicated them, congratulated Emily on the returning moderation and good sense of the squire, and herself on her prudence in having urged the young lady to this happy expostulation. But their mutual felicitations lasted not long. Mr. Tyrrel informed Mrs. Jakeman of the necessity in which he found himself of sending her to a distance, upon a business which would not fail to detain her several weeks; and, though the errand by no means wore an artificial or ambiguous face, the two friends drew a melancholy presage from this ill-timed separation. Mrs. Jakeman, in the mean time, exhorted her ward to persevere, reminded her of the compunction which had already been manifested by her kinsman, and encouraged her to hope every thing from her courage and good temper. Emily, on her part, though grieved at the absence of her protector and counsellor at so interesting a crisis, was unable to suspect Mr. Tyrrel of such a degree either of malice or duplicity as could afford ground for serious alarm. She congratulated herself upon her delivery from so alarming a persecution, and drew a prognostic of future success from this happy termination of the first serious affair of her life. She exchanged a state of fortitude and alarm for her former pleasing dreams respecting Mr. Falkland. These she bore without impatience. She was even taught by the uncertainty of the event to

desire to prolong, rather than abridge, a situation which might be delusive, but which was not without its pleasures.

CHAPTER VIII.

NOTHING could be further from Mr. Tyrrel's intention than to suffer his project to be thus terminated. No sooner was he freed from the fear of his housekeeper's interference, than he changed the whole system of his conduct. He ordered Miss Melville to be closely confined to her apartment, and deprived of all means of communicating her situation to any one out of his own house. He placed over her a female servant, in whose discretion he could confide, and who, having formerly been honoured with the amorous notices of the squire, considered the distinctions that were paid to Emily at Tyrrel Place as a usurpation upon her more reasonable claims. The squire himself did every thing in his power to blast the young lady's reputation, and represented to his attendants these precautions as necessary, to prevent her from eloping to his neighbour, and plunging herself in total ruin.

As soon as Miss Melville had been twenty-four hours in durance, and there was some reason to suppose that her spirit might be subdued to the emergency of her situation, Mr. Tyrrel thought proper to go to her, to explain the grounds of her present treatment, and acquaint her with the only means by which she could hope for a change. Emily no sooner saw him than she turned towards him with an air of greater firmness than perhaps

she had ever assumed in her life, and accosted him thus:—

"Well, sir, is it you? I wanted to see you. It seems I am shut up here by your orders. What does this mean? What right have you to make a prisoner of me? What do I owe you? Your mother left me a hundred pounds: have you ever offered to make any addition to my fortune? But, if you had, I do not want it. I do not pretend to be better than the children of other poor parents; I can maintain myself as they do. I prefer liberty to wealth. I see you are surprised at the resolution I exert. But ought I not to turn again when I am trampled upon? I should have left you before now, if Mrs. Jakeman had not over-persuaded me, and if I had not thought better of you than by your present behaviour I find you deserve. But now, sir, I intend to leave your house this moment, and insist upon it that you do not endeavour to prevent me."

Thus saying, she rose, and went towards the door, while Mr. Tyrrel stood thunderstruck at her magnanimity. Seeing, however, that she was upon the point of being out of the reach of his power, he recovered himself, and pulled her back.

"What is in the wind now? Do you think, strumpet, that you shall get the better of me by sheer impudence? Sit down! rest you satisfied!—So you want to know by what right you are here, do you? By the right of possession. This house is mine, and you are in my power. There is no Mrs. Jakeman now to spirit you away; no, nor no Falkland to bully for you. I have countermined you, damn me! and blown up your schemes. Do you think I will be contradicted and opposed for nothing? When did you ever know anybody resist my will without being made to repent? And shall I now be browbeaten by a chitty-faced girl?

—I have not given you a fortune! Damn you! who brought you up? I will make you a bill for clothing and lodging. Do not you know that every creditor has a right to stop his runaway debtor? You may think as you please; but here you are till you marry Grimes. Heaven and earth shall not prevent but I will get the better of your obstinacy!"

"Ungenerous, unmerciful man! and so it is enough for you that I have nobody to defend me! But I am not so helpless as you imagine. You may imprison my body, but you cannot conquer my mind. Marry Mr. Grimes! And is this the way to bring me to your purpose? Every hardship I suffer puts still farther distant the end for which I am thus unjustly treated. You are not used to have your will contradicted! When did I ever contradict it? And, in a concern that is so completely my own, shall my will go for nothing? Would you lay down this rule for yourself, and suffer no other creature to take the benefit of it? I want nothing of you: how dare you refuse me the privilege of a reasonable being, to live unmolested in poverty and innocence? What sort of a man do you show yourself; you that lay claim to the respect and applause of every one that knows you?"

The spirited reproaches of Emily had at first the effect to fill Mr. Tyrrel with astonishment, and make him feel abashed and overawed in the presence of this unprotected innocent. But his confusion was the result of surprise. When the first emotion wore off, he cursed himself for being moved by her expostulations; and was ten times more exasperated against her, for daring to defy his resentment at a time when she had every thing to fear. His despotic and unforgiving propensities stimulated him to a degree little short of madness. At the same time his habits, which were pensive and

gloomy, led him to meditate a variety of schemes to punish her obstinacy. He began to suspect that there was little hope of succeeding by open force, and therefore determined to have recourse to treachery.

He found in Grimes an instrument sufficiently adapted to his purpose. This fellow, without an atom of intentional malice, was fitted, by the mere coarseness of his perceptions, for the perpetration of the greatest injuries. He regarded both injury and advantage merely as they related to the gratifications of appetite; and considered it an essential in true wisdom, to treat with insult the effeminacy of those who suffer themselves to be tormented with ideal misfortunes. He believed that no happier destiny could befall a young woman than to be his wife; and he conceived that that termination would amply compensate for any calamities she might suppose herself to undergo in the interval. He was therefore easily prevailed upon, by certain temptations which Mr. Tyrrel knew how to employ, to take part in the plot into which Miss Melville was meant to be betrayed.

Matters being thus prepared, Mr. Tyrrel proceeded, through the means of the jailer (for the experience he already had of personal discussion did not incline him to repeat his visits), to play upon the fears of his prisoner. This woman, sometimes under the pretence of friendship, and sometimes with open malice, informed Emily, from time to time, of the preparations that were making for her marriage. One day, "the squire had rode over to look at a neat little farm which was destined for the habitation of the new-married couple;" and at another, "a quantity of live-stock and household-furniture was procured, that every thing might be ready for their reception." She then told her "of

a license that was bought, a parson in readiness, and a day fixed for the nuptials." When Emily endeavoured, though with increased misgivings, to ridicule these proceedings as absolutely nugatory without her consent, her artful gouvernante related several stories of forced marriages, and assured her that neither protestations, nor silence, nor fainting would be of any avail, either to suspend the ceremony or to set it aside when performed.

The situation of Miss Melville was in an eminent degree pitiable. She had no intercourse but with her persecutors. She had not a human being with whom to consult, who might afford her the smallest degree of consolation and encouragement. She had fortitude; but it was neither confirmed nor directed by the dictates of experience. It could not therefore be expected to be so inflexible, as with better information it would, no doubt, have been found. She had a clear and noble spirit; but she had some of her sex's errors. Her mind sunk under the uniform terrors with which she was assailed, and her health became visibly impaired.

Her firmness being thus far undermined, Grimes, in pursuance of his instructions, took care in his next interview to throw out an insinuation that, for his own part, he had never cared for the match, and since she was so averse to it, would be better pleased that it should never take place. Between one and the other, however, he was got into a scrape, and now he supposed he must marry, will he, nill he. The two squires would infallibly ruin him upon the least appearance of backwardness on his part, as they were accustomed to do every inferior that resisted their will. Emily was rejoiced to find her admirer in so favourable a disposition; and earnestly pressed him to give effect to this humane declaration. Her representations were full of elo-

quence and energy. Grimes appeared to be moved at the fervency of her manner; but objected the resentment of Mr. Tyrrel and his landlord. At length, however, he suggested a project, in consequence of which he might assist her in her escape, without its ever coming to their knowledge, as, indeed, there was no likelihood that their suspicions would fix upon him. "To be sure," said he, "you have refused me in a disdainful sort of a way, as a man may say. Mayhap you thought I was no better 'an a brute: but I bear you no malice, and I will show you that I am more kind-hearted 'an you have been willing to think. It is a strange sort of a vagary you have taken, to stand in your own light, and disoblige all your friends. But if you are resolute,—do you see?—I scorn to be the husband of a lass that is not every bit as willing as I; and so I will even help to put you in a condition to follow your own inclinations."

Emily listened to these suggestions at first with eagerness and approbation. But her fervency somewhat abated when they came to discuss the minute parts of the undertaking. It was necessary, as Grimes informed her, that her escape should be effected in the dead of the night. He would conceal himself for that purpose in the garden, and be provided with false keys, by which to deliver her from her prison. These circumstances were by no means adapted to calm her perturbed imagination. To throw herself into the arms of the man whose intercourse she was employing every method to avoid, and whom, under the idea of a partner for life, she could least of all men endure, was, no doubt, an extraordinary proceeding. The attendant circumstances of darkness and solitude aggravated the picture. The situation of Tyrrel Place was uncommonly lonely; it was three miles from the

nearest village, and not less than seven from that in which Mrs. Jakeman's sister resided, under whose protection Miss Melville was desirous of placing herself. The ingenuous character of Emily did not allow her once to suspect Grimes of intending to take an ungenerous and brutal advantage of these circumstances; but her mind involuntarily revolted against the idea of committing herself, alone, to the disposal of a man whom she had lately been accustomed to consider as the instrument of her treacherous relation.

After having for some time revolved these considerations, she thought of the expedient of desiring Grimes to engage Mrs. Jakeman's sister to wait for her at the outside of the garden. But this Grimes peremptorily refused. He even flew into a passion at the proposal. It showed very little gratitude, to desire him to disclose to other people his concern in this dangerous affair. For his part, he was determined, in consideration of his own safety, never to appear in it to any living soul. If miss did not believe him, when he made this proposal out of pure good-nature, and would not trust him a single inch, she might even see to the consequences herself. He was resolved to condescend no further to the whims of a person who, in her treatment of him, had shown herself as proud as Lucifer himself.

Emily exerted herself to appease his resentment; but all the eloquence of her new confederate could not prevail upon her instantly to give up her objection. She desired till the next day to consider of it. The day after was fixed by Mr. Tyrrel for the marriage ceremony. In the mean time she was pestered with intimations, in a thousand forms, of the fate that so nearly awaited her. The preparations were so continued, methodical, and regu-

lar, as to produce in her the most painful and aching anxiety. If her heart attained a moment's intermission upon the subject, her female attendant was sure, by some sly hint or sarcastical remark, to put a speedy termination to her tranquillity. She felt herself, as she afterward remarked, alone, uninstructed, just broken loose, as it were, from the trammels of infancy, without one single creature to concern himself in her fate. She, who till then never knew an enemy, had now, for three weeks, not seen the glimpse of a human countenance that she had not good reason to consider as wholly estranged to her at least, if not unrelentingly bent on her destruction. She now, for the first time, experienced the anguish of never having known her parents, and being cast upon the charity of people with whom she had too little equality to hope to receive from them the offices of friendship.

The succeeding night was filled with the most anxious thoughts. When a momentary oblivion stole upon her senses, her distempered imagination conjured up a thousand images of violence and falsehood; she saw herself in the hands of her determined enemies, who did not hesitate by the most daring treachery to complete her ruin. Her waking thoughts were not more consoling. The struggle was too great for her constitution. As morning approached, she resolved, at all hazards, to put herself into the hands of Grimes. This determination was no sooner made than she felt her heart sensibly lightened. She could not conceive any evil which could result from this proceeding, that deserved to be put in the balance against those which, under the roof of her kinsman, appeared unavoidable.

When she communicated her determination to Grimes, it was not possible to say whether he

received pleasure or pain from the intimation. He smiled indeed; but his smile was accompanied by a certain abrupt ruggedness of countenance, so that it might equally well be the smile of sarcasm or of congratulation. He, however, renewed his assurances of fidelity to his engagements and punctuality of execution. Meanwhile the day was interspersed with nuptial presents and preparations, all indicating the firmness as well as security of the directors of the scene. Emily had hoped that, as the crisis approached, they might have remitted something of their usual diligence. She was resolved, in that case, if a fair opportunity had offered, to give the slip both to her jailers and to her new and reluctantly chosen confederate. But, though extremely vigilant for that purpose, she found the execution of the idea impracticable.

At length the night, so critical to her happiness, approached. The mind of Emily could not fail, on this occasion, to be extremely agitated. She had first exerted all her perspicacity to elude the vigilance of her attendant. This insolent and unfeeling tyrant, instead of any relentings, had only sought to make sport of her anxiety. Accordingly, in one instance she hid herself, and, suffering Emily to suppose that the coast was clear, met her at the end of the gallery, near the top of the staircase. "How do you do, my dear?" said she, with an insulting tone. "And so the little dear thought itself cunning enough to outwit me, did it? Oh, it was a sly little gipsy! Go, go back, love; troop!" Emily felt deeply the trick that was played upon her. She sighed, but disdained to return any answer to this low vulgarity. Being once more in her chamber, she sat down in a chair, and remained buried in revery for more than two hours. After this she went to her drawers, and

turned over, in a hurrying, confused way, her linen and clothes, having in her mind the provision it would be necessary to make for her elopement. Her jailer officiously followed her from place to place, and observed what she did for the present in silence. It was now the hour of rest. "Good night, child," said this saucy girl, in the act of retiring. "It is time to lock up. For the few next hours, the time is your own. Make the best use of it! Do'ee think ee can creep out at the key-hole lovey? At eight o'clock you see me again. And then, and then," added she, clapping her hands, "it is all over. The sun is not surer to rise, than you and your honest man to be made one."

There was something in the tone with which this slut uttered her farewell, that suggested the question to Emily, "What does she mean? Is it possible that she should know what has been planned for the few next hours?"—This was the first moment that suspicion had offered itself, and its continuance was short. With an aching heart she folded up the few necessaries she intended to take with her. She instinctively listened, with an anxiety that would almost have enabled her to hear the stirring of a leaf. From time to time she thought her ear was struck with the sound of feet; but the treading, if treading it were, was so soft, that she could never ascertain whether it were a real sound, or the mere creature of the fancy. Then all was still, as if the universal motion had been at rest. By-and-by she conceived she overheard a noise as of buzzing and low-muttered speech. Her heart palpitated; for a second time she began to doubt the honesty of Grimes. The suggestion was now more anxious than before; but it was too late. Presently she heard the sound of a key in her chamber-door, and the rustic made his

appearance. She started, and cried, "Are we discovered? did not I hear you speak?" Grimes advanced on tiptoe with his finger to his lip. "No, no," replied he, "all is safe!" He took her by the hand, led her in silence out of the house, and then across the garden. Emily examined with her eye the doors and passages as they proceeded, and looked on all sides with fearful suspicion; but every thing was as vacant and still as she herself could have wished. Grimes opened a back-door of the garden already unlocked, that led into an unfrequented lane. There stood two horses ready equipped for the journey, and fastened by their bridles to a post not six yards distant from the garden. Grimes pushed the door after them. "By Gemini," said he, "my heart was in my mouth. As I comed along to you, I saw Mun, coachey, pop along from the back-door to the stables. He was within a hop, step, and jump of me. But he had a lantern in his hand, and he did not see me, being as I was darkling." Saying this, he assisted Miss Melville to mount. He troubled her little during the route; on the contrary, he was remarkably silent and contemplative, a circumstance by no means disagreeable to Emily, to whom his conversation had never been acceptable.

After having proceeded about two miles, they turned into a wood, through which the road led to the place of their destination. The night was extremely dark, at the same time that the air was soft and mild, it being now the middle of summer. Under pretence of exploring the way, Grimes contrived, when they had already penetrated into the midst of this gloomy solitude, to get his horse abreast with that of Miss Melville, and then, suddenly reaching out his hand, seized hold of her

bridle. "I think we may as well stop here a bit," said he.

"Stop!" exclaimed Emily with surprise; "why should we stop? Mr. Grimes, what do you mean?"

"Come, come," said he, "never trouble yourself to wonder. Did you think I were such a goose, to take all this trouble merely to gratify your whim? I'faith, nobody shall find me a pack-horse, to go of other folks' errands, without knowing a reason why. I cannot say that I much minded to have you at first; but your ways are enough to stir the blood of my granddad. Far-fetched and dear-bought is always relishing. Your consent was so hard to gain, that squire thought it was surest asking in the dark. A' said, however, a' would have no such doings in his house, and so, do ye see, we are comed here."

"For God's sake, Mr. Grimes, think what you are about! You cannot be base enough to ruin a poor creature who has put herself under your protection!"

"Ruin! No, no, I will make an honest woman of you, when all is done. Nay, none of your airs; no tricks upon travellers! I have you here as safe as a horse in a pound; there is not a house nor a shed within a mile of us; and if I miss the opportunity, call me spade. Faith, you are a delicate morsel, and there is no time to be lost!"

Miss Melville had but an instant in which to collect her thoughts. She felt that there was little hope of softening the obstinate and insensible brute in whose power she was placed. But the presence of mind and intrepidity annexed to her character did not now desert her. Grimes had scarcely finished his harangue, when, with a strong and unexpected jerk, she disengaged the bridle from his grasp, and at the same time put her horse upon full speed.

She had scarcely advanced twice the length of her horse, when Grimes recovered from his surprise, and pursued her, inexpressibly mortified at being so easily overreached. The sound of his horse behind served but to rouse more completely the mettle of that of Emily; whether by accident or sagacity, the animal pursued without a fault the narrow and winding way; and the chase continued the whole length of the wood.

At the extremity of this wood there was a gate. The recollection of this softened a little the cutting disappointment of Grimes, as he thought himself secure of putting an end, by its assistance, to the career of Emily; nor was it very probable that anybody would appear to interrupt his designs, in such a place, and in the dead and silence of the night. By the most extraordinary accident, however, they found a man on horseback in wait at this gate. "Help, help!" exclaimed the affrighted Emily; "thieves! murder! help!" The man was Mr. Falkland. Grimes knew his voice; and therefore, though he attempted a sort of sullen resistance, it was feebly made. Two other men, whom, by reason of the darkness, he had not at first seen, and who were Mr. Falkland's servants, hearing the bustle of the rencounter, and alarmed for the safety of their master, rode up; and then Grimes, disappointed at the loss of his gratification, and admonished by conscious guilt, shrunk from further parley, and rode off in silence.

It may seem strange that Mr. Falkland should thus a second time have been the saviour of Miss Melville, and that under circumstances the most unexpected and singular. But in this instance it is easily to be accounted for. He had heard of a man who lurked about this wood for robbery or some other bad design, and that it was conjectured this

man was Hawkins, another of the victims of Mr. Tyrrel's rural tyranny, whom I shall immediately have occasion to introduce. Mr. Falkland's compassion had already been strongly excited in favour of Hawkins; he had in vain endeavoured to find him, and do him good; and he easily conceived, that if the conjecture which had been made in this instance proved true, he might have it in his power not only to do what he had always intended, but further, to save from a perilous offence against the laws and society a man who appeared to have strongly imbibed the principles of justice and virtue. He took with him two servants, because, going with the express design of encountering robbers, if robbers should be found, he believed he should be inexcusable if he did not go provided against possible accidents. But he had directed them, at the same time that they kept within call, to be out of the reach of being seen; and it was only the eagerness of their zeal that had brought them up thus early in the present encounter.

This new adventure promised something extraordinary. Mr. Falkland did not immediately recognise Miss Melville; and the person of Grimes was that of a total stranger, whom he did not recollect to have ever seen. But it was easy to understand the merits of the case, and the propriety of interfering. The resolute manner of Mr. Falkland, combined with the dread which Grimes, oppressed with a sense of wrong, entertained of the opposition of so elevated a personage, speedily put the ravisher to flight. Emily was left alone with her deliverer. He found her much more collected and calm than could reasonably have been expected from a person who had been, a moment before, in the most alarming situation. She told him of the place to which she desired to be conveyed, and he immediately under-

took to escort her. As they went along, she recovered that state of mind which inclined her to make a person to whom she had such repeated obligations, and who was so eminently the object of her admiration, acquainted with the events that had recently befallen her. Mr. Falkland listened with eagerness and surprise. Though he had already known various instances of Mr. Tyrrel's mean jealousy and unfeeling tyranny, this surpassed them all; and he could scarcely credit his ears while he heard the tale. His brutal neighbour seemed to realize all that has been told of the passions of fiends. Miss Melville was obliged to repeat, in the course of her tale, her kinsman's rude accusation against her, of entertaining a passion for Mr. Falkland; and this she did with the most bewitching simplicity and charming confusion. Though this part of the tale was a source of real pain to her deliverer, yet it is not to be supposed but that the flattering partiality of this unhappy girl increased the interest he felt in her welfare, and the indignation he conceived against her infernal kinsman.

They arrived without accident at the house of the good lady under whose protection Emily desired to place herself. Here Mr. Falkland willingly left her as in a place of security. Such conspiracies as that of which she was intended to have been the victim depend for their success upon the person against whom they are formed being out of the reach of help; and the moment they are detected, they are annihilated. Such reasoning will, no doubt, be generally found sufficiently solid; and it appeared to Mr. Falkland perfectly applicable to the present case. But he was mistaken.

CHAPTER IX.

Mr. Falkland had experienced the nullity of all expostulation with Mr. Tyrrel, and was therefore content in the present case with confining his attention to the intended victim. The indignation with which he thought of his neighbour's character was now grown to such a height, as to fill him with reluctance to the idea of a voluntary interview. There was indeed another affair which had been contemporary with this, that had once more brought these mortal enemies into a state of contest, and had contributed to raise into a temper little short of madness, the already inflamed and corrosive bitterness of Mr. Tyrrel.

There was a tenant of Mr. Tyrrel, one Hawkins; —I cannot mention his name without recollecting the painful tragedies that are annexed to it! This Hawkins had originally been taken up by Mr. Tyrrel, with a view of protecting him from the arbitrary proceedings of a neighbouring squire, though he had now in his turn become an object of persecution to Mr. Tyrrel himself. The first ground of their connexion was this:—Hawkins, besides a farm which he rented under the above-mentioned squire, had a small freehold estate that he inherited from his father. This of course entitled him to a vote in the county elections; and a warmly contested election having occurred, he was required by his landlord to vote for the candidate in whose favour he had himself engaged. Hawkins refused to obey the mandate,

and soon after received notice to quit the farm he at that time rented.

It happened that Mr. Tyrrel had interested himself strongly in behalf of the opposite candidate; and, as Mr. Tyrrel's estate bordered upon the seat of Hawkins's present residence, the ejected countryman could think of no better expedient than that of riding over to this gentleman's mansion, and relating the case to him. Mr. Tyrrel heard him through with attention. "Well, friend," said he, "it is very true that I wished Mr. Jackman to carry his election; but you know it is usual in these cases for tenants to vote just as their landlords please. I do not think proper to encourage rebellion."—"All that is very right, and please you," replied Hawkins, "and I would have voted at my landlord's bidding for any other man in the kingdom but Squire Marlow. You must know, one day his huntsman rode over my fence, and so through my best field of standing corn. It was not above a dozen yards about if he had kept the cart-road. The fellow had served me the same sauce, an it please your honour, three or four times before. So I only asked him what he did that for, and whether he had not more conscience than to spoil people's crops o' that fashion? Presently the squire came up. He is but a poor, weasen-face chicken of a gentleman, saving your honour's reverence. And so he flew into a woundy passion, and threatened to horsewhip me. I will do as much in reason to pleasure my landlord as arr a tenant he has; but I will not give my vote to a man that threatens to horsewhip me. And so, your honour, I and my wife and three children are to be turned out of house and home, and what I am to do to maintain them God knows. I have been a hard-working man, and have always lived well, and I do think the case is main hard. Squire Underwood

turns me out of my farm; and if your honour do not take me in, I know none of the neighbouring gentry will, for fear, as they say, of encouraging their own tenants to run rusty too."

This representation was not without its effect upon Mr. Tyrrel. "Well, well, man," replied he, "we will see what can be done. Order and subordination are very good things; but people should know how much to require. As you tell the story, I cannot see that you are greatly to blame. Marlow is a coxcombical prig, that is the truth on't; and if a man will expose himself, why, he must even take what follows. I do hate a Frenchified fop with all my soul; and I cannot say that I am much pleased with my neighbour Underwood for taking the part of such a rascal. Hawkins, I think, is your name? You may call on Barnes, my steward, to-morrow, and he shall speak to you."

While Mr. Tyrrel was speaking, he recollected that he had a farm vacant, of nearly the same value as that which Hawkins at present rented under Mr. Underwood. He immediately consulted his steward, and finding the thing suitable in every respect, Hawkins was installed out of hand in the catalogue of Mr. Tyrrel's tenants. Mr. Underwood extremely resented this proceeding, which indeed, as being contrary to the understood conventions of the country gentlemen, few people but Mr. Tyrrel would have ventured upon. There was an end, said Mr. Underwood, to all regulation, if tenants were to be encouraged in such disobedience. It was not a question of this or that candidate, seeing that any gentleman, who was a true friend to his country, would rather lose his election than do a thing which, if once established into a practice, would deprive them for ever of the power of managing any election. The labouring people were sturdy and resolute

enough of their own accord; it became every day more difficult to keep them under any subordination; and, if the gentlemen were so ill advised as to neglect the public good, and encourage them in their insolence, there was no foreseeing where it would end.

Mr. Tyrrel was not of a stamp to be influenced by these remonstrances. Their general spirit was sufficiently conformable to the sentiments he himself entertained; but he was of too vehement a temper to maintain the character of a consistent politician; and, however wrong his conduct might be, he would by no means admit of its being set right by the suggestions of others. The more his patronage of Hawkins was criticised, the more inflexibly he adhered to it; and he was at no loss in clubs and other assemblies to overbear and silence, if not to confute, his censurers. Besides which, Hawkins had certain accomplishments which qualified him to be a favourite with Mr. Tyrrel. The bluntness of his manner and the ruggedness of his temper gave him some resemblance to his landlord; and, as these qualities were likely to be more frequently exercised on such persons as had incurred Mr. Tyrrel's displeasure than upon Mr. Tyrrel himself, they were not observed without some degree of complacency. In a word, he every day received new marks of distinction from his patron, and after some time was appointed coadjutor to Mr. Barnes under the denomination of bailiff. It was about the same period that he obtained a lease of the farm of which he was tenant.

Mr. Tyrrel determined, as occasion offered, to promote every part of the family of this favoured dependant. Hawkins had a son, a lad of seventeen, of an agreeable person, a ruddy complexion, and of quick and lively parts. This lad was in an uncom-

mon degree the favourite of his father, who seemed to have nothing so much at heart as the future welfare of his son. Mr. Tyrrel had noticed him two or three times with approbation; and the boy, being fond of the sports of the field, had occasionally followed the hounds, and displayed various instances both of agility and sagacity in presence of the squire. One day in particular he exhibited himself with uncommon advantage; and Mr. Tyrrel without further delay proposed to his father to take him into his family, and make him whipper-in to his hounds, till he could provide him with some more lucrative appointment in his service.

This proposal was received by Hawkins with various marks of mortification. He excused himself with hesitation for not accepting the offered favour; said the lad was in many ways useful to him; and hoped his honour would not insist upon depriving him of his assistance. This apology might perhaps have been sufficient with any other man than Mr. Tyrrel; but it was frequently observed of this gentleman that when he had once formed a determination, however slight, in favour of any measure, he was never afterward known to give it up, and that the only effect of opposition was to make him eager and inflexible in pursuit of that to which he had before been nearly indifferent. At first he seemed to receive the apology of Hawkins with good humour, and to see nothing in it but what was reasonable; but afterward, every time he saw the boy his desire of retaining him in his service was increased, and he more than once repeated to his father the good disposition in which he felt himself towards him. At length he observed that the lad was no more to be seen mingling in his favourite sports, and he began to suspect that this

originated in a determination to thwart him in his projects.

Roused by this suspicion, which, to a man of Mr. Tyrrel's character, was not of a nature to brook delay, he sent for Hawkins to confer with him. "Hawkins," said he, in a tone of displeasure, "I am not satisfied with you. I have spoken to you two or three times about this lad of yours, whom I am desirous of taking into favour. What is the reason, sir, that you seem unthankful and averse to my kindness? You ought to know that I am not to be trifled with. I shall not be contented when I offer my favours to have them rejected by such fellows as you. I made you what you are; and, if I please, can make you more helpless and miserable than you were when I found you. Have a care!"

"An it please your honour," said Hawkins, "you have been a very good master to me, and I will tell you the whole truth. I hope you will na be angry. This lad is my favourite, my comfort, and the stay of my age."

"Well, and what then? Is that a reason you should hinder his preferment?"

"Nay, pray, your honour, hear me. I may be very weak for aught I know in this case, but I cannot help it. My father was a clergyman. We have all of us lived in a creditable way; and I cannot bear to think that this poor lad of mine should go to service. For my part I do not see any good that comes by servants. I do not know, your honour, but I think I should not like my Leonard to be such as they. God forgive me, if I wrong them! But this is a very dear case, and I cannot bear to risk my poor boy's welfare, when I can so easily, if you please, keep him out of harm's way. At present he is sober and industrious, and, without being pert or surly, knows what is due to him. I know, your

honour, that it is main foolish of me to talk to you thus; but your honour has been a good master to me, and I cannot bear to tell you a lie."

Mr. Tyrrel had heard the whole of this harangue in silence, because he was too much astonished to open his mouth. If a thunderbolt had fallen at his feet he could not have testified greater surprise. He had thought that Hawkins was so foolishly fond of his son that he could not bear to trust him out of his presence; but had never in the slightest degree suspected what he now found to be the truth.

"Oh, ho, you are a gentleman, are you? A pretty gentleman, truly! your father was a clergyman! Your family is too good to enter into my service! Why, you impudent rascal! was it for this that I took you up, when Mr. Underwood dismissed you for your insolence to him? Have I been nursing a viper in my bosom? Pretty master's manners will be contaminated, truly! He will not know what is due to him, but will be accustomed to obey orders! You insufferable villain! Get out of my sight! Depend upon it, I will have no gentlemen on my estate! I will off with them, root and branch, bag and baggage! So, do you hear, sir? come to me to-morrow morning, bring your son, and ask my pardon; or, take my word for it, I will make you so miserable you shall wish you had never been born."

This treatment was too much for Hawkins's patience. "There is no need, your honour, that I should come to you again about this affair. I have taken up my determination, and no time can make any change in it. I am main sorry to displease your worship, and I know that you can do me a great deal of mischief. But I hope you will not be so hardhearted as to ruin a father only for being fond of his child, even if so be that his fondness

should make him do a foolish thing. But I cannot help it, your honour: you must do as you please. The poorest neger, as a man may say, has some point that he will not part with. I will lose all that I have, and go to day-labour, and my son too, if needs must; but I will not make a gentleman's servant of him."

"Very well, friend; very well!" replied Mr. Tyrrel, foaming with rage. "Depend upon it, I will remember you! Your pride shall have a downfall! God damn it! is it come to this? Shall a rascal that farms his forty acres pretend to beard the lord of the manor? I will tread you into paste! Let me advise you, scoundrel, to shut up your house and fly as if the devil was behind you! You may think yourself happy, if I be not too quick for you yet, if you escape in a whole skin! I would not suffer such a villain to remain upon my land a day longer, if I could gain the Indies by it!"

"Not so fast, your honour," answered Hawkins, sturdily. "I hope you will think better of it, and see that I have not been to blame. But if you should not, there is some harm that you can do me, and some harm that you cannot. Though I am a plain working man, your honour, do you see? yet I am a man still. No; I have got a lease of my farm, and I shall not quit it o' thaten. I hope there is some law for poor folk, as well as for rich."

Mr. Tyrrel, unused to contradiction, was provoked beyond bearing at the courage and independent spirit of his retainer. There was not a tenant upon his estate, or at least not one of Hawkins's mediocrity of fortune, whom the general policy of landowners, and still more the arbitrary and uncontrollable temper of Mr. Tyrrel, did not effectually restrain from acts of open defiance.

"Excellent, upon my soul! Damn my blood!

but you are a rare fellow. You have a lease, have you? You will not quit, not you! a pretty pass things are come to, if a lease can protect such fellows as you against the lord of a manor! But you are for a trial of skill? Oh, very well, friend, very well! With all my soul! Since it is come to that, we will show you some pretty sport before we have done! But get out of my sight, you rascal! I have not another word to say to you! Never darken my doors again."

Hawkins (to borrow the language of the world) was guilty in this affair of a double imprudence. He talked to his landlord in a more peremptory manner than the constitution and practices of this country allow a dependant to assume. But, above all, having been thus hurried away by his resentment, he ought to have foreseen the consequences. It was mere madness in him to think of contesting with a man of Mr. Tyrrel's eminence and fortune. It was a fawn contending with a lion. Nothing could have been more easy to predict, than that it was of no avail for him to have right on his side, when his adversary had influence and wealth, and therefore could so victoriously justify any extravagances that he might think proper to commit. This maxim was completely illustrated in the sequel. Wealth and despotism easily know how to engage those laws as the coadjutors of their oppression which were perhaps at first intended [witless and miserable precaution!] for the safeguards of the poor.

From this moment Mr. Tyrrel was bent upon Hawkins's destruction; and he left no means unemployed that could either harass or injure the object of his persecution. He deprived him of his appointment of bailiff, and directed Barnes and his other dependants to do him ill offices upon all occasions. Mr. Tyrrel, by the tenure of his manor,

was impropriator of the great tithes, and this circumstance afforded him frequent opportunities of petty altercation. The land of one part of Hawkins's farm, though covered with corn, was lower than the rest; and consequently exposed to occasional inundations from a river by which it was bounded. Mr. Tyrrel had a dam belonging to this river privately cut, about a fortnight before the season of harvest, and laid the whole under water. He ordered his servants to pull away the fences of the higher ground during the night, and to turn in his cattle, to the utter destruction of the crop. These expedients, however, applied to only one part of the property of this unfortunate man. But Mr. Tyrrel did not stop here. A sudden mortality took place among Hawkins's live stock, attended with very suspicious circumstances. Hawkins's vigilance was strongly excited by this event, and he at length succeeded in tracing the matter so accurately, that he conceived he could bring it home to Mr. Tyrrel himself.

Hawkins had hitherto carefully avoided, notwithstanding the injuries he had suffered, the attempting to right himself by legal process; being of opinion that law was better adapted for a weapon of tyranny in the hands of the rich, than for a shield to protect the humbler part of the community against their usurpations. In this last instance, however, he conceived that the offence was so atrocious as to make it impossible that any rank could protect the culprit against the severity of justice. In the sequel, he saw reason to applaud himself for his former inactivity in this respect, and to repent that any motive had been strong enough to persuade him into a contrary system.

This was the very point to which Mr. Tyrrel wanted to bring him, and he could scarcely credit

his good fortune, when he was told that Hawkins had entered an action. His congratulation upon this occasion was immoderate, as he now conceived that the ruin of his late favourite was irretrievable. He consulted his attorney, and urged him by every motive he could devise to employ the whole series of his subterfuges in the present affair. The direct repelling of the charge exhibited against him was the least part of his care; the business was, by affidavits, motions, pleas, demurrers, flaws, and appeals, to protract the question from term to term, and from court to court. It would, as Mr. Tyrrel argued, be the disgrace of a civilized country, if a gentleman, when insolently attacked in law by the scum of the earth, could not convert the cause into a question of the longest purse, and stick in the skirts of his adversary till he had reduced him to beggary.

Mr. Tyrrel, however, was by no means so far engrossed by his lawsuit as to neglect other methods of proceeding offensively against his tenant. Among the various expedients that suggested themselves, there was one, which, though it tended rather to torment than irreparably injure the sufferer, was not rejected. This was derived from the particular situation of Hawkins's house, barns, stacks, and outhouses. They were placed at the extremity of a slip of land connecting them with the rest of the farm, and were surrounded on three sides by fields, in the occupation of one of Mr. Tyrrel's tenants most devoted to the pleasures of his landlord. The road to the market-town ran at the bottom of the largest of these fields, and was directly in view of the front of the house. No inconvenience had yet arisen from that circumstance, as there had always been a broad path, that intersected this field, and led directly from Hawkins's house to the road. This path, or private road, was now, by concert of Mr.

Tyrrel and his obliging tenant, shut up, so as to make Hawkins a sort of prisoner in his own domains, and oblige him to go near a mile about for the purposes of his traffic.

Young Hawkins, the lad who had been the original subject of dispute between his father and the squire, had much of his father's spirit, and felt an uncontrollable indignation against the successive acts of despotism of which he was a witness. His resentment was the greater, because the sufferings to which his parent was exposed, all of them, flowed from affection to him; at the same time that he could not propose removing the ground of dispute, as by so doing he would seem to fly in the face of his father's paternal kindness. Upon the present occasion, without asking any counsel but of his own impatient resentment, he went in the middle of the night and removed all the obstructions that had been placed in the way of the old path, broke the padlocks that had been fixed, and threw open the gates.

In these operations he did not proceed unobserved, and the next day a warrant was issued for apprehending him. He was accordingly carried before a meeting of justices, and by them committed to the county jail, to take his trial for the felony at the next assizes. Mr. Tyrrel was determined to prosecute the offence with the greatest severity; and his attorney, having made the proper inquiries for that purpose, undertook to bring it under that clause of the act 9 Geo. I. commonly called the Black Act, which declares that "any person, armed with a sword, or other offensive weapon, and having his face blackened, or being otherwise disguised, appearing in any warren or place where hares or conies have been or shall be usually kept, and being thereof duly convicted, shall be adjudged guilty of felony, and shall suffer death, as in cases

of felony, without benefit of clergy." Young Hawkins, it seemed had buttoned the cape of his great coat over his face, as soon as he perceived himself to be observed, and he was furnished with a wrenching-iron for the purpose of breaking the padlocks. The attorney further undertook to prove, by sufficient witnesses, that the field in question was a warren in which hares were regularly fed. Mr. Tyrrel seized upon these pretences with inexpressible satisfaction. He prevailed upon the justices, by the picture he drew of the obstinacy and insolence of the Hawkinses, fully to commit the lad upon this miserable charge: and it was by no means so certain as paternal affection would have desired, that the same overpowering influence would not cause in the sequel the penal clause to be executed in all its strictness.

This was the finishing stroke to Hawkins's miseries; as he was not deficient in courage, he had stood up against his other persecutions without flinching. He was not unaware of the advantages which our laws and customs give to the rich over the poor in contentions of this kind. But being once involved, there was a stubbornness in his nature that would not allow him to retract, and he suffered himself to hope, rather than expect, a favourable issue. But in this last event he was wounded in the point that was nearest his heart. He had feared to have his son contaminated and debased by a servile station, and he now saw him transferred to the seminary of a jail. He was even uncertain as to the issue of his imprisonment, and trembled to think what the tyranny of wealth might effect to blast his hopes for ever.

From this moment his heart died within him. He had trusted to persevering industry and skill, to save the wreck of his little property from the vulgar

spite of his landlord. But he had now no longer any spirit to exert those efforts which his situation more than ever required. Mr. Tyrrel proceeded without remission in his machinations; Hawkins's affairs every day grew more desperate, and the squire, watching the occasion, took the earliest opportunity of seizing upon his remaining property in the mode of a distress for rent.

It was precisely in this stage of the affair that Mr. Falkland and Mr. Tyrrel accidentally met, in a private road near the habitation of the latter. They were on horseback, and Mr. Falkland was going to the house of the unfortunate tenant, who seemed upon the point of perishing under his landlord's malice. He had been just made acquainted with the tale of this persecution. It had indeed been an additional aggravation of Hawkins's calamity, that Mr. Falkland, whose interference might otherwise have saved him, had been absent from the neighbourhood for a considerable time. He had been three months in London, and from thence had gone to visit his estates in another part of the island. The proud and self-confident spirit of this poor fellow always disposed him to depend, as long as possible, upon his own exertions. He had avoided applying to Mr. Falkland, or indeed indulging himself in any manner in communicating and bewailing his hard hap, in the beginning of the contention; and when the extremity grew more urgent, and he would have been willing to recede in some degree from the stubbornness of his measures, he found it no longer in his power. After an absence of considerable duration, Mr. Falkland at length returned somewhat unexpectedly; and having learned, among the first articles of country intelligence, the distresses of this unfortunate yeoman, he resolved to ride over to his house the next morning,

and surprise him with all the relief it was in his power to bestow.

At sight of Mr. Tyrrel in this unexpected rencounter, his face reddened with indignation. His first feeling, as he afterward said, was to avoid him; but finding that he must pass him, he conceived that it would be want of spirit not to acquaint him with his feelings on the present occasion.

"Mr. Tyrrel," said he, somewhat abruptly, "I am sorry for a piece of news which I have just heard."

"And pray, sir, what is your sorrow to me?"

"A great deal, sir: it is caused by the distresses of a poor tenant of yours, Hawkins. If your steward have proceeded without your authority, I think it right to inform you what he has done; and if he have had your authority, I would gladly persuade you to think better of it."

"Mr. Falkland, it would be quite as well if you would mind your own business, and leave me to mind mine. I want no monitor, and I will have none."

"You mistake, Mr. Tyrrel; I am minding my own business. If I see you fall into a pit, it is my business to draw you out and save your life. If I see you pursuing a wrong mode of conduct, it is my business to set you right and save your honour."

"Zounds, sir, do not think to put your conundrums upon me! Is not the man my tenant? Is not my estate my own? What signifies calling it mine, if I am not to have the direction of it? Sir, I pay for what I have: I owe no man a penny; and I will not put my estate to nurse to you, nor the best he that wears a head."

"It is very true," said Mr. Falkland, avoiding any direct notice of the last words of Mr. Tyrrel, "that there is a distinction of ranks. I believe that distinction is a good thing, and necessary to the peace of mankind. But, however necessary it may be,

we must acknowledge that it puts some hardship upon the lower orders of society. It makes one's heart ache to think, that one man is born to the inheritance of every superfluity, while the whole share of another, without any demerit of his, is drudgery and starving; and that all this is indispensable. We that are rich, Mr. Tyrrel, must do every thing in our power to lighten the yoke of these unfortunate people. We must not use the advantage that accident has given us with an unmerciful hand. Poor wretches! they are pressed almost beyond bearing as it is; and if we unfeelingly give another turn to the machine, they will be crushed into atoms."

This picture was not without its effect, even upon the obdurate mind of Mr. Tyrrel.—"Well, sir, I am no tyrant. I know very well that tyranny is a bad thing. But you do not infer from thence that these people are to do as they please, and never meet with their deserts?"

"Mr. Tyrrel, I see that you are shaken in your animosity. Suffer me to hail the new-born benevolence of your nature. Go with me to Hawkins. Do not let us talk of his deserts! Poor fellow! he has suffered almost all that human nature can endure. Let your forgiveness upon this occasion be the earnest of good neighbourhood and friendship between you and me."

"No, sir, I will not go. I own there is something in what you say. I always knew you had the wit to make good your own story, and tell a plausible tale. But I will not be come over thus. It has been my character, when I had once conceived a scheme of vengeance never to forego it; and I will not change that character. I took up Hawkins when everybody forsook him, and made a man of him; and the ungrateful rascal has only insulted me for my pains. Curse me, if I ever forgive him!

It would be a good jest indeed, if I were to forgive the insolence of my own creature at the desire of a man like you that has been my perpetual plague."

"For God's sake, Mr. Tyrrel, have some reason in your resentment! Let us suppose that Hawkins has behaved unjustifiably, and insulted you: is that an offence that never can be expiated? Must the father be ruined, and the son hanged, to glut your resentment?"

"Damn me, sir, but you may talk your heart out; you shall get nothing of me. I shall never forgive myself for having listened to you for a moment. I will suffer nobody to stop the stream of my resentment; if I ever were to forgive him, it should be at nobody's entreaty but my own. But, sir, I never will. If he and all his family were at my feet, I would order them all to be hanged the next minute, if my power were as good as my will."

"And this is your decision, is it? Mr. Tyrrel, I am ashamed of you! Almighty God! to hear you talk gives one a loathing for the institutions and regulations of society, and would induce one to fly the very face of man! But, no! society casts you out; man abominates you. No wealth, no rank, can buy out your stain. You will live deserted in the midst of your species; you will go into crowded societies, and no one will deign so much as to salute you. They will fly from your glance as they would from the gaze of a basilisk. Where do you expect to find the hearts of flint that shall sympathize with yours? You have the stamp of misery, incessant, undivided, unpitied misery!"

Thus saying, Mr. Falkland gave spurs to his horse, rudely pushed beside Mr. Tyrrel, and was presently out of sight. Flaming indignation annihilated even his favourite sense of honour, and he regarded his neighbour as a wretch, with whom it

was impossible even to enter into contention. For the latter, he remained for the present motionless and petrified. The glowing enthusiasm of Mr. Falkland was such as might well have unnerved the stoutest foe. Mr. Tyrrel, in spite of himself, was blasted with the compunctions of guilt, and unable to string himself for the contest. The picture Mr. Falkland had drawn was prophetic. It described what Mr. Tyrrel chiefly feared; and what in its commencement he thought he already felt. It was responsive to the whispering of his own meditations; it simply gave body and voice to the spectre that haunted him, and to the terrors of which he was an hourly prey.

By-and-by, however, he recovered. The more he had been temporarily confounded, the fiercer was his resentment when he came to himself. Such hatred never existed in a human bosom without marking its progress with violence and death. Mr. Tyrrel, however, felt no inclination to have recourse to personal defiance. He was the furthest in the world from a coward; but his genius sunk before the genius of Falkland. He left his vengeance to the disposal of circumstances. He was secure that his animosity would never be forgotten nor diminished by the interposition of any time or events. Vengeance was his nightly dream, and the uppermost of his waking thoughts.

Mr. Falkland had departed from this conference with a confirmed disapprobation of the conduct of his neighbour, and an unalterable resolution to do every thing in his power to relieve the distresses of Hawkins. But he was too late. When he arrived he found the house already evacuated by its master. The family was removed nobody knew whither; Hawkins had absconded, and, what was still more extraordinary, the boy Hawkins had escaped on the

very same day from the county jail. The inquiries Mr. Falkland set on foot after them were fruitless; no traces could be found of the catastrophe of these unhappy people. That catastrophe I shall shortly have occasion to relate, and it will be found pregnant with horror, beyond what the blackest misanthropy could readily have suggested.

I go on with my tale. I go on to relate those incidents in which my own fate was so mysteriously involved. I lift the curtain, and bring forward the last act of the tragedy.

CHAPTER X.

It may easily be supposed, that the ill temper cherished by Mr. Tyrrel in his contention with Hawkins, and the increasing animosity between him and Mr. Falkland, added to the impatience with which he thought of the escape of Emily.

Mr. Tyrrel heard with astonishment of the miscarriage of an expedient, of the success of which he had not previously entertained the slightest suspicion. He became frantic with vexation. Grimes had not dared to signify the event of his expedition in person, and the footman whom he desired to announce to his master that Miss Melville was lost, the moment after fled from his presence with the most dreadful apprehensions. Presently he bellowed for Grimes, and the young man at last appeared before him, more dead than alive. Grimes he compelled to repeat the particulars of the tale; which he had no sooner done than he once again slunk away, shocked at the execrations with which Mr. Tyrrel

overwhelmed him. Grimes was no coward; but he reverenced the inborn divinity that attends upon rank, as Indians worship the Devil. Nor was this all. The rage of Mr. Tyrrel was so ungovernable and fierce, that few hearts could have been found so stout as not to have trembled before it with a sort of unconquerable inferiority.

He no sooner obtained a moment's pause than he began to recall to his tempestuous mind the various circumstances of the case. His complaints were bitter; and, in a tranquil observer, might have produced the united feeling of pity for his sufferings, and horror at his depravity. He recollected all the precautions he had used; he could scarcely find a flaw in the process; and he cursed that blind and malicious power which delighted to cross his most deep-laid schemes. "Of this malice he was beyond all other human beings the object. He was mocked with the shadow of power, and when he lifted his hand to smite, it was struck with sudden palsy. [In the bitterness of his anguish, he forgot his recent triumph over Hawkins, or perhaps he regarded it less as a triumph than an overthrow, because it had failed of coming up to the extent of his malice.] To what purpose had Heaven given him a feeling of injury, and an instinct to resent, while he could in no case make his resentment felt! It was only necessary for him to be the enemy of any person, to ensure that person's being safe against the reach of misfortune. What insults, the most shocking and repeated, had he received from this paltry girl! And by whom was she now torn from his indignation? By that devil that haunted him at every moment, that crossed him at every step, that fixed at pleasure his arrows in his heart, and made mows and mockery at his insufferable tortures."

There was one other reflection that increased his

anguish, and made him careless and desperate as to his future conduct. It was in vain to conceal from himself that his reputation would be cruelly wounded by this event. He had imagined, that while Emily was forced into this odious marriage, she would be obliged by decorum, as soon as the event was decided, to draw a veil over the compulsion she had suffered. But this security was now lost, and Mr. Falkland would take a pride in publishing his dishonour. Though the provocations he had received from Miss Melville would, in his own opinion, have justified him in any treatment he should have thought proper to inflict, he was sensible the world would see the matter in a different light. This reflection augmented the violence of his resolutions, and determined him to refuse no means by which he could transfer the anguish that now preyed upon his own mind to that of another.

Meanwhile the composure and magnanimity of Emily had considerably subsided, the moment she believed herself in a place of safety. While danger and injustice assailed her with their menaces, she found in herself a courage that disdained to yield. The succeeding appearance of calm was more fatal to her. There was nothing now powerfully to foster her courage or excite her energy. She looked back at the trials she had passed, and her soul sickened at the recollection of that which, while it was in act, she had had the fortitude to endure. Till the period at which Mr. Tyrrel had been inspired with this cruel antipathy, she had been in all instances a stranger to anxiety and fear. Uninured to misfortune, she had suddenly and without preparation been made the subject of the most infernal malignity. When a man of robust and vigorous constitution has a fit of sickness, it produces a more powerful effect than the same indisposition upon a deli-

cate valetudinarian. Such was the case with Miss Melville. She passed the succeeding night sleepless and uneasy, and was found in the morning with a high fever. Her distemper resisted for the present all attempts to assuage it, though there was reason to hope that the goodness of her constitution, assisted by tranquillity and the kindness of those about her, would ultimately surmount it. On the second day she was delirious. On the night of that day she was arrested at the suit of Mr. Tyrrel, for a debt contracted for board and necessaries for the last fourteen years.

The idea of this arrest, as the reader will perhaps recollect, first occurred in the conversation between Mr. Tyrrel and Miss Melville, soon after he had thought proper to confine her to her chamber. But at that time he had probably no serious conception of ever being induced to carry it into execution. It had merely been mentioned by way of threat, and as the suggestion of a mind whose habits had long been accustomed to contemplate every possible instrument of tyranny and revenge. But now that the unlooked-for rescue and escape of this poor kinswoman had wrought up his thoughts to a degree of insanity, and that he revolved in the gloomy recesses of his mind how he might best shake off the load of disappointment which oppressed him, the idea recurred with double force. He was not long in forming his resolution; and calling for Barnes his steward, immediately gave him directions in what manner to proceed.

Barnes had been for several years the instrument of Mr. Tyrrel's injustice. His mind was hardened by use, and he could, without remorse, officiate as the spectator, or even as the author and director, of a scene of vulgar distress. But even he was somewhat startled upon the present occasion. The char-

acter and conduct of Emily in Mr. Tyrrel's family had been without a blot. She had not a single enemy; and it was impossible to contemplate her youth, her vivacity, and her guileless innocence without emotions of sympathy and compassion.

"Your worship?—I do not understand you!—Arrest Miss—Miss Emily!"

"Yes,—I tell you!—What is the matter with you?—Go instantly to Swineard, the lawyer, and bid him finish the business out of hand!"

"Lord love your honour! Arrest her! Why she does not owe you a brass farthing: she always lived upon your charity!"

"Ass! Scoundrel! I tell you she does owe me,—owes me eleven hundred pounds.—The law justifies it.—What do you think laws were made for? I do nothing but right, and right I will have."

"Your honour, I never questioned your orders in my life; but I must now. I cannot see you ruin Miss Emily, poor girl! nay, and yourself too, for the matter of that, and not say which way you are going. I hope you will bear with me. Why, if she owed you ever so much, she cannot be arrested. She is not of age."

"Will you have done?—Do not tell me of—It cannot, and it can. It has been done before,—and it shall be done again. Let him dispute it that dares! I will do it now, and stand to it afterward. Tell Swineard,—if he makes the least boggling, it is as much as his life is worth;—he shall starve by inches."

"Pray, your honour, think better of it. Upon my life, the whole country will cry shame of it."

"Barnes! What do you mean? I am not used to be talked to, and I cannot bear it! You have been a good fellow to me upon many occasions.—But if I find you out for making one with

them that dispute my authority, damn my soul, if I do not make you sick of your life!"

"I have done, your honour. I will not say another word except this,—I have heard as how that Miss Emily is sick a-bed. You are determined, you say, to put her in jail. You do not mean to kill her, I take it."

"Let her die! I will not spare her for an hour. —I will not always be insulted. She had no consideration for me, and I have no mercy for her.—I am in for it! They have provoked me past bearing, —and they shall feel me! Tell Swineard, in bed or up, day or night, I will not hear of an instant's delay."

Such were the directions of Mr. Tyrrel, and in strict conformity to his directions were the proceedings of that respectable limb of the law he employed upon the present occasion. Miss Melville had been delirious through a considerable part of the day on the evening of which the bailiff and his follower arrived. By the direction of the physician whom Mr. Falkland had ordered to attend her, a composing draught was administered; and, exhausted as she was by the wild and distracted images that for several hours had haunted her fancy, she was now sunk into a refreshing slumber. Mrs. Hammond, the sister of Mrs. Jakeman, was sitting by her bedside, full of compassion for the lovely sufferer, and rejoicing in the calm tranquillity that had just taken possession of her, when a little girl, the only child of Mrs. Hammond, opened the street-door to the rap of the bailiff. He said he wanted to speak to Miss Melville, and the child answered that she would go tell her mother. So saying, she advanced to the door of the back-room upon the ground-floor, in which Emily lay; but the moment it was opened, instead of waiting for the appear-

ance of the mother, the bailiff entered along with the girl.

Mrs. Hammond looked up. "Who are you!" said she. "Why do you come in here? Hush! be quiet!"

"I must speak with Miss Melville."

"Indeed, but you must not. Tell me your business. The poor child has been light-headed all day. She has just fallen asleep, and must not be disturbed."

"That is no business of mine. I must obey orders."

"Orders? Whose orders? What is it you mean?"

At this moment Emily opened her eyes. "What noise is that? Pray let me be quiet."

"Miss, I want to speak with you. I have got a writ against you for eleven hundred pounds at the suit of Squire Tyrrel."

At these words both Mrs. Hammond and Emily were dumb. The latter was scarcely able to annex any meaning to the intelligence; and though Mrs. Hammond was somewhat better acquainted with the sort of language that was employed, yet in this strange and unexpected connexion it was almost as mysterious to her as to poor Emily herself.

"A writ? How can she be in Mr. Tyrrel's debt? A writ against a child!"

"It is no signification putting your questions to us. We only do as we are directed. There is our authority. Look at it."

"Lord Almighty!" exclaimed Mrs. Hammond, "what does this mean? It is impossible Mr. Tyrrel should have sent you."

"Good woman, none of your jabber to us! Cannot you read?"

"This is all a trick! The paper is forged! It

is a vile contrivance to get the poor orphan out of the hands of those with whom only she can be afe. Proceed upon it at your peril!"

"Rest you content; that is exactly what we mean to do. Take my word, we know very well what we are about."

"Why, you would not tear her from her bed? I tell you, she is in a high fever; she is light-headed; it would be death to remove her! You are bailiffs, are not you? You are not murderers?"

"The law says nothing about that. We have orders to take her sick or well. We will do her no harm; except so far as we must perform our office, be it how it will."

"Where would you take her? What is it you mean to do?"

"To the county jail. Bullock, go order a post-chaise from the Griffin!"

"Stay, I say! Give no such orders! Wait only three hours; I will send off a messenger express to Squire Falkland, and I am sure he will satisfy you as to any harm that can come to you, without its being necessary to take the poor child to jail."

"We have particular directions against that. We are not at liberty to lose a minute. Why are not you gone? Order the horses to be put to immediately!"

Emily had listened to the course of this conversation, which had sufficiently explained to her whatever was enigmatical in the first appearance of the bailiffs. The painful and incredible reality that was thus presented effectually dissipated the illusions of phrensy to which she had just been a prey. "My dear Madam," said she to Mrs. Hammond, "do not harass yourself with useless efforts. I am very sorry for all the trouble I have given you.

But my misfortune is inevitable. Sir, if you will step into the next room, I will dress myself, and attend you immediately."

Mrs. Hammond began to be equally aware that her struggles were to no purpose; but she could not be equally patient. At one moment she raved upon the brutality of Mr. Tyrrel, whom she affirmed to be a devil incarnate, and not a man. At another she expostulated with bitter invective against the hard-heartedness of the bailiff, and exhorted him to mix some humanity and moderation with the discharge of his function; but he was impenetrable to all she could urge. In the mean while Emily yielded with the sweetest resignation to an inevitable evil. Mrs. Hammond insisted that, at least, they should permit her to attend her young lady in the chaise; and the bailiff, though the orders he had received were so peremptory that he dared not exercise his discretion as to the execution of the writ, began to have some apprehensions of danger, and was willing to admit of any precaution that was not in direct hostility to his functions. For the rest, he understood that it was in all cases dangerous to allow sickness, or apparent unfitness for removal, as a sufficient cause to interrupt a direct process; and that, accordingly, in all doubtful questions and presumptive murders, the practice of the law inclined, with a laudable partiality, to the vindication of its own officers. In addition to these general rules, he was influenced by the positive injunctions and assurances of Swineard, and the terror which, through a circle of many miles, was annexed to the name of Tyrrel. Before they departed, Mrs. Hammond despatched a messenger with a letter of three lines to Mr. Falkland, informing him of this extraordinary event. Mr. Falkland was from home when the messenger arrived, and not expected to

return till the second day; accident seemed in this instance to favour the vengeance of Mr. Tyrrel, for he had himself been too much under the dominion of an uncontrollable fury to take a circumstance of this sort into his estimate.

The forlorn state of these poor women, who were conducted, the one by compulsion, the other a volunteer, to a scene so little adapted to their accommodation as that of a common jail, may easily be imagined. Mrs. Hammond, however, was endowed with a masculine courage and impetuosity of spirit, eminently necessary in the difficulties they had to encounter. She was in some degree fitted by a sanguine temper, and an impassioned sense of injustice, for the discharge of those very offices which sobriety and calm reflection might have prescribed. The health of Miss Melville was materially affected by the surprise and removal she had undergone at the very time that repose was most necessary for her preservation. Her fever became more violent; her delirium was stronger; and the tortures of her imagination were proportioned to the unfavourableness of the state in which the removal had been effected. It was highly improbable that she could recover.

In the moments of suspended reason she was perpetually calling on the name of Falkland. Mr. Falkland, she said, was her first and only love, and he should be her husband. A moment after she exclaimed upon him, in a disconsolate yet reproachful tone, for his unworthy deference to the prejudices of the world. It was very cruel of him to show himself so proud, and tell her that he would never consent to marry a beggar. But if he were proud, she was determined to be proud too. He should see that she would not conduct herself like a slighted maiden, and that, though he could reject

her, it was not in his power to break her heart. At another time she imagined she saw Mr. Tyrrel and his engine Grimes, their hands and garments dropping with blood; and the pathetic reproaches she vented against them might have affected a heart of stone. Then the figure of Falkland presented itself to her distracted fancy, deformed with wounds, and of a deadly paleness; and she shrieked with agony, while she exclaimed that such was the general hard-heartedness, that no one would make the smallest exertion for his rescue. In such vicissitudes of pain, perpetually imagining to herself unkindness, insult, conspiracy, and murder, she passed a considerable part of two days.

On the evening of the second Mr. Falkland arrived, accompanied by Doctor Wilson, the physician by whom she had previously been attended. The scene he was called upon to witness was such as to be most exquisitely agonizing to a man of his acute sensibility. The news of the arrest had given him an inexpressible shock; he was transported out of himself at the unexampled malignity of its author. But when he saw the figure of Miss Melville, haggard, and a warrant of death written in her countenance, a victim to the diabolical passions of her kinsman, it seemed too much to be endured. When he entered, she was in the midst of one of her fits of delirium, and immediately mistook her visiters for two assassins. She asked where they had hid her Falkland, her lord, her life, her husband! and demanded that they should restore to her his mangled corpse, that she might embrace him with her dying arms, breathe her last upon his lips, and be buried in the same grave. She reproached them with the sordidness of their conduct in becoming the tools of her vile cousin, who had deprived her of her reason, and would never be contented till he

had murdered her. Mr. Falkland tore himself away from this painful scene, and leaving Doctor Wilson with his patient, desired him, when he had given the necessary directions, to follow him to his inn.

The perpetual hurry of spirits in which Miss Melville had been kept for several days by the nature of her indisposition was extremely exhausting to her; and in about an hour from the visit of Mr. Falkland, her delirium subsided, and left her in so low a state as to render it difficult to perceive any signs of life. Doctor Wilson, who had withdrawn, to sooth, if possible, the disturbed and impatient thoughts of Mr. Falkland, was summoned afresh upon this change of symptoms, and sat by the bedside during the remainder of the night. The situation of his patient was such as to keep him in momentary apprehension of her decease. While Miss Melville lay in this feeble and exhausted condition, Mrs. Hammond betrayed every token of the tenderest anxiety. Her sensibility was habitually of the acutest sort, and the qualities of Emily were such as powerfully to fix her affection. She loved her like a mother. Upon the present occasion every sound, every motion, made her tremble. Doctor Wilson had introduced another nurse, in consideration of the incessant fatigue Mrs. Hammond had undergone; and he endeavoured by representations, and even by authority, to compel her to quit the apartment of the patient. But she was uncontrollable; and he at length found that he should probably do her more injury by the violence that would be necessary to separate her from the suffering innocent, than by allowing her to follow her inclination. Her eye was a thousand times turned, with the most eager curiosity, upon the countenance of Doctor Wilson, without her daring to breathe a question respecting his opinion, lest he should

answer her by a communication of the most fatal tidings. In the mean time she listened with the deepest attention to every thing that dropped either from the physician or the nurse, hoping to collect, as it were, from some oblique hint, the intelligence which she had not courage expressly to require.

Towards morning the state of the patient seemed to take a favourable turn. She dozed for near two hours, and, when she awoke, appeared perfectly calm and sensible. Understanding that Mr. Falkland had brought the physician to attend her, and was himself in her neighbourhood, she requested to see him. Mr. Falkland had gone, in the mean time, with one of his tenants, to bail the debt, and now entered the prison to inquire whether the young lady might be safely removed from her present miserable residence to a more airy and commodious apartment. When he appeared, the sight of him revived in the mind of Miss Melville an imperfect recollection of the wanderings of her delirium. She covered her face with her fingers, and betrayed the most expressive confusion, while she thanked him, with her usual unaffected simplicity, for the trouble he had taken. She hoped she should not give him much more; she thought she should get better. It was a shame, she said, if a young and lively girl as she was could not contrive to outlive the trifling misfortunes to which she had been subjected. But while she said this she was still extremely weak. She tried to assume a cheerful countenance; but it was a faint effort, which the feeble state of her frame did not seem sufficient to support. Mr. Falkland and the doctor joined to request her to keep herself quiet, and avoid for the present all occasions of exertion.

Encouraged by these appearances, Mrs. Hammond ventured to follow the two gentlemen out of

the room, in order to learn from the physician what hopes he entertained. Doctor Wilson acknowledged that he found his patient at first in a very unfavourable situation, that the symptoms were changed for the better, and that he was not without some expectation of her recovery. He added, however, that he could answer for nothing; that the next twelve hours would be exceedingly critical, but that if she did not grow worse before morning, he would then undertake for her life. Mrs. Hammond, who had hitherto seen nothing but despair, now became frantic with joy. She burst into tears of transport, blessed the physician in the most emphatic and impassioned terms, and uttered a thousand extravagancies. Doctor Wilson seized this opportunity to press her to give herself a little repose, to which she consented, a bed being first procured for her in the room next to Miss Melville's, she having charged the nurse to give her notice of any alteration in the state of the patient.

Mrs. Hammond enjoyed an uninterrupted sleep of several hours. It was already night, when she was awaked by an unusual bustle in the next room. She listened for a few moments, and then determined to go and discover the occasion of it. As she opened her door for that purpose, she met the nurse coming to her. The countenance of the messenger told her what it was she had to communicate, without the use of words. She hurried to the bedside, and found Miss Melville expiring. The appearances that had at first been so encouraging were of short duration. The calm of the morning proved to be only a sort of lightening before death. In a few hours the patient grew worse. The bloom of her countenance faded; she drew her breath with difficulty; and her eyes became fixed. Doctor Wilson came in at this period, and immediately per-

ceived that all was over. She was for some time in convulsions; but these subsiding, she addressed the physician with a composed, though feeble voice. She thanked him for his attention; and expressed the most lively sense of her obligations to Mr. Falkland. She sincerely forgave her cousin, and hoped he might never be visited by too acute a recollection of his barbarity to her. She would have been contented to live. Few persons had a sincerer relish of the pleasures of life; but she was well pleased to die, rather than have become the wife of Grimes. As Mrs. Hammond entered, she turned her countenance towards her, and with an affectionate expression repeated her name. This was her last word; in less than two hours from that time she breathed her last in the arms of this faithful friend.

CHAPTER XI.

Such was the fate of Miss Emily Melville. Perhaps tyranny never exhibited a more painful memorial of the detestation in which it deserves to be held. The idea irresistibly excited in every spectator of the scene was that of regarding Mr. Tyrrel as the most diabolical wretch that had ever dishonoured the human form. The very attendants upon this house of oppression, for the scene was acted upon too public a stage not to be generally understood, expressed their astonishment and disgust at his unparalleled cruelty.

If such were the feelings of men bred to the commission of injustice, it is difficult to say what must

have been those of Mr. Falkland. He raved, he swore, he beat his head, he rent up his hair. He was unable to continue in one posture, and to remain in one place. He burst away from the spot with vehemence, as if he sought to leave behind him his recollection and his existence. He seemed to tear up the ground with fierceness and rage. He returned soon again. He approached the sad remains of what had been Emily, and gazed on them with such intentness, that his eyes appeared ready to burst from their sockets. Acute and exquisite as were his notions of virtue and honour, he could not prevent himself from reproaching the system of nature, for having given birth to such a monster as Tyrrel. He was ashamed of himself for wearing the same form. He could not think of the human species with patience. He foamed with indignation against the laws of the universe, that did not permit him to crush such reptiles at a blow, as we would crush so many noxious insects. It was necessary to guard him like a madman.

The whole office of judging what was proper to be done under the present circumstances devolved upon Doctor Wilson. The doctor was a man of cool and methodical habits of acting. One of the first ideas that suggested itself to him was, that Miss Melville was a branch of the family of Tyrrel. He did not doubt of the willingness of Mr. Falkland to discharge every expense that might be further incident to the melancholy remains of this unfortunate victim; but he conceived that the laws of fashion and decorum required some notification of the event to be made to the head of the family. Perhaps, too, he had an eye to his interest in his profession, and was reluctant to expose himself to the resentment of a person of Mr. Tyrrel's consideration in the neighbourhood. But, with this weakness, he had

nevertheless some feelings in common with the rest of the world, and must have suffered considerable violence before he could have persuaded himself to be the messenger; besides which he did not think it right in the present situation to leave Mr. Falkland.

Doctor Wilson no sooner mentioned these ideas, than they seemed to make a sudden impression on Mrs. Hammond, and she earnestly requested that she might be permitted to carry the intelligence. The proposal was unexpected; but the doctor did not very obstinately refuse his assent. She was determined, she said, to see what sort of impression the catastrophe would make upon the author of it; and she promised to comport herself with moderation and civility. The journey was soon performed.

"I am come, sir," said she to Mr. Tyrrel, "to inform you that your cousin, Miss Melville, died this afternoon."

"Died?"

"Yes, sir. I saw her die. She died in these arms."

"Died? Who killed her? What do you mean?"

"Who? Is it for you to ask that question? Your cruelty and malice killed her!"

"Me?—my?—Poh! she is not dead—it cannot be—it is not a week since she left this house."

"Do not you believe me? I say she is dead!"

"Have a care, woman! this is no matter for jesting. No: though she used me ill, I would not believe her dead for all the world!"

Mrs. Hammond shook her head in a manner expressive at once of grief and indignation.

"No, no, no, no! I will never believe that!—No, never!"

"Will you come with me, and convince your eyes? It is a sight worthy of you; and will be a

feast to such a heart as yours!"—Saying this, Mrs. Hammond offered her hand as if to conduct him to the spot.

Mr. Tyrrel shrunk back.

"If she be dead, what is that to me? Am I to answer for every thing that goes wrong in the world?—What do you come here for? Why bring your messages to me?"

"To whom should I bring them but to her kinsman,—and her murderer."

"Murderer?—Did I employ knives or pistols? Did I give her poison? I did nothing but what the law allows. If she be dead, nobody can say that I am to blame!"

"To blame?—All the world will abhor and curse you. Were you such a fool as to think, because men pay respect to wealth and rank, this would extend to such a deed? They will laugh at so barefaced a cheat. The meanest beggar will spurn and spit at you. Ay, you may well stand confounded at what you have done. I will proclaim you to the whole world, and you will be obliged to fly the very face of a human creature!"

"Good woman," said Mr. Tyrrel, extremely humbled, "talk no more in this strain!—Emmy is not dead! I am sure—I hope—she is not dead!—Tell me that you have only been deceiving me, and I will forgive you every thing—I will forgive her—I will take her into favour—I will do any thing you please!—I never meant her any harm!"

"I tell you she is dead! You have murdered the sweetest innocent that lived! Can you bring her back to life, as you have driven her out of it? If you could, I would kneel to you twenty times a day! What is it you have done!—Miserable wretch! did you think you could do and undo, and change things this way and that, as you pleased?"

The reproaches of Mrs. Hammond were the first instance in which Mr. Tyrrel was made to drink the full cup of retribution. This was, however, only a specimen of a long series of contempt, abhorrence, and insult, that was reserved for him. The words of Mrs. Hammond were prophetic. It evidently appeared, that though wealth and hereditary elevation operate as an apology for many delinquencies, there are some which so irresistibly address themselves to the indignation of mankind, that, like death, they level all distinctions, and reduce their perpetrator to an equality with the most indigent and squalid of his species. Against Mr. Tyrrel, as the tyrannical and unmanly murderer of Emily, those who dared not venture the unreserved avowal of their sentiments muttered curses, deep, not loud; while the rest joined in a universal cry of abhorrence and execration. He stood astonished at the novelty of his situation. Accustomed as he had been to the obedience and trembling homage of mankind, he had imagined they would be perpetual, and that no excess on his part would ever be potent enough to break the enchantment. Now he looked round, and saw sullen detestation in every face, which with difficulty restrained itself, and upon the slightest provocation broke forth with an impetuous tide, and swept away the mounds of subordination and fear. His large estate could not purchase civility from the gentry, the peasantry, scarcely from his own servants. In the indignation of all around him he found a ghost that haunted him with every change of place, and a remorse that stung his conscience, and exterminated his peace. The neighbourhood appeared more and more every day to be growing too hot for him to endure, and it became evident that he would ultimately be obliged to quit the country. Urged by the flagitiousness of this

last example, people learned to recollect every other instance of his excesses, and it was, no doubt, a fearful catalogue that rose up in judgment against him. It seemed as if the sense of public resentment had long been gathering strength unperceived, and now burst forth into insuppressible violence.

There was scarcely a human being upon whom this sort of retribution could have sat more painfully than upon Mr. Tyrrel. Though he had not a consciousness of innocence prompting him continually to recoil from the detestation of mankind as a thing totally unallied to his character, yet the imperiousness of his temper, and the constant experience he had had of the pliability of other men, prepared him to feel the general and undisguised condemnation into which he was sunk with uncommon emotions of anger and impatience. That he, at the beam of whose eye every countenance fell, and to whom in the fierceness of his wrath no one was daring enough to reply, should now be regarded with avowed dislike, and treated with unceremonious censure, was a thing he could not endure to recollect or believe. Symptoms of the universal disgust smote him at every instant, and at every blow he writhed with intolerable anguish. His rage was unbounded and raving. He repelled every attack with the fiercest indignation; while the more he struggled, the more desperate his situation appeared to become. At length he determined to collect his strength for a decisive effort, and to meet the whole tide of public opinion in a single scene.

In pursuance of these thoughts he resolved to repair, without delay, to the rural assembly which I have already mentioned in the course of my story. Miss Melville had now been dead one month. Mr. Falkland had been absent the last week in a distant part of the country, and was not expected to

return for a week longer. Mr. Tyrrel willingly embraced the opportunity, trusting if he could now effect his re-establishment, that he should easily preserve the ground he had gained, even in the face of his formidable rival. Mr. Tyrrel was not deficient in courage; but he conceived the present to be too important an epoch in his life to allow him to make any unnecessary risk in his chance for future ease and importance.

There was a sort of bustle that took place at his entrance into the assembly,—it having been agreed by the gentlemen of the assembly that Mr. Tyrrel was to be refused admittance, as a person with whom they did not choose to associate. This vote had already been notified to him by letter by the master of the ceremonies, but the intelligence was rather calculated, with a man of Mr. Tyrrel's disposition, to excite defiance than to overawe. At the door of the assembly he was personally met by the master of the ceremonies, who had perceived the arrival of an equipage, and who now endeavoured to repeat his prohibition: but he was thrust aside by Mr. Tyrrel with an air of native authority and ineffable contempt. As he entered, every eye was turned upon him. Presently all the gentlemen in the room assembled round him. Some endeavoured to hustle him, and others began to expostulate. But he found the secret effectually to silence the one set, and to shake off the other. His muscular form, the well-known eminence of his intellectual powers, the long habits to which every man was formed of acknowledging his ascendency, were all in his favour. He considered himself as playing a desperate stake, and had roused all the energies he possessed, to enable him to do justice to so interesting a transaction. Disengaged from the insects that at first pestered him, he paced up and down

the room with a magisterial stride, and flashed an angry glance on every side. He then broke silence. "If any one had any thing to say to him, he should know where and how to answer him. He would advise any such person, however, to consider well what he was about. If any man imagined he had any thing personally to complain of, it was very well. But he did expect that nobody there would be ignorant and raw enough to meddle with what was no business of theirs, and intrude into the concerns of any man's private family."

This being a sort of defiance, one and another gentleman advanced to answer it. He that was first began to speak; but Mr. Tyrrel, by the expression of his countenance and a peremptory tone, by well-timed interruptions and pertinent insinuations, caused him first to hesitate, and then to be silent. He seemed to be fast advancing to the triumph he had promised himself. The whole company were astonished. They felt the same abhorrence and condemnation of his character; but they could not help admiring the courage and resources he displayed upon the present occasion. They could without difficulty have concentered afresh their indignant feelings, but they seemed to want a leader.

At this critical moment Mr. Falkland entered the room. Mere accident had enabled him to return sooner than he expected.

Both he and Mr. Tyrrel reddened at sight of each other. He advanced towards Mr. Tyrrel without a moment's pause, and in a peremptory voice asked him what he did there?

"Here? What do you mean by that? This place is as free to me as you, and you are the last person to whom I shall deign to give an account of myself."

"Sir, the place is not free to you. Do not you know you have been voted out? Whatever were your rights, your infamous conduct has forfeited them."

"Mr. what do you call yourself, if you have any thing to say to me, choose a proper time and place. Do not think to put on your bullying airs under shelter of this company! I will not endure it."

"You are mistaken, sir. This public scene is the only place where I can have any thing to say to you. If you would not hear the universal indignation of mankind, you must not come into the society of men.—Miss Melville!—Shame upon you, inhuman, unrelenting tyrant! Can you hear her name, and not sink into the earth? Can you retire into solitude, and not see her pale and patient ghost rising to reproach you? Can you recollect her virtues, her innocence, her spotless manners, her unresentful temper, and not run distracted with remorse? Have you not killed her in the first bloom of her youth? Can you bear to think that she now lies mouldering in the grave through your cursed contrivance, that deserved a crown, ten thousand times more than you deserve to live? And do you expect that mankind will ever forget, or forgive such a deed? Go, miserable wretch; think yourself too happy that you are permitted to fly the face of man! Why, what a pitiful figure do you make at this moment! Do you think that any thing could bring so hardened a wretch as you are to shrink from reproach, if your conscience were not in confederacy with them that reproached you? And were you fool enough to believe that any obstinacy, however determined, could enable you to despise the keen rebuke of justice? Go, shrink into your miserable self! Begone, and let me never be blasted with your sight again!"

And here, incredible as it may appear, Mr. Tyrrel began to obey his imperious censurer. His looks were full of wildness and horror; his limbs trembled; and his tongue refused its office. He felt no power of resisting the impetuous torrent of reproach that was poured upon him. He hesitated; he was ashamed of his own defeat; he seemed to wish to deny it. But his struggles were ineffectual; every attempt perished in the moment it was made. The general voice was eager to abash him. As his confusion became more visible, the outcry increased. It swelled gradually to hootings, tumult, and a deafening noise of indignation. At length he willingly retired from the public scene, unable any longer to endure the sensations it inflicted.

In about an hour and a half he returned. No precaution had been taken against this incident, for nothing could be more unexpected. In the interval he had intoxicated himself with large draughts of brandy. In a moment he was in a part of the room where Mr. Falkland was standing, and with one blow of his muscular arm levelled him with the earth. The blow, however, was not stunning, and Mr. Falkland rose again immediately. It is obvious to perceive how unequal he must have been in this species of contest. He was scarcely risen, before Mr. Tyrrel repeated his blow. Mr. Falkland was now upon his guard, and did not fall. But the blows of his adversary were redoubled with a rapidity difficult to conceive, and Mr. Falkland was once again brought to the earth. In this situation Mr. Tyrrel kicked his prostrate enemy, and stooped apparently with the intention of dragging him along the floor. All this passed in a moment, and the gentlemen present had not time to recover their surprise. They now interfered, and Mr. Tyrrel once more quitted the apartment.

It is difficult to conceive any event more terrible to the individual upon whom it fell than the treatment which Mr. Falkland in this instance experienced. Every passion of his life was calculated to make him feel it more acutely. He had repeatedly exerted an uncommon energy and prudence, to prevent the misunderstanding between Mr. Tyrrel and himself from proceeding to extremities; but in vain! It was closed with a catastrophe, exceeding all that he had feared, or that the most penetrating foresight could have suggested. To Mr. Falkland disgrace was worse than death. The slightest breath of dishonour would have stung him to the very soul. What must it have been with this complication of ignominy, base, humiliating, and public? Could Mr. Tyrrel have understood the evil he inflicted, even he, under all his circumstances of provocation, could scarcely have perpetrated it. Mr. Falkland's mind was full of uproar like the war of contending elements, and of such suffering as casts contempt on the refinements of inventive cruelty. He wished for annihilation, to lie down in eternal oblivion, in an insensibility, which, compared with what he experienced, was scarcely less enviable than beatitude itself. Horror, detestation, revenge, inexpressible longings to shake off the evil, and a persuasion that in this case all effort was powerless, filled his soul even to bursting.

One other event closed the transactions of this memorable evening. Mr. Falkland was baffled of the vengeance that yet remained to him. Mr. Tyrrel was found by some of the company dead in the street, having been murdered at the distance of a few yards from the assembly house.

CHAPTER XII.

I SHALL endeavour to state the remainder of this narrative in the words of Mr. Collins. The reader has already had occasion to perceive that Mr. Collins was a man of no vulgar order; and his reflections on the subject were uncommonly judicious.

"This day was the crisis of Mr. Falkland's history. From hence took its beginning that gloomy and unsociable melancholy, of which he has since been the victim. No two characters can be in certain respects more strongly contrasted, than the Mr. Falkland of a date prior and subsequent to these events. Hitherto he had been attended by a fortune perpetually prosperous. His mind was sanguine; full of that undoubting confidence in its own powers which prosperity is qualified to produce. Though the habits of his life were those of a serious and sublime visionary, they were nevertheless full of cheerfulness and tranquillity. But from this moment, his pride and the lofty adventurousness of his spirit were effectually subdued. From an object of envy he was changed into an object of compassion. Life, which hitherto no one had more exquisitely enjoyed, became a burden to him. No more self-complacency, no more rapture, no more self-approving and heart-transporting benevolence! He who had lived beyond any man upon the grand and animating reveries of the imagination, seemed now to have no visions but of anguish and despair. His case was peculiarly worthy of sympathy, since

no doubt, if rectitude and purity of disposition could give a title to happiness, few men could exhibit a more consistent and powerful claim than Mr. Falkland.

"He was too deeply pervaded with the idle and groundless romances of chivalry ever to forget the situation, humiliating and dishonourable according to his ideas, in which he had been placed upon this occasion. There is a mysterious sort of divinity annexed to the person of a true knight, that makes any species of brute violence committed upon it indelible and immortal. To be knocked down, cuffed, kicked, dragged along the floor! Sacred Heaven, the memory of such a treatment was not to be endured! No future lustration could ever remove the stain: and, what was perhaps still worse in the present case, the offender having ceased to exist, the lustration which the laws of knight-errantry prescribe was rendered impossible.

"In some future period of human improvement, it is probable, that that calamity will be in a manner unintelligible, which in the present instance contributed to tarnish and wither the excellence of one of the most elevated and amiable of human minds. If Mr. Falkland had reflected with perfect accuracy upon the case, he would probably have been able to look down with indifference upon a wound which, as it was, pierced to his very vitals. How much more dignity, than in the modern duellist, do we find in Themistocles, the most gallant of the Greeks; who, when Eurybiades, his commander-in-chief, in answer to some of his remonstrances, lifted his cane over him with a menacing air, accosted him in that noble apostrophe, 'Strike, but hear!'

"How would a man of true discernment in such a case reply to his brutal assailant? 'I make it my boast that I can endure calamity and pain:

shall I not be able to endure the trifling inconvenience that your folly can inflict upon me? Perhaps a human being would be more accomplished, if he understood the science of personal defence; but how few would be the occasions upon which he would be called to exert it? How few persons would he encounter so unjust and injurious as you, if his own conduct were directed by the principles of reason and benevolence? Besides, how narrow would be the use of this science when acquired? It will scarcely put the man of delicate make and petty stature upon a level with the athletic pugilist; and if it did in some measure secure me against the malice of a single adversary, still my person and my life, so far as mere force is concerned, would always be at the mercy of two. Further than immediate defence against actual violence, it could never be of use to me. The man who can deliberately meet his adversary for the purpose of exposing the person of one or both of them to injury tramples upon every principle of reason and equity. Duelling is the vilest of all egotism, treating the public, who has a claim to all my powers and exertions, as if it were nothing, and myself, or rather an untelligible chimera I annex to myself, as if it were entitled to my exclusive attention. I am unable to cope with you: what then? Can that circumstance dishonour me? No; I can only be dishonoured by perpetrating an unjust action. My honour is in my own keeping, beyond the reach of all mankind. Strike! I am passive. No injury that you can inflict shall provoke me to expose you or myself to unnecessary evil. I refuse that; but I am not therefore pusillanimous: when I refuse any danger or suffering by which the general good may be promoted, then brand me for a coward!'

"These reasonings, however simple and irre-

sistible they must be found by a dispassionate inquirer, are little reflected on by the world at large, and were most of all uncongenial to the prejudices of Mr. Falkland.

"But the public disgrace and chastisement that had been imposed upon him, intolerable as they were to be recollected, were not the whole of the mischief that redounded to our unfortunate patron from the transactions of that day. It was presently whispered that he was no other than the murderer of his antagonist. This rumour was of too much importance to the very continuance of his life, to justify its being concealed from him. He heard it with inexpressible astonishment and horror; it formed a dreadful addition to the load of intellectual anguish that already oppressed him. No man had ever held his reputation more dear than Mr. Falkland; and now, in one day, he was fallen under the most exquisite calamities, a complicated personal insult, and the imputation of the foulest of crimes. He might have fled; for no one was forward to proceed against a man so adored as Mr. Falkland, or in revenge of one so universally execrated as Mr. Tyrrel. But flight he disdained. In the mean time the affair was of the most serious magnitude, and the rumour unchecked seemed daily to increase in strength. Mr. Falkland appeared sometimes inclined to adopt such steps as might have been best calculated to bring the imputation to a speedy trial. But he probably feared, by too direct an appeal to judicature, to render more precise an imputation, the memory of which he deprecated; at the same time that he was sufficiently willing to meet the severest scrutiny, and, if he could not hope to have it forgotten that he had ever been accused, to prove in the most satisfactory manner that the accusation was unjust.

"The neighbouring magistrates at length conceived it necessary to take some steps upon the subject. Without causing Mr. Falkland to be apprehended, they sent to desire he would appear before them at one of their meetings. The proceeding being thus opened, Mr. Falkland expressed his hope that, if the business were likely to stop there, their investigation might at least be rendered as solemn as possible. The meeting was numerous; every person of a respectable class in society was admitted to be an auditor; the whole town, one of the most considerable in the county, was apprized of the nature of the business. Few trials, invested with all the forms of judgment, have excited so general an interest. A trial, under the present circumstances, was scarcely attainable; and it seemed to be the wish both of principal and umpires, to give to this transaction all the momentary notoriety and decisiveness of a trial.

"The magistrates investigated the particulars of the story. Mr. Falkland, it appeared, had left the rooms immediately after his assailant; and though he had been attended by one or two of the gentlemen to his inn, it was proved that he had left them upon some slight occasion as soon as he arrived at it; and that, when they inquired for him of the waiters, he had already mounted his horse and ridden home.

"By the nature of the case, no particular facts could be stated in balance against these. As soon as they had been sufficiently detailed, Mr. Falkland therefore proceeded to his defence. Several copies of his defence were made, and Mr. Falkland seemed, for a short time, to have had the idea of sending it to the press, though, for some reason or other, he afterward suppressed it. I have one of the copies in my possession, and I will read it to you."

Saying this, Mr. Collins rose, and took it from a private drawer in his escritoire. During this action he appeared to recollect himself. He did not, in the strict sense of the word, hesitate; but he was prompted to make some apology for what he was doing.

"You seem never to have heard of this memorable transaction; and, indeed, that is little to be wondered at, since the good-nature of the world is interested in suppressing it, and it is deemed a disgrace to a man to have defended himself from a criminal imputation, though with circumstances the most satisfactory and honourable. It may be supposed that this suppression is particularly acceptable to Mr. Falkland; and I should not have acted in contradiction to his modes of thinking in communicating the story to you, had there not been circumstances of peculiar urgency that seemed to render the communication desirable." Saying this, he proceeded to read from the paper in his hand.

"'Gentlemen,

"'I stand here accused of a crime, the most black that any human creature is capable of perpetrating. I am innocent. I have no fear that I shall fail to make every person in this company acknowledge my innocence. In the mean time, what must be my feelings? Conscious as I am of deserving approbation and not censure, of having passed my life in acts of justice and philanthropy, can any thing be more deplorable than for me to answer to a charge of murder? So wretched is my situation, that I cannot accept your gratuitous acquittal, if you should be disposed to bestow it. I must answer to an imputation, the very thought of which is ten thousand times worse to me than death. I must exert the whole energy of my mind, to prevent my being ranked with the vilest of men.

"'Gentlemen, this is a situation in which a man may be allowed to boast. Accursed situation! No man need envy me the vile and polluted triumph I am now to gain! I have called no witnesses to my character. Great God! what sort of character is that which must be supported by witnesses? But, if I must speak, look round the company, ask of every one present, inquire of your own hearts! Not one word of reproach was ever whispered against me. I do not hesitate to call upon those who have known me most, to afford me the most honourable testimony.

"'My life has been spent in the keenest and most unintermitted sensibility to reputation. I am almost indifferent as to what shall be the event of this day. I would not open my mouth upon the occasion, if my life were the only thing that was at stake. It is not in the power of your decision to restore to me my unblemished reputation, to obliterate the disgrace I have suffered, or to prevent it from being remembered that I have been brought to examination upon a charge of murder. Your decision can never have the efficacy to prevent the miserable remains of my existence from being the most intolerable of all burthens.

"'I am accused of having committed murder upon the body of Barnabas Tyrrel. I would most joyfully have given every farthing I possess, and devoted myself to perpetual beggary, to have preserved his life. His life was precious to me, beyond that of all mankind. In my opinion, the greatest injustice committed by his unknown assassin was that of defrauding me of my just revenge. I confess that I would have called him out to the field, and that our encounter should not have been terminated but by the death of one or both of us. This would have been a pitiful and inadequate compensation

for his unparalleled insult, but it was all that remained.

"'I ask for no pity, but I must openly declare that never was any misfortune so horrible as mine. I would willingly have taken refuge from the recollection of that night in a voluntary death. Life was now stripped of all those recommendations for the sake of which it was dear to me. But even this consolation is denied me. I am compelled to drag for ever the intolerable load of existence, upon penalty, if at any period, however remote, I shake it off, of having that impatience regarded as confirming a charge of murder. Gentlemen, if by your decision you could take away my life, without that act being connected with my disgrace, I would bless the cord that stopped the breath of my existence for ever.

"'You all know how easily I might have fled from this purgation. If I had been guilty, should I not have embraced the opportunity? But, as it was, I could not. Reputation has been the idol, the jewel of my life. I could never have borne to think that a human creature, in the remotest part of the globe, should believe that I was a criminal. Alas! what a deity it is that I have chosen for my worship! I have entailed upon myself everlasting agony and despair!

"'I have but one word to add. Gentlemen, I charge you to do me the imperfect justice that is in your power! My life is a worthless thing. But my honour, the empty remains of honour I have now to boast, is in your judgment, and you will each of you, from this day, have imposed upon yourselves the task of its vindicators. It is little that you can do for me; but it is not less your duty to do that little. May that God who is the fountain of honour and good prosper and protect you! The man who

now stands before you is devoted to perpetual barrenness and blast! He has nothing to hope for beyond the feeble consolation of this day!'

"You will easily imagine that Mr. Falkland was discharged with every circumstance of credit. Nothing is more to be deplored in human institutions, than that the ideas of mankind should have annexed a sentiment of disgrace to a purgation thus satisfactory and decisive. No one entertained the shadow of a doubt upon the subject, and yet a mere concurrence of circumstances made it necessary that the best of men should be publicly put on his defence, as if really under suspicion of an atrocious crime. It may be granted, indeed, that Mr. Falkland had his faults, but those very faults placed him at a still farther distance from the criminality in question. He was the fool of honour and fame: a man whom, in the pursuit of reputation, nothing could divert; who would have purchased the character of a true, gallant, and undaunted hero, at the expense of worlds, and who thought every calamity nominal but a stain upon his honour. How atrociously absurd to suppose any motive capable of inducing such a man to play the part of a lurking assassin! How unfeeling to oblige him to defend himself from such an imputation! Did any man, and, least of all, a man of the purest honour, ever pass in a moment from a life unstained by a single act of injury, to the consummation of human depravity?

"When the decision of the magistrates was declared, a general murmur of applause and involuntary transport burst forth from every one present. It was at first low, and gradually became louder. As it was the expression of rapturous delight, and an emotion disinterested and divine, so there was an indescribable something in the very sound, that car-

ried it home to the heart, and convinced every spectator that there was no merely personal pleasure which ever existed that would not be foolish and feeble in the comparison. Every one strove who should most express his esteem of the amiable accused. Mr. Falkland was no sooner withdrawn than the gentlemen present determined to give a still further sanction to the business, by their congratulations. They immediately named a deputation to wait upon him for that purpose. Every one concurred to assist the general sentiment. It was a sort of sympathetic feeling that took hold upon all ranks and degrees. The multitude received him with huzzas; they took his horses from his carriage, dragged him along in triumph, and attended him many miles on his return to his own habitation. It seemed as if a public examination upon a criminal charge, which had hitherto been considered in every event as a brand of disgrace, was converted, in the present instance, into an occasion of enthusiastic adoration and unexampled honour.

"Nothing could reach the heart of Mr. Falkland. He was not insensible to the general kindness and exertions; but it was too evident that the melancholy that had taken hold of his mind was invincible.

"It was only a few weeks after this memorable scene that the real murderer was discovered. Every part of this story was extraordinary. The real murderer was Hawkins. He was found with his son, under a feigned name, at a village about thirty miles distant, in want of all the necessaries of life. He had lived there from the period of his flight, in so private a manner that all the inquiries that had been set on foot by the benevolence of Mr. Falkland or the insatiable malice of Mr. Tyrrel, had been insufficient to discover him. The first thing that had led to the detection was a parcel of clothes

covered with blood that were found in a ditch, and that, when drawn out, were known by the people of the village to belong to this man. The murder of Mr. Tyrrel was not a circumstance that could be unknown, and suspicion was immediately roused. A diligent search being made, the rusty handle, with part of the blade of a knife, was found thrown in a corner of his lodging, which, being applied to a piece of the point of a knife that had been broken in the wound, appeared exactly to correspond. Upon further inquiry, two rustics, who had been accidentally on the spot, remembered to have seen Hawkins and his son in the town that very evening, and to have called after them, and received no answer, though they were sure of their persons. Upon this accumulated evidence both Hawkins and his son were tried, condemned, and afterward executed. In the interval between the sentence and execution Hawkins confessed his guilt, with many marks of compunction; though there are persons by whom this is denied; but I have taken some pains to inquire into the fact, and am persuaded that their disbelief is precipitate and groundless.

"The cruel injustice that this man had suffered from his village-tyrant was not forgotten upon the present occasion. It was by a strange fatality that the barbarous proceedings of Mr. Tyrrel seemed never to fall short of their completion; and even his death served eventually to consummate the ruin of a man he hated; a circumstance which, if it could have come to his knowledge, would perhaps have in some measure consoled him for his untimely end. This poor Hawkins was surely entitled to some pity, since his being finally urged to desperation, and brought, together with his son, to an ignominious fate, was originally owing to the sturdiness of his virtue and independence. But the compassion of

the public was in a great measure shut against him, as they thought it a piece of barbarous and unpardonable selfishness, that he had not rather come boldly forward to meet the consequences of his own conduct than suffer a man of so much public worth as Mr. Falkland, and who had been so desirous of doing him good, to be exposed to the risk of being tried for a murder that he had committed.

"From this time to the present Mr. Falkland has been nearly such as you at present see him. Though it be several years since these transactions, the impression they made is for ever fresh in the mind of our unfortunate patron. From thenceforward his habits became totally different. He had before been fond of public scenes, and acting a part in the midst of the people among whom he immediately resided. He now made himself a rigid recluse. He had no associates, no friends. Inconsolable himself, he yet wished to treat others with kindness. There was a solemn sadness in his manner, attended with the most perfect gentleness and humanity. Everybody respects him, for his benevolence is unalterable; but there is a stately coldness and reserve in his behaviour, which makes it difficult for those about him to regard him with the familiarity of affection. These symptoms are uninterrupted, except at certain times when his sufferings become intolerable, and he displays the marks of a furious insanity. At those times his language is fearful and mysterious, and he seems to figure to himself by turns every sort of persecution and alarm which may be supposed to attend upon an accusation of murder. But, sensible of his own weakness, he is anxious at such times to withdraw into solitude: and his domestics in general know nothing of him, but the uncommunicative and haughty, but mild, dejection that accompanies every thing he does."

CHAPTER XIII.

I HAVE stated the narrative of Mr. Collins, interspersed with such other information as I was able to collect, with all the exactness that my memory, assisted by certain memorandums I made at the time, will afford. I do not pretend to warrant the authenticity of any part of these memoirs, except so much as fell under my own knowledge, and that part shall be given with the same simplicity and accuracy that I would observe towards a court which was to decide in the last resort upon every thing dear to me. The same scrupulous fidelity restrains me from altering the manner of Mr. Collins's narrative to adapt it to the precepts of my own taste; and it will soon be perceived how essential that narrative is to the elucidation of my history.

The intention of my friend in this communication was to give me ease; but he in reality added to my embarrassment. Hitherto I had had no intercourse with the world and its passions; and, though I was not totally unacquainted with them as they appear in books, this proved of little service to me when I came to witness them myself. The case seemed entirely altered, when the subject of those passions was continually before my eyes, and the events had happened but the other day, as it were, in the very neighbourhood where I lived. There was a connexion and progress in this narrative, which made it altogether unlike the little village incidents I had hitherto known. My feelings

were successively interested for the different persons that were brought upon the scene. My veneration was excited for Mr. Clare, and my applause for the intrepidity of Mrs. Hammond. I was astonished that any human creature should be so shockingly perverted as Mr. Tyrrel. I paid the tribute of my tears to the memory of the artless Miss Melville. I found a thousand fresh reasons to admire and love Mr. Falkland.

At present I was satisfied with thus considering every incident in its obvious sense. But the story I had heard was for ever in my thoughts, and I was peculiarly interested to comprehend its full import. I turned it a thousand ways, and examined it in every point of view. In the original communication it appeared sufficiently distinct and satisfactory; but as I brooded over it, it gradually became mysterious. There was something strange in the character of Hawkins. So firm, so sturdily honest and just, as he appeared at first; all at once to become a murderer! His first behaviour under the prosecution, how accurately was it calculated to prepossess one in his favour! To be sure, if he were guilty, it was unpardonable in him to permit a man of so much dignity and worth as Mr. Falkland to suffer under the imputation of his crime! And yet I could not help bitterly compassionating the honest fellow, brought to the gallows, as he was, strictly speaking, by the machinations of that devil incarnate, Mr. Tyrrel. His son, too, that son for whom he voluntarily sacrificed his all, to die with him at the same tree; surely never was a story more affecting!

Was it possible, after all, that Mr. Falkland should be the murderer? The reader will scarcely believe, that the idea suggested itself to my mind that I would ask him. It was but a passing thought;

but it serves to mark the simplicity of my character. Then I recollected the virtues of my master, almost too sublime for human nature; I thought of his sufferings so unexampled, so unmerited; and chid myself for the suspicion. The dying confession of Hawkins recurred to my mind; and I felt that there was no longer a possibility of doubting. And yet what was the meaning of all Mr. Falkland's agonies and terrors? In fine, the idea having once occurred to my mind, it was fixed there for ever. My thoughts fluctuated from conjecture to conjecture, but this was the centre about which they revolved. I determined to place myself as a watch upon my patron.

The instant I had chosen this employment for myself, I found a strange sort of pleasure in it. To do what is forbidden always has its charms, because we have an indistinct apprehension of something arbitrary and tyrannical in the prohibition. To be a spy upon Mr. Falkland! That there was danger in the employment served to give an alluring pungency to the choice. I remembered the stern reprimand I had received, and his terrible looks; and the recollection gave a kind of tingling sensation, not altogether unallied to enjoyment. The further I advanced, the more the sensation was irresistible. I seemed to myself perpetually upon the brink of being countermined, and perpetually roused to guard my designs. The more impenetrable Mr. Falkland was determined to be, the more uncontrollable was my curiosity. Through the whole, my alarm and apprehension of personal danger had a large mixture of frankness and simplicity, conscious of meaning no ill, that made me continually ready to say every thing that was upon my mind, and would not suffer me to believe that, when things were brought to the test, any one could be seriously angry with me.

These reflections led gradually to a new state of my mind. When I had first removed into Mr. Falkland's family, the novelty of the scene rendered me cautious and reserved. The distant and solemn manners of my master seemed to have annihilated my constitutional gayety. But the novelty by degrees wore off, and my constraint in the same degree diminished. The story I had now heard, and the curiosity it excited, restored to me activity, eagerness, and courage. I had always had a propensity to communicate my thoughts; my age was, of course, inclined to talkativeness; and I ventured occasionally, in a sort of hesitating way, as if questioning whether such a conduct might be allowed, to express my sentiments as they arose, in the presence of Mr. Falkland.

The first time I did so, he looked at me with an air of surprise, made me no answer, and presently took occasion to leave me. The experiment was soon after repeated. My master seemed half-inclined to encourage me, and yet doubtful whether he might venture. He had long been a stranger to pleasure of every sort, and my artless and untaught remarks appeared to promise him some amusement. Could an amusement of this sort be dangerous?

In this uncertainty he could not probably find it in his heart to treat with severity my innocent effusions. I needed but little encouragement; for the perturbation of my mind stood in want of this relief. My simplicity, arising from my being a total stranger to the intercourse of the world, was accompanied with a mind in some degree cultivated with reading, and perhaps not altogether destitute of observation and talent. My remarks were therefore perpetually unexpected, at one time implying extreme ignorance, and at another some portion of acuteness, but at all times having an air

of innocence, frankness, and courage. There was still an apparent want of design in the manner, even after I was excited accurately to compare my observations, and study the inferences to which they led; for the effect of old habit was more visible than that of a recently conceived purpose which was yet scarcely mature.

Mr. Falkland's situation was like that of a fish that plays with the bait employed to entrap him. By my manner he was in a certain degree encouraged to lay aside his usual reserve, and relax his stateliness; till some abrupt observation or interrogatory stung him into recollection, and brought back his alarm. Still it was evident that he bore about him a secret wound. Whenever the cause of his sorrows was touched, though in a manner the most indirect and remote, his countenance altered, his distemper returned, and it was with difficulty that he could suppress his emotions, sometimes conquering himself with painful effort, and sometimes bursting into a sort of paroxysm of insanity, and hastening to bury himself in solitude.

These appearances I too frequently interpreted into grounds of suspicion, though I might with equal probability and more liberality have ascribed them to the cruel mortifications he had encountered in the objects of his darling ambition. Mr. Collins had strongly urged me to secrecy; and Mr. Falkland, whenever my gesture or his consciousness impressed him with the idea of my knowing more than I expressed, looked at me with wistful earnestness, as questioning what was the degree of information I possessed, and how it was obtained. But again at our next interview the simple vivacity of my manner restored his tranquillity, obliterated the emotion of which I had been the cause, and placed things afresh in their former situation.

The longer this humble familiarity on my part had continued, the more effort it would require to suppress it; and Mr. Falkland was neither willing to mortify me by a severe prohibition of speech, nor even perhaps to make me of so much consequence as that prohibition might seem to imply. Though I was curious, it must not be supposed that I had the object of my inquiry for ever in my mind, or that my questions and innuendoes were perpetually regulated with the cunning of a gray-headed inquisitor. The secret wound of Mr. Falkland's mind was much more uniformly present to his recollection than to mine; and a thousand times he applied the remarks that occurred in conversation; when I had not the remotest idea of such an application, till some singularity in his manner brought it back to my thoughts. The consciousness of this morbid sensibility, and the imagination that its influence might perhaps constitute the whole of the case, served probably to spur Mr. Falkland again to the charge, and connect a sentiment of shame with every project that suggested itself for interrupting the freedom of our intercourse.

I will give a specimen of the conversations to which I allude; and as it shall be selected from those which began upon topics the most general and remote, the reader will easily imagine the disturbance that was almost daily endured by a mind so tremblingly alive as that of my patron.

"Pray, sir," said I, one day, as I was assisting Mr. Falkland in arranging some papers, previously to their being transcribed into his collection, "how came Alexander of Macedon to be surnamed the Great?"

"How came it? Did you never read his history?"

"Yes, sir."

"Well, Williams, and could you find no reasons there?"

"Why, I do not know, sir. I could find reasons why he should be so famous; but every man that is talked of is not admired. Judges differ about the merits of Alexander. Doctor Prideaux says in his Connexions that he deserves only to be called the Great Cut-throat; and the author of Tom Jones has written a volume, to prove that he and all other conquerors ought to be classed with Jonathan Wild."

Mr. Falkland reddened at these citations.

"Accursed blasphemy! Did these authors think that, by the coarseness of their ribaldry, they could destroy his well-earned fame? Are learning, sensibility, and taste no securities to exempt their possessor from this vulgar abuse? Did you ever read, Williams, of a man more gallant, generous, and free? Was ever mortal so completely the reverse of every thing engrossing and selfish? He formed to himself a sublime image of excellence, and his only ambition was to realize it in his own story. Remember his giving away every thing when he set out upon his grand expedition, professedly reserving for himself nothing but hope. Recollect his heroic confidence in Philip the physician, and his entire and unalterable friendship or Hephestion. He treated the captive family of Darius with the most cordial urbanity, and the venerable Sysigambis with all the tenderness and attention of a son to his mother. Never take the judgment, Williams, upon such a subject of a clerical pedant, or a Westminster justice. Examine for yourself, and you will find in Alexander a model of honour, generosity, and disinterestedness,—a man who, for the cultivated liberality of his mind, and the unparalleled grandeur of his projects, must stand alone the spectacle and admiration of all ages of the world."

"Ah, sir! it is a fine thing for us to sit here and compose his panegyric. But shall I forget what a vast expense was bestowed in erecting the monument of his fame? Was not he the common disturber of mankind? Did not he overrun nations that would never have heard of him but for his devastations? How many hundred thousands of lives did he sacrifice in his career? What must I think of his cruelties; a whole tribe massacred for a crime committed by their ancestors one hundred and fifty years before; fifty thousand sold into slavery; two thousand crucified for their gallant defence of their country? Man is surely a strange sort of creature, who never praises any one more heartily than him who has spread destruction and ruin over the face of nations!"

"The way of thinking you express, Williams, is natural enough, and I cannot blame you for it. But let me hope that you will become more liberal. The death of a hundred thousand men is at first sight very shocking; but what in reality are a hundred thousand such men, more than a hundred thousand sheep? It is mind, Williams, the generation of knowledge and virtue, that we ought to love. This was the project of Alexander; he set out in a great undertaking to civilize mankind; he delivered the vast continent of Asia from the stupidity and degradation of the Persian monarchy; and though he was cut off in the midst of his career, we may easily perceive the vast effects of his project. Grecian literature and cultivation, the Seleucidæ, the Antiochuses, and the Ptolemies followed, in nations which before had been sunk to the condition of brutes. Alexander was the builder, as notoriously as the destroyer, of cities."

"And yet, sir, I am afraid that the pike and the battle-axe are not the right instruments for making

men wise. Suppose it were admitted that the lives of men were to be sacrificed without remorse if a paramount good were to result, it seems to me as if murder and massacre were but a very left-handed way of producing civilization and love. But pray, do not you think this great hero was a sort of a madman? What now will you say to his firing the palace of Persepolis, his weeping for other worlds to conquer, and his marching his whole army over the burning sands of Libya, merely to visit a temple, and persuade mankind that he was the son of Jupiter Ammon?"

"Alexander, my boy, has been much misunderstood. Mankind have revenged themselves upon him by misrepresentation, for having so far eclipsed the rest of his species. It was necessary to the realizing his project, that he should pass for a god. It was the only way by which he could get a firm hold upon the veneration of the stupid and bigoted Persians. It was this, and not a mad vanity, that was the source of his proceeding. And how much had he to struggle with in this respect, in the unapprehending obstinacy of some of his Macedonians?"

"Why then, sir, at last Alexander did but employ means that all politicians profess to use, as well as he. He dragooned men into wisdom, and cheated them into the pursuit of their own happiness. But what is worse, sir, this Alexander, in the paroxysm of his headlong rage, spared neither friend nor foe. You will not pretend to justify the excesses of his ungovernable passion. It is impossible, sure, that a word can be said for a man whom a momentary provocation can hurry into the commission of murders—"

The instant I had uttered these words I felt what it was that I had done. There was a magnetical sympathy between me and my patron, so that their

effect was not sooner produced upon him, than my own mind reproached me with the inhumanity of the allusion. Our confusion was mutual. The blood forsook at once the transparent complexion of Mr. Falkland, and then rushed back again with rapidity and fierceness. I dared not utter a word, lest I should commit a new error, worse than that into which I had just fallen. After a short but severe struggle to continue the conversation, Mr. Falkland began with trepidation, but afterward became calmer:—

"You are not candid,—Alexander—you must learn more clemency—Alexander, I say, does not deserve this rigour. Do you remember his tears, his remorse, his determined abstinence from food, which he could scarcely be persuaded to relinquish? Did not that prove acute feeling and a rooted principle of equity?—Well, well, Alexander was a true and judicious lover of mankind, and his real merits have been little comprehended."

I know not how to make the state of my mind at that moment accurately understood. When one idea has got possession of the soul, it is scarcely possible to keep it from finding its way to the lips. Error, once committed, has a fascinating power, like that ascribed to the eyes of the rattlesnake, to draw us into a second error. It deprives us of that proud confidence in our own strength, to which we are indebted for so much of our virtue. Curiosity is a restless propensity, and often does but hurry us forward the more irresistibly, the greater is the danger that attends its indulgence.

"Clitus," said I, "was a man of very coarse and provoking manners, was he not?"

Mr. Falkland felt the full force of this appeal. He gave me a penetrating look, as if he would see my very soul. His eyes were then in an instant

withdrawn. I could perceive him seized with a convulsive shuddering, which, though strongly counteracted, and therefore scarcely visible, had I know not what of terrible in it. He left his employment, strode about the room in anger, his visage gradually assumed an expression as of supernatural barbarity, he quitted the apartment abruptly, and flung the door with a violence that seemed to shake the house.

"Is this," said I, "the fruit of conscious guilt, or of the disgust that a man of honour conceives at guilt undeservedly imputed?"

CHAPTER XIV.

The reader will feel how rapidly I was advancing to the brink of the precipice. I had a confused apprehension of what I was doing, but I could not stop myself. "Is it possible," said I, "that Mr. Falkland, who is thus overwhelmed with a sense of the unmerited dishonour that has been fastened upon him in the face of the world, will long endure the presence of a raw and unfriended youth, who is perpetually bringing back that dishonour to his recollection, and who seems himself the most forward to entertain the accusation?"

I felt indeed that Mr. Falkland would not hastily incline to dismiss me, for the same reason that restrained him from many other actions, which might seem to savour of a too tender and ambiguous sensibility. But this reflection was little adapted to comfort me. That he should cherish in his heart a growing hatred against me, and that he should think

himself obliged to retain me a continual thorn in his side, was an idea by no means of favourable augury to my future peace.

It was some time after this that, in clearing out a case of drawers, I found a paper that, by some accident, had slipped behind one of the drawers, and been overlooked. At another time, perhaps, my curiosity might have given way to the laws of decorum, and I should have restored it unopened to my master, its owner. But my eagerness for information had been too much stimulated by the preceding incidents, to allow me at present to neglect any occasion of obtaining it. The paper proved to be a letter written by the elder Hawkins, and from its contents seemed to have been penned when he had first been upon the point of absconding from the persecutions of Mr. Tyrrel. It was as follows :—

"Honourable Sir,

"I have waited some time in daily hope of your honour's return into these parts. Old Warnes and his dame, who are left to take care of your house, tell me they cannot say when that will be, nor justly in what part of England you are at present. For my share, misfortune comes so thick upon me, that I must determine upon something (that is for certain), and out of hand. Our squire, who I must own at first used me kindly enough, though I am afraid that was partly out of spite to Squire Underwood, has since determined to be the ruin of me. Sir, I have been no craven; I fought it up stoutly; for after all, you know, God bless your honour! it is but a man to a man; but he has been too much for me.

"Perhaps if I were to ride over to the market-town and inquire of Munsle, your lawyer, he could tell me how to direct to you. But having hoped and

waited o' this fashion, and all in vain, has put me upon other thoughts. I was in no hurry, sir, to apply to you; for I do not love to be a trouble to anybody. I kept that for my last stake. Well, sir, and now that has failed me like, I am ashamed, as it were, to have thought of it. Have not I, thinks I, arms and legs as well as other people? I am driven out of house and home. Well, and what then? Sure I arn't a cabbage, that if you pull it out of the ground it must die. I am penniless. True; and how many hundreds are there that live from hand to mouth all the days of their life? (Begging your honour's pardon) thinks I, if we little folks had but the wit to do for ourselves, the great folks would not be such maggoty changelings as they are. They would begin to look about them.

"But there is another thing that has swayed with me more than all the rest. I do not know how to tell you, sir,—my poor boy, my Leonard, the pride of my life, has been three weeks in the county jail. It is true indeed, sir. Squire Tyrrel put him there. Now, sir, every time that I lay my head upon my pillow under my own little roof, my heart smites me with the situation of my Leonard. I do not mean so much for the hardship; I do not so much matter that. I do not expect him to go through the world upon velvet; I am not such a fool. But who can tell what may hap in a jail! I have been three times to see him; and there is one man in the same quarter of the prison that looks so wicked! I do not much fancy the looks of the rest. To be sure, Leonard is as good a lad as ever lived. I think he will not give his mind to such. But come what will, I am determined he shall not stay among them twelve hours longer. I am an obstinate old fool perhaps; but I have taken it into my head, and I

will do it. Do not ask me what. But if I were to write to your honour, and wait for your answer, it might take a week or ten days more. I must not think of it!

'Squire Tyrrel is very headstrong, and you, your honour, might be a little hottish, or so. No, I would not have anybody quarrel for me. There has been mischief enough done already; and I will get myself out of the way. So I write this, your honour, merely to unload my mind. I feel myself equally as much bound to respect and love you as if you had done every thing for me, that I believe you would have done if things had chanced differently. It is most likely you will never hear of me any more. If it should be so, set your worthy heart at rest. I know myself too well ever to be tempted to do any thing that is really bad. I have now my fortune to seek in the world. I have been used ill enough, God knows. But I bear no malice; my heart is at peace with all mankind; and I forgive everybody. It is like enough that poor Leonard and I may have hardship enough to undergo among strangers, and being obliged to hide ourselves like housebreakers or highwaymen. But I defy all the malice of fortune to make us do an ill thing. That consolation we will always keep against all the crosses of a heart-breaking world.

"God bless you!

"So prays,

"Your honour's humble servant to command,

"BENJAMIN HAWKINS."

I read this letter with considerable attention, and it occasioned me many reflections. To my way of thinking it contained a very interesting picture of a blunt, downright, honest mind. "It is a melancholy consideration," said I to myself; "but such is man!

To have judged from appearances one would have said, this is a fellow to have taken fortune's buffets and rewards with an incorruptible mind. And yet see where it all ends! This man was capable of afterward becoming a murderer, and finished his life at the gallows. O poverty! thou art indeed omnipotent! Thou grindest us into desperation; thou confoundest all our boasted and most deep-rooted principles; thou fillest us to the very brim with malice and revenge, and renderest us capable of acts of unknown horror! May I never be visited by thee in the fulness of thy power!"

Having satisfied my curiosity with respect to this paper, I took care to dispose of it in such a manner as that it should be found by Mr. Falkland; at the same time that, in obedience to the principle which at present governed me with absolute dominion, I was willing that the way in which it offered itself to his attention should suggest to him the idea that it had possibly passed through my hands. The next morning I saw him, and I exerted myself to lead the conversation, which by this time I well knew how to introduce, by insensible degrees to the point I desired. After several previous questions, remarks, and rejoinders, I continued:—

"Well, sir, after all, I cannot help feeling very uncomfortably as to my ideas of human nature, when I find that there is no dependence to be placed upon its perseverance, and that, at least among the illiterate, the most promising appearances may end in the foulest disgrace."

"You think, then, that literature and a cultivated mind are the only assurance from the constancy of our principles!"

"Humph!—why, do you suppose, sir, that learning and ingenuity do not often serve people rather to hide their crimes than to restrain them from com-

mitting them? History tells us strange things in that respect."

"Williams," said Mr. Falkland, a little disturbed, "you are extremely given to censure and severity."

"I hope not. I am sure I am most fond of looking on the other side of the picture, and considering how many men have been aspersed, and even at some time or other almost torn to pieces by their fellow-creatures, whom, when properly understood, we find worthy of our reverence and love."

"Indeed," replied Mr. Falkland, with a sigh, "when I consider these things I do not wonder at the dying exclamation of Brutus, 'O Virtue, I sought thee as a substance, but I find thee an empty name!' I am too much inclined to be of his opinion."

"Why, to be sure, sir, innocence and guilt are too much confounded in human life. I remember an affecting story of a poor man in the reign of Queen Elizabeth, who would have infallibly been hanged for murder upon the strength of circumstantial evidence, if the person really concerned had not been himself upon the jury and prevented it."

In saying this I touched the spring that wakened madness in his mind. He came up to me with a ferocious countenance, as if determined to force me into a confession of my thoughts. A sudden pang, however, seemed to change his design! he drew back with trepidation, and exclaimed, "Detested be the universe, and the laws that govern it! Honour, justice, virtue, are all the juggle of knaves! If it were in my power I would instantly crush the whole system into nothing!"

I replied, "Oh, sir! things are not so bad as you imagine. The world was made for men of sense to do what they will with. Its affairs cannot be better than in the direction of the genuine heroes; and as in the end they will be found the truest

friends of the whole, so the multitude have nothing to do but to look on, be fashioned, and admire."

Mr. Falkland made a powerful effort to recover his tranquillity. "Williams," said he, "you instruct me well. You have a right notion of things, and I have great hopes of you. I will be more of a man; I will forget the past, and do better for the time to come. The future, the future is always our own."

"I am sorry, sir, that I have given you pain. I am afraid to say all that I think. But it is my opinion that mistakes will ultimately be cleared up, justice done, and the true state of things come to light, in spite of the false colours that may for a time obscure it."

The idea I suggested did not give Mr. Falkland the proper degree of delight. He suffered a temporary relapse. "Justice!"—he muttered. "I do not know what is justice. My case is not within the reach of common remedies; perhaps of none. I only know that I am miserable. I began life with the best intentions and the most fervid philanthropy; and here I am—miserable—miserable beyond expression or endurance."

Having said this, he seemed suddenly to recollect himself, and reassumed his accustomed dignity and command. "How came this conversation?" cried he. "Who gave you a right to be my confidant? Base, artful wretch that you are! learn to be more respectful! Are my passions to be wound and unwound by an insolent domestic? Do you think I will be an instrument to be played on at your pleasure, till you have extorted all the treasures of my soul? Begone, and fear lest you be made to pay for the temerity you have already committed!"

There was an energy and determination in the gestures with which these words were accompanied,

that did not admit of their being disputed. My mouth was closed; I felt as if deprived of all share of activity, and was only able silently and passively to quit the apartment.

CHAPTER XV.

Two days subsequent to this conversation, Mr. Falkland ordered me to be called to him. [I shall continue to speak in my narrative of the silent as well as the articulate part of the intercourse between us. His countenance was habitually animated and expressive, much beyond that of any other man I have seen. The curiosity which, as I have said, constituted my ruling passion, stimulated me to make it my perpetual study. It will also most probably happen, while I am thus employed in collecting the scattered incidents of my history, that I shall upon some occasions annex to appearances an explanation which I was far from possessing at the time, and was only suggested to me through the medium of subsequent events.]

When I entered the apartment, I remarked in Mr. Falkland's countenance an unwonted composure. This composure, however, did not seem to result from internal ease, but from an effort which, while he prepared himself for an interesting scene, was exerted to prevent his presence of mind, and power of voluntary action, from suffering any diminution.

"Williams," said he, "I am determined, whatever it may cost me, to have an explanation with you. You are a rash and inconsiderate boy, and have given me much disturbance. You ought to

have known, that though I allow you to talk with me upon indifferent subjects, it is very improper in you to lead the conversation to any thing that relates to my personal concerns. You have said many things lately in a very mysterious way, and appear to know something more than I am aware of. I am equally at a loss to guess how you came by your knowledge, as of what it consists. But I think I perceive too much inclination on your part to trifle with my peace of mind. That ought not to be, nor have I deserved any such treatment from you. But, be that as it will, the guesses in which you oblige me to employ myself are too painful. It is a sort of sporting with my feelings, which, as a man of resolution, I am determined to bring to an end. I expect you, therefore, to lay aside all mystery and equivocation, and inform me explicitly what it is upon which your allusions are built. What is it you know? What is it you want? I have been too much exposed already to unparalleled mortification and hardship, and my wounds will not bear this perpetual tampering."

"I feel, sir," answered I, "how wrong I have been, and am ashamed that such a one as I should have given you all this trouble and displeasure. I felt it at the time; but I have been hurried along, I do not know how. I have always tried to stop myself, but the demon that possessed me was too strong for me. I know nothing, sir, but what Mr. Collins told me. He told me the story of Mr. Tyrrel and Miss Melville and Hawkins. I am sure, sir, he said nothing but what was to your honour, and proved you to be more an angel than a man."

"Well, sir: I found a letter written by that Hawkins the other day; did not that letter fall into your hands? Did not you read it?"

"For God's sake, sir, turn me out of your house. Punish me in some way or other, that I may forgive myself. I am a foolish, wicked, despicable wretch. I confess, sir, I did read the letter."

"And how dared you read it? It was indeed very wrong of you. But we will talk of that by-and-by. Well, and what did you say to the letter? You know, it seems, that Hawkins was hanged."

"I say, sir? why it went to my heart to read it. I say as I said the day before yesterday, that when I see a man of so much principle afterward deliberately proceeding to the very worst of crimes, I can scarcely bear to think of it."

"That is what you say? It seems, too, you know —accursed remembrance!—that I was accused of this crime?"

I was silent.

"Well, sir. You know, too, perhaps, that from the hour the crime was committed—yes, sir, that was the date [and as he said this, there was somewhat frightful, I had almost said diabolical, in his countenance]—I have not had an hour's peace; I became changed from the happiest to the most miserable thing that lives; sleep has fled from my eyes; joy has been a stranger to my thoughts; and annihilation I should prefer a thousand times to the being that I am. As soon as I was capable of a choice, I chose honour and the esteem of mankind as a good I preferred to all others. You know, it seems, in how many ways my ambition has been disappointed,—I do not thank Collins for having been the historian of my disgrace,—would to God that night could be blotted from the memory of man!—But the scene of that night, instead of perishing, has been a source of ever new calamity to me, which must flow for ever! Am I then, thus miserable and ruined, a proper subject upon which for

you to exercise your ingenuity, and improve your power of tormenting? Was it not enough that I was publicly dishonoured? that I was deprived, by the pestilential influence of some demon, of the opportunity of avenging my dishonour? No: in addition to this, I have been charged with having in this critical moment intercepted my own vengeance by the foulest of crimes. That trial is past. Misery itself has nothing worse in store for me, except what you have inflicted; the seeming to doubt of my innocence, which, after the fullest and most solemn examination, has been completely established. You have forced me to this explanation. You have extorted from me a confidence which I had no inclination to make. But it is a part of the misery of my situation that I am at the mercy of every creature, however little, who feels himself inclined to sport with my distress. Be content. You have brought me low enough."

"Oh, sir, I am not content; I cannot be content! I cannot bear to think what I have done. I shall never again be able to look in the face of the best of masters and the best of men. I beg of you, sir, to turn me out of your service. Let me go and hide myself where I may never see you more."

Mr. Falkland's countenance had indicated great severity through the whole of this conversation; but now it became more harsh and tempestuous than ever. "How now, rascal!" cried he; "you want to leave me, do you? Who told you that I wished to part with you? But you cannot bear to live with such a miserable wretch as I am! You are not disposed to put up with the caprices of a man so dissatisfied and unjust!"

"Oh, sir, do not talk to me thus! Do with me any thing you will. Kill me, if you please."

"Kill you!" [Volumes could not describe the

emotions with which this echo of my words was given and received.]

"Sir, I could die to serve you! I love you more than I can express. I worship you as a being of a superior nature. I am foolish, raw, inexperienced, —worse than any of these;—but never did a thought of disloyalty to your service enter into my heart."

Here our conversation ended; and the impression it made upon my youthful mind it is impossible to describe. I thought with astonishment, even with rapture, of the attention and kindness towards me I discovered in Mr. Falkland, through all the roughness of his manner. I could never enough wonder at finding myself, humble as I was by my birth, obscure as I had hitherto been, thus suddenly become of so much importance to the happiness of one of the most enlightened and accomplished men in England. But this consciousness attached me to my patron more eagerly than ever, and made me swear a thousand times, as I meditated upon my situation, that I would never prove unworthy of so generous a protector.

CHAPTER XVI.

Is it not unaccountable, that in the midst of all my increased veneration for my patron, the first tumult of my emotion was scarcely subsided, before the old question that had excited my conjectures recurred to my mind, Was he the murderer? It was a kind of fatal impulse, that seemed destined to hurry me to my destruction. I did not wonder at the disturbance that was given to Mr. Falkland by

any allusion, however distant, to this fatal affair. That was as completely accounted for from the consideration of his excessive sensibility in matters of honour, as it would have been upon the supposition of the most atrocious guilt. Knowing, as he did, that such a charge had once been connected with his name, he would of course be perpetually uneasy, and suspect some latent insinuation at every possible opportunity. He would doubt and fear, lest every man with whom he conversed harboured the foulest suspicion against him. In my case he found that I was in possession of some information, more than he was aware of, without its being possible for him to decide to what it amounted,—whether I had heard a just or unjust, a candid or calumniatory tale. He had also reason to suppose that I gave entertainment to thoughts derogatory to his honour, and that I did not form that favourable judgment which the exquisite refinement of his ruling passion made indispensable to his peace. All these considerations would of course maintain in him a state of perpetual uneasiness. But though I could find nothing that I could consider as justifying me in persisting in the shadow of a doubt, yet, as I have said, the uncertainty and restlessness of my contemplations would by no means depart from me.

The fluctuating state of my mind produced a contention of opposite principles, that by turns usurped dominion over my conduct. Sometimes I was influenced by the most complete veneration for my master; I placed an unreserved confidence in his integrity and his virtue, and implicitly surrendered my understanding for him to set it to what point he pleased. At other times the confidence which had before flowed with the most plenteous tide began to ebb; I was, as I had already

been, watchful, inquisitive, suspicious, full of a thousand conjectures as to the meaning of the most indifferent actions. Mr. Falkland, who was most painfully alive to every thing that related to his honour, saw these variations, and betrayed his consciousness of them now in one manner, and now in another, frequently before I was myself aware, sometimes almost before they existed. The situation of both was distressing; we were each of us a plague to the other; and I often wondered that the forbearance and benignity of my master was not at length exhausted, and that he did not determine to thrust from him for ever so incessant an observer. There was indeed one eminent difference between his share in the transaction and mine. I had some consolation in the midst of my restlessness. Curiosity is a principle that carries its pleasures, as well as its pains, along with it. The mind is urged by a perpetual stimulus; it seems as if it were continually approaching to the end of its race; and as the insatiable desire of satisfaction is its principle of conduct, so it promises itself in that satisfaction an unknown gratification, which seems as if it were capable of fully compensating any injuries that may be suffered in the career. But to Mr. Falkland there was no consolation. What he endured in the intercourse between us appeared to be gratuitous evil. He had only to wish that there was no such person as myself in the world, and to curse the hour when his humanity led him to rescue me from my obscurity, and place me in his service.

A consequence produced upon me by the extraordinary nature of my situation it is necessary to mention. The constant state of vigilance and suspicion in which my mind was retained, worked a very rapid change in my character. It seemed to

have all the effect that might have been expected from years of observation and experience. The strictness with which I endeavoured to remark what passed in the mind of one man, and the variety of conjectures into which I was led, appeared, as it were, to render me a competent adept in the different modes in which the human intellect displays its secret workings. I no longer said to myself, as I had done in the beginning, "I will ask Mr. Falkland whether he were the murderer." On the contrary, after having carefully examined the different kinds of evidence of which the subject was susceptible, and recollecting all that had already passed upon the subject, it was not without considerable pain that I felt myself unable to discover any way in which I could be perfectly and unalterably satisfied of my patron's innocence. As to his guilt, I could scarcely bring myself to doubt that in some way or other, sooner or later, I should arrive at the knowledge of that, if it really existed. But I could not endure to think, almost for a moment, of that side of the alternative as true; and with all my ungovernable suspicion arising from the mysteriousness of the circumstances, and all the delight which a young and unfledged mind receives from ideas that give scope to all that imagination can picture of terrible or sublime, I could not yet bring myself to consider Mr. Falkland's guilt as a supposition attended with the remotest probability.

I hope the reader will forgive me for dwelling thus long on preliminary circumstances. I shall come soon enough to the story of my own misery I have already said, that one of the motives which induced me to the penning of this narrative was to console myself in my insupportable distress. I derive a melancholy pleasure from dwelling upon the circumstances which imperceptibly paved the

way to my ruin. While I recollect or describe past scenes, which occurred in a more favourable period of my life, my attention is called off for a short interval from the hopeless misfortune in which I am at present involved. The man must indeed possess an uncommon portion of hardness of heart, who can envy me so slight a relief.—To proceed.

For some time after the explanation which had thus taken place between me and Mr. Falkland, his melancholy, instead of being in the slightest degree diminished by the lenient hand of time, went on perpetually to increase. His fits of insanity—for such I must denominate them for want of a distinct appellation, though it is possible they might not fall under the definition that either the faculty or the court of chancery appropriate to the term—became stronger and more durable than ever. It was no longer practicable wholly to conceal them from the family, and even from the neighbourhood. He would sometimes, without any previous notice, absent himself from his house for two or three days, unaccompanied by servant or attendant. This was the more extraordinary, as it is well known that he paid no visits, nor kept up any sort of intercourse with the gentlemen of the vicinity. But it was impossible that a man of Mr. Falkland's distinction and fortune should long continue in such a practice without its being discovered what was become of him; though a considerable part of our county was among the wildest and most desolate districts that are to be found in South Britain. Mr. Falkland was sometimes seen climbing among the rocks, reclining motionless for hours together upon the edge of a precipice, or lulled into a kind of nameless lethargy of despair by the dashing of the torrents. He would remain for whole nights together under the naked cope of heaven, inattentive to the considera-

tion either of place or time; insensible to the variations of the weather, or rather seeming to be delighted with that uproar of the elements which partially called off his attention from the discord and dejection that occupied his own mind.

At first, when we received intelligence at any time of the place to which Mr. Falkland had withdrawn himself, some person of his household, Mr. Collins or myself, but most generally myself, as I was always at home, and always, in the received sense of the word, at leisure, went to him to persuade him to return. But, after a few experiments, we thought it advisable to desist, and leave him to prolong his absence, or to terminate it, as might happen to suit his own inclination. Mr. Collins, whose gray hairs and long services seemed to give him a sort of right to be importunate, sometimes succeeded; though even in that case there was nothing that could sit more uneasily upon Mr. Falkland than this insinuation as if he wanted a guardian to take care of him, or as if he were in, or in danger of falling into, a state in which he would be incapable of deliberately controlling his own words and actions. At one time he would suddenly yield to his humble venerable friend, murmuring grievously at the constraint that was put upon him, but without spirit enough even to complain of it with energy. At another time, even though complying, he would suddenly burst out in a paroxysm of resentment. Upon these occasions there was something inconceivably, savagely terrible in his anger, that gave to the person against whom it was directed the most humiliating and insupportable sensations. Me he always treated, at these times, with fierceness, and drove me from him with a vehemence lofty, emphatical, and sustained, beyond any thing of which I should have thought human nature to be capable.

These sallies seemed always to constitute a sort of crisis in his indisposition; and whenever he was induced to such a premature return, he would fall immediately after into a state of the most melancholy inactivity, in which he usually continued for two or three days. It was by an obstinate fatality, that whenever I saw Mr. Falkland in these deplorable situations, and particularly when I lighted upon him after having sought him among the rocks and precipices, pale, emaciated, solitary, and haggard, the suggestion would continually recur to me, in spite of inclination, in spite of persuasion, and in spite of evidence, Surely this man is a murderer!

CHAPTER XVII.

It was in one of the lucid intervals, as I may term them, that occurred during this period, that a peasant was brought before him, in his character of a justice of peace, upon an accusation of having murdered his fellow. As Mr. Falkland had by this time acquired the repute of a melancholy valetudinarian, it is probable he would not have been called upon to act in his official character upon the present occasion, had it not been that two or three of the neighbouring justices were all of them from home at once, so that he was the only one to be found in a circuit of many miles. The reader, however, must not imagine, though I have employed the word insanity in describing Mr. Falkland's symptoms, that he was by any means reckoned for a madman by the generality of those who had occasion to observe him. It is true that his behaviour, at

certain times, was singular and unaccountable; but then, at other times, there was in it so much dignity, regularity, and economy; he knew so well how to command and make himself respected; his actions and carriage were so condescending, considerate and benevolent, that, far from having forfeited the esteem of the unfortunate or the many, they were loud and earnest in his praises.

I was present at the examination of this peasant. The moment I heard of the errand which had brought this rabble of visiters, a sudden thought struck me. I conceived the possibility of rendering the incident subordinate to the great inquiry which drank up all the currents of my soul. I said, this man is arraigned of murder, and murder is the master-key that wakes distemper in the mind of Mr. Falkland. I will watch him without remission, I will trace all the mazes of his thought. Surely, at such a time his secret anguish must betray itself. Surely, if it be not my own fault, I shall now be able to discover the state of his plea before the tribunal of unerring justice.

I took my station in a manner most favourable to the object upon which my mind was intent. I could perceive in Mr. Falkland's features, as he entered, a strong reluctance to the business in which he was engaged; but there was no possibility of retreating. His countenance was embarrassed and anxious; he scarcely saw anybody. The examination had not proceeded far before he chanced to turn his eye to the part of the room where I was. It happened in this as in some preceding instances—we exchanged a silent look, by which we told volumes to each other. Mr. Falkland's complexion turned from red to pale and from pale to red. I perfectly understood his feelings, and would willingly have withdrawn myself. But it was impossible; my passions

were too deeply engaged; I was rooted to the spot; though my own life, that of my master, or almost of a whole nation had been at stake, I had no power to change my position.

The first surprise however having subsided, Mr. Falkland assumed a look of determined constancy, and even seemed to increase in self-possession much beyond what could have been expected from his first entrance. This he could probably have maintained, had it not been that the scene, instead of being permanent, was in some sort perpetually changing. The man who was brought before him was vehemently accused by the brother of the deceased as having acted from the most rooted malice. He swore that there had been an old grudge between the parties, and related several instances of it. He affirmed that the murderer had sought the earliest opportunity of wreaking his revenge; had struck the first blow; and though the contest was in appearance only a common boxing match, had watched the occasion of giving a fatal stroke, which was followed by the instant death of his antagonist.

While the accuser was giving in his evidence, the accused discovered every token of the most poignant sensibility. At one time his features were convulsed with anguish; tears unbidden trickled down his manly cheeks; and at another he started with apparent astonishment at the unfavourable turn that was given to the narrative, though without betraying any impatience to interrupt. I never saw a man less ferocious in his appearance. He was tall, well made, and comely. His countenance was ingenuous and benevolent, without folly. By his side stood a young woman, his sweetheart, extremely agreeable in her person, and her looks testifying how deeply she interested herself in the fate of her lover. The accidental spectators were divided, between indigna-

tion against the enormity of the supposed criminal, and compassion for the poor girl that accompanied him. They seemed to take little notice of the favourable appearances visible in the person of the accused, till, in the sequel, those appearances were more forcibly suggested to their attention. For Mr. Falkland, he was at one moment engrossed by curiosity and earnestness to investigate the tale, while at another he betrayed a sort of revulsion of sentiment, which made the investigation too painful for him to support.

When the accused was called upon for his defence, he readily owned the misunderstanding that had existed, and that the deceased was the worst enemy he had in the world. Indeed, he was his only enemy, and he could not tell the reason that had made him so. He had employed every effort to overcome his animosity, but in vain. The deceased had upon all occasions sought to mortify him, and do him an ill turn; but he had resolved never to be engaged in a broil with him, and till this day he had succeeded. If he had met with a misfortune with any other man, people at least might have thought it accident; but now it would always be believed that he had acted from secret malice and a bad heart.

The fact was, that he and his sweetheart had gone to a neighbouring fair, where this man had met them. The man had often tried to affront him; and his passiveness, interpreted into cowardice, had perhaps encouraged the other to additional rudeness. Finding that he had endured trivial insults to himself with an even temper, the deceased now thought proper to turn his brutality upon the young woman that accompanied him. He pursued them; he endeavoured in various manners to harass and vex them; they had sought in vain to shake him off.

The young woman was considerably terrified. The accused expostulated with their persecutor, and asked him how he could be so barbarous as to persist in frightening a woman? He replied, with an insulting tone, "Then the woman should find some one able to protect her; people that encouraged and trusted to such a thief as that, deserved no better!" The accused tried every expedient he could invent; at length he could endure it no longer; he became exasperated, and challenged the assailant. The challenge was accepted; a ring was formed; he confided the care of his sweetheart to a bystander; and, unfortunately, the first blow he struck proved fatal.

The accused added, that he did not care what became of him. He had been anxious to go through the world in an inoffensive manner, and now he had the guilt of blood upon him. He did not know but it would be kindness in them to hang him out of the way; for his conscience would reproach him as long as he lived, and the figure of the deceased, as he had lain senseless and without motion at his feet, would perpetually haunt him. The thought of this man, at one moment full of life and vigour, and the next lifted a helpless corpse from the ground, and all owing to him, was a thought too dreadful to be endured. He had loved the poor maiden who had been the innocent occasion of this with all his heart; but from this time he should never support the sight of her. The sight would bring a tribe of fiends in its rear. One unlucky minute had poisoned all his hopes, and made life a burden to him. Saying this, his countenance fell, the muscles of his face trembled with agony, and he looked the statue of despair.

This was the story of which Mr. Falkland was called upon to be the auditor. Though the incidents

were, for the most part, wide of those which belonged to the adventures of the preceding chapters and there had been much less policy and skill displayed on either part in this rustic encounter, yet there were many points which, to a man who bore the former strongly in his recollection, suggested a sufficient resemblance. In each case it was a human brute persisting in a course of hostility to a man of benevolent character, and suddenly and terribly cut off in the midst of his career. These points perpetually smote upon the heart of Mr. Falkland. He at one time started with astonishment, and at another shifted his posture, like a man who is unable longer to endure the sensations that press upon him. Then he new strung his nerves to stubborn patience. I could see, while his muscles preserved an inflexible steadiness, tears of anguish roll down his cheeks. He dared not trust his eyes to glance towards the side of the room where I stood; and this gave an air of embarrassment to his whole figure. But when the accused came to speak of his feelings, to describe the depth of his compunction for an involuntary fault, he could endure it no longer. He suddenly rose, and with every mark of horror and despair rushed out of the room.

This circumstance made no material difference in the affair of the accused. The parties were detained about half an hour. Mr. Falkland had already heard the material parts of the evidence in person. At the expiration of that interval he sent for Mr. Collins out of the room. The story of the culprit was confirmed by many witnesses who had seen the transaction. Word was brought that my master was indisposed; and, at the same time, the accused was ordered to be discharged. The vengeance of the brother, however, as I afterward found, did not rest

here, and he met with a magistrate, more scrupulous or more despotic, by whom the culprit was committed for trial.

This affair was no sooner concluded, than I hastened into the garden, and plunged into the deepest of its thickets. My mind was full, almost to bursting. I no sooner conceived myself sufficiently removed from all observation, than my thoughts forced their way spontaneously to my tongue, and I exclaimed, in a fit of uncontrollable enthusiasm, "This is the murderer; the Hawkinses were innocent! I am sure of it! I will pledge my life for it! It is out! It is discovered! Guilty, upon my soul!"

While I thus proceeded with hasty steps along the most secret paths of the garden, and from time to time gave vent to the tumult of my thoughts in involuntary exclamations, I felt as if my animal system had undergone a total revolution. My blood boiled within me. I was conscious to a kind of rapture for which I could not account. I was solemn, yet full of rapid emotion, burning with indignation and energy. In the very tempest and hurricane of the passions, I seemed to enjoy the most soul-ravishing calm. I cannot better express the then state of my mind than by saying, I was never so perfectly alive as at that moment.

This state of mental elevation continued for several hours, but at length subsided, and gave place to more deliberate reflection. One of the first questions that then occurred was, what shall I do with the knowledge I have been so eager to acquire? I had no inclination to turn informer. I felt what I had had no previous conception of, that it was possible to love a murderer, and, as I then understood it, the worst of murderers. I conceived it to be in the highest degree absurd and iniquitous, to cut off a man qualified for the most essential and extensive utility,

merely out of retrospect to an act which, whatever were its merits, could not be retrieved.

This thought led me to another, which had at first passed unnoticed. If I had been disposed to turn informer, what had occurred amounted to no evidence that was admissible in a court of justice. Well then, added I, if it be such as would not be admitted at a criminal tribunal, am I sure it is such as I ought to admit? There were twenty persons besides myself present at the scene from which I pretend to derive such entire conviction. Not one of them saw it in the light that I did. It either appeared to them a casual and unimportant circumstance, or they thought it sufficiently accounted for by Mr. Falkland's infirmity and misfortunes. Did it really contain such an extent of arguments and application, that nobody but I was discerning enough to see?

But all this reasoning produced no alteration in my way of thinking. For this time I could not get it out of my mind for a moment: "Mr. Falkland is the murderer! He is guilty! I see it! I feel it! I am sure of it!" Thus was I hurried along by an uncontrollable destiny. The state of my passions in their progressive career, the inquisitiveness and impatience of my thoughts, appeared to make this determination unavoidable.

An incident occurred while I was in the garden that seemed to make no impression upon me at the time, but which I recollected when my thoughts were got into somewhat of a slower motion. In the midst of one of my paroxysms of exclamation, and when I thought myself most alone, the shadow of a man as avoiding me passed transiently by me at a small distance. Though I had scarcely caught a faint glimpse of his person, there was something in the occurrence that persuaded me it was Mr. Falk-

land. I shuddered at the possibility of his having overheard the words of my soliloquy. But this idea, alarming as it was, had not power immediately to suspend the career of my reflections. Subsequent circumstances, however, brought back the apprehension to my mind. I had scarcely a doubt of its reality, when dinner-time came, and Mr. Falkland was not to be found. Supper and bedtime passed in the same manner. The only conclusion made by his servants upon this circumstance was, that he was gone upon one of his accustomed melancholy rambles.

CHAPTER XVIII.

THE period at which my story is now arrived, seemed as if it were the very crisis of the fortune of Mr. Falkland. Incident followed upon incident, in a kind of breathless succession. About nine o'clock the next morning an alarm was given that one of the chimneys of the house was on fire. No accident could be apparently more trivial; but presently it blazed with such fury as to make it clear that some beam of the house, which in the first building had been improperly placed, had been reached by the flames. Some danger was apprehended for the whole edifice. The confusion was the greater, in consequence of the absence of the master, as well as of Mr. Collins, the steward. While some of the domestics were employed in endeavouring to extinguish the flames, it was thought proper that others should busy themselves in removing the most valuable moveables to a lawn in the garden. I took

some command in the affair, to which indeed my station in the family seemed to entitle me, and for which I was judged qualified by my understanding and mental resources.

Having given some general directions, I conceived that it was not enough to stand by and superintend, but that I should contribute my personal labour in the public concern. I set out for that purpose; and my steps, by some mysterious fatality, were directed to the private apartment at the end of the library. Here, as I looked round, my eye was suddenly caught by the trunk mentioned in the first pages of my narrative.

My mind was already raised to its utmost pitch. In a window-seat of the room lay a number of chisels and other carpenter's tools. I know not what infatuation instantaneously seized me. The idea was too powerful to be resisted. I forgot the business upon which I came, the employment of the servants, and the urgency of general danger. I should have done the same if the flames that seemed to extend as they proceeded, and already surmounted the house, had reached this very apartment. I snatched a tool suitable for the purpose, threw myself upon the ground, and applied with eagerness to a magazine which enclosed all for which my heart panted. After two or three efforts, in which the energy of uncontrollable passion was added to my bodily strength, the fastenings gave way, the trunk opened, and all that I sought was at once within my reach.

I was in the act of lifting up the lid, when Mr. Falkland entered, wild, breathless, distracted in his looks! He had been brought home from a considerable distance by the sight of the flames. At the moment of his appearance the lid dropped down from my hand. He no sooner saw me than his eyes

emitted sparks of rage. He ran with eagerness to a brace of loaded pistols which hung in the room, and, seizing one, presented it to my head. I saw his design, and sprang to avoid it; but, with the same rapidity with which he had formed his resolution, he changed it, and instantly went to the window, and flung the pistol into the court below. He bade me begone with his usual irresistible energy; and, overcome as I was already by the horror of the detection, I eagerly complied.

A moment after, a considerable part of the chimney tumbled with noise into the court below, and a voice exclaimed that the fire was more violent than ever. These circumstances seemed to produce a mechanical effect upon my patron, who, having first locked the closet, appeared on the outside of the house, ascended the roof, and was in a moment in every place where his presence was required. The flames were at length extinguished.

The reader can with difficulty form a conception of the state to which I was now reduced. My act was in some sort an act of insanity; but how indescribable are the feelings with which I looked back upon it! It was an instantaneous impulse, a short-lived and passing alienation of mind; but what must Mr. Falkland think of that alienation? To any man a person who had once shown himself capable of so wild a flight of the mind must appear dangerous: how must he appear to a man under Mr. Falkland's circumstances? I had just had a pistol held to my head by a man resolved to put a period to my existence. That indeed was past; but what was it that fate had yet in reserve for me? The insatiable vengeance of a Falkland, of a man whose hands were, to my apprehension, red with blood, and his thoughts familiar with cruelty and murder. How great were the resources of his

mind, resources henceforth to be confederated for my destruction! This was the termination of an ungoverned curiosity, an impulse that I had represented to myself as so innocent or so venial.

In the high tide of boiling passion I had overlooked all consequences. It now appeared to me like a dream. Is it in man to leap from the high-raised precipice, or rush unconcerned into the midst of flames? Was it possible I could have forgotten for a moment the awe-creating manners of Falkland, and the inexorable fury I should awake in his soul? No thought of future security had reached my mind. I had acted upon no plan. I had conceived no means of concealing my deed after it had once been effected. But it was over now. One short minute had effected a reverse in my situation, the suddenness of which the history of man, perhaps, is unable to surpass.

I have always been at a loss to account for my having plunged thus headlong into an act so monstrous. There is something in it of unexplained and involuntary sympathy. One sentiment flows, by necessity of nature, into another sentiment of the same general character. This was the first instance in which I had witnessed a danger by fire. All was confusion around me, and all changed into hurricane within. The general situation, to my unpractised apprehension, appeared desperate, and I by contagion became alike desperate. At first I had been in some degree calm and collected, but that too was a desperate effort; and when it gave way, a kind of instant insanity became its successor.

I had now every thing to fear. And yet what was my fault? It proceeded from none of those errors which are justly held up to the aversion of mankind; my object had been neither wealth, nor the means of indulgence, nor the usurpation of

power. No spark of malignity had harboured in my soul. I had always reverenced the sublime mind of Mr. Falkland; I reverenced it still. My offence had merely been a mistaken thirst of knowledge. Such, however, it was, as to admit neither of forgiveness nor remission. This epoch was the crisis of my fate, dividing what may be called the offensive part from the defensive, which has been the sole business of my remaining years. Alas! my offence was short, not aggravated by any sinister intention: but the reprisals I was to suffer are long, and can terminate only with my life!

In the state in which I found myself, when the recollection of what I had done flowed back upon my mind, I was incapable of any resolution. All was chaos and uncertainty within me. My thoughts were too full of horror to be susceptible of activity. I felt deserted of my intellectual powers, palsied in mind, and compelled to sit in speechless expectation of the misery to which I was destined. To my own conception I was like a man who, though blasted with lightning, and deprived for ever of the power of motion, should yet retain the consciousness of his situation. Death-dealing despair was the only idea of which I was sensible.

I was still in this situation of mind when Mr. Falkland sent for me. His message roused me from my trance. In recovering, I felt those sickening and loathsome sensations which a man may be supposed at first to endure who should return from the sleep of death. Gradually I recovered the power of arranging my ideas and directing my steps. I understood that the minute the affair of the fire was over Mr. Falkland had retired to his own room. It was evening before he ordered me to be called.

I found in him every token of extreme distress,

except that there was an air of solemn and sad composure that crowned the whole. For the present, all appearance of gloom, stateliness, and austerity was gone. As I entered he looked up, and, seeing who it was, ordered me to bolt the door. I obeyed. He went round the room, and examined its other avenues. He then returned to where I stood. I trembled in every joint of my frame. I exclaimed within myself, "What scene of death has Roscius now to act?"

"Williams!" said he, in a tone which had more in it of sorrow than resentment, "I have attempted your life! I am a wretch devoted to the scorn and execration of mankind!" There he stopped.

"If there be one being on the whole earth that feels the scorn and execration due to such a wretch more strongly than another, it is myself. I have been kept in a state of perpetual torture and madness. But I can put an end to it and its consequences; and, so far at least as relates to you, I am determined to do it. I know the price, and—I will make the purchase.

"You must swear," said he. "You must attest every sacrament, divine and human, never to disclose what I am now to tell you."—He dictated the oath, and I repeated it with an aching heart. I had no power to offer a word of remark.

"This confidence," said he, "is of your seeking, not of mine. It is odious to me, and is dangerous to you."

Having thus prefaced the disclosure he had to make, he paused. He seemed to collect himself as for an effort of magnitude. He wiped his face with his handkerchief. The moisture that incommoded him appeared not to be tears, but sweat.

"Look at me. Observe me. Is it not strange that such a one as I should retain lineaments of a

human creature? I am the blackest of villains. I am the murderer of Tyrrel. I am the assassin of the Hawkinses."

I started with terror, and was silent.

"What a story is mine! Insulted, disgraced, polluted in the face of hundreds, I was capable of any act of desperation. I watched my opportunity, followed Mr. Tyrrel from the rooms, seized a sharp-pointed knife that fell in my way, came behind him and stabbed him to the heart. My gigantic oppressor rolled at my feet.

"All are but links of one chain. A blow! A murder! My next business was to defend myself, to tell so well-digested a lie as that all mankind should believe it true. Never was a task so harrowing and intolerable!

"Well, thus far fortune favoured me; she favoured me beyond my desire. The guilt was removed from me, and cast upon another; but this I was to endure. Whence came the circumstantial evidence against him, the broken knife and the blood, I am unable to tell. I suppose, by some miraculous accident, Hawkins was passing by, and endeavoured to assist his oppressor in the agonies of death. You have heard his story; you have read one of his letters. But you do not know the thousandth part of the proofs of his simple and unalterable rectitude that I have known. His son suffered with him; that son for the sake of whose happiness and virtue he ruined himself, and would have died a hundred times.—I have had feelings, but I cannot describe them.

"This it is to be a gentleman! a man of honour! I was the fool of fame. My virtue, my honesty, my everlasting peace of mind, were cheap sacrifices to be made at the shrine of this divinity. But, what is worse, there is nothing that has happened

that has in any degree contributed to my cure. I am as much the fool of fame as ever. I cling to it to my last breath. Though I be the blackest of villains, I will leave behind me a spotless and illustrious name. There is no crime so malignant, no scene of blood so horrible, in which that object cannot engage me. It is no matter that I regard these things at a distance with aversion;—I am sure of it; bring me to the test, and I shall yield. I despise myself, but thus I am; things are gone too far to be recalled.

"Why is it that I am compelled to this confidence? From the love of fame. I should tremble at the sight of every pistol or instrument of death that offered itself to my hands; and perhaps my next murder may not be so fortunate as those I have already committed. I had no alternative but to make you my confidant or my victim. It was better to trust you with the whole truth under every seal of secrecy, than to live in perpetual fear of your penetration or your rashness.

"Do you know what it is you have done? To gratify a foolishly inquisitive humour, you have sold yourself. You shall continue in my service, but can never share my affection. I will benefit you in respect of fortune, but I shall always hate you. If ever an unguarded word escape from your lips, if ever you excite my jealousy or suspicion, expect to pay for it by your death or worse. It is a dear bargain you have made. But it is too late to look back. I charge and adjure you by every thing that is sacred, and that is tremendous, preserve your faith!

"My tongue has now for the first time for several years spoken the language of my heart; and the intercourse from this hour shall be shut for ever. I want no pity. I desire no consolation. Sur-

rounded as I am with horrors, I will at least preserve my fortitude to the last. If I had been reserved to a different destiny I have qualities in that respect worthy of a better cause. I can be mad, miserable, and frantic; but even in phrensy I can preserve my presence of mind and discretion."

Such was the story I had been so desirous to know. Though my mind had brooded upon the subject for months, there was not a syllable of it that did not come to my ear with the most perfect sense of novelty. "Mr. Falkland is a murderer!" said I, as I retired from the conference. This dreadful appellative, "a murderer," made my very blood run cold within me. "He killed Mr. Tyrrel, for he could not control his resentment and anger: he sacrificed Hawkins the elder and Hawkins the younger, because he could upon no terms endure the public loss of honour: how can I expect that a man thus passionate and unrelenting will not sooner or later make me his victim?"

But, notwithstanding this terrible application of the story, an application to which perhaps in some form or other mankind are indebted for nine-tenths of their abhorrence against vice, I could not help occasionally recurring to reflections of an opposite nature. "Mr. Falkland is a murderer!" resumed I. "He might yet be a most excellent man, if he did but think so." It is the thinking ourselves vicious, then, that principally contributes to make us vicious.

Amid the shock I received from finding, what I had never suffered myself constantly to believe, that my suspicions were true, I still discovered new cause of admiration for my master. His menaces indeed were terrible. But when I recollected the offence I had given, so contrary to every received principle of civilized society, so insolent and rude, so intolerable to a man of Mr. Falkland's eleva-

tion, and in Mr. Falkland's peculiarity of circumstances, I was astonished at his forbearance. There were indeed sufficiently obvious reasons why he might not choose to proceed to extremities with me. But how different from the fearful expectations I had conceived were the calmness of his behaviour, and the regulated mildness of his language! In this respect, I for a short time imagined that I was emancipated from the mischiefs which had appalled me; and that, in having to do with a man of Mr. Falkland's liberality, I had nothing rigorous to apprehend.

"It is a miserable prospect," said I, "that he holds up to me. He imagines that I am restrained by no principles, and deaf to the claims of personal excellence. But he shall find himself mistaken. I will never become an informer. I will never injure my patron; and therefore he will not be my enemy With all his misfortunes and all his errors, I feel that my soul yearns for his welfare. If he has been criminal, that is owing to circumstances; the same qualities under other circumstances would have been, or rather were, sublimely beneficent."

My reasonings were, no doubt, infinitely more favourable to Mr. Falkland, than those which human beings are accustomed to make in the case of such as they style great criminals. This will not be wondered at, when it is considered that I had myself just been trampling on the established boundaries of obligation, and therefore might well have a fellow-feeling for other offenders. Add to which, I had known Mr. Falkland from the first as a beneficent divinity. I had observed at leisure, and with a minuteness which could not deceive me, the excellent qualities of his heart; and I found him possessed of a mind beyond comparison the most fertile and accomplished I had ever known.

But though the terrors which had impressed me were considerably alleviated, my situation was notwithstanding sufficiently miserable. The ease and light-heartedness of my youth were for ever gone. The voice of an irresistible necessity had commanded me to "sleep no more." I was tormented with a secret, of which I must never disburthen myself; and this consciousness was, at my age, a source of perpetual melancholy. I had made myself a prisoner, in the most intolerable sense of that term, for years—perhaps for the rest of my life. Though my prudence and discretion should be invariable, I must remember that I should have an overseer, vigilant from conscious guilt, full of resentment at the unjustifiable means by which I had extorted from him a confession, and whose lightest caprice might at any time decide upon every thing that was dear to me. The vigilance even of a public and systematical despotism is poor, compared with a vigilance which is thus goaded by the most anxious passions of the soul. Against this species of persecution I knew not how to invent a refuge. I dared neither fly from the observation of Mr. Falkland, nor continue exposed to its operation. I was at first indeed lulled in a certain degree to security upon the verge of the precipice. But it was not long before I found a thousand circumstances perpetually reminding me of my true situation. Those I am now to relate are among the most memorable.

CHAPTER XIX.

In no long time after the disclosure Mr. Falkland had made, Mr. Forester, his elder brother by the mother's side, came to reside for a short period in our family. This was a circumstance peculiarly adverse to my patron's habits and inclinations. He had broken off, as I have already said, all intercourse of visiting with his neighbours. He debarred himself every kind of amusement and relaxation. He shrunk from the society of his fellows, and thought he could never be sufficiently buried in obscurity and solitude. This principle was, in most cases, of no difficult execution to a man of firmness. But Mr. Falkland knew not how to avoid the visit of Mr. Forester. This gentleman was just returned from a residence of several years upon the Continent; and his demand of an apartment in the house of his half-brother, till his own house at the distance of thirty miles should be prepared for his reception, was made with an air of confidence that scarcely admitted of a refusal. Mr. Falkland could only allege, that the state of his health and spirits was such that he feared a residence at his house would be little agreeable to his kinsman; and Mr. Forester conceived that this was a disqualification which would always augment in proportion as it was tolerated, and hoped that his society, by inducing Mr. Falkland to suspend his habits of seclusion, would be the means of essential benefit. Mr. Falkland opposed him no further. He would have been sorry to be thought unkind to

a kinsman for whom he had a particular esteem; and the consciousness of not daring to assign the true reason, made him cautious of adhering to his objection.

The character of Mr. Forester was, in many respects, the reverse of that of my master. His very appearance indicated the singularity of his disposition. His figure was short and angular. His eyes were sunk far into his head, and were overhung with eyebrows, black, thick, and bushy. His complexion was swarthy, and his lineaments hard. He had seen much of the world; but, to judge of him from his appearance and manners, one would have thought that he had never moved from his fireside.

His temper was acid, petulant, and harsh. He was easily offended by trifles, respecting which, previously to the offence, the persons with whom he had intercourse could have no suspicion of such a result. When offended, his customary behaviour was exceedingly rugged. He thought only of setting the delinquent right, and humbling him for his error; and, in his eagerness to do this, overlooked the sensibility of the sufferer, and the pains he inflicted. Remonstrance in such a case he regarded as the offspring of cowardice, which was to be extirpated with a steady and unshrinking hand, and not soothed with misjudging kindness and indulgence. As is usual in human character, he had formed a system of thinking to suit the current of his feelings. He held that the kindness we entertain for a man should be veiled and concealed, exerted in substantial benefits, but not disclosed, lest an undue advantage should be taken of it by its object.

With this rugged outside, Mr. Forester had a warm and generous heart. At first sight all men were deterred by his manner, and excited to give

him an ill character. But the longer any one knew him, the more they approved him. His harshness was then only considered as habit; and strong sense and active benevolence were uppermost in the recollection of his familiar acquaintance. His conversation, when he condescended to lay aside his snappish, rude, and abrupt half-sentences, became flowing in diction, and uncommonly amusing with regard to its substance. He combined, with weightiness of expression, a dryness of characteristic humour, that demonstrated at once the vividness of his observation and the force of his understanding.

The peculiarities of this gentleman's character were not undisplayed in the scene to which he was now introduced. Having much kindness in his disposition, he soon became deeply interested in the unhappiness of his relation. He did every thing in his power to remove it; but his attempts were rude and unskilful. With a mind so accomplished and a spirit so susceptible as that of Mr. Falkland, Mr. Forester did not venture to let loose his usual violence of manner; but, if he carefully abstained from harshness, he was however wholly incapable of that sweet and liquid eloquence of the soul which would perhaps have stood the fairest chance of seducing Mr. Falkland for a moment to forget his anguish. He exhorted his host to rouse up his spirit, and defy the foul fiend; but the tone of his exhortations found no sympathetic chord in the mind of my patron. He had not the skill to carry conviction to an understanding so well fortified in error. In a word, after a thousand efforts of kindness to his entertainer, he drew off his forces, growling and dissatisfied with his own impotence, rather than angry at the obstinacy of Mr. Falkland. He felt no diminution of his affection for him, and was sin-

cerely grieved to find that he was so little capable of serving him. Both parties in this case did justice to the merits of the other; at the same time that the disparity of their humours was such as to prevent the stranger from being in any degree a dangerous companion to the master of the house. They had scarcely one point of contact in their characters. Mr. Forester was incapable of giving Mr. Falkland that degree either of pain or pleasure which can raise the soul into a tumult, and deprive it for a while of tranquillity and self-command.

Our visiter was a man, notwithstanding appearances, of a peculiarly sociable disposition, and, where he was neither interrupted nor contradicted, considerably loquacious. He began to feel himself painfully out of his element upon the present occasion. Mr. Falkland was devoted to contemplation and solitude. He put upon himself some degree of restraint upon the arrival of his kinsman, though even then his darling habits would break out. But when they had seen each other a certain number of times, and it was sufficiently evident that the society of either would be a burthen rather than a pleasure to the other, they consented, by a sort of silent compact, that each should be at liberty to follow his own inclination. Mr. Falkland was, in a sense, the greatest gainer by this. He returned to the habits of his choice, and acted, as nearly as possible, just as he would have done if Mr. Forester had not been in existence. But the latter was wholly at a loss. He had all the disadvantages of retirement, without being able, as he might have done at his house, to bring his own associates or his own amusements about him.

In this situation he cast his eyes upon me. I was his principle to do every thing that his thoughts suggested, without caring for the forms of the world.

He saw no reason why a peasant, with certain advantages of education and opportunity, might not be as eligible a companion as a lord; at the same time that he was deeply impressed with the venerableness of old institutions. Reduced as he was to a kind of last resort, he found me better qualified for his purpose than any other of Mr. Falkland's household.

The manner in which he began this sort of correspondence was sufficiently characteristical. It was abrupt; but it was strongly stamped with essential benevolence. It was blunt and humorous; but there was attractiveness, especially in a case of unequal intercourse, in that very rusticity by which he levelled himself with the mass of his species. He had to reconcile himself as well as to invite me; not to reconcile himself to the postponing an aristocratical vanity, for of that he had a very slender portion, but to the trouble of invitation, for he loved his ease. All this produced some irregularity and indecision in his own mind, and gave a whimsical impression to his behaviour.

On my part, I was by no means ungrateful for the distinction that was paid me. My mind had been relaxed into temporary dejection, but my reserve had no alloy of moroseness or insensibility. It did not long hold out against the condescending attentions of Mr. Forester. I became gradually heedful, encouraged, confiding. I had a most eager thirst for the knowledge of mankind; and though no person perhaps ever purchased so dearly the instructions he received in that school, the inclination was in no degree diminished. Mr. Forester was the second man I had seen uncommonly worthy of my analysis, and who seemed to my thoughts, arrived as I was at the end of my first essay, almost as much deserving to be studied as Mr. Falkland

himself. I was glad to escape from the uneasiness of my reflections; and, while engaged with this new friend, I forgot the criticalness of the evils with which I was hourly menaced.

Stimulated by these feelings, I was what Mr. Forester wanted, a diligent and zealous hearer. I was strongly susceptible of impression; and the alternate impressions my mind received, visibly displayed themselves in my countenance and gestures. The observations Mr. Forester had made in his travels, the set of opinions he had formed, all amused and interested me. His manner of telling a story, or explaining his thoughts, was forcible, perspicuous, and original: his style in conversation had an uncommon zest. Every thing he had to relate delighted me; while, in return, my sympathy, my eager curiosity, and my unsophisticated passions rendered me to Mr. Forester a most desirable hearer. It is not to be wondered at, therefore, that every day rendered our intercourse more intimate and cordial.

Mr. Falkland was destined to be for ever unhappy; and it seemed as if no new incident could occur from which he was not able to extract food for this imperious propensity. He was wearied with a perpetual repetition of similar impressions; and entertained an invincible disgust against all that was new. The visit of Mr. Forester he regarded with antipathy. He was scarcely able to look at him without shuddering; an emotion which his guest perceived, and pitied as the result of habit and disease, rather than of judgment. None of his actions passed unremarked; the most indifferent excited uneasiness and apprehension. The first overtures of intimacy between me and Mr. Forester probably gave birth to sentiments of jealousy in the mind of my master. The irregular, variable char-

acter of his visiter tended to heighten them, by producing an appearance of inexplicableness and mystery. At this time he intimated to me that it was not agreeable to him that there should be much intercourse between me and this gentleman.

What could I do? Young as I was, could it be expected that I should play the philosopher, and put a perpetual curb upon my inclinations? Imprudent though I had been, could I voluntarily subject myself to an eternal penance and estrangement from human society? Could I discourage a frankness so perfectly in consonance with my wishes, and receive in an ungracious way a kindness that stole away my heart?

Besides this, I was but ill prepared for the servile submission Mr. Falkland demanded. In early life I had been accustomed to be much my own master. When I first entered into Mr. Falkland's service, my personal habits were checked by the novelty of my situation, and my affections were gained by the high accomplishments of my patron. To novelty and its influence, curiosity had succeeded: curiosity, so long as it lasted, was a principle stronger in my bosom than even the love of independence. To that I would have sacrificed my liberty or my life; to gratify it, I would have submitted to the condition of a West Indian negro, or to the tortures inflicted by North American savages. But the turbulence of curiosity had now subsided.

As long as the threats of Mr. Falkland had been confined to generals, I endured it. I was conscious of the unbecoming action I had committed, and this rendered me humble. But when he went further, and undertook to prescribe to every article of my conduct, my patience was at an end. My mind, before sufficiently sensible to the unfortunate situation to which my imprudence had reduced me, now

took a nearer and a more alarming view of the circumstances of the case. Mr. Falkland was not an old man; he had in him the principles of vigour, however they might seem to be shaken; he might live as long as I should. I was his prisoner; and what a prisoner! All my actions observed; all my gestures marked. I could move neither to the right nor the left, but the eye of my keeper was upon me. He watched me, and his vigilance was a sickness to my heart. For me there was no more freedom, no more of hilarity, of thoughtlessness, or of youth. Was this the life upon which I had entered with such warm and sanguine expectation? Were my days to be wasted in this cheerless gloom; a galley-slave in the hands of the system of nature, whom death only, the death of myself or my inexorable superior, could free?

I had been adventurous in the gratification of an infantine and unreasonable curiosity; and I resolved not to be less adventurous, if need were, in the defence of every thing that can make life a blessing. I was prepared for an amicable adjustment of interests: I would undertake that Mr. Falkland should never sustain injury through my means; but I expected in return that I should suffer no encroachment, but be left to the direction of my own understanding.

I went on, then, to seek Mr. Forester's society with eagerness; and it is the nature of an intimacy that does not decline, progressively to increase. Mr. Falkland observed these symptoms with visible perturbation. Whenever I was conscious of their being perceived by him, I betrayed tokens of confusion: this did not tend to allay his uneasiness. One day he spoke to me alone; and, with a look of mysterious but terrible import, expressed himself thus:—

"Young man, take warning! Perhaps this is the last time you shall have an opportunity to take it! I will not always be the butt of your simplicity and inexperience, nor suffer your weakness to triumph over my strength! Why do you trifle with me? You little suspect the extent of my power. At this moment you are enclosed with the snares of my vengeance unseen by you, and, at the instant that you flatter yourself you are already beyond their reach, they will close upon you. You might as well think of escaping from the power of the omni present God, as from mine! If you could touch so much as my finger, you should expiate it in hours and months and years of a torment, of which as yet you have not the remotest idea. Remember! I am not talking at random! I do not utter a word that, if you provoke me, shall not be executed to the severest letter!"

It may be supposed that these menaces were not without their effect. I withdrew in silence. My whole soul revolted against the treatment I endured, and yet I could not utter a word. Why could not I speak the expostulations of my heart, or propose the compromise I meditated? It was inexperience, and not want of strength that awed me. Every act of Mr. Falkland contained something new, and I was unprepared to meet it. Perhaps it will be found that the greatest hero owes the propriety of his conduct to the habit of encountering difficulties, and calling out with promptness the energies of his mind.

I contemplated the proceedings of my patron with the deepest astonishment. Humanity and general kindness were fundamental parts of his character; but in relation to me they were sterile and inactive. His own interest required that he should purchase my kindness; but he preferred to govern me by

terror, and watch me with unceasing anxiety. I ruminated with the most mournful sensations upon the nature of my calamity. I believed that no human being was ever placed in a situation so pitiable as mine. Every atom of my frame seemed to have a several existence, and to crawl within me. I had but too much reason to believe that Mr. Falkland's threats were not empty words. I knew his ability; I felt his ascendency. If I encountered him, what chance had I of victory? If I were defeated, what was the penalty I had to suffer? Well, then, the rest of my life must be devoted to slavish subjection. Miserable sentence! And, if it were, what security had I against the injustice of a man, vigilant, capricious, and criminal? I envied the condemned wretch upon the scaffold; I envied the victim of the Inquisition in the midst of his torture. They know what they have to suffer. I had only to imagine every thing terrible, and then say, "The fate reserved for me is worse than this!"

It was well for me that these sensations were transient: human nature could not long support itself under what I then felt. By degrees my mind shook off its burthen. Indignation succeeded to emotions of terror. The hostility of Mr. Falkland excited hostility in me. I determined I would never calumniate him in matters of the most trivial import, much less betray the grand secret upon which every thing dear to him depended. But, totally abjuring the offensive, I resolved to stand firmly upon the defensive. The liberty of acting as I pleased I would preserve, whatever might be the risk. If I were worsted in the contest, I would at least have the consolation of reflecting that I had exerted myself with energy. In proportion as I thus determined, I drew off my forces from petty incursions, and felt the propriety of acting with premeditation

and system. I ruminated incessantly upon plans of deliverance, but I was anxious that my choice should not be precipitately made.

It was during this period of my deliberation and uncertainty that Mr. Forester terminated his visit. He observed a strange distance in my behaviour, and, in his good-natured, rough way, reproached me for it. I could only answer with a gloomy look of mysterious import, and a mournful and expressive silence. He sought me for an explanation, but I was now as ingenious in avoiding as I had before been ardent to seek him; and he quitted our house, as he afterward told me, with an impression that there was some ill destiny that hung over it, which seemed fated to make all its inhabitants miserable, without its being possible for a bystander to penetrate the reason.

CHAPTER XX.

Mr. Forester had left us about three weeks, when Mr. Falkland sent me upon some business to an estate he possessed in a neighbouring county, about fifty miles from his principal residence. The road led in a direction wholly wide of the habitation of our late visiter. I was upon my return from the place to which I had been sent, when I began in fancy to take a survey of the various circumstances of my condition, and by degrees lost, in the profoundness of my contemplation, all attention to the surrounding objects. The first determination of my mind was to escape from the lynx-eyed jealousy and despotism of Mr. Falkland; the second to provide,

by every effort of prudence and deliberation I could devise, against the danger with which I well knew my attempt must be accompanied.

Occupied with these meditations, I rode many miles before I perceived that I had totally deviated from the right path. At length I roused myself, and surveyed the horizon round me; but I could observe nothing with which my organ was previously acquainted. On three sides, the heath stretched as far as the eye could reach; on the fourth, I discovered at some distance a wood of no ordinary dimensions. Before me, scarcely a single track could be found, to mark that any human being had ever visited the spot. As the best expedient I could devise, I bent my course towards the wood I have mentioned, and then pursued, as well as I was able, the windings of the enclosure. This led me, after some time, to the end of the heath; but I was still as much at a loss as ever respecting the road I should pursue. The sun was hid from me by a gray and cloudy atmosphere; I was induced to continue along the skirts of the wood, and surmounted with some difficulty the hedges and other obstacles that from time to time presented themselves. My thoughts were gloomy and disconsolate; the dreariness of the day, and the solitude which surrounded me, seemed to communicate a sadness to my soul. I had proceeded a considerable way, and was overcome with hunger and fatigue, when I discovered a road and a little inn at no great distance. I made up to them, and upon inquiry found that, instead of pursuing the proper direction, I had taken one that led to Mr. Forester's rather than to my own habitation. I alighted, and was entering the house, when the appearance of that gentleman struck my eyes.

Mr. Forester accosted me with kindness, invited

me into the room where he had been sitting, and inquired what accident had brought me to that place.

While he was speaking, I could not help recollecting the extraordinary manner in which we were thus once more brought together, and a train of ideas was by this means suggested to my mind. Some refreshment was, by Mr. Forester's order, prepared for me; I sat down, and partook of it. Still this thought dwelt upon my recollection:—"Mr. Falkland will never be made acquainted with our meeting; I have an opportunity thrown in my way, which if I do not improve, I shall deserve all the consequences that may result. I can now converse with a friend, and a powerful friend, without fear of being watched and overlooked." What wonder that I was tempted to disclose, not Mr. Falkland's secret, but my own situation, and receive the advice of a man of worth and experience, which might perhaps be adequately done without entering into any detail injurious to my patron?

Mr. Forester, on his part, expressed a desire to learn why it was I thought myself unhappy, and why I had avoided him during the latter part of his residence under the same roof, as evidently as I had before taken pleasure in his communications. I replied, that I could give him but an imperfect satisfaction upon these points; but what I could, I would willingly explain. The fact, I proceeded, was, that there were reasons which rendered it impossible for me to have a tranquil moment under the roof of Mr. Falkland. I had revolved the matter again and again in my mind, and was finally convinced that I owed it to myself to withdraw from his service. I added, that I was sensible, by this half-confidence, I might rather seem to merit the disapprobation of Mr. Forester than his counte-

nance; but I declared my persuasion, that if he could be acquainted with the whole affair, however strange my behaviour might at present appear, he would applaud my reserve.

He appeared to muse for a moment upon what I had said, and then asked what reason I could have to complain of Mr. Falkland? I replied, that I entertained the deepest reverence for my patron; I admired his abilities, and considered him as formed for the benefit of his species. I should in my own opinion be the vilest of miscreants if I uttered a whisper to his disadvantage. But this did not avail: I was not fit for him; perhaps I was not good enough for him; at all events, I must be perpetually miserable so long as I continued to live with him.

I observed Mr. Forester gaze upon me eagerly with curiosity and surprise; but this circumstance I did not think proper to notice. Having recovered himself, he inquired, why then, that being the case, I did not quit his service? I answered, what he now touched upon was that which most of all contributed to my misfortune. Mr. Falkland was not ignorant of my dislike to my present situation; perhaps he thought it unreasonable, unjust; but I knew that he would never be brought to consent to my giving way to it.

Here Mr. Forester interrupted me, and, smiling, said, I magnified obstacles, and overrated my own importance; adding, that he would undertake to remove that difficulty, as well as to provide me with a more agreeable appointment. This suggestion produced in me a serious alarm. I replied, that I must entreat him upon no account to think of applying to Mr. Falkland upon the subject. I added, that perhaps I was only betraying my imbecility; but, in reality, unacquainted as I was with expe-

rience and the world, I was afraid, though disgusted with my present residence, to expose myself, upon a mere project of my own, to the resentment of so considerable a man as Mr. Falkland. If he would favour me with his advice upon the subject, or if he would only give me leave to hope for his protection in case of any unforeseen accident, this was all I presumed to request; and, thus encouraged, I would venture to obey the dictates of my inclination, and fly in pursuit of my lost tranquillity.

Having thus opened myself to this generous friend, as far as I could do it with propriety and safety, he sat for some time silent, with an air of deep reflection. At length, with a countenance of unusual severity, and a characteristic fierceness of manner and voice, he thus addressed me: "Young man, perhaps you are ignorant of the nature of the conduct you at present hold. Maybe you do not know that where there is mystery, there is always something at bottom that will not bear the telling. Is this the way to obtain the favour of a man of consequence and respectability? To pretend to make a confidence, and then tell him a disjointed story that has not common sense in it!"

I answered, that, whatever were the amount of that prejudice, I must submit. I placed my hope of a candid construction, in the present instance, in the rectitude of his nature.

He went on: "You do so; do you? I tell you, sir, the rectitude of my nature is an enemy to disguise. Come, boy, you must know that I understand these things better than you. Tell all, or expect nothing from me but censure and contempt."

"Sir," replied I, "I have spoken from deliberation; I have told you my choice, and, whatever be the result, I must abide by it. If in this misfortune you refuse me your assistance, here I must

end, having gained by the communication only your ill opinion and displeasure."

He looked hard at me, as if he would see me through. At length he relaxed his features, and softened his manner. "You are a foolish, headstrong boy," said he, "and I shall have an eye upon you. I shall never place in you the confidence I have done. But—I will not desert you. At present, the balance between approbation and dislike is in your favour. How long it will last I cannot tell; I engage for nothing. But it is my rule to act as I feel. I will for this time do as you require;—and, pray God, it may answer. I will receive you, either now or hereafter, under my roof, trusting that I shall have no reason to repent, and that appearances will terminate as favourably as I wish, though I scarcely know how to hope it."

We were engaged in the earnest discussion of subjects thus interesting to my peace, when we were interrupted by an event the most earnestly to have been deprecated. Without the smallest notice, and as if he had dropped upon us from the clouds, Mr. Falkland burst into the room. I found afterward that Mr. Forester had come thus far upon an appointment to meet Mr. Falkland, and that the place of their intended rendezvous was at the next stage. Mr. Forester was detained at the inn where we now were by our accidental rencounter, and in reality had for the moment forgotten his appointment; while Mr. Falkland, not finding him where he expected, proceeded thus far towards the house of his kinsman. To me the meeting was the most unaccountable in the world.

I instantly foresaw the dreadful complication of misfortune that was included in this event. To Mr. Falkland, the meeting between me and his relation must appear not accidental, but, on my part

at least, the result of design. I was totally out of the road I had been travelling by his direction; I was in a road that led directly to the house of Mr. Forester. What must he think of this? How must he suppose I came to that place? The truth, if told, that I came there without design, and purely in consequence of having lost my way, must appear to be the most palpable lie that ever was devised.

Here then I stood detected in the fact of that intercourse which had been so severely forbidden. But in this instance it was infinitely worse than in those which had already given so much disturbance to Mr. Falkland. It was then frank and unconcealed; and therefore the presumption was, that it was for purposes that required no concealment. But the present interview, if concerted, was in the most emphatical degree clandestine. Nor was it less perilous than it was clandestine: it had been forbidden with the most dreadful menaces; and Mr. Falkland was not ignorant how deep an impression those menaces had mad upon my imagination. Such a meeting, therefore, could not have been concerted, under such circumstances, for a trivial purpose, or for any purpose that his heart did not ache to think of. Such was the amount of my crime, such was the agony my appearance was calculated to inspire; and it was reasonable to suppose that the penalty I had to expect would be proportionable. The threats of Mr. Falkland still sounded in my ears, and I was in a transport of terror.

The conduct of the same man in different circumstances is often so various as to render it very difficult to be accounted for. Mr. Falkland, in this to him terrible crisis, did not seem to be in any degree hurried away by passion. For a moment he was dumb, his eyes glared with astonishment; and

the next moment, as it were, he had the most perfect calmness and self-command. Had it been otherwise, I have no doubt that I should instantly have entered into an explanation of the manner in which I came there, the ingenuousness and consistency of which could not but have been in some degree attended with a favourable event. But, as it was, I suffered myself to be overcome; I yielded, as in a former instance, to the discomfiting influence of surprise. I dared scarcely breathe; I observed the appearances with equal anxiety and surprise. Mr. Falkland quietly ordered me to return home, and take along with me the groom he had brought with him. I obeyed in silence.

I afterward understood, that he inquired minutely of Mr. Forester the circumstances of our meeting; and that that gentleman, perceiving that the meeting itself was discovered, and guided by habits of frankness, which, when once rooted in a character, it is difficult to counteract, told Mr. Falkland every thing that had passed, together with the remarks it had suggested to his own mind. Mr. Falkland received the communication with an ambiguous and studied silence, which by no means operated to my advantage in the already poisoned mind of Mr. Forester. His silence was partly the direct consequence of a mind watchful, inquisitive, and doubting; and partly perhaps was adopted for the sake of the effect it was calculated to produce, Mr. Falkland not being unwilling to encourage prejudices against a character which might one day come in competition with his own.

As to me, I went home indeed, for this was not a moment to resist. Mr. Falkland, with a premeditation to which he had given the appearance of accident, had taken care to send with me a guard to attend upon his prisoner. I seemed as if con-

ducting to one of those fortresses, famed in the history of despotism, from which the wretched victim is never known to come forth alive; and when I entered my chamber, I felt as if I were entering a dungeon. I reflected that I was at the mercy of a man, exasperated at my disobedience, and who was already formed to cruelty by successive murders. My prospects were now closed; I was cut off for ever from pursuits that I had meditated with ineffable delight; my death might be the event of a few hours. I was a victim at the shrine of conscious guilt, that knew neither rest nor satiety; I should be blotted from the catalogue of the living, and my fate remain eternally a secret; the man who added my murder to his former crimes would show himself the next morning, and be hailed with the admiration and applause of his species.

In the midst of these terrible imaginations, one idea presented itself that alleviated my feelings. This was the recollection of the strange and unaccountable tranquillity which Mr. Falkland had manifested when he discovered me in company with Mr. Forester. I was not deceived by this. I knew that the calm was temporary, and would be succeeded by a tumult and whirlwind of the most dreadful sort. But a man under the power of such terrors as now occupied me catches at every reed. I said to myself, "This tranquillity is a period it is incumbent upon me to improve; the shorter its duration may be found, the more speedy am I obliged to be in the use of it." In a word, I took the resolution, because I already stood in fear of the vengeance of Mr. Falkland, to risk the possibility of provoking it in a degree still more inexpiable, and terminate at once my present state of uncertainty. I had now opened my case to Mr. Forester, and he had given me positive assurances

of his protection. I determined immediately to address the following letter to Mr. Falkland. The consideration, that if he meditated any thing tragical, such a letter would only tend to confirm him, did not enter into the present feelings of my mind.

"Sir,

"I have conceived the intention of quitting your service. This is a measure we ought both of us to desire. I shall then be, what it is my duty to be, master of my own actions. You will be delivered from the presence of a person whom you cannot prevail upon yourself to behold without unpleasing emotions.

"Why should you subject me to an eternal penance? Why should you consign my youthful hopes to suffering and despair? Consult the principles of humanity that have marked the general course of your proceedings, and do not let me, I entreat you, be made the subject of a useless severity. My heart is impressed with gratitude for your favours. I sincerely ask your forgiveness for the many errors of my conduct. I consider the treatment I have received under your roof as one almost uninterrupted scene of kindness and generosity. I shall never forget my obligations to you, and will never betray them.

"I remain, sir,

"Your most grateful, respectful,

"and dutiful servant,

"CALEB WILLIAMS."

Such was my employment of the evening of a day which will be ever memorable in the history of my life. Mr. Falkland not being yet returned, though expected every hour, I was induced to make use of the pretence of fatigue to avoid an interview.

I went to bed. It may be imagined that my slumbers were neither deep nor refreshing.

The next morning I was informed that my patron did not come home till late; that he had inquired for me, and, being told that I was in bed, had said nothing further upon the subject. Satisfied in this respect, I went to the breakfasting-parlour, and, though full of anxiety and trepidation, endeavoured to busy myself in arranging the books, and a few other little occupations, till Mr. Falkland should come down. After a short time I heard his step, which I perfectly well knew how to distinguish, in the passage. Presently he stopped, and speaking to some one in a sort of deliberate but smothered voice, I overheard him repeat my name as inquiring for me. In conformity to the plan I had persuaded myself to adopt, I now laid the letter I had written upon the table at which he usually sat, and made my exit at one door as Mr. Falkland entered the other. This done, I withdrew, with flutterings and palpitation, to a private apartment, a sort of light closet at the end of the library, where I was accustomed not unfrequently to sit.

I had not been here three minutes when I heard the voice of Mr. Falkland calling me. I went to him in the library. His manner was that of a man labouring with some dreadful thought, and endeavouring to give an air of carelessness and insensibility to his behaviour. Perhaps no carriage of any other sort could have produced a sensation of such inexplicable horror, or have excited in the person who was its object such anxious uncertainty about the event.—"That is your letter," said he, throwing it.

"My lad," continued he, "I believe now you have played all your tricks, and the farce is nearly at an end! With your apishness and absurdity,

however, you have taught me one thing; and whereas before I have winced at them with torture, I am now as tough as an elephant. I shall crush you in the end with the same indifference that I would any other little insect that disturbed my serenity.

"I am unable to tell what brought about your meeting with Mr. Forester yesterday. It might be design; it might be accident. But I shall not forget it. You write me here that you are desirous to quit my service. To that I have a short answer: you never shall quit it with life. If you attempt it, you shall never cease to rue your folly as long as you exist. That is my will; and I will not have it resisted. The very next time you disobey me in that or any other article, there is an end of your vagaries for ever. Perhaps your situation may be a pitiable one; it is for you to look to that. I only know that it is in your power to prevent its growing worse; no time nor chance shall ever make it better.

"Do not imagine I am afraid of you! I wear an armour against which all your weapons are impotent. I have dug a pit for you; and whichever way you move, backward or forward, to the right or the left, it is ready to swallow you. Be still! If once you fall, call as loud as you will, no man on earth shall hear your cries; prepare a tale however plausible, or however true, the whole world shall execrate you for an impostor. Your innocence shall be of no service to you; I laugh at so feeble a defence. It is I that say it; you may believe what I tell you.—Do you not know, miserable wretch!" added he, suddenly altering his tone, and stamping upon the ground with fury, "that I have sworn to preserve my reputation, whatever be the expense; that I love it more than the whole world and its

inhabitants taken together? And do you think that you shall wound it? Begone, miscreant! reptile! and cease to contend with insurmountable power!"

The part of my history which I am now relating is that which I reflect upon with the least complacency. Why was it that I was once more totally overcome by the imperious carriage of Mr. Falkland, and unable to utter a word? The reader will be presented with many occasions in the sequel, in which I wanted neither facility in the invention of expedients, nor fortitude in entering upon my justification. Persecution at length gave firmness to my character, and taught me the better part of manhood. But in the present instance I was irresolute, overawed, and abashed.

The speech I had heard was the dictate of phrensy, and it created in me a similar phrensy. It determined me to do the very thing against which I was thus solemnly warned, and fly from my patron's house. I could not enter into parley with him; I could no longer endure the vile subjugation he imposed on me. It was in vain that my reason warned me of the rashness of a measure to be taken without concert or preparation. I seemed to be in a state in which reason had no power. I felt as if I could coolly survey the several arguments of the case, perceive that they had prudence, truth, and common sense on their side; and then answer, I am under the guidance of a director more energetic than you.

I was not long in executing what I had thus rapidly determined. I fixed on the evening of that very day as the period of my evasion. Even in this short interval I had perhaps sufficient time for deliberation. But all opportunity was useless to me; my mind was fixed, and each succeeding moment only increased the unspeakable eagerness with

which I meditated my escape. The hours usually observed by our family in this country residence were regular; and one in the morning was the time I selected for my undertaking.

In searching the apartment where I slept, I had formerly discovered a concealed door, which led to a small apartment of the most secret nature, not uncommon in houses so old as that of Mr. Falkland, and which had perhaps served as a refuge from persecution, or a security from the inveterate hostilities of a barbarous age. I believed no person was acquainted with this hidingplace but myself. I felt unaccountably impelled to remove into it the different articles of my personal property. I could not at present take them away with me. If I were never to recover them, I felt that it would be a gratification to my sentiment, that no trace of my existence should be found after my departure. Having completed their removal, and waited till the hour I had previously chosen, I stole down quietly from my chamber with a lamp in my hand. I went along a passage that led to a small door opening into the garden, and then crossed the garden to a gate that intersected an elm-walk and a private horse-path on the outside.

I could scarcely believe my good fortune in having thus far executed my design without interruption. The terrible images Mr. Falkland's menaces had suggested to my mind made me expect impediment and detection at every step; though the impassioned state of my mind impelled me to advance with desperate resolution. He probably, however, counted too securely upon the ascendency of his sentiments, when imperiously pronounced, to think it necessary to take precautions against a sinister event. For myself, I drew a favourable omen as to the final result of my project, from the smoothness of success that attended it in the outset.

CHAPTER XXI.

The first plan that had suggested itself to me was, to go to the nearest public road and take the earliest stage for London. There I believed I should be most safe from discovery, if the vengeance of Mr. Falkland should prompt him to pursue me; and I did not doubt, among the multiplied resources of the metropolis, to find something which should suggest to me an eligible mode of disposing of my person and industry. I reserved Mr. Forester in my arrangement as a last resource, not to be called forth unless for immediate protection from the hand of persecution and power. I was destitute of that experience of the world which can alone render us fertile in resources, or enable us to institute a just comparison between the resources that offer themselves. I was like the fascinated animal, that is seized with the most terrible apprehensions at the same time that he is incapable of adequately considering for his own safety.

The mode of my proceeding being digested, I traced, with a cheerful heart, the unfrequented path it was now necessary for me to pursue. The night was gloomy, and it drizzled with rain. But these were circumstances I had scarcely the power to perceive; all was sunshine and joy with me. I hardly felt the ground; I repeated to myself a thousand times, "I am free. What concern have I with danger and alarm? I feel that I am free: I feel that I will continue so. What power is able to hold in chains a mind ardent and determined? What power can cause that man to die whose whole soul

commands him to continue to live?" I looked back with abhorrence to the subjection in which I had been held. I did not hate the author of my misfortunes—truth and justice acquit me of that; I rather pitied the hard destiny to which he seemed condemned. But I thought with unspeakable loathing of those errors, in consequence of which every man is fated to be more or less the tyrant or the slave. I was astonished at the folly of my species, that they did not rise up as one man, and shake off chains so ignominious and misery so insupportable. So far as related to myself, I resolved—and this resolution has never been entirely forgotten by me—to hold myself disengaged from this odious scene, and never fill the part either of the oppressor or the sufferer.

My mind continued in this enthusiastical state, full of confidence, and accessible only to such a portion of fear as served rather to keep up a state of pleasurable emotion than to generate anguish and distress, during the whole of this nocturnal expedition. After a walk of three hours, I arrived, without accident, at the village from which I hoped to have taken my passage for the metropolis. At this early hour every thing was quiet; no sound of any thing human saluted my ear. It was with difficulty that I gained admittance into the yard of the inn, where I found a single ostler taking care of some horses. From him I received the unwelcome tidings that the coach was not expected till six o'clock in the morning of the day after to-morrow, its route through that town occurring only three times a week. This intelligence gave the first check to the rapturous inebriation by which my mind had been possessed from the moment I quitted the habitation of Mr. Falkland. The whole of my fortune in ready cash consisted of about eleven guineas. I had

about fifty more, that had fallen to me from the disposal of my property at the death of my father; but that was so vested as to preclude it from immediate use, and I even doubted whether it would not be found better ultimately to resign it, than, by claiming it, to risk the furnishing a clew to what I most of all dreaded, the persecution of Mr. Falkland. There was nothing I so ardently desired as the annihilation of all future intercourse between us, that he should not know there was such a person on the earth as myself, and that I should never more hear the repetition of a name which had been so fatal to my peace.

Thus circumstanced, I conceived frugality to be an object by no means unworthy of my attention, unable as I was to prognosticate what discouragements and delays might present themselves to the accomplishment of my wishes, after my arrival in London. For this and other reasons, I determined to adhere to my design of travelling by the stage; it only remaining for me to consider in what manner I should prevent the eventful delay of twenty-four hours from becoming, by any untoward event, a source of new calamity. It was by no means advisable to remain in the village where I now was during this interval; nor did I even think proper to employ it in proceeding on foot along the great road. I therefore decided upon making a circuit, the direction of which should seem at first extremely wide of my intended route, and then, suddenly taking a different inclination, should enable me to arrive by the close of day at a market-town twelve miles nearer to the metropolis.

Having fixed the economy of the day, and persuaded myself that it was the best which, under the circumstances, could be adopted, I dismissed, for the most part, all further anxieties from my mind,

and eagerly yielded myself up to the different amusements that arose. I rested and went forward at the impulse of the moment. At one time I reclined upon a bank immersed in contemplation, and at another exerted myself to analyze the prospects which succeeded each other. The haziness of the morning was followed by a spirit-stirring and beautiful day. With the ductility so characteristic of a youthful mind, I forgot the anguish which had lately been my continual guest, and occupied myself entirely in dreams of future novelty and felicity. I scarcely ever, in the whole course of my existence, spent a day of more various or exquisite gratification. It furnished a strong, and perhaps not an unsalutary contrast, to the terrors which had preceded, and the dreadful scenes that awaited me.

In the evening I arrived at the place of my destination, and inquired for the inn at which the coach was accustomed to call. A circumstance, however, had previously excited my attention, and reproduced in me a state of alarm.

Though it was already dark before I reached the town, my observation had been attracted by a man, who passed me on horseback in the opposite direction, about half a mile on the other side of the town. There was an inquisitiveness in his gesture that I did not like; and, as far as I could discern his figure, I pronounced him an ill-looking man. He had not passed me more than two minutes before I heard the sound of a horse advancing slowly behind me. These circumstances impressed some degree of uneasy sensation upon my mind. I first mended my pace; and, this not appearing to answer the purpose, I afterward loitered, that the horseman might pass me. He did so; and, as I glanced at him, I thought I saw that it was the same man. He now put his horse into a trot, and en-

tered the town. I followed; and it was not long before I perceived him at the door of an alehouse, drinking a mug of beer. This, however, the darkness prevented me from discovering, till I was in a manner upon him. I pushed forward, and saw him no more, till, as I entered the yard of the inn where I intended to sleep, the same man suddenly rode up to me, and asked if my name were Williams.

This adventure, *while it had been passing*, expelled the gayety of my mind, and filled me with anxiety. The apprehension, however, that I felt, appeared to me groundless: if I were pursued, I took it for granted it would be by some of Mr. Falkland's people, and not by a stranger. The darkness took from me some of the simplest expedients of precaution. I determined at least to proceed to the inn, and make the necessary inquiries.

I no sooner heard the sound of the horse as I entered the yard, and the question proposed to me by the rider, than the dreadful certainty of what I feared instantly took possession of my mind. Every incident connected with my late abhorred situation was calculated to impress me with the deepest alarm. My first thought was, to betake myself to the fields, and trust to the swiftness of my flight for safety. But this was scarcely practicable: I remarked that my enemy was alone; and I believed that, man to man, I might reasonably hope to get the better of him, either by the firmness of my determination, or the subtlety of my invention.

Thus resolved, I replied in an impetuous and peremptory tone, that I was the man he took me for; adding, "I guess your errand; but it is to no purpose. You come to conduct me back to Falkland House; but no force shall ever drag me to that place alive. I have not taken my resolution without strong reasons; and all the world shall not persuade

me to alter it. I am an Englishman, and it is the privilege of an Englishman to be sole judge and master of his own actions."

"You are in the devil of a hurry," replied the man, "to guess my intentions, and tell your own. But your guess is right; and mayhap you may have reason to be thankful that my errand is not something worse. Sure enough the squire expects you;—but I have a letter, and when you have read that, I suppose you will come off a little of your stoutness. If that does not answer, it will then be time to think what is to be done next."

Thus saying, he gave me his letter, which was from Mr. Forester, whom, as he told me, he had left at Mr. Falkland's house. I went into a room of the inn for the purpose of reading it, and was followed by the bearer. The letter was as follows:—

"WILLIAMS,

"My brother Falkland has sent the bearer in pursuit of you. He expects that, if found, you will return with him: I expect it too. It is of the utmost consequence to your future honour and character. After reading these lines, if you are a villain and a rascal, you will perhaps endeavour to fly; if your conscience tells you you are innocent, you will, out of all doubt, come back. Show me then whether I have been your dupe; and, while I was won over by your seeming ingenuousness, have suffered myself to be made the tool of a designing knave. If you come, I pledge myself that, if you clear your reputation, you shall not only be free to go wherever you please, but shall receive every assistance in my power to give. Remember, I engage for nothing further than that.

"VALENTINE FORESTER."

What a letter was this! To a mind like mine, glowing with the love of virtue, such an address was strong enough to draw the person to whom it was addressed from one end of the earth to the other. My mind was full of confidence and energy. I felt my own innocence, and was determined to assert it. I was willing to be driven out a fugitive; I even rejoiced in my escape, and cheerfully went out into the world destitute of every provision, and depending for my future prospects upon my own ingenuity.

Thus much, said I, Falkland! you may do. Dispose of me as you please with respect to the goods of fortune; but you shall neither make prize of my liberty, nor sully the whiteness of my name. I repassed in my thoughts every memorable incident that had happened to me under his roof. I could recollect nothing, except the affair of the mysterious trunk, out of which the shadow of a criminal accusation could be extorted. In that instance my conduct had been highly reprehensible, and I had never looked back upon it without remorse and self-condemnation. But I did not believe that it was of the nature of those actions which can be brought under legal censure. I could still less persuade myself that Mr. Falkland, who shuddered at the very possibility of detection, and who considered himself as completely in my power, would dare to bring forward a subject so closely connected with the internal agony of his soul. In a word, the more I reflected on the phrases of Mr. Forester's billet, the less could I imagine the nature of those scenes to which they were to serve as a prelude.

The inscrutableness, however, of the mystery they contained did not suffice to overwhelm my courage. My mind seemed to undergo an entire revolution. Timid and embarrassed as I had felt myself, when

I regarded Mr. Falkland as my clandestine and domestic foe, I now conceived that the case was entirely altered. "Meet me," said I, "as an open accuser: if we must contend, let us contend in the face of day; and then, unparalleled as your resources may be, I will not fear you." Innocence and guilt were, in my apprehension, the things in the whole world the most opposite to each other. I would not suffer myself to believe that the former could be confounded with the latter, unless the innocent man first allowed himself to be subdued in mind, before he was defrauded of the good opinion of mankind. Virtue rising superior to every calamity, defeating by a plain unvarnished tale all the stratagems of vice, and throwing back upon her adversary the confusion with which he had hoped to overwhelm her, was one of the favourite subjects of my youthful reveries. I determined never to prove an instrument of destruction to Mr. Falkland; but I was not less resolute to obtain justice to myself.

The issue of all these confident hopes I shall immediately have occasion to relate. It was thus, with the most generous and undoubting spirit, that I rushed upon irretrievable ruin.

"Friend," said I to the bearer, after a considerable interval of silence, "you are right. This is, indeed, an extraordinary letter you have brought me; but it answers its purpose. I will certainly go with you now, whatever be the consequence. No person shall ever impute blame to me, so long as I have it in my power to clear myself."

I felt, in the circumstances in which I was placed by Mr. Forester's letter, not merely a willingness, but an alacrity and impatience to return. We procured a second horse. We proceeded on our journey in silence. My mind was occupied again in

endeavouring to account for Mr. Forester's letter. I knew the inflexibility and sternness of Mr. Falkland's mind in accomplishing the purposes he had at heart; but I also knew that every virtuous and magnanimous principle was congenial to his character.

When we arrived, midnight was already past, and we were obliged to waken one of the servants to give us admittance. I found that Mr. Forester had left a message for me, in consideration of the possibility of my arrival during the night, directing me immediately to go to bed, and to take care that I did not come weary and exhausted to the business of the following day. I endeavoured to take his advice; but my slumbers were unrefreshing and disturbed. I suffered, however, no reduction of courage: the singularity of my situation, my conjectures with respect to the present, my eagerness for the future, did not allow me to sink into a languid and inactive state.

Next morning the first person I saw was Mr. Forester. He told me that he did not yet know what Mr. Falkland had to allege against me, for that he had refused to know. He had arrived at the house of his brother by appointment on the preceding day to settle some indispensable business, his intention having been to depart the moment the business was finished, as he knew that conduct on his part would be most agreeable to Mr. Falkland. But he was no sooner come than he found the whole house in confusion, the alarm of my elopement having been given a few hours before. Mr. Falkland had despatched servants in all directions in pursuit of me; and the servant from the market-town arrived at the same moment with Mr. Forester, with intelligence that a person answering the description he gave had been there very early

in the morning, inquiring respecting the stage to London.

Mr. Falkland seemed extremely disturbed at this information, and exclaimed on me with acrimony, as an unthankful and unnatural villain.

Mr. Forester replied, "Have more command of yourself, sir! Villain is a serious appellation, and must not be trifled with. Englishmen are free; and no man is to be charged with villany because he changes one source of subsistence for another."

Mr. Falkland shook his head, and with a smile expressive of acute sensibility, said, "Brother, brother, you are the dupe of his art. I always considered him with an eye of suspicion, and was aware of his depravity. But I have just discovered—"

"Stop, sir!" interrupted Mr. Forester, "I own I thought that, in a moment of acrimony, you might be employing harsh epithets in a sort of random style. But if you have a serious accusation to state, we must not be told of that till it is known whether the lad is within reach of a hearing. I I am indifferent myself about the good opinion of others. It is what the world bestows and retracts with so little thought, that I can make no account of its decision. But that does not authorize me lightly to entertain an ill opinion of another. The slenderest allowance I think I can make to such as I consign to be the example and terror of their species, is that of being heard in their own defence. It is a wise principle that requires the judge to come into court uninformed of the merits of the cause he is to try; and to that principle I am determined to conform as an individual. I shall always think it right to be severe and inflexible in my treatment of offenders; but the severity I exer-

cise in the sequel, must be accompanied with impartiality and caution in what is preliminary."

While Mr. Forester related to me these particulars, he observed me ready to break out into some of the expressions which the narrative suggested; but he would not suffer me to speak. "No," said he; "I would not hear Mr. Falkland against you; and I cannot hear you in your defence. I come to you at present to speak, and not to hear. I thought it right to warn you of your danger, but I have nothing more to do now. Reserve what you have to say to the proper time. Make the best story you can for yourself—true, if truth, as I hope, will serve your purpose; but, if not, the most plausible and ingenious you can invent. That is what self-defence requires from every man, where, as it always happens to a man upon his trial, he has the whole world against him, and has his own battle to fight against the world. Farewell; and God send you a good deliverance! If Mr. Falkland's accusation, whatever it be, shall appear premature, depend upon having me more zealously your friend than ever. If not, this is the last act of friendship you will ever receive from me!"

It may be believed that this address, so singular, so solemn, so big with conditional menace, did not greatly tend to encourage me. I was totally ignorant of the charge to be advanced against me; and not a little astonished, when it was in my power to be in the most formidable degree the accuser of Mr. Falkland, to find the principles of equity so completely reversed, as for the innocent but instructed individual to be the party accused and suffering, instead of having, as was natural, the real criminal at his mercy. I was still more astonished at the superhuman power Mr. Falkland seemed to

possess, of bringing the object of his persecution within the sphere of his authority; a reflection attended with some check to that eagerness and boldness of spirit which now constituted the ruling passion of my mind.

But this was no time for meditation. To the sufferer the course of events is taken out of his direction, and he is hurried along with an irresistible force, without finding it within the compass of his efforts to check their rapidity. I was allowed only a short time to recollect myself, when my trial commenced. I was conducted to the library, where I had passed so many happy and so many contemplative hours, and found there Mr. Forester and three or four of the servants already assembled, in expectation of me and my accuser. Every thing was calculated to suggest to me that I must trust only in the justice of the parties concerned, and had nothing to hope from their indulgence. Mr. Falkland entered at one door, almost as soon as I entered at the other.

END OF VOL. I.

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ADVENTURES

OF

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BY WILLIAM GODWIN, ESQ.

AUTHOR OF "ST. LEON," "CLOUDESLEY," &c. &c.

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