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LOCHANDHU

A TALE OF THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY.

By Thomas De la Cour, Esq.
"De nos jours ceux qui aiment la Nature sont
accusés d'être romanesques"

Chamfort.

IN THREE VOLUMES

VOL. I.



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“**LOCH-AN-EILAN.**—THIS lake is much embellished by an ancient castle standing on an island within it, and even yet entire, though roofless. As a Highland castle, it is of considerable dimensions, and the island being scarcely larger than its foundations, it appears to rise immediately out of the water.—It would not be easy to imagine a wilder position than this, for a den of thieves and robbers, nor one more thoroughly romantic. It is more like the things of which we read in the novels of the Otranto School, than a scene of real life. If ever you should propose to rival the Author of Waverley in that line of art, I recommend you to choose part of your scene here. As I lay on its topmost tower, amid the universal silence, while the bright sun exalted the perfume from the woods around, and all the old world visions and romances seemed to flit about its grey and solitary ruins, I, too, felt as if I would have written a chapter that might hereafter be worthy the protection of Minerva—the Minerva of Leadenhall Street.”

MACCULLOCH'S *Letters on the
Highlands of Scotland.*

INTRODUCTORY ADDRESS.

COURTEOUS READER!

I AM an elderly man of easy fortune, that is to say, I have enough for all the wants of an individual of my retired and moderate habits. Retired I may well enough call them; for, though I move in the sun-beam of human existence, I so rarely impinge upon any of my fellow atoms, that I am almost as little known as if I had no corporeal entity.

“ Whatten a dumpy-looking body’s that wi’ the brown wig?” said a barber’s apprentice to the servant girl, as I one day passed up stairs to my lodgings.

“ Troth, I dinna ken,” answered the girl;

“ he’s an odd being they ca’ Mongomery, that leeves in our house.”

I stopped at the turn of the stair to hear the rest.

“ He’s had our best rooms for mair nor five or six years. He keeps them winter an’ simmer, though he aye bangs aff with the first comin’ o’ the gouk, and ne’er comes back till driven in wi’ the bad wather, like a wudcock, in the hinder end o’ autumn. He seldom taks mair nor twa sarks an’ a change o’ stockins wi’ him. Whan he’s at hame he never sees a mortal, or speaks to a soul—an’ he’s aye vrite vriting. But he’s a harmless creatur’—pays weel,—and gi’es unco little trouble.”

I was amused with this sketch of my own portrait. The fact is, that being fitted rather for a spectator of life’s comedy than to be an actor in it, I haunt the public places of resort, during the bad weather

half of the year, greedily devouring man and his affairs; and then, during the more genial months, I roam about the country, mixing up the same substantial food, with the refreshing sallad of romantic scenery. Thus I find materials to occupy my pen in newspapers and magazines; and to make amends for the silence my tongue usually maintains to those around me, I enlighten the public in general with the fruits of my lucubrations.

When the first good weather appears, I fit myself with a new jacket, breeches, and gaiters, and a stout pair of shoes; and with a tough oak sapling in my hand, away I go to follow my nose, whithersoever it may lead. As I never can determine whither my steps are to turn, till I find myself fairly on the way, the curiosity of my worthy landlady, about the direction of these my summer jaunts, re-

mains unsatisfied. So utterly ignorant is she, indeed, of my motions, that if death should chance to arrest me in the midst of my wanderings, I shall probably be buried by strangers, unknown and unwept, in the spot where I am stricken down; and then Mrs Gladstones will be left to wonder and guess at the fate that prevents my periodical return. But here I am, safe for this season at least, installed in the full comfort of my old morocco chair, with my mind so full of interesting matter, that I must have a book of my own to put it into.—But before I give it you, Sir, I will tell you how I came by it.

I happened to be wandering on foot through the grand pass of the Grampians, when I overtook a respectable looking old man with a grey head, and a hale, though weather-beaten face, who had seated himself on the parapet of a bridge, a few

miles from the inn of Dalwhinnie. Though averse to anything like general intercourse with mankind, my heart warms to a solitary mortal like myself, especially when I meet him, as I thus did Johnny Fimister, as he called himself, in one of nature's wild and lonely mountain scenes, where man feels himself but as a speck amidst the grandeur of her works. I sat down by him, and after we had made acquaintance by a friendly pinch of snuff, and some remarks upon the weather, we set out on our travel together. I was not inquisitive, but Johnny showed every desire to be communicative, and made the road so short, as the saying is, by his stories, that we reached the place of rest and refreshment, ere we had, as I thought, gone half way.

As we entered the court-yard of the inn, we observed a tall, and very bulky old man, in enormous jack-boots, with a great

queue hanging over the capes of a blue surtout, who was in the act of mounting a powerful horse. The pedlar made two or three hasty steps forwards, and looked up in the rider's face, as he was adjusting himself on the saddle, and then returned, as if he had been mistaken in his man, and the horseman rode slowly away, without noticing him.

I had already made up my mind to ask the old pedlar to sup with me; and as he heard me order a nice dish of Loch Ericht trouts to be fried, and a couple of fowls to be split open and broiled, he very readily accepted my invitation. Little was said during the meal, both of us being too much occupied to talk. After it was over, without speaking, I gently pushed the punch-ladle, and the whisky and materials, over to his side of the table, with a nod and a sign. He comprehended me at once, and,

without losing a moment, mixed a bowl with most scientific precision. It was nectar; and lighting my segar, I spent the evening in luxurious ease and silence, listening to the ceaseless chat of my new acquaintance, who read all my shrugs and nods of reply with admirable tact, rarely putting me to the necessity of using my unwilling organs of speech, even in a monosyllable.

“ I saw you looked strange at me, Sir,” said he, “ when I glower’d yon gate, at yon auld carle on the brown naig. Troth I thought, for a gliff, that he was a man I aince see’d here about fifeteen or aughteen years syne. He was vera like him, and he was mounted upon just sic a like beast; and as I cam lampin into the yaird that day, for I’m no athegither sae souple noo as I was than, he was just ridin’ away after the same fashion yon yane did. But

yon canna be him, after a', for he maun be dead mony a day syne."

A long draught of smoke, treasured up within my cheeks, and accompanied by a look of inquiry, told him I wished him to explain to whom he alluded.

"Aye Sir, ye want to ken wha it was I saw at that time I'm speakin' o'. Troth it was nae less than the Laird o' Lochandhu that was. Every body believed it to be him. And wha else could it be?—for he was nae stranger, and kent a' the nooks and corners o' baith Badenoch and Strathspey. He gaed about a'where, an' mony a question he put about the auld fouk o' his ain day. But maist o' them ware dead.—He was seen to shed mony a tear. At length he rode awa' again, and naebody kent whare he gaed."

"And who was Lochandhu?" said I,

my curiosity overcoming my habitual taciturnity.

“Lochandhu!” exclaimed the pedlar, “an’ did ye never hear o’ Lochandhu?—my troth, he made some steer in his time in thay pairts. Lochandhu was——But I hae gotten a deal about him in an auld warld history in my pack, though its no just a’ about him neither, for there’s a hantel else about ither fouk, that I ken naething o’. But I’ll let ye see’t gin ye like,” continued he, unstrapping and unlocking his box, and drawing forth a large bundle of papers. “It was a’ written by a gude honest man o’ a minister in this country—a great scholar, they tell me. When the worthy auld man died, his hellicate, ne’er-do-weel, havrel, o’ a hafpins son, couped it wi’ me for a new snuff-mull,—ane o’ yere horn mulls, wi’ a wee bit silver, and a Scots peeble on the tap o’t. Troth I

thought I had a gude bargain o't; and gif it had been in prent, I might may be hae sauld it again for a profit. But naebody can be fashed wi' vrite, ye ken; and sae I hae carried a' this weight for naething, ever sinsyne. I wuss I ware weel quite o't."

Without a word, I opened my purse, and laying a couple of sovereigns on the palm of my hand, I nodded significantly at the MS., and then looked in Johnny Fimister's face.—There I read surprise and joy.

"Troth ye's hae it wi' a' my heart, Sir," quoth Johnny; "my back 'll be glad to be free o't, an' I'll walk a' the lighter wi' thae yellow boys i' my pouch. Mony thanks t'ye, Sir—mony thanks; I wuss ye muckle gude o't."

With all the eagerness of a book collector who has had the good fortune to pop upon some rare volume at a book-stall, I

pounced upon my precious purchase, packed it up with attention, and sent it off next morning for Edinburgh by the Highland coach, addressed for myself, at Mrs Gladstones', with a large "*Care, and to be kept dry,*" on the back.

On my arrival in town the other day, I was pleased to find that my worthy landlady had taken particular care of it, and as I was employed in opening the parcel, the good woman remained in the room to tell me she had done so. The strings took some time to undo, and her curiosity made her loiter about the apartment, under pretence of dusting the chairs and tables with her apron, but always keeping her eyes thrown over her shoulder, as if eagerly watching for a sight of the contents. I was rejoiced to find all right. But mine hostess, on seeing nothing but a number of quires of dirty, close-written, coarse sheets of foolscap, much

browned, and highly perfumed with peat-reek, left the room in evident chagrin, with a half audible “hoof! is that a’? naething but a parcel o’ auld paper to sing fowls wi’!”

I had no sooner dined than I sat down with a bottle of prime fifteen, a box of segars, and the MS. before me; and lighting a weed, I read straight on, sipping and puffing alternately, until I had gone completely through it. I leave you, courteous reader, to whom I now resign it, to judge whether my night was well or ill employed.

CHARLES MONTAGUE MONTGOMERY.

*Gladstones’ Lodgings, James’ Court,
10th November 1824.*

LOCHANDHU.

CHAPTER I.

Prythee, see there ! behold ! look ! lo ! how say you ?

Macbeth.

Dentro la porta ando, ch' adito dava

Ne la seconda assai più larga cava.

La stanza quadra, e spaziosa pare.

— — — — —
E quello di splendente, e chiaro foco

Rendea gran lume a l'uno, e a l'altro loco.

ARIOSTO.

ABOUT fifty years ago, on a delightful evening in June, when the soft summer sky was reflected from the bosom of a calm sea, a gay pleasure yacht, of about sixty tons burden, was sailing along the bold coast defending the entrance of one of those numerous friths, indenting the north-east of Scotland. Whilst several ships, in the distance, lay almost motionless, like specks

amidst the clear grey shadow, that, deepening into an intense blue, was gradually settling over the face of the ocean, a gentle breeze filled her white canvas, and kept her gaudy streamers on the stretch. She seemed, indeed, to have wooed and won the favouring zephyr exclusively to herself; for, as is often the case with such light winds, it blew partially over a narrow stripe of the water in her course, producing a slight rippling line along the surface, and lifting, as it passed onwards, a thousand wavelets to be gilded by the declining beams of a glorious sunset.

Having kept a little off shore to clear a bold headland, she tacked, stood in for the lovely little bay it protected, and then dropped her anchor within its sheltered amphitheatre, where the lofty and precipitous wall of surrounding rock promised perfect safety from every blast.

A small boat, fancifully painted, was now lowered from her side, and pushed off for the beach, that formed a broad shelving pebbly margin between the sea and the base of the cliffs. It was rowed by six seamen, uniformly dressed in blue jackets and white trowsers, and having leathern caps on their heads, with the word

“Dasher” emblazoned in large letters of gold on their fronts. It was steered by a bulky, and rather elderly man, wearing something resembling the undress costume of a naval captain of the day, and whose hardy countenance, rusted by the action of various climates, displayed a certain air of habitual command. In the bow sat a young man wrapped up in a large boat-cloak, who, as soon as the prow touched the land, jumped actively ashore, and throwing his cumbersome covering to a servant, exhibited a tall handsome person, clad in a green hunting dress, peculiarly calculated to display his finely-proportioned figure. On his head he wore an upright cap of dark brown fur, decorated by a broad and rich gold band, and his luxuriantly curled black hair and whiskers gave shade to his fair, untarnished, yet manly face; as the perfect arch of his ample eyebrows added to the beauty and nobleness of his forehead, and gave fire to his large, full, and intelligent eyes. In his hand he held a Spanish gun, of rare and curious workmanship, and his shoulders were belted with the apparatus of a sportsman. A light couteau-de-chasse hung by his side from a

belt of green velvet, ornamented with gold, and his companion, who landed with somewhat less agility, was armed with a large cutlass, depending from a broad belt of black leather.

“ Well, Amherst Oakenwold, my boy !” said the elder stranger to his friend, slapping him familiarly on the shoulder as he spoke, “ here we are in canny Scotland ! Have I not been as good as my word ? Have I not whistled you from the Downs hither in first-rate style, and hasn’t the little Dasher done her duty ?—What a thing for lying near the wind !—never was there a better put together parcel of planks !—I’ll be bound to steer her all round the world and back again, without starting a single timber.”

“ I must admit, Cleaver,” replied the other, stretching himself, and moving his limbs, as if delighted to escape from the confinement to which he had for some days been subjected, “ that your little yacht is the perfection of pleasure vessels, and yourself the most expert, the steadiest, and the boldest of captains ; nor will I now deny that you have a perfect right to exercise all that despotic control you are wont

to insist upon as your prerogative when on board."

"Despotic control! Aye, what the devil would you expect from me?—Would you have a crew without a head, or with no harder a head than a boiled turnip?—or, what is worse, would you have as many heads as a boatswain's cat has tails?—No, no, that would never do; lubber or landsman, order and obey is the word with me when I walk my quarter-deck, be it ever so small. But when I put my foot on shore, I become as quiet and gentle as a lamb, unless, indeed, when I happen to be combed against the hair."

"My dear fellow," said Amherst, shaking him heartily by the hand, "nobody knows your good-nature better than I do. The kind act you have just done me, by aiding my escape from the vexation I was exposed to at home, is sufficient proof of your readiness to serve a friend."

"Don't mention it, my dear boy," cried the captain, "pray don't mention it; I would cross the Atlantic to serve the son of my old ship-mate, not to speak of the sneaking kindness I

have felt for you ever since you jumped into my arms, and kissed me, when your father insisted that you wouldn't remember old Cleaver in his tarred jacket—I mean that time when the Admiral brought you aboard of us at the Nore. Splice my mainsail! what a little urchin you were then! Why, zounds, I can hardly believe you to be the same creature! But, belay!—why do we stand jawing here? Night is about to close, and we have yet to look for some place of refreshment and repose, thof I can't say these here parts afford much prospect of our being well accommodated. I wish we had run in for one of those somewhat Christian-like towns we saw glittering along shore; for, you know, that when I am not afloat, I like to have my comfort in mine inn as well as e'er an alderman in the city."

"I am glad we did not," said Amherst, "for I am so delighted with the romantic scenery of this lovely bay, that I should have been loath to have left it unexamined. May not yonder path lead to some human habitation?—Come, let us explore it."

"With all my heart," said Cleaver; "I say,

my lads, keep watch in the boat till we return ; and, O'Gollochar, do you follow your master and me."

The footway-track Amherst had alluded to led them up a steep and very rugged ravine, the bed of which was encumbered by large fragments torn by time and weather from its rocky sides. A clear little rill, gushing from a copious spring towards its upper extremity, ran tinkling over the stony masses, and poured itself into a narrow chasm under one of the largest of them, where it was entirely lost. The fountain-head was enclosed within a circle of ancient ruined masonry, exhibiting marks of having been once polished, laid, and jointed with great nicety ; but many of the stones having been shaken from their beds, were now tufted with moss, and partially covered by the broad-leaved wild plants growing in profusion around them, and the pure water, once confined to a single jet, now rushed out through various fissures. At the distance of a yard or two above the well stood the remains of the shaft of an ancient cross, and near it on the ground lay the upper part of it, half buried by

the herbage, to which the humidity of the place gave peculiar luxuriance.

“What a lovely, wild, and interesting spot!” exclaimed Amherst.

“What a noble watering place,” cried Cleaver; “here is water enough to supply a whole navy; but what the deuce are these copper coins laid here for?”

“Judging from these fragments of a cross,” said his companion, “this must be some holy well. I have heard that such offerings are still made by the superstitious vulgar to springs once blessed by saints of former days, and ever since supposed to be peculiarly gifted, even although popery has ceased to protect them.”

Having reached the brow of the crags, a very cheerless prospect presented itself to their eyes. The downs, extending for several miles along the summit of the rocks, and rising in elevation as they retreated inland, displayed a barren surface of irregularly-blown sand heaps, covered with patches of wiry bent grass. Beyond all this a bold promontory arose to the westward, its green head exhibiting traces of ancient fortifications; and, farther still, the eye was carried

over an extensive low and sterile plain, yet more unprofitable than the ground around them. Not a house, nor even hovel, was to be descried. What appearance the country, lying beyond the ridge about a mile to the south, might wear, they had no opportunity of knowing; but, as Cleaver expressed it, what they did see looked sufficiently "glum," and damped all hopes of a snug supper. They hesitated for some time what to do. At length, as the sun had already sunk behind the huge bulk of the distant western mountains, and the sea and its coasts were beginning to melt into obscurity,—after wandering from knoll to knoll, without gaining any additional information, they finally resolved to postpone all further attempts to explore till to-morrow, and to return to spend the night on board.

As they were slowly preparing to descend into the ravine, O'Gollochar, who was immediately behind them, suddenly exclaimed, in accents of astonishment, "Sweet Vargin Mary, Master dear! what sort of a cratur is that down yonder below?"

They threw their eyes hastily in the direction

he pointed, and perceived, in the indistinctness of twilight, a little human figure, apparently a female, seated upon the shaft of the fallen cross, then about fifty yards below them. The stories they had heard of the popular superstitions of Scotland instantly crossed their minds; but whatever influence these might have had upon their attendant, whose native soil is sufficiently prolific in such belief to have given him an early tincture of it, the gentlemen laughed at such weaknesses.

“Holloa you there!” shouted Cleaver, “can you guide us to any hostel, where we may be victualled and moored for the night? You shall be well paid for your pilotage.”

The creature was sitting as if occupied in raising water from the spring. It started up at the sound, stretched its tiny arms abroad, as if in alarm, and running with the rapidity of thought three times round the circle of the well, suddenly disappeared.

Amherst, roused by curiosity from the momentary surprise this singular apparition had thrown him into, rushed impetuously down the hollow to discover where it had concealed itself.

He carefully examined every nook—he looked into every crevice where a human being might have been secreted, all the way from the spring down to the very bottom of the ravine, where it opened upon the strand, but he could not perceive the least vestige of the object of his search. Surprised and disappointed, he stood for some minutes wrapt in silent astonishment, until he was joined by Cleaver, whose obesity of person, ill calculated for such rapid movements, had permitted him to follow but slowly.

“Why, Amherst, my boy,” cried the captain, puffing and blowing as he spoke, “why, Amherst, you must surely have the legs of a goat, or a roebuck, to enable you to bound over slippery stones and rugged rocks in this sort of way. I, for my part, who did not run quite so fast, shook my carcass to pieces, and had two or three times nearly broken my legs in my attempt to overtake you. But who the devil was that person we saw?”

“The devil, indeed!” cried O’Gollochar, with a face as pale as death.

“Strange!” said Amherst, after recovering

himself, "very strange indeed! where can she have hid herself?"

"She certainly did not pass out this way," said Cleaver; "for before I started to follow you in this same break-neck, mad-cap chace, I kept my eye so fixed upon the bottom of the ravine here, that I must have seen a rat or a weasel, if it had escaped in this direction."

"She could not have scaled these walls of rock," said Amherst.

"Not unless she can walk like a fly with her head down," replied Cleaver.

"By the hill of Howth, she's a fairy or a witch," cried O'Gollochar; "I'll take my oath, I saw her vanish in a flash of fire."

"Nay, Cornelius," said his master, "your eyes have added to the mysterious circumstances of this extraordinary personage, who is certainly mysterious enough in herself, without any such flaming addition. But if we may judge of her by the seat she had chosen, she could not very well be a slave of the Devil, whose servants are supposed to flee at the very sign of the cross."

"Och, don't talk about that ould jontleman, dear master," cried O'Gollochar, crossing himself

in good earnest ; “ sure it was my crossing myself afore, when I first seen the cratur, that got us rid of her so aisily ; and now, if I might make so bould, I would advise you and the captain to get all three of us on board again, as fast as our trotters can carry us, for fear she might maybe come back again.”

After puzzling themselves with unavailing conjectures, the gentlemen returned slowly to their boat. On questioning the sailors left in charge of it, who had observed nothing, they were satisfied of the impossibility of the figure having escaped along the beach from the bottom of the ravine, the boat having been moored opposite to the very entrance of it. Their curiosity was sufficiently awakened, and they would have willingly renewed their search, but it was now so dark, that even the adjacent precipices began to be invisible, and all attempts to unravel the mystery were vain.

They were about to get into the boat, when their eyes were attracted by the sudden twinkle of a light on the shore, as if in the bend of the bay, about five or six hundred yards off. At first it seemed to glimmer like a candle or *torre,*

appearing and disappearing alternately. But suddenly it flamed up with a broad blaze to a great height, illuminating the ample mouth of a large cavern in the cliff, and throwing a red glare on its interior, whilst all around was rendered doubly obscure by its very splendour. The gleam shot across the water, and the tide, as it broke gently on the shore, flashed and sparkled under the influence of its reflection. Several figures were seen, like black shadows, occasionally crossing the light, and apparently employed in feeding the fire. A fervid imagination might have fancied them the dæmons who guard the damned spirits flitting across the threshold of the infernal regions.

“ Yonder at least are some human beings,” said Amherst ; “ let us approach, and learn from them whether there is any house in the vicinity. I confess I have no fancy to be rocked for another night by the waves, if I can possibly procure a bed for love or money on *terra firma*.”

“ Why, Master Amherst,” said Cleaver, “ I fear you are still a land-lubber for all I have done to tar you. So you ha’n’t got your sea legs yet, man ? If you had been as long tossed

upon brine as me, you would think less of its agitation. But to tell you the truth, the fresh smell of land has given me my landsman's appetite for something cooked under a roof, and I should have no objections at this moment to exchange our cold meat basket for a hot beefsteak, or pork sausage, or grilled fowl, or something else warm and savoury. Besides, I own I feel curious to know what those same cocks yonder are about. They look by that light as black as negers, and remind me of the cannibals in Robin Crusoe, dancing round the fire that roasted their prisoners. But come, let's go and have a nearer peep at them."

The two gentlemen now proceeded along the beach in the direction of the fire, followed by O'Gollochar, who, though far from being proof against fear when any thing wearing the semblance of the supernatural came across him, was a perfect lion when he knew that he had to deal with mere men. Before they had proceeded many steps, the bending of the shore, and the occasional projections of the cliffs, excluded the view of the fire for some time, until the shifting of the intervening objects again per-

mitted them to see the mouth of the cavern. They then perceived that the figures had disappeared, and that the blaze had fallen considerably lower, rising only by fits as portions of the inflamed mass, falling in from time to time towards the centre, roused its dormant energy. As they advanced, the huge vault rose before them from the smooth pebbly shore, at the distance of a few feet from the water's edge, in all the magnificence of Nature's own architecture.

The fire, composed of large pieces of broken drift wood, now burned with a subdued, but glowing glare. A heap of dry furze, lying in a corner, showed to what it had owed its former short-lived splendour. The natural walls of red sandstone were rendered still redder by the light that faded away as it rose upwards, and lost itself amidst the clouds of smoke, rolling along under the dome of the roof towards the open air. The spacious cavern, extending about forty or fifty yards inwards, appeared to be of irregular shape, and terminated in a solid face of rock, where the gleam discovered some fallen masses of stone, of many tons in weight, heaped

up one above the other, nearly to the roof. The floor was composed of a natural Mosaic of beautiful sea-polished pebbles, laid, by some high spring tide of former days, in a firm dry sand of a dazzling whiteness. There was not a vestige of that loathsome humidity and dankness, so generally disfiguring natural chambers of this description. All was dry as the artificial habitation of civilized man, save where a fountain, as pure as rock crystal, poured from an aperture at the further extremity, and after falling several feet with lulling music into a smooth oval basin it had worn for itself in the stone, ran with a rapid current that freshened the air of the place, in a channel of its own formation, towards the mouth of the cave and the sea. This fairy fountain, sparkling with the rays of light, gave to the whole the air of enchantment.

The enthusiastic Amherst was in raptures. "How romantic!" he exclaimed to his companion; "let us dispatch O'Gollochar to the boat for our provision basket, and let us eat our evening meal, and spend the night in this wonderful cavern. Those oblong blocks lying along

the wall of that inner recess, branching off to the right, will serve us for tables, seats, and beds, where we may sleep wrapped up in our cloaks, more comfortably than if we were on down. My heart bounds with delight at the wildness of the scene, and the novelty of our situation."

"Have a care, my young Don Quixote," replied Cleaver; "such adventures as these are more likely to end in bloody noses than in beef-steaks. By the bye, talking of beef-steaks, I wish we had some nice juicy rumps to dress on that same fire, for now that the smoke begins to dissipate, it is in such right good case for cooking 'em, that one cannot look at it without thinking of a gridiron. But who knows whether we may not have a visit from the cocks who made this fire, and who knows what sort of gentry they may turn out to be?"

"Oh! they are fishermen doubtless," said Amherst.

"I would not have you be too sure of that," said Cleaver; "but be they who they may, I am not the man to baulk you of your frolic, and as we have your fowling-piece there, and good

trusty cutlasses—weapons, which I do the more esteem, as they more rarely miss fire than your pop-guns—we may bid defiance to an enemy.”

O’Gollochar was accordingly forthwith dispatched for the cold provisions, with orders to the boat’s crew to return on board for the night.

On his return, the contents of the basket were spread on one of the stone-tables, and Amherst soon finished a hasty supper upon a cold sirloin of beef, washing it down with a glass or two of wine. Cleaver’s appetite was not so easily satisfied. He eat, and cut, and came again, ever and anon surveying the fire, and grumbling in unavailing regret, that it should be suffered to burn in smokeless glow, and that its beautiful cherry-red should be expended, without his having a beef-steak to dress upon it.

“ If I had only had even a frying-pan, and an onion, and a little butter, what a glorious hash I might have made ! But,” added he, with a sigh, as he put his last morsel, a thin slice coiled upon the fork, into his mouth, “ there is no help for it, we must e’en go to roost as we are.”

They accordingly now retired into the inner-

most part of the recess, forming a sort of dark chamber to the right, about a third of the way from the entrance of the grand cavern, where each occupying one of the stone-blocks, which, from their shape and position, seemed to have been placed there by human hands, they wrapped themselves up in the ample folds of their cloaks, and consigned themselves to repose. O'Gollochar, after satisfying the cravings of hunger with the fragments of the feast, disposed of himself on the ground near his master.

CHAPTER II.

Pallido, cresco, e macilente avea
 ————il viso, ————il crin—canuto.
 Sua statura a sei palmi non giungea.

ARIOSTO.

What kind should this cock come of?

As you Like it.

AMHERST had not slept long, when he was awakened by the gripe of a hand seizing upon his wrist, with a strength that effectually shackled him. He was about to make a desperate effort to deliver himself from what, in his half-waking state, he believed to be the grasp of some unknown enemy, when he perceived his terrified servant hanging over him in breathless apprehension, his knees knocking together, his eyes fixed in his head, and his teeth chattering in his jaws. He was in the act of opening his

mouth, to demand the cause of alarm, when, happening to throw a glance towards the greater chamber of the cavern, he perceived the very figure that had so strangely appeared and vanished near the fountain.

The creature, for human being it could hardly be denominated, though its dress was that of a woman, was, as far as he could judge, about three feet and a half high. Its form, indeed, appearing perhaps still more diminutive, from the vastness of the subterranean void, in the midst of which it was now seen, might have been mistaken for that of a child, had not the disproportionate size of the head, the prominence and coarseness of the features, the hollow eyes, the high cheek-bones, the thin and hooked nose, the skinny lips of its wide mouth, and the deep furrows marking its lean and leathery chops, given it a ghastly look of deformed age. The effect of this was much increased, by the grizzled hair hanging in long and numerous matted locks from under a fillet of red cloth encircling its head, and by the corpse-like paleness of its hue, rendered more fearful by the glare of the blazing wood. A garment of coarse green stuff,

having a tight boddice rising no higher than the shoulders, and leaving bare the scraggy neck, and the thin but sinewy arms, and descending loosely from the waist to about the middle of the leg, formed the whole of its drapery. As the head and countenance indicated age, so, on the other hand, the shape of the body and the bare limbs betokened extreme agility and strength of action.

Amherst at first gazed on the figure with surprise. It was busily employed in heaping up fuel on the fire, which, in consequence of its exertions, had already begun to give forth fresh volumes of flame and smoke, and whilst engaged in this occupation, he saw it lift up logs of wood, bigger than itself, with an ease that perfectly confounded him. As he looked, it went on, placing them endwise, one leaning against the other, so as to form a high pile, filling the intervals every now and then with dry brushwood, and fanning the flame energetically with a large branch of furze. All these actions were performed with inconceivable expedition, the figure wheeling round and round the pile with a rapidity almost supernatural, yet emitting no

sound, save that of a low muttered chaunting, the words of which were lost.

Amherst gazed on this singular being for a few moments. The deep sleep he had just been roused from left him for some time in doubt whether it was not a dream. At length he recovered his recollection, and being seized with an irresistible desire to satisfy his curiosity, by arresting the flight of a creature so uncouth and mysterious, he extricated himself, by one sudden exertion of all his strength, from the iron grasp of his servant's fear, and rushed forward into the main cavern. But the apparition was gone ! The noise he had made in his momentary struggle with O'Gollochar had alarmed it, and although only a few yards intervened between the spot where he had slept, and the fire where it had been busied, yet so swift were its motions, that it ran three times round the blazing pile, darted off like the bolt of death, and he only reached the centre of the cavern in time to see it vanish in the thick smoke rolling along the roof, immediately over the heaped up fragments resting against the further extremity of the vault.

Amherst stood thunder-struck for a moment. But recollecting himself, he seized upon a lighted brand from the fire, and running towards the end of the cavern where the figure had disappeared, he climbed, with some difficulty, from one immense mass of fallen rock to another, to the height of thirty or forty feet, until he had nearly reached the roof, examining every part with the greatest attention, in the hope of being enabled to account upon rational principles for its escape. But all his endeavours were fruitless. Again his wonder was renewed and redoubled, and the more he reflected on the almost inaccessible ascent the creature had scaled, as it were, with wings, the more he was perplexed.

Baffled and vexed, he sat him down on one of the stones, and was musing on the unaccountable occurrences of the evening, when his thoughts were interrupted by the noise of a desperate struggle in the sleeping place, and the half-choked voice of Cleaver. His first idea was, that his friend had been attacked, perhaps by banditti, and he rushed headlong to the recess. There all his apprehensions were not only immediately

removed, but were irresistibly converted into immoderate peals of laughter.

The Irishman had no sooner been shaken from his master, than the overwhelming dread he laboured under made him fly to the captain, who lay on his back like a great turtle, on the bed of stone he had selected, in that disturbed, though deep sort of sleep, resulting from repletion of stomach. Not contented with mere proximity, O'Gollochar griped him round the neck, and afterwards laid himself at length upon him, with all his weight, like a nightmare. But Cleaver's sleep was so profound, that although his breathing was affected almost to suffocation, he did not immediately awaken. When he was thus grappled by the terrified Cornelius, he was dreaming that his ship was sailing bravely before a gallant breeze, with every sail set, and going more knots than had ever been marked by log-line. Suddenly he felt a shock, as if the prow had struck upon some sunken sand-bank, and then she gradually went down under him. A wide ocean surrounded him, and death stared him in the face. He hastily attempted to prepare himself for swim-

ming, but he could not move a hand nor a limb, and the water rose rapidly over the sinking vessel. A huge hairy monster, half man, half fish, of tremendous strength, and with eyes like brazen censers, emerged from the sea, and grasping him about the neck, was dragging him downwards with a weight like that of ten first-rate anchors. He already felt the stifling of the waves, with all the horrors of drowning, and in utter despair of life, he struggled so desperately with the foul fiend, that he rolled O'Gollochar and himself off the bench ; when being awakened from his sleep, by the fall, but not from his dreadful dream, he began bellowing out, as well as the pressure upon his wind-pipe would permit, in notes resembling those of a half-stopped postman's horn, and at the same time buffetting with might and main the unfortunate Irishman, whose fear made him keep his hold like a bull-dog, notwithstanding the numerous thumps that rained upon him ; so that, when Amherst reached the scene of action, they were tumbling one over the other on the ground in most ludicrous conflict, the eyes of both starting from their sockets, partly from the different terrors that possessed them, and

partly from the actual strangulation they were mutually inflicting and enduring. Amherst succeeded with some difficulty in relieving them from each other's grasp, and an explanation ensued.

The sailor was astonished with his friend's story, and could hardly be persuaded that it was not an illusion, and that he had not been dreaming as well as himself.

“Believe me, Amherst,” said he, with all that gravity the subject demanded, “never doubt me lad, but these night-hags which have been riding us, have all been engendered by the quantity of cold food we so lately devoured, that could not choose but chill our stomachs, and cause a stagnation of the very blood in our veins. For my part, I never dream of Davy Jones but after a cold supper. Had we only had that beef-steak now I spoke of—had we, I say, had it juicy and hot, our stomachs would have been thereby cherished, and no such morbid affection, as our Doctor used to say, could have supervened. But I swear I shall make up for it at breakfast to-morrow, if there is a

decent inn to be found within the circuit of a morning's cruize."

These words were hardly spoken, when they were alarmed by the voices of men entering the outer cavern.

"These are, no doubt, the fishermen," said Amherst.

"It may be so," said Cleaver; "but look to your arms, and be on your guard, as we know not what sort of cocks the fishermen on these coasts may be."

They listened, for the speakers had not yet advanced so far as to be visible, but their conversation was carried on in a language intelligible to neither of the gentlemen. O'Gollochar, however, declared, at the first sound of it, that it was Irish, but with all that, he could make nothing out of it.

"Sure," whispered he, "isn't it mighty strange now, that it should be Irish that they are speaking, and I not comprehend a word at all that they are saying, when it is myself that not only talks it, but understands it too like a blackbird, ever sin' I was the size of a bane cod."

As the fire threw light into every nook of the

cavern, so that they could not long remain concealed, they thought it best to show themselves boldly at once. Amherst advanced with his gun in his hand, followed by his companion and O'Gollochar; and entering the grand cavern, they perceived four men, who seemed to be not a little surprised at finding the place preoccupied.

The first of these, tall, bony, and athletic, appeared to be of middle age. His air was of itself sufficient to mark him as master, even if his dress had not told the tale for him. He wore a small gold-laced cocked hat, from beneath which an enormous queue of black hair dangled between his broad shoulders. His single-breasted coat was green, and made with a low neck, large skirts, and ample sleeves, and the button-holes and pocket-covers were garnished with broad gold lace, as was also a red waistcoat, with large flaps hanging over, and half hiding his breeches. These were of doe skin, made to fit very tight, and a pair of high jack-boots, armed with silver chained spurs, with immense rowels, rose above his knees. A long cut-and-thrust sword, with a Spanish hilt and guard,

hung at his side, from a broad buff belt, passing diagonally across his breast, and under his coat; and in his hand he flourished a gold-headed cane. His neckcloth and his breast and wrist ruffles were of rich foreign lace, and his whole presence had something in it that bespoke the gentleman.

Amherst's attention was so much occupied in scanning him, that he had only leisure to remark, that his followers were dressed in the Highland garb, and that they were armed with the claymore, and with pistols stuck in their girdles.

On the sudden appearance of Amherst and his party from the recess, the leader started, and the Highlanders laid their hands on their pistols; but after surveying the two gentlemen with one comprehensive glance, he waved his hand to his followers, and gave some order in Gaelic that immediately stayed their hasty violence. He then advanced towards Amherst, with a manner partaking equally of dignity and of complaisance, seasoned with all the ease of a finished man of the world, though, at the same time, not without a tincture of suspicion.

“Your servant, gentlemen,” said he with a

bow ; “ who are you, may I make so bold as to ask ? and what do you here, in this lonely place, at such an hour ? ”

“ Perhaps,” replied Amherst, “ I ought to demand of you, Sir, by what authority I am thus questioned ; but as I have no cause for concealment of any kind, I shall not hesitate to satisfy one, who has so much the manner and outward appearance of a gentleman.” He then told him his name, and briefly added, that he and his companion were on a voyage of pleasure, and having landed in the neighbourhood, had been guided to the cavern by the light of the fire.

The stranger started involuntarily at the name of Oakenwold. He eyed Amherst keenly, and then, as if recollecting himself, he went up to him, and shaking him cordially by the hand,—

“ Sir,” said he, “ I consider our poor country of Scotland as much beholden to you and your friend, for thus deigning to visit her bleak shores ; for, dear as they are to those who have drawn their first breath of life upon them, I must admit, (Scotchman though I be,) that to a son of fertile Kent, they must appear bleak when contrasted with his native fields ; though

we, too, have our plains, and to-morrow's sun will show you one almost vying with them in richness. But in return for the politeness with which you have just condescended to answer my perhaps rather impertinent, though, when your arms are considered, somewhat excusable interrogatory, I must tell you that my name is Macgillivray; that I am proprietor of a small estate in the Highlands, some fifty miles from hence; that I am at present on a visit in this neighbourhood; and being engaged to-night in company at a public-house hard by, I walked forth to take a little of the air of this fine evening on the shore, and was, like you, led by the light to enter this cavern. I have now reason to rejoice at my good fortune for thus accidentally bringing me to form so agreeable an acquaintance."

"Public-house, did you say, Sir!" exclaimed Cleaver, whose attention having been rivetted by the word, had followed the speaker no farther,—“I think you mentioned a public-house? By Heavens, I am glad there is an inn so near. Methinks I already, by anticipation, smell some veal-cutlets done in a nice brown sauce, seasoned

with a clove of garlic, and a little mace. Pray, my dear Sir, have the goodness to order one of your people to guide us to this same hostel ; and if you will do us the favour to bestow upon us your company at supper, you will add to the obligation.”

“ I will do myself the honour of showing you the way thither myself, gentlemen, with the greatest pleasure,” said the stranger ; “ and my friends will, I am sure, thank me for presenting them with such an addition to their merry party.”

So saying, he gave some orders in Gaelic to his men, who, much to the surprise of Amherst and his friend, remained in the cavern, and leading the way, he was followed by the two gentlemen and O’Gollochar.

The stranger first conducted them for a considerable way along the shore, by the foot of the cliffs, in a direction opposite to that leading to the landing-place, and then they wound up by one of those steep and narrow paths frequently found on such bold coasts, where the fishermen are compelled to avail themselves of every practicable breach in the rocky wall to make a pas-

sage to and from the sea-beach, in pursuit of their daily occupation. They then crossed the high barren downs already described, by an indistinct track, leading among the sand heaps, and they ultimately began to descend towards the more inland country, through a series of wild furzy pastures, to which some irregular patches of cultivation succeeded.

After nearly an hour's walk, their eyes were gladdened by the sight of an illuminated window at some distance, which, though consisting of four small panes of glass only, emitted blaze of light enough to have served for a beacon.

Amherst was surprised to find their walk so much longer than Mr Macgillivray had led him to expect it to be. It was too great for a mere saunter of pleasure. He could not help thinking there was something very mysterious in the whole behaviour of their new acquaintance; for although he continued to converse with fluency, and with all the urbanity he displayed when they first met him, Amherst frequently observed his keen eyes turned on him in the imperfect light of the moon, as if to scan his face and person. Nothing, however, like an apprehension of

treachery had ever crossed his mind, and, indeed, if any such had arisen there, it must have been soon dispelled by the cheering though confused sounds of merriment proceeding from the black mass before them, which, but for the flickering blaze from its little window, would never have been taken by Amherst for a human dwelling.

As they approached the hut, they began to distinguish, what might much more properly have been called the noise than the air of a rude song, supported by an occasional chorus of many voices, and as they drew nearer, their ears caught the words of the conclusion,

Then whilst we have claret,
Come, boys, do not spare it,
For wit is its produce, then drink to have fire !
See, mirth sits on ilka brow,
Who cares for care now ?

For drown'd in deep goblets the fiend must expire.
Then, hey ! come ! jolly boys, join in the carrol,
And ilka ane fill his point stoup to the nail,
Let's fill, drink and fill, till we empty the barrel,
For though it held oceans our thirst would prevail !

A Bacchanalian cheer arose as this chorus terminated, and it had just died away as Mr Mac-

gillivray ushered his new acquaintances into the public-house. But before I permit him to introduce them to the party within, I must first give the reader some idea of the interior of the place.

The house was chiefly composed of two large chambers, known in Scotland by the appellation of the *but* and the *ben*. The first of these, entering from the doorway, was used as the kitchen and hall. It had a large fire-place, with a chimney so much projected into the middle of the apartment, that a company of a dozen might have easily sat under it; and a couple of forms, placed one on each side, showed that it was frequently so occupied. The black smoky rafters were only here and there covered with bits of old boat sails, stretched across, and bent downwards between the beams, as if laden with numerous articles of lumber thrown up there to be out of the way. In other places the eye was permitted to penetrate upwards through a network of cobwebs and dust, till arrested by the interior of the thatched roof. Two or three favourite hens, at roost in the sooty regions above, seemed to sleep perfectly unconscious of the

noise below. The walls of the apartment were lined with divers cupboards, and plate-racks of different altitudes, shapes, and patterns, containing a motley assemblage of pewter and stoneware, mingled with kitchen utensils, many of them broken, and all of them dirty. Amongst other things there were a number of truncated bottles, stalkless glasses, and many pieces of cracked tea-ware of very fine foreign china, and these were intermixed with horn spoons, iron skewers, and dirty pot-lids. Long strings of fish hung drying over the fire-place, and a number of mutton hams dangled from hooks fixed in the beams, some of them so low as to make it difficult for a tall person to steer his head through them. Several large antique-looking chests, having curious dark recesses between them, where the light could hardly penetrate, a dresser, a frail table, and half a dozen wooden chairs, in the same state, formed the major part of the furniture of this chamber.

They had no sooner entered, than their ears were saluted with the sounds of discord.

“Set ye up, ye dirty baggage, to be gawin glaikin out with the fallows at this time o’ night,

an' leavin' me to be slavin' here my lane, an' sae muckle company in the house!"

Such was the exclamation of mine hostess, Mrs M'Claver, a tall, stout, good-looking, but extremely dirty woman, in a white mutch, with long black locks curling over her face and shoulders, a string of large amber beads round her neck, and clothed in a printed short-gown, covering a petticoat of red flannel, and having a pair of large well filled pockets, and a pin-cushion and pair of shears hanging by a long string at her side. In one hand she brandished an old gridiron, and in the other a dried haddock, as she stood threatening a very handsome spirited-looking wench, with trigly snooded up hair, to whom her reproof had been addressed, and who seemed just in the act of returning the first broadside of the wordy war, when its further progress was arrested by the appearance of the strangers and Macgillivray.

"Mrs M'Claver," said the latter, "you seem to be moved; pray what has bonny Peggy Galravage been doing to displease you?"

"Ou no that muckle after a'," said Mrs M'Claver, smoothing her brow with a smile, as she

eyed Amherst and his friend.—“ I was only gi'en her a wee bit o' an advice, an' ye ken it's weel my pairt, for as she's under my roof, I maun see that she behaves hersel, poor thing!—An' she's a decent lassie eneugh, after a's said.—Waes me! I hae nae dochter noo to gi'e motherly advices till! and when I had ane, gude kens, my words were but o' little profit—wha kens whare poor Eppy's wandering? or wha kens——”

But here Macgillivray, who perceived she had got hold of the thread of her endless theme, interrupted her, by introducing the two English gentlemen.

“ Proud am I, Maister Macgillivray,” said she, crossing her arms, gridiron and all, and dropping a low curtsy, “ to see siccan braw gallant gentlemen in my house. I've ay been unco fond o' the Englishers ever sin' Captain Clutterbuck lodged wi' me. He was a braw paymaster; an' mony was the braw bonny die he gied to poor Eppy. But she's awa' noo, Heaven kens whare.—I never sall forget the night——”

Here, again, Macgillivray broke in upon her

favourite topic, by asking if Sir Alisander Sanderson was still with the party?

“Ou, ay, troth is he, worthy man; he’s ower gude natured to gang awa’ and leave the honest folk. But stap this way, gentlemen, stap this way, stap yere ways ben.”

So saying, she proceeded to open the door of the inner chamber, into which Macgillivray led the way.

This apartment was of the same size as that through which they had just passed, and its fire-place, though somewhat less than the other, was of similar construction, and was filled with a blazing fire of bog-fir and peats. The walls though of sod, had been plastered inside with clay, and covered with white wash, still adhering in most places, though it had peeled off in many large patches. The rafters were partly covered with split planks, and partly, as in the other, with old sails. The whole of this patched ceiling was festooned with a perfect drapery of cobwebs and sooty filaments, drooping from every part of it. The ornaments were the sad remains of a cracked mirror, in a tarnished old carved-and-gilt frame, and a few prints, long

ago rendered unintelligible by the effects of damp. A long table formed of boards, supported upon trestles, extended down the length of the room, its surface being thickly set with stoups, or wooden drinking vessels, of a tall form, constructed of staves and hoops. Opposite to that end of it, farthest from the fire, stood an elevated gantrees, or wooden support for a cask, on which was poised a huge hogs-head of claret, reared higher than the level of the table, and having a cock and pail, that is to say, a wooden tube and plug inserted into it. The vicinity of the cask bore all the appearance of frequent applications having been made to its spiggot, and that, too, by no very steady hands, for the clay floor was moistened by frequent libations, and some of the hollows, in the inequality of its surface, stood in pools of the generous fluid.

In an old carved oak chair, ornamented with huge knobs, at the head of the table, near the cask, sat Sir Alisander Sanderson, of whom Macgillivray had spoken, a fat, ruddy, good-humoured gentleman-like person about forty, with a benevolent expression of countenance. Being

naturally indolent, and, moreover, a confirmed hypochondriac, he hardly ever left his own fire-side from one year's end to the other. To accommodate his valetudinarian whims about cold, the company subjected themselves to the risk of being melted by a tremendous fire, in addition to the naturally oppressive heat of so crowded a place. But the good gentleman was so universal a favourite, that every inconvenience was cheerfully submitted to, rather than lose the gratification of having Sir Alisander to preside over their revels. Such was the Baronet's apprehension of cold, and sifting airs, that, notwithstanding the quantum of culinary heat he was now exposed to, he sat with his great-coat on, a large flannel roller round his neck, and a red night-cap on his head, surmounted by his small gold laced cocked hat.

Next to Sir Alisander sat his shadow, Julius Cæsar Macflae, a spare figure in black velvet breeches, whose *tout ensemble* bore a strong resemblance to those *memento moris* who walk before funeral processions, known in Scotland by the name of *saulies*. His long thin neck, bound tight by a narrow white stock and buckle, show-

ed over his collarless coat like the shank of a mushroom. His head was thinly sprinkled with straggling hairs, with great difficulty collected from different quarters into a tiny pig-tail behind, so as to leave two *chevaux de frise* of bristles, rising on each side over his ears, which were so large as to resemble the orifices of two vast conchs. A toupee in front had once existed, but had long since disappeared, leaving his brow to exhibit all the effects of a West Indian sun, shaded gradually off into the polished yellow of his bald pate. His mouth was of size corresponding to that of his ears, but the smelling organ was so little developed, that it was hardly more prominent than the nose of an old-fashioned barber's block, its site being only ascertained by the appearance of two black perforations resembling nostrils. His eyebrows projected remarkably, and were so very bushy, that they seemed to have monopolized all the hair that should have adorned his head. They almost covered his eyes, which, when narrowly inspected, were of that greenish, watery, mis-shapen appearance, presented by a bursten gooseberry after rain. Notwithstanding the sounding names

of this person, he was the son of a parish schoolmaster, who, being very desirous that his boy should become a hero and a scholar, thought it prudent, on the Shandean principle, to bestow upon him *praenomina* suitable to the deeds he should one day achieve, as well as corresponding to his future literary eminence. Nor did Julius altogether baulk these fond paternal hopes, for, after having acted as tutor to Sir Alisander, he procured a situation in the West Indies, where he actually held a commission in the Kingston Volunteers, and where he, moreover, made some figure in a debating club. Having realized a little fortune, he returned to repose under his laurels, and having built a snug, upright-gabled house in his native village, he became the humble, but inseparable companion of his former pupil.

The seats in the neighbourhood of the chair were occupied by the Lairds of Blutterbog, Whinnyshaw, Blawweary, Crazletap, Windlestrawlee, and Windygoul, individuals having so little particularly striking or characteristic about them, as to require no minute delineation.

After them came Bailie Sparrowpipe the mer-

cer from the neighbouring borough, a tall, thin, spindle shanked man about forty-five or fifty; a sort of dandy of the day, with white thread stockings, large brass buckles, short-knee'd black serge breeches, yellow waiscoat, and cinnamon-coloured coat, of the old cut, pale face, and small pinking eyes, which had enough ado to see beyond a long sharp-pointed nose, and his hair peaked up in a toupee before, and tied in a silk bag behind. His body was bent forward at about half its altitude, in an angle so acute, that his nose and toes always entered a room several seconds before the rear-guard of his person. This conformation, in the opinion of many, was bestowed originally upon them by nature; but it was more generally believed, that he owed it partly, if not wholly, to the obsequious bows he made over the counter to the ladies who frequented his shop.

Next to Sparrowpipe sat Deacon M'Candy the grocer, a thick-set round-bellied vulgar little man, with a bluish red face and fiery eyes, betokening a lurking violence of temper, capable of occasionally rousing him from that natural apathy indicated by the stupidity of his countenance.

On the opposite side of the table to him sat Dr Partenclaw, who prided himself upon his vocal powers, and who had been leader of the catch. He was a little man with a large jowl, pig's eyes, red hooked nose, sack belly, spindle thighs, cased in dirty leather breeches, and limbs bound in a sort of black leather greaves, fastened with iron clasps.

Besides these, there were some inferior persons, who, as they seated themselves there for no other purpose than to assist in emptying the hogshead, to fill up the chorus of the songs, or to join in the roar or laugh, are hardly worth particularizing.

CHAPTER III.

Benedetto
 Quel claretto
 Che si spilla in Avignone
 Questo vasto Bellicone
 Io ne verso entro 'l mio petto.

Baccho in Toscana.

Since my Phyllis has fall'n to my share,
 In a bumper I'll drink to the fair,
 And the man here who envies me most,
 Let him bid me say more to the toast,
 For a larger I'll soon change my cup,
 To the brim fill the *Constable* up.

Catch, Edinburgh Catch Club.

WHEN Macgillivray entered with the gentlemen, the tumultuous Bacchanalian roar that followed the termination of the catch was hushed, and the strangers were surveyed from all quarters, with half-closed eyes, and twisted-up mouths, betokening the serious scrutiny of men in a state of wise intoxication. To judge of the

plight of the party, it is only necessary to be informed, that this was the second night of their orgies.

Macgillivray having introduced Amherst and Cleaver to Sir Alisander, the good Knight rose to receive them, and the maudlin company got up in imitation of their President, like an ill drilled squad, tardily following the motions of the fugal.—“Chairs,—chairs for the gentlemen!”—cried the Baronet. But besides that on which he sat himself, there was but one rickety chair in the place. That was instantly ceded by the polite FustleCraig of Windlestraw, who placed it for Amherst near Sir Alisander, and went to seat himself on the end of a form lower down the table. Cleaver, whose jovial heart was expanded by the sight of so jolly a party, was so eager to join the revellers, that he immediately placed himself on an empty brandy anker set on end, and proceeded, without loss of time, to attack two huge high-flavoured dishes, one containing hot, broiled, smoked haddocks, and the other, red herrings of most inviting savour, which, with some oaten cakes, and a few pewter platters, were at this moment

put on the board by the bustling Mrs M'Claver, and the bonny Peggy Galravage.

“ I see,” said the good-natured Baronet, who could not resist a pun,—“ I see, Mr Oakenwold, that your friend Captain Cleaver has already brought himself to an anchor, like a good seaman, chee ! he !—he !”—The joke, though it produced the usual spasm of approval in the face of Macflae, and a laugh from such of the rest as were within earshot, was lost upon the subject of it, who was too much occupied with his haddock to hear it.

“ My friend,” said Amherst, “ though long a man-of-war's-man by profession, is now only a navigator for pleasure.”

“ Your present voyage is of that nature ?” said Sir Alisander.

“ It is so,” said Amherst, “ and is occasioned chiefly by our wish to see a little of Scotland.”

“ A very laudable desire,” replied Sir Alisander, “ and I hope our Land of Cakes will not disappoint you.—Since pleasure then, and not business, is your object, you cannot do better than make my house of Sanderson-Mains your

head-quarters for some weeks. I shall be happy to do my best to entertain you, or rather, to see that you are entertained,—for I am but a weak vessel myself, and not much able now to leave the house. I will take you thither as soon as I can get away from these honest people, who must always have me for their preses on such occasions as this—much against my will, I assure you, for such bouts do not by any means agree with my stomach, which has been very ticklish for some years. But they will not have me excused, so I must e'en sacrifice a little to the wishes of my good neighbours, by yielding to their importunity, though it should even be to the curtailing of my life.”

Amherst, whilst he expressed his thanks for so kind an invitation, given to strangers, and assured the worthy Baronet, that his friend and he would be happy to avail themselves of his hospitality, stared with astonishment at the person who gave it, and wondered where the secret sapping disease could lurk, that rendered him a frail vessel, who had so much the outward appearance of good health and a robust constitution, and whose trappings, consisting of all the parapher-

nalía of the sick man, had so whimsical an effect when contrasted with the *embonpoint* of his figure, and the rustic healthfulness of his face.

The prepossessing, and even noble appearance of Amherst, followed by the Baronet's invitation, that sufficiently spoke his good opinion of the strangers, like oil upon the stormy seas, produced a certain lull upon the obstreperous mirth of the company, and it was some time before it again began to swell itself into a roar.—A deep pledge was passed round by the chairman to the health of the new guests, and replied to, of course, by one from each of them, and the claret again began to mount into the brains of the votaries of Bacchus, and again to loosen the shackles of their tongues.

“Maister Oakenwold,” said Bailie Sparrow-pipe, rising and addressing Amherst in a tone of voice, thin, shrill, and sharp, resembling the cutting notes of a fife,—“I drink to you, and to your country, Sir—I rejoice for to see ane Englishman amang us.—I have a high respect for England Sir, and troth, gif I shou'd say otherwise, my verra speech itsell wad betray me, for ye may observe that my dialeck is somewhat polished.

And nae wonder nor it shou'd be sae, for I was nae less than sax weeks in Lunnon itsell about aughteen years syne, whare I gathered the tongue, as likewise thae manners which hae acquired for me the appellation of the feenished man."—A simper of great self-approbation followed this speech.

"I am glad, Bailie," said Macgillivray with an air of gravity, evidently intended to bring him out—"I am very glad that you are here, were it only to show our English guests, that we are not all barbarians in this country."

"Hout fye, hout fye, Maister Macgillivray!—barbarians!—na truly, though we do leeve in the North, we're no just that neither;—there's mony a ane o' us has traivelled,—there's you hae been in Italy—and Maister Macflae in the Wast Indians—and Dr Partenclaw there, forbye mony ither voyages, was aince at the Greenland fishing—no to crack o' mysell being in Lunnon."

"Upon few people, however, are the advantages of travel so apparent as upon the elegant Mr Sparrowpipe," said Macgillivray. "But then nature, Sir,—nature is everything."

"Troth that's true eneugh," replied Sparrowpipe—"I had aye a sort o' genty cast about me

—I mind verra weil that Sally Hopkins, the dancin' master's dochter in Threadneedle Street, used aye to say that o' me; and her father, wha was a verra gude judge o' siccan matters, used to declare, that I could mak as bonny a boo as ony Lord o' the bed-chammer."

"I have no doubt of that, Bailie," said Macgillivray—"you are still remarkable for your talent that way, which indeed has rather improved than otherwise, and is perhaps one of the causes of your being such a terrible fellow among the ladies."

"Hout fye, hout fye, Maister Macgillivray," said the Bailie, stretching his long neck and nose across the table like a goose, with a simper of ineffable delight upon his face; "ye are pleased for to flatter me, Sir,—that is to say—I mean—ye wrang me sair, Sir—I dinna deserve naesiccan character.—But an I do," added he, looking down, or rather inwards upon his yellow waistcoat, with manifest satisfaction,—“ane canna help ane's attraction, ye ken."

"Aye, aye," said the Baronet—"very true, Mr Sparrowpipe,—the rose cannot be blamed for its fragrance."

“ Nor good claret for its seducing flavour,” said Cleaver, who now for the first time had found leisure to speak, and putting a brimming flagon to his head, he tossed it off to wash down the immense mass of dried fish he had swallowed.

“ Come now, Bailie,” cried Sir Alisander—“ give us a toast,—give us one of the many beauties on your list !”

“ I’ll give ye—I’ll give,” said the Bailie, with some hesitation, and looking upwards to the rafters, as if appealing to them for aid in making his selection—“ I’ll give ye—Miss Louisa Matilda Mactavish, a young leddy that maist o’ ye ken verra weil ; she’s a lovely lassie, and I’ll drink a mutchkin stoup till her.”

“ Say more, Bailie !” roared out young Barklay o’ Blutterbog ; “ I can’t consent to yield her to ye so easily,—she’s a particular favourite of mine.”

Blutterbog’s speech was received with a general cheer, resembling that species of applause which runs round an English ring when a brace of bruisers have agreed to pit themselves for a match at milling. The Bailie, however, seemed

now like a snail that draws in its horns on the approach of something from which it apprehends danger ; he felt that he was in a scrape, and he wished to recede if possible. The rule on such occasions of Bacchanalian challenge was, that as the party who proposed the toast drank a bumper, so he who advanced an equal claim to the lady, by the words “ say more ! ”—was obliged to drink a double bumper,—after which the first drank double that, and the other that again doubled, and so on alternately, doubling the quantity of the draught every time, until one or other of the parties gave in, or was fairly floored. To Blutterbog, who had already swallowed gallons, and whose capacious throat was gaping for gallons more, this contest was mere sport. But the bilious Bailie of the Borough, though he had no objections to a long tipple where he was permitted to do as he liked, and where he had listeners to his long love stories, felt that such a deluge of drink as now threatened him would be death to him—He grew doubly pale at the very thought.

“ I’m no just preceesely inclined to gang a’ that length for the lass, Maister Barklay o’ Blutter-

bog," said the Bailie, screwed up by vexation to the highest pitch of his soprano.—“ She’s a bonny lass eneugh I maun confess till ye,—but she’s no just ane that taks my fancy naither.”

“ Fire and fury, Sir, why did you toast her then ?” cried the impetuous bullyboy of a laird.

“ Troth, Blutterbog,” said the Bailie, now alarmed for something more than his stomach, “ I kenna preceesely how it was I happened on her—I’m sure I had fifty mair i’ my head to pick and chuse amang—and I’m far frae wishing to come in your way. But I hae siccan a compassionate heart !—an’ the lassie, puir thing, is aye glowrin frae her windows at me, as I gae by in state till the kirk on Sabbath days, wi’ the town-offishers an’ their red coats and muckle halberts afore me—and she aye giggles for to see me—she canna help fa’in’ in fancy wi’ me ye ken, an’ sae——”

“ Fancy with you, ye damn’d sneaking coil of list !” interrupted Blutterbog, to whom the lady in question was privately affianced at the time—“ Tis false, ye yard of staytape !”

The Bailie glided lengthways under the table

like an eel under a stone, just as his antagonist had sprung on it to get at him. The furious laird's weight and violence together were too much for its frail supports,—and crash,—down went the whole, stoups, claret, haddocks, herrings, boards, and Blutterbog upon the unfortunate Sparrowpipe, who lay sprawling beneath. All was now confusion. Macgillivray and some of those nearest to him laid hold of Blutterbog as he was scrambling over the wrecks of the broken table, to glut his vengeance upon the unlucky magistrate, and dragging him apart, endeavoured to pacify him, whilst others drew Sparrowpipe from under the ruins like a boiled welck from its shell. His body, indeed, seemed as pliant as if it had had no more bones in it than that marine species of snail, and the paleness of death was upon him: his eyes were fixed, and he uttered not a word.

“By Jupiter, gentlemen,” cried Dr Partenclaw, as he bent over him, “this is a serious matter!—the man's gone!—poor Sparrowpipe has piped his last—what will our concert do now for a counter alto?—There wasn't such an one in any opera in Europe!—it was like a piccolo flute,

or a bird organ: his cranium is fractured—a blood-vessel is ruptured—and two or three spoonfuls of the cerebral mass are protruded.”—A dead silence prevailed for some moments.

“ I shall be Bailie myself at the neist election o’ magistrates,” said Deacon M’Candy with the most stupid indifference.

“ I confess,” continued the Doctor, “ I did think his skull was thick enough to have borne worse shocks than this, bad as it was. Nor, indeed, should I have expected the subject to exhibit even so much brain as we now behold. But bring a light here, and I will soon ascertain the true state of the case, and if, as I suspect, he is fairly gone, then we may open his skull, and have a peep into its interior.”—All this the Doctor pronounced with as much coolness and unconcern, as if he had been talking of opening his snuff-box.

Whilst the rational and less intoxicated part of the company were occupied in endeavouring to pacify the rage of Blutterbog, Partenclaw, who happened to be surrounded by those who had most deeply drenched their senses in the juice of the barrel, now gave various directions

which were hastily and implicitly obeyed. The body was laid at length on a form, and the Doctor's dissecting tools were out in an instant, whilst a group of eight or ten individuals of the party, stimulated by curiosity, hung over him to see what he was going to do. The saw was actually applied to the unfortunate man's head, when, at the very first touch of it, Sparrowpipe suddenly screamed out, with a yell that might almost have been heard a mile off; and at the same time drew his head and feet together with a jerk so violent, as to render the recoil something like that of a twisted up piece of Indian rubber. The effect of it was like the explosion of a bomb, the circle was dispersed, and the persons forming it tumbled in all directions, and Partenclaw was laid on his back like a lobster, with his saw held up in the air. The Doctor, however, though with some difficulty, yet with undiminished *sang froid*, rose again to the charge.

“There is some life in the man yet,” quoth he; “give me a spoon that I may remove his brains, and examine the fracture in his skull.”

Sparrowpipe, with whom the application of

the saw had in some degree served the purpose of the lancet, had begun to regain his senses, as the Doctor uttered these words. They acted upon him like the touching of the spring of an automaton. He started up to the sitting posture, and having clapped both his hands to his head, he exclaimed, in the most doleful voice,

“ Oh, I’m a dead man !—I’m a dead man !—sure enough my skull is crackit, and my brains are a’ out, and some o’ them are scattered on the very floor.”

The sudden relief the spectators experienced from all dread of the Bailie being killed outright upon the spot, coupled with the ludicrous effect produced by his dolorous accents, and highly ridiculous appearance, instantaneously changed their silent breathless anxiety into a burst of unextinguishable laughter, in the midst of which he sat in all the horrors and anguish of mind, inspired by a firm belief of immediate death.

“ You may laugh, gentlemen,” cried he, in yet more woeful strains, as soon as he could be heard—“ ye may laugh, unchristian-like sinners as ye are !—but,” said he, holding out a handful

of the pulpy matter taken from his head, "an ye winna believe me, there's a pickle o' my brains in my ain hand, and there's the rest o' them lying on the floor." The roar of laughter was renewed.

"Bailie," said the Baronet, at the first pause that occurred, "if you are resolved to insist upon being scatter-brained, it is not for any of us to gainsay you."

The renewed shout that followed this observation made Sparrowpipe angry.

"I *have* lost my brains, I tell ye," exclaimed he, in a pet, "and gif ye winna *believe* me, there they are in your face," so saying, he threw the soft mass slap into Partenclaw's eyes, and almost blinded him.

The real state of the case was now discovered, much to the satisfaction of every body. A mass of herring milts, tinged with the streams of claret, had fallen into his hair, and this, added to his temporary stupor, had led to the Doctor's mistake. The drunken company had now leisure to note the figure of Sparrowpipe in detail. Never was mortal in such a pickle. His garments, and above all his yellow waistcoat, the

pride of his very heart, were covered with fish entrails, brine, and claret, and he stank so, that he would have made an excellent drag for a pack of hounds, to which purpose, indeed, any one who beheld him, without doing violence to probability, might have easily imagined that he had been actually applied. All this minor part of his misfortune had been overlooked by him in the dreadful idea of immediate death. But now that all his fears on that score had subsided, he began, in sad strains, to deplore the damage his drapery had sustained.

“ Waes me ! waes me ! siccan a fusome sight as I am. My new kassimer vest is a’thegither ruined !—Fich, fich ! it stinks like a fishwife’s creel—it’s an ill-fared tradin’ voyage to me this. I may buy a bargain o’ lace and silken hose, but my new stand o’ claes, my gude coat and breeks, and aboon a’ my vest, can never gang on again.—Ugh ! I wish I had them aff !—my verra stamick scunners at my verra sell !”

“ Then, Bailie,” said the Baronet quietly, “ I fancy it’s the first time you were ever sickened with your own person, whatever effect it may have had upon others. But come, cheer

up, man!—let Mrs M'Claver do the best she can to cleanse you from the pickle you have been soused in, and then let us endeavour to get things into some sort of order again."

CHAPTER IV.

A rude and boisterous captain of the sea.

DOUGLAS.

Under his eye-brows looking still askance,

— — — — —
 He lower'd with dangerous eye-glance ;
 His rolling eyes did never rest in place,
 But walk'd each way for fear of hid mischance,
 Holding a lattice still before his eyes,
 Through which he still did peep.

SPENCER.

THE Bailie had been wisped down with straw, washed with soap and water, and dried with a towel by the hostess and Peggy Galravage,—the boards had been replaced as a table, and the ranks of the company restored after their late discomfiture,—and the stoups had begun to circulate with renewed energy, when the door opened, and their attention was attracted by the entrance of a new personage.

This was a tall, swaggering, sea-faring man, dressed in a tawdry anomalous sort of sea uniform, of blue, faced with orange, ornamented with large brass buttons, and broad gold lace. On his head he wore an enormous cocked hat, a huge cutlass was suspended at his side by a broad buff belt, whilst the butt ends of two brace of brass-mounted pistols were seen appearing from his girdle. His black curly hair, and his large whiskers and eyebrows, gave uncommon fierceness to features, naturally handsome, had they not been disfigured by an expression of libertinism, mingled with certain touches of depravity, appearing to argue a ready inclination to crime, and a fitness for executing it, but partially disguised by that look of careless freedom characterizing the hearty sailor on shore.

“ Ah ! Captain Brandywyn,” exclaimed several voices at once. “ What ? are you come at last ? how goes it with you ? and what has become of you ? ”

“ Ha, ha ! my boys, all assembled I see ! ” cried he, as he leered around him. “ What cheer, my hearty fellows ? So I see you have broke bulk already—is’t not prime Bourdeaux, eh ?—

I have thirty casks on board as good—never shipped better since I have been in the trade. I sent that sample ashore, when I was off the head at hap-hazard, just to let you know that I was on the coast, to give you a notion what sort of tipple I carried, and to wet your whistles a-bit. I would ha' been here at the broaching of the barrel too, an I had not been afeard of the hawks to the eastward. But, sink them, they were on the look-out, and I was forced to push away and keep a decent offing; so, taking advantage of the wind, I ran over for the north coast, did a little business there in the meanwhile, and then came walloping back with the breeze that sprung up at sun-set. But just as I was about to take up my anchorage, I saw a suspicious-looking little vessel lying in my very birth, so I hauled my wind and stood off a bit, and though I did see your blaze, I thought it as well to come ashore in my boat, to know how the land might lay before I ——”

Here he suddenly paused, for having by this time thrown his eyes all round the company, they rested upon Cleaver, when, starting invo-

luntarily, and earnestly gazing at him, he exclaimed, "What! Clea——"

His presence of mind seemed to return to him in time to prevent his finishing the word, and correcting himself with uncommon readiness, he added,

"What! Cleghorn among you? no, no, no—I see, I am mistaken;—this damned hovel is so smoky, that I swear I took that good humour-ed-looking gentleman for the Custom-house Captain himself, and so thought I had thrown myself into the very jaws of the lion."

"How could you suppose, Captain," said Macgillivray, "that we could have such a guest to welcome you? These are two English gentlemen on a pleasure trip in that same little vessel which so alarmed you. Pray let me make you acquainted with one another," continued he, as he led the seemingly unwilling Captain up to the strangers. "Mr Oakenwold, this is our worthy friend, Captain Brandywyn, formerly of the navy, and now commanding a merchantman. He is a rough diamond, Sir, but not the less valuable on that account. And this, Captain Brandywyn, is Captain Cleaver, to whom you

will the rather more naturally draw, as being sons of the same element ; for sailors, you know, stick together like pitch.”

But never was proposition less borne out by appearances, for Brandywyn seemed to be repelled rather than attracted by the sight of his brother tar, and Cleaver had been too busily employed with some deviled herring roes, done by Peggy Galravage according to his own directions, to notice the entrance of any one. He was nevertheless too polite not to rise when Macgillivray introduced Brandywyn to him. He got up, his fork in his hand, with a large piece of the rich food impaled on it, made his bow, his eye being all the time directed downwards on the morsel about to relish his mouth, and was in the act of saying something civil, without thinking much to whom it was addressed, when Brandywyn drew hastily back, and muttered, in a sulky tone,

“ Pshaw ! Macgillivray—curse your Italian politeness ! you are enough to sicken a dog with your palaver.”

And so saying, he hastened to seat himself beyond Partenclaw, half way down the table

where, in defiance of the numerous questions and remarks addressed to him from all quarters, he seemed to fall into a reverie, during which he stole frequent and long looks at Cleaver, when he thought himself unobserved, as if he wished to scrutinize every feature of his countenance.

Cleaver, whose politeness amounted to no more than what a sailor commonly serves out to every one he meets on shore, as matter of course, pretty much in the same way as he does his guineas, eagerly returned to his deviled roes, without perceiving the strangely mysterious conduct of Brandywyn. But it did not escape Amherst, whose eyes had been rivetted upon the ruffian-looking seaman from the first moment of his entrance.

“ Captain Cleaver,” said Sir Alisander, “ you and Captain Brandywyn may have met before. Sailors are often jostled together by the jumble of accidents. It is not unlikely you may have seen one another on the shores of Italy for instance, or may be——”

No sooner had Brandywyn heard the name of Italy, than he started, and hastily interrupting the Baronet, stammered out, in a flurried,

but very earnest manner, "Italy! I never was in Italy in my life—at least I mean—that is—I should have said—I never was at Naples."

"Why," replied the Baronet, with his usual good-natured laugh, "nobody talked of Naples; yet, if I mistake not, since you have named it, I think I have heard you talk of the place."

"In troth, and so have I," said Deacon M'Candy, hiccupping as he spoke, for he was now beginning to get very drunk. "I swear—that is to say, in my faith, I'm sure, I've often heard ye crack o' that city, and mair by token, I've heard ye brag o' the braw maccaroni and the sugar confecks they manufactur' there; and I canna be mista'en, seeing these are articles mair especially in my line, ye ken, Captain, so that I canna but mind it."

"Aye, indeed," said Macflae, "and I remember hearing you tell of the eruption and eructations of that famous hill called Mount Vesuvius—and moreover, of that popish miracle of the liquifaction, or deliquation of the blood of their patron saint, whose name is like unto that of one of our months, but whether it be January or February, I cannot just remember at the pre-

sent period or epocha. But surely, and of a truth, much more do I recollect to have heard you narrate of the curiosities and extraord'nars of that famous town, city, or metropolis."

Brandywyn seemed to fret inwardly at these remarks, vague and unmeaning as they were. But, like some wolf attacked by ignorant rustics and vulgar yelping sheep dogs, he roused himself; and with a loud, but apparently forced laugh, which increased the savage expression of the passion he could but ill conceal, he exclaimed,

" Belay ! belay !—what ! will ye not allow a sailor to use the privilege of a traveller, and to cram a little ? I tell ye, I may have been off the mouth of the bay of Naples, or perhaps in its mouth ; but if ever I was ashore in the city, blast me, I say !—so let's have no more on't."

And so lifting a large stoup of claret to his head, he quaffed it off at one draught, and then muffling himself up in a cloak, the Neapolitan fashion of which particularly struck Amherst, and saying—" Well, I must go and see what the Charming Sally is about ; I shall have her in before many hours are over, so those who may want

to be customers will keep a look-out at the old place,"—he precipitately left the house.

Cleaver, who had at first paid little or no regard to Brandywyn, had his attention somewhat excited by the earnest and suspicious manner in which he denied having been at Naples. He had looked at him, and his face instantly struck him as not entirely strange to him, though he could not immediately remember where he had met with it. But he had now little time allowed him for cogitation; for the empty stoups began to rattle more frequently against the sides of the already half-hollow cask, and the discharge from the spigot-hole nearly amounted to a constant stream. The tongues of the revellers, too, began to ring such an incessant larum of nonsense, that nothing was to be distinguished in the general Babel of voices, except an occasional howl from some Bacchanal, raising a note louder than the rest, or the screeching verse of some ribald song, to which nobody listened, because every one wished to be the person listened to.

Sir Alisander himself, being naturally of a less buoyant and more even temperament than the rest, maintained a state of tolerable sobriety, but

could no longer preserve even the semblance of control over his troops, although he frequently thundered on the crazy boards with the end of his gold-headed cane.

“ I wish to Heaven we could slip away from this boisterous scene,” said he to Amherst ; “ but I dare not desert my post without giving dire offence—I shall have a headache for a month after all this noise.”

And truly it was indeed overpowering enough ; every one striving to bring his own individual supposed talent into notice, and no one being disposed to yield the arena to his neighbour. Some half dozen to be sure there were, who, wiser than the rest, or perhaps more deeply overloaded with drink, lay snoring in different attitudes, with their arms and heads resting on the table. Now it was that Partenclaw, being very desirous to get up a glee, had ranged himself with Blutterbog and Windlestraw, like choristers upon a form, where they began to strain their throats in ineffectual endeavours to tune their voices, producing a jarring discord, very much improved by the drunken attempts of Deacon M‘Candy, who was trying to roar out,

“ Hey, Johnny Cope, are ye waukin yet,
Or are ye sleeping, I would wit? ”—

Now it was that Bailie Sparrowpipe insisted upon exhibiting to the company the very minuet he had danced with Miss Sally Hopkins, at a grand farewell ball given by him at the Hog and Pitcher in Wapping, on the occasion of his leaving London.—Now it was that Julius Cæsar Macflae was in vain attempting to procure listeners to a speech he had composed, and spoken with great applause, in the Rum Club of Kingston, on some subject then under discussion in the House of Assembly ; but Demosthenes himself, when rehearsing to the raging elements, spoke not more unprofitably. He jumped upon a stool, slapped his breast, shut his eyes, forced down his eye-brows, clenched his fist, and hammered the air ; but all to no purpose. At last the barrel at the upper end of the room catching his eye, a faint hope seized him that he might have some chance of making a stronger impression from so elevated a rostrum. The idea no sooner struck him, than staggering towards it, he mounted with considerable difficulty, and poising

himself erect, he began to spout forth his oration in interrupted jets and spurts, something resembling those issuing from the spiggot of the barrel itself when it lacked air. He screamed,—he vociferated,—but attracted no attention, save from the Deacon, whose animal spirits, generally sluggish when in their wonted state of quiescence, but now spurred into furious gallop by the liberal potations he had imbibed, knew no bounds.

No sooner did he perceive Macflae perched on the hogshead, than, rushing towards it, he ascended it with an activity no one could have expected from his round bulky figure, and short thick legs, and getting astride on it, like a Bacchus, he began roaring out his favourite song of “Johnny Cope” with the lungs of a Stentor.

Cæsar might have fancied that he was partially heard before, but now his speech was annihilated. If he had possessed the eloquence of Marc Antony himself, it would have availed him nothing, when opposed to a voice that resembled the noise of a blast-furnace in an iron-foundery. The irritated Julius turned round upon him with bitter rage, and with a heat which nothing but Cayenne pepper and a West Indian sun could

have generated, he grappled the Deacon by the throat, whilst M'Candy in his turn seized the orator by the legs, so that Macflae would have been certainly thrown down by the suddenness and violence of his gripe, had he not supported himself by twisting the assailant's neckcloth with both hands, until the purple face of poor M'Candy actually became as black as one of his own plums.

The struggle now grew desperate. It was too much for the rotten gantrees,—it cracked and gave way, and down came the hogshead with a noise like thunder. All was hushed in an instant, and on rolled the barrel down the inclined plane of the uneven floor, like the stone of Sisyphus, leaving Cæsar and M'Candy struggling in a sea of claret that poured from the bung-hole opened by the shock. The Baronet and Amherst had hardly time to get out of its way, when bang it went against the end of the crazy form on which the three choristers were standing in all the ecstasy and self-imagined harmony of their first stave, and the legs giving way before it, the whole orchestra was precipitated on the table, which failing in its turn, was involved in a second

ruin, and the chorus of snorers having their support thus suddenly removed, were thrown head foremost into the centre, where nothing was to be seen among the broken lumber but a moving heap of arms, heads, and legs, kicking and sprawling in so confused a manner, as to make it utterly impossible to say to whom the various members belonged. Those who had been so suddenly and rudely awakened, finding themselves, they knew not how, on the floor in the midst of such a *melée*, and supposing they had had foul play, and that some vile trick had been played them, began to fight, every man against him who was nearest to him, until in a very few minutes, nothing was to be seen but bloody faces, broken noses, and bunged up eyes, whilst the glee of the musical *Partenclaw* and his harmonious associates was changed into a medley of groans, screams, and execrations. Sir Alisander, Cleaver, Amherst, Macgillivray, and one or two of the soberest, who had escaped from the general overthrow, endeavoured for some time to separate the combatants; but this they found not only impossible to execute, but dangerous to attempt; for so numerous were the arms and legs that were

striking and kicking in all directions, that one might as well have expected to come in contact with the complicated machinery of a hackling-mill without risk, as within reach of these animated flails.

Sir Alisander seeing, to his great satisfaction, that the claret had all run out, and that his official duties were consequently terminated, thought it the part of a prudent general to sound a retreat whilst he could draw off his forces without observation, and communicating his intentions to Amherst and his friend, they grasped their arms and cloaks, and called O'Gollochar. The Baronet, in his hurry to escape, forgot to send for his old coach, and notwithstanding night air, and rheumatism, he sallied forth with them, leaving Macgillivray and the two females, whose shrill voices were now pitched like trumpets far above the deep roar of the battle, to restore peace and order as they best might.

The approach of dawn was just visible in the eastern horizon, when the party left the public-house. The country, as far as they could see, exhibited a variety of soil and surface, cultivated fields being intermixed with furzy pastures, and

occasionally, though more rarely, with patches of hazle-copse, and other brushwood. They had, as Sir Alisander told them, not much more than a mile to go; Amherst, who was stewed by the heat and closeness of the apartment they had just left, enjoyed the fresh and balmy breath of Heaven. He walked on in conversation with the Baronet, whilst Cleaver followed at some distance, steadying his rather treacherous limbs by leaning on the brawny arm of O'Gollochar.

Sir Alisander's kind, unaffected, and gentlemanlike manner, seasoned as it was by an occasional display of dry, inoffensive humour, had already won the heart of the young Englishman, who begged of him to give him some account of the origin of the singular merry-making he had just witnessed.

“ It must, indeed, have appeared to you a very strange, and, perhaps, even a very barbarous assemblage, Mr Oakenwold; and maybe you think it a little odd that one of my apparent character and situation in life should have presided as chief priest in such a sacrifice to Bacchus, surrounded as I was by so many Satyrs and Sileni. I can assure you I have no particular pleasure in

such scenes; but I am of a facile temper, Sir, and do not like to refuse any thing to these worthy people, who, somehow or other, have a very general regard for me, though, Heaven knows, my frail state of health forbids my seeking popularity, by being actively useful as a country gentleman. The truth is, I should probably lose more than I would gain with them, were I to pretend to be so. But I cannot refuse to join in their revels, without setting up as a censor, an office certain to render me very odious, an alternative I cannot make up my mind to. There is some apology for them in the half-civilized state of this part of the country; the hostile parties into which society has been lately divided by political convulsions, having hardly yet allowed us time to borrow the improvement and polish of our more southern neighbours. It is as unwise as it is hopeless, to attempt to alter the nature of man at once; and it is often the best and speediest way to effect a lasting change, to seem to yield to the current for a time, in order the better afterwards to stem it. Having said thus much, I may now tell you, that the wine you were drinking was smuggled, and that the greater part of

the persons you sat with were assembled there to wait for the arrival of Captain Brandywyn and his vessel, the Charming Sally, in order to purchase the various foreign articles her cargo is composed of. The Captain, like an expert angler, knows how to strew his ground baits. He sends on shore a hogshead of claret to Mrs M'Claver's, and it is her business to distribute immediate information of its arrival. This draws the customers together, and after such a deep carouse as you witnessed, it is not unlikely that his goods will be quickly and well disposed of. All this is very bad; but I cannot think of making myself hated by becoming a custom-house officer, and if I did attempt such a thing, I should only succeed in gathering an ample harvest of odium, without adding one shilling to the King's revenue. Besides, a peaceable life is essential to my existence, so I must e'en continue to ride the ford as I find it, and leave it to more active men to bustle and fight themselves out of the good will of those by whom they are surrounded."

By this time they had arrived at the gate of Sanderson Mains, to which a straight avenue of young trees led up through the centre of the

square grass field it stood in. It was a large, plain, barn-like building of three stories, with a great length of front facing directly south, or to what is called, in the language of the country, the *twall o'clock line*. It exhibited numerous windows of small size, and was flanked by two pigeon-house-looking wings.

Behind it, and at about forty yards distance, was a low stone wall fencing off the field from the church-yard. There a very antique church, having divers uncouth projections, a low Gothic tower, or rather belfry of stone, a grey slate roof tinted with a thousand weather-stained hues, several very curious old monuments rising from amidst those of modern date and more vulgar taste, and two or three weather-beaten ash trees, afforded almost the only features of interest, to a scene otherwise completely agricultural, and devoid of variety.

Behind the church-yard, and at the foot of those elevated downs rising between it and the sea, were the miserable hovels of a straggling hamlet, seated amidst all the rich filth which, at that period, (we do not say now,) distinguished such places in Scotland; and above these the grey

roof of the manse appeared rising in that modest dignity befitting its inhabitant. Such were the objects the morning was beginning partially to illuminate, and its sombre light seemed particularly suited to their simplicity.

On entering the house, the gentlemen were ushered into a low-roofed paved hall, and servants having appeared, bed-rooms were speedily prepared for the strangers, to which they retired, to endeavour to get rid of their fatigue by a few hours repose.

CHAPTER V.

For marriage is a matter of more worth
Than to be dealt in by attorneyship.

SHAKSPEARE.

Of wiles
More inexpert, I boast not.—Then let those
Contrive who need, unworthy of our might.

MILTON.

AMHERST had arrived at Oakenwold Manor from Oxford only a short time previous to the marine trip that carried him, as we have just seen, to Scotland.

His father, Sir Cable Oakenwold, was the representative of an ancient and highly respectable family in Kent. Having been born a second son, and in a maritime county, he went early into the navy, and rose, by his bravery and good conduct, to the rank of Admiral of the Blue. Just before

he got his flag he married Amherst's mother, the daughter and heiress of a gentleman of fortune, whose estate lay in the vicinity of the New Forest in Hampshire. Warm in his affections, he was devotedly attached to his wife, and her death, which happened a few years after their marriage, preyed upon his mind, and soured his temper. This event was soon followed by the death of his elder brother, Sir Theophilus, for whom he had the strongest fraternal love and veneration, and for whose loss the succession to his title and immense estates but ill repaid him. These circumstances, added to long habits of uncontrolled and undisputed command, combined to make him testy, impatient of contradiction, and extremely liable to fits of violence, of no long duration to be sure, and of which he was always afterwards ashamed, and ever ready to make treble reparation for what they might have led him to say or do while under their influence. His strong attachment to his wife was naturally transferred with tenfold interest to her only child, and indeed, he doted so on Amherst, that he must have been inevitably ruined from over indulgence, had not the Admiral's eminence in his profession

kept him so constantly employed at sea, that he was compelled to place his boy at a public school, where he remained till he went to Oxford.

Until the period of the Admiral taking up his residence at his paternal seat, that is, a few years previous to the time we are now speaking of, the father and son had rarely met for more than a few days at a time, and that at considerable intervals. But the old veteran's warm heart so dissolved itself upon these occasions, as to make Amherst fully aware of the intrinsic value of its metal, and the young man consequently returned his father's fondness with all the strength of filial love.

As Amherst was the sole hope of the Oakenwolds, and was now almost of age, and the heir of a very large fortune, it was very natural that his father should look anxiously to his making a speedy and respectable marriage; and as the time was hardly past, when fathers used to think that they had a right to be the chief negotiators in such treaties, Sir Cable began to cast about in his mind to discover what fair one would be most worthy of the hand of his son, without such

a notion ever entering into his head, as that there was a chance of his choice being disputed by him for whom it was made. After some little consideration, his thoughts rested on the niece of Lady Deborah Delassaux, a young lady somewhat younger than his son, and whose history had something peculiar in it.

She was the only child of Sir Marmaduke Delassaux. Her father died at Rome, and grief for his loss occasioned her mother's untimely dissolution in bringing her prematurely into the world. She was therefore an orphan as soon as she saw the light, and that too in a foreign land. The charge of the child naturally devolved on her uncle, Sir Godmansbury, who succeeded to his brother's title, whilst his large property descended upon the infant Olivia. It so happened that Sir Godmansbury was travelling in Greece at the time of his brother's death, so that his wife, Lady Deborah, daughter of the Earl of Llanstephan, whom he had left at Naples, took immediate charge of the child in her husband's absence. But the infant was fated to lose her second father, for soon after his return to Italy, and before he could join his lady, Sir Godmansbury

fell by the hand of assassins, or banditti, in a manner the particulars of which were never very well known. Lady Deborah having given way to all those professions of grief becoming a widow, continued to reside abroad for some years, and then returned to England with her niece. They took up their residence at the young ladies' seat of Brokenhurst-Hall, within a few miles of Oakenwold Manor, and it was immediately converted into a magnificent abode by all that wealth could effect.

The Admiral, and his maiden sister who kept house for him, were the only people with whom Lady Deborah and her niece were in the habit of holding much intercourse at the time we are now speaking of. The proud and haughty bearing of both the ladies made them by no means favourites with the neighbouring families, with whom they only associated when formally called on to do so; and the very marked attention they invariably paid to Sir Cable and Miss Margery Oakenwold, was naturally enough interpreted by busy talkers, into a desire to secure so eligible a match as Amherst for Miss Delassaux. But to the good people who were the objects of these observations,

no such political notion ever occurred. In our endeavours to account for the civilities of others towards us, we are seldom at the trouble of looking further than to those merits we are always very ready to give ourselves credit for possessing.

It was after returning from one of his visits to Brokenhurst-Hall, during which more than ordinary attention had been shown him, that the Admiral first conceived the idea of uniting his son to Miss Delassaux. As he was accustomed to carry every scheme into immediate execution as soon as it was engendered, he lost no time in ascertaining the sentiments of Lady Deborah. This he had a very early opportunity of doing; for the ladies of Brokenhurst came to spend a day at Oakenwold Manor. Sir Cable was on the fret until he could detach Lady Deborah from her niece and his sister, that he might open his mind to her in private on the subject of his thoughts.

Miss Margery, all alive to entertain her guests, arrayed in her fawn-coloured satin gown of long and slender waist, and her black silk hood and scarf, and supported by a tall thin cane with an

ivory head, trotted about on her high-heeled shoes, dragging the young lady and her aunt from one object of curiosity to another,—from pasture to shrubbery walk,—from canal to flower plot,—from gold fish bason to tulip bed,—and from Chinese bridge to aviary;—the Admiral panting after them all the while big with his secret, and moist with perspiration, until his small stock of patience began to be exhausted.

“Margery,” cried he at last, “you will over-fatigue yourself;—go in, my good old girl, and take Miss Delassaux with you, to show her your piping bullfinches, and your cabinet of shells. I will lead Lady Deborah on to the extremity of the dark walk, to show her the view of the sea from the seat.”

“Very true, brother,” replied Miss Margery, “very true,—that’s well remembered; it would be a pity, indeed, not to show her ladyship the moss-house. It is all new since you were last here, Lady Deborah, and I may say it was all my own doing, and I am sure it will be a great pleasure to me to show it to you.”

“No, no, Madge,” cried the Admiral hastily, “go in, go in, I tell you,—you know you have

had rheumatism lately, and you are overheating yourself."

At any other time the contraction of her name, that invariably argued a coming storm, would have instantly silenced Miss Oakenwold into implicit obedience. But she was now so fairly mounted on her hobby, that she did not even perceive it.

"I have had no rheumatism these six weeks, brother!" said she.

"I tell you, Madge, I know better, you have rheumatism, and are damned lame at this moment,—and you are as hot as a furnace,—so don't make a fool of yourself and put me in a passion,"—raising his voice,—“don't put me in a passion, I say!"

"I believe, Miss Oakenwold," said Lady Deborah, who was probably as desirous as Sir Cable could be, to have a conference with him in private, "I believe my niece had better return to the house;—she is somewhat delicate, and the sea air, even though coming from a distance, is not always beneficial. I will just walk to the point of view the Admiral so kindly proposes to

lead me to, and then return to look at your shells, of which I am passionately fond.”

Miss Oakenwold stammered,—looked disappointed,—and dropping a curtsey of the old school, said in a submissive tone, “As your ladyship pleases.” And Miss Delassaux, who was not usually remarkable for yielding to the dictation even of her aunt, followed her, on this occasion, with alacrity, from which it might almost have been supposed, that she had actually guessed at the nature of the conversation about to ensue between her and the Admiral.

✓ Sir Cable, to use his own language, was not a man to stand shilly-shally, or to keep firing round bowls at a distance from the enemy. He boldly ran alongside and poured a broadside into her at once. He expatiated on the merits of his son,—on the extent and value of the estates to which he would succeed at his death,—on the antiquity of his family,—and lastly, on the advantages that must accrue to both parties from the contiguity of their respective territories, and the union of both. Nor did he “haul his wind,” until he had exhausted all his oratorical ammunition. Lady Deborah heard him with the greatest

inward delight; but, like an experienced politician, she did not choose to lower the value of her accession to the treaty, by appearing to embrace it too eagerly, or with all the keenness she really felt. She drew up her tall and dignified figure, rendered yet more majestic by the high and rich head-dress she was crowned with, and then seating herself with all the magnificence of a condescending queen, on the mossy seat they had by this time reached, she turned her full piercing black eyes on the Admiral.

“Sir Cable,” said she, “I am not unacquainted with the merits of Mr Oakenwold—public report has done much for him; neither am I ignorant of the respectability of your family. The value or extent of your estates I have never thought of, nor in any union of the kind to which you allude, would such paltry considerations be permitted to enter either into my own or my niece’s mind. Her fortune is, thank Heaven, on a scale of grandeur equal to the high blood from which she is descended by both sides of the house, which might command the proudest alliance. By my good troth,” said she, rolling her large eyes loftily around, “I see not

any reason that she should snatch at the first party that may offer, as if she were an humble spinster !”

Lady Deborah’s refined politics had rather carried her too far here. The hasty Admiral, always taking it for granted that the stream of other people’s ideas must run in the same direction as his own, was not prepared for any such rhodomontade. Not quite understanding what she would be at, he was taken altogether aback for some minutes, until finally interpreting her ladyship’s high tone into a decided rejection of his overtures, the discovery produced a commotion in his mind like the meeting of a swollen river with a furious spring-tide.

“ Oh, very well,—very well, Lady Deborah Delassaux,” exclaimed he, starting abruptly from the mossy seat to which his fatigue had very willingly brought him ; “ as you please—as your ladyship pleases, and as your niece pleases ; my boy is no beggar’s brat to go knocking at all the doors in the parish for a wife. Though I say it, who am his father, he has metal in his composition, and purity in his blood, that will entitle him to cock his beaver at e’er a she in Old

England.—But come, come,” continued he, moderating himself a little—“ come, come—no offence on either side ; and since my proposal is not agreeable, let us e’en shake hands, and part friends, and say no more, or think no more, about it.”

“ Admiral Oakenwold,” replied Lady Deborah, keeping her seat, yet relaxing somewhat of her overwhelming importance, whilst a smile disarmed her eyes of much of their haughtiness, “ Sir Cable Oakenwold, you mistake me ; what I have said was by no means intended to convey any objection on my part to the highly respectable, and highly advisable party you have offered my niece in the person of Mr Oakenwold, your only son. My expressions were rather elicited, naturally enough, by the surprise of an unexpected proposal, and dictated by the partiality of an affection for my niece, which I may well call parental, since she has now no other parent than myself. Be assured, however, that my surprise is not unmingled with pleasure. But Miss Delassaux can have no thoughts of marriage as yet, and consequently none of Mr Oakenwold, whom she has hardly seen, though I

think it by no means impossible, that a little intercourse may produce a mutual attachment between the young persons ; and if my influence can at all weigh with her, I have little hesitation in giving you my promise, that it shall not be wanting to direct and foster those favourable first impressions Olivia may receive from an acquaintance with your son."

The Admiral's countenance gradually brightened up during Lady Deborah's speech. He apologized awkwardly for his hasty interpretation of her first reply to his advances, and after a long and confidential conversation, it was ultimately agreed, very much to the satisfaction of both the negotiating powers, that Amherst should be introduced as a visitor at Brokenhurst-Hall, immediately on his arrival in the country.

Lady Deborah and her niece had no sooner left Oakenwold Manor, than the Admiral became impatient to break the secret to his sister.

"Margery," said he abruptly, as they sat *tête-à-tête* after dinner, "I am going to marry Amherst as soon as he comes home."

Miss Oakenwold stared with surprise,—“Dear

me, brother Cable!—what, marry the boy already? why, he is but a child——”

“ Child! you old goose, the lad is nearly of age.”

“ Aye, dear me!—married!” said Miss Margery; “ what will become of all the jellies and preserved fruits I and Mrs Glass have been making, early and late, all this season, and all for Ammy?”

“ Jellies and preserved fruits, indeed!” cried the Admiral; “ is the woman a fool? Why, what a plague, do you take Amherst for a nursery baby, to be fond of such trash?—I’ll tell you what it is, Madge, don’t provoke me with your damned nonsensical old maid’s store-room balderdash. I will marry Ammy, and that directly.”

“ Well, brother,” said Miss Margery, recollecting herself, “ to be sure you know best; but may I ask who is to be the happy bride?”

“ Miss Delassaux, to be sure,” gruffly replied the Admiral.

“ Miss Delassaux!—well, dear me, that is surprising;” and then, in a somewhat lower

tone, she added, "well, after all, they won't be lost."

"What won't be lost, you old carraway comfit?" cried Sir Cable impatiently.

"My preserves, brother," said Miss Oakenwold; "I was just thinking, that as Miss De-lassaux knows nothing of such matters, she cannot have prepared a supply of sweets, and I know Ammy likes them; and as the marriage will most likely be at Brokenhurst-Hall, I was just thinking, that, with care, my preserves would carry that distance very nicely, and make a pretty show at the wedding-feast."

"What a damned old fool you are, Madge; you are enough to make a parson swear. But, come, stir your stumps, old girl, and see that Mrs Glass puts every thing in order for the boy's reception, for, you know, 'from his letter, he will be here to-morrow, or next day, without fail."

Miss Oakenwold hurried off on this most agreeable of all errands, leaving the Admiral to enjoy the repose of his easy chair, and Morpheus never steeped his eyelids in a sweeter balm, than now descended upon them.

He had not dozed above half an hour, when his slumbers were broken by the sound of horses approaching the house; a voice was heard in the hall—it was his son. But I shall leave my reader to imagine the delight that glistened in the old man's eyes, as he rushed to the landing-place of the oaken staircase to meet him; how he strained him to his bosom; how he held him off at arm's length with his left hand, whilst, with his right, he cleared his eyes of their gathering mists, that he might get a more satisfactory view of him. Nor shall I attempt to describe the joy of Aunt Margery,—nor the bustle of the thrifty Mrs Glass,—nor the honest half familiar, half respectful greetings of Tom Cuddy, who had been the Admiral's body-servant and ship-mate for forty years, and who had dandled Amherst in his arms.

The million of questions, generally crowded together without arrangement, by paternal affection, on a first meeting with a darling child, after a long absence, occupied Sir Cable too much, to allow him to broach the subject of the embryo marriage that evening. He thought of nothing else all night, however, and the result of

his reflection was, that it would be as well, perhaps, after all, to let Amherst see the young lady, before he made him aware of the proposed match. He accordingly ordered the coach after breakfast, and drove with his son to Brokenhurst-Hall.

Amherst was received by Lady Deborah and her beautiful niece with a kindness, that, with its usual effect upon young minds, soon won his good opinion of both, and his visit was in every respect so agreeable, that, before leaving the house, the old Admiral was delighted, by hearing him give a very ready acceptance to the warm invitation he received to be a frequent guest there. Seeing matters in so favourable a train, and doubting not, in compliance with the sanguine wishes of his heart, that the match was almost as good as concluded, he resolved to leave his son to make his own approaches, and carry on the siege in his own way, contenting himself with watching the consequences. By thus keeping his schemes *in petto*, he promised himself the pleasure of giving Amherst a most agreeable surprise, when he came to communicate them.

Every succeeding day added to the Admiral's

satisfaction. His son's expeditions to Brokenhurst-Hall became more and more frequent, and in the course of a week or two, the old man began to chuckle with a delight, almost enough to have betrayed him, when, in answer to his inquiries, as to where Amherst had rambled with his gun, he found that his day had been entirely spent there; and as he rallied him on the circumstance of his returning so often with an empty game-bag, he secretly congratulated himself that the youth was fast entangling his heart in the gold and silken meshes he had so ingeniously spread to catch him.

CHAPTER VI.

The Prince is in that mood,
The offspring of a young and teeming fancy,
That boys call love ; but no more like to love,
Than the weak lightning of a summer night,
That plays upon the horizon's edge, is like
To that which issues from the loaded cloud,
And rives the oak asunder.

LORD JOHN RUSSEL.

Gardez-vous d'écouter les paroles douces et flâteuses de Calypso, qui se glisseront comme un serpent sous les fleurs : craignez ce poison caché ; défiez-vous de vous-même.

FENELON.

NEARLY a month passed away in uninterrupted enjoyment, and in what might have been called a new, delicious, and more highly excited state of existence for Amherst. Every day he sallied forth with his gun, as soon as the family breakfast was over. But it was not to shoot, for, let the breeze blow as it would, or the noses of his pointers incline to lead him which way they

might, still he naturally and instinctively took his course in a straight line, as the crow would fly, over the enclosed country towards Brokenhurst-Hall. There he loitered off his day hanging over the guitar, or the drawing-table, or the embroidery frame of the beautiful Miss Delasaux; or reading verses to her as she lay stretched on a sofa; or lounging on a shaven bank, as she angled for the tiny brood of a little stream, that smoothly meandered, in many a maze, within a channel of a regularly defined breadth, through rich and highly perfumed shrubberies. Calypso's island was not more enchanting to the fascinated Ulysses, than were to Amherst the level lawns, the embowering evergreens, the terrace walks, the temples, and the unruffled liquid mirrors, which reflected these and all the other artificial beauties of Brokenhurst-Hall. Nor had the divine Calypso herself more powerful spells for detaining the Grecian chief, than the insidious nymph of these charming scenes employed, to induce Amherst to linger among them.

Thus glided away the happy hours of the lovers, for so they might well be called, although their tongues had yet been silent on the tender

subject; for their eyes had already spoken volumes in a language not to be misunderstood.

They were one day seated within the circle of a little Ionic temple; under the dome of which stood a finely-executed copy in marble of the Medicean Venus. The building arose from a piece of shaven turf of the richest green, surrounded by tall evergreens of the most luxuriant foliage, and sloping gently towards a considerable sheet of water, into which the rill that stole through the grounds was taught by human art to expand itself. On all sides of this little lake, the eye sank amidst the deep and softened shadows of thickly-tufted chesnuts, planes, and lime trees, closing it in at some distance behind; whilst here and there from the velvet margin, the spiral cypress, or tall poplar, contrasted their upright forms with those of the graceful weeping willows, and other pendulous trees, seeming to unite their long tendrils to their images reflected in the water. A thousand perfumes here mingled their fragrance. It was a spot of sweetness and of silence, the gentle sighing of the zephyr among the leaves, and the almost imperceptible ripple on the lake, being the only sound or mo-

tion that could be distinguished. The goddess to whom the temple was dedicated might well have chosen it as her abode, for love was breathed in the very air.

Amherst felt the full power of its influence. He was intoxicated with a combination of bewitching sensations. His pulse beat high ; his eyes swam with an ecstasy never before experienced ; and he was about to seize the hand of Miss Delassaux, to give vent to his feelings in a formal declaration of his passion, when they were interrupted by the appearance of a female, of prepossessing mien and countenance, but clothed in the ragged weeds of poverty, and whose person exhibited all the external marks of famine and wretchedness. The miserable creature tottered, in very weakness, forth from the dark walk leading into the retirement where they sat, and partly from respect, but more from the absolute failure of her limbs, dropped on her knees before them.

Miss Delassaux's large black eyes, melting with tenderness, were instantly kindled up with lightnings, such as Amherst had never before beheld in them.

“Wretch!” exclaimed she, unwarily permitting herself to be betrayed into a haughty and violent tone; “how could you dare to intrude on these my private walks?”

“Alas, my lady,” said the poor woman feebly, and holding up her emaciated hands in an attitude of supplication, whilst the tears poured in torrents over her wan cheeks, “I have made bold to come to you again. Husband was so crushed in trying to save poor Jem last races, when he was killed by the carriage going over him, that he has never been able to rise since. We have hardly had a morsel of food for some days, and my baby at the breast—and my poor man——”

“But why do you come to me with these complaints? why did you not go to Hawkins, my steward?” said Miss Delassaux, impatiently interrupting the supplicant; “I leave all such matters to Mr Hawkins—Did not I tell you so before?”

“You did indeed, my lady, and I went; but Mr Hawkins——”

“Well, begone, I say,” exclaimed Miss Delassaux, in the same unfeeling tone; “I have nothing to do with such a—a——” But here

she hesitated ; for her eyes chancing at this moment to fall on Amherst, she observed that a cloud had taken possession of his sunny brow. She coughed, to give herself time to recover a little ; and then, immediately changing her voice to a milder accent, she continued, “ I was saying, unfortunate woman, that I do not in general allow myself to interfere in such cases ; for the extreme sensibility of my heart will not permit me to witness human misery, without subjecting me to indescribable pain ; and I have suffered so much in this way, that I have been induced for some time to employ an agent in all such matters. — But, since you have thus forced your case upon me in person, I must give way to my feelings ; and — here ! — take this, and be happy.” And so saying, she drew from her pocket a green silk net purse, embroidered with gold, and heavy with guineas, and tossed it towards the poor woman ; then, shrowding her eyes in her white handkerchief, she seemed to give way to the emotions so suddenly and deeply excited, by a tale of woe she had refused to listen to.

The wretched woman threw herself forward upon the glittering prize, and grasped it with eagerness.

“ Heaven bless you !” she exclaimed, with energy ; “ my husband and my child may yet be saved.” Then, starting up, with a look of almost frenzied anxiety, she darted off with a rapidity her weakness was but ill calculated for.

She was no sooner gone than Miss Delassaux removed the handkerchief from her face, and looked round for the approbation of Amherst, with eyes re-illumed with the lambent fires of love. But in his they found no corresponding flames to mingle with. The rays which so lately shone upon her, like those of the morning sun, when his beams pour from the brow of an eastern mountain in one cheering flood of light over the gay flower garden, were now extinguished, and he seemed absorbed in a dream of gloomy thought. On him her acting had been thrown away, and even the moving tones she now assumed utterly failed to awaken his attention. At last, he seemed suddenly to recollect himself, and stammering out something about the hour, and bowing to Miss Delassaux with more formality than he had been lately wont to do, he hastily left her.

The magnificent gate of the park had closed

behind him, before his senses had altogether recovered from the shock they received. His eyes wandered almost unconsciously over the prospect now spread before him. It was one of those wide and extended vales, where a lazy stream glided along like a silvery serpent amongst the gay greens and yellows of the richest cultivation; where groves, and bean-fields, and gardens, and fragrant meadows, and hop-grounds, mingled their varied beauties; and where the curling smoke of many a vine-clad cottage, and snug farm-house, seemed to speak the existence of a thick-sown and happy population. Alas, how often does such a flattering picture, when more narrowly examined, prove but the deceitful gilding of misery!

A warm, misty-looking vapour, like a summer exhalation, arose from the middle of the scene, and melted into the blue sky; and immediately under it, a pointed spire or two, and a tall Gothic tower, together with some red-tiled roofs, and brick gables, peeping here and there in clusters from the trees they were interspersed with, showed that it proceeded from a little country town. A considerable extent of turf near it, having a

smooth swarded sweeping line traced over its surface, partly enclosed with a barrier of painted posts and rails, marked the race-ground. Amherst's eyes fell upon it. He retraced his steps to the gate, and, calling out the park-keeper's wife, he described the appearance of the female whom he had so lately seen, soon ascertained where she lived, and, impatient to follow the impulse of his heart, entered a narrow lane, leading, between hedges, towards the village.

The path he followed soon opened upon the race-ground; but it was some little time before he could discover the habitation he was in search of. At last he found it, under a great oak tree. It seemed to be one of those temporary edifices of turf, usually erected on the margin of the common by those low hucksters who frequent races and fairs, and generally left untenanted, except during the few days when the sports are going forward. The entrance was closed by a door of wattle. He stooped to go in; but as the opening, originally serving as a window, had been recently blocked up with sods, the inside was so dark, that objects were not at first discernible. As he stood for a moment in the aperture, a boy

of between three and four years old, with no other covering than a ragged shirt, and worn to a skeleton by famine, came creeping, like an apparition, into the stream of light that broke into the hut, crying, with a faint voice, “ Mammy ! mammy ! ”

Amherst spoke kindly to the poor child, and asked him where his mammy was ; but, “ Don’t know—Mammy ! Oh, my mammy ! Where’s my mammy ? ” was all the answer he could give.

As his eyes became accustomed to the twilight of the place, he was enabled to see better around him ; and nothing could equal the miserable interior. A broken table, propped by two large stones, two wooden stools, an old hamper, a couple of cracked vessels of brown earthenware, one of which seemed to contain water, and a great heap of straw and rushes in the obscurity at one end of the hovel, composed its whole furniture.

Whilst Amherst was surveying these objects, and looking in vain for the inhabitants of this wretched abode, his attention was attracted by the attitude of the little boy, who was hanging over the hamper, and gazing earnestly into it. He put in his little hands, to touch something,

and then clasping them together, he burst into tears, exclaiming, "Oh! Sally's cold, cold! Oh, mammy, mammy! Oh, come back, mammy!"

Amherst approached the hamper, when he perceived that it contained an infant of three or four months old. The head appeared from amidst a heap of rags and straw; and an old torn jacket, that seemed to have belonged to the little boy, was laid over the body of the child. The boy looked anxiously in Amherst's face, as he lifted up the little coat.

"Don't ye take it off," said he; "I put it on to make poor Sally warm."

But, alas! no heat could now be imparted to the little innocent. Death's icy hand had already extinguished her feeble spark of life. What was Amherst's horror when he discovered this? And how was it augmented, when, by moving the hamper a little towards the light, he surveyed the havock made on features naturally very lovely? Disease, terminating in extreme exhaustion from lack of the warm life-draught the parched bosom of the mother could no longer supply, had finally brought on spasms; and her eyes and mouth, open and contorted, were horri-

bly fixed by the last terrible convulsion, that had liberated her guiltless spirit from its earthly prison.

A faint, but lengthened groan, issuing from the heap of mingled straw and rushes in the obscurity at the farther end of the hovel, now informed him that something yet unseen remained of life within its walls. He hastened to ascertain from whom it proceeded. A ghastly eye, that seemed to have the settled glaze of death upon it, stared upon him from amongst the heaped up litter. He lifted a portion of it, and there, beneath a canvas sheet, he beheld the extenuated and livid body of a man, apparently of middle age, lying on an old horse-rug.

Gaunt famine seemed to have nearly completed its work upon him. The vital spark was still lingering there, however ; though all consciousness of existence seemed to be gone. Amherst's very soul was harrowed up with the sad spectacle he beheld, and he was so agitated and perplexed, that he knew not well what to do. He could not leave the miserable object before him to die without help ; and yet, if he staid, what help could he afford, without the means ? Life ebbed fast

with the unfortunate man ; his moans were now lower and less frequent, and occasionally interrupted by an involuntary effort to draw a deeper inspiration, which, when it took place, shook the whole frame. Amherst ran to the entrance, to see if any help was at hand ; but no human being was near. He then walked about the hut with hurried strides, perfectly bewildered, and unable to think of any thing that could afford even temporary relief. Meantime, the paleness of the countenance became more intense, the skin tightened over the nose and cheekbones, the slight spasm of a moment convulsed the features, and the death-rattle in the throat announced that all was over.

Footsteps were now heard approaching the hut ; —they came slow and heavily. Amherst again hastened to the door, to call for assistance, forgetting, in his agitation, that aid, alas, now arrived too late ! Two men appeared bearing the body of a female. It was the very woman he had so lately seen in the grounds of Brokenhurst.

“ This way—this way ;—this is all the home the poor soul has now,” said one of the men,

whose appearance and accent bespoke him an Irish labourer. “Softly—softly with her; let us lay her down on this bank, with her head up—so—And, do you hear, little boy?” addressing a lad, who had carried a small basket behind them; “do ye run and fetch a drop of water—or stay, maybe there’s something better there.” So saying, he rummaged hastily amongst the contents of the basket, and drew forth a pint bottle of wine, and after ineffectually trying to extract the cork with his teeth, he adroitly knocked off part of the neck of it with a smart blow on the edge of a great stone. He then put it to the woman’s mouth, and poured in a few drops of the liquid; and as he observed her to revive a little, he increased the quantity. He then busied himself in rubbing the palms of her hands and the soles of her feet, whilst Amherst and the other man gave him all the assistance in their power.

Life was soon restored; and, as recollection returned with it, she started up with an alacrity that in her weak state seemed miraculous.

“Where am I?” she exclaimed, looking wildly around her. “Oh, I see! Now I remember

all." Then, seizing the basket from the ground, she rushed into the hut.

Amherst and the men followed. Ignorant of what had taken place during her absence, she had hastened to her husband's straw bed, and had already lifted up his head, and was trying to pour some of the wine into his mouth. The teeth were locked together by the last spasm.

"Oh, he will die!" she exclaimed in anguish; "Oh, help me with him towards the light."

The two men did so. Amherst was too much overpowered by his feelings to be able to prevent them. They rested the body on their knees and on the floor. Again she in vain tried to insert the bottle. A deeper alarm seized her. Almost breathless, she ran her hand rapidly over his breast, and put her lips to his, and then her ear to his mouth—and then she earnestly gazed for some minutes on his ghastly eyes, till the sad truth burst upon her at once—and then she threw herself on the body in a paroxysm of grief.

Her little boy, whose cries of "Mammy! mammy!" had been hitherto disregarded, now came and pulled her by the sleeve. Still, overwhelmed in her present woe, she minded him not.

“ Mammy, mammy !” said she at last, “ little Sally’s cold, cold !”

A new cord of feeling was touched—was instantly touched, and hope mingled with the sound. She left the body at once, and ran to the hamper. But there the image of death was stamped in too horrible a form to be mistaken. She gazed on the infant with eyes stretching from their sockets ; and, uttering a piercing shriek, she snatched the body up from the straw where it was cradled. One wild look showed that reason had instantaneously forsaken her. She raised the infant corpse on high with both her hands, and burst into a loud laugh, that chilled the very blood of those around her. The laugh gradually subsided, and the expression of her countenance changed. She seated herself slowly on one of the settles ; a smile came over her features, far more heartbreaking than the laugh that preceded it ; and she began to fondle and nurse the baby, as if it had been still alive. The scene was more than human nature could stand. Even the poor Irishman, whose rough outside covered as much heart as ever warmed a Christian bosom, cried like an infant.

It was some time before Amherst could command himself so far as to be actively useful. At last he called one of the men aside, and putting a purse into his hand, begged of him, in words as intelligible as his choked utterance would admit of, to hasten to procure immediate female assistance. He gave him directions to find a conveyance for the unfortunate woman and her boy, and to see them taken to some comfortable lodging in the neighbouring village, to send for medical advice, and to administer every thing necessary. All which he readily undertook, and proceeded directly to execute.

The first part of his commission was very speedily performed, for not far from the hovel, he met with two women, whom he knew, and the afflicted widow and bereaved mother was committed to their care. She still sat fondling her baby with the fixed eyes and vacant stare of madness, and every now and then she burst into a heart-rending convulsion of maniac laughter.

Amherst having done all for her that present circumstances demanded, now called the Irishman to the door, believing, from something he had said, that he could give him the history of

the unfortunate female, on whom it had thus pleased Heaven to pour out the very dregs of the phial of human wretchedness. He was not mistaken, and the tale was told with so much feeling, and in a manner so ingenuous, as to impress Amherst with the most favourable opinion of the narrator. This is no time, however, to perplex the reader with his curious phraseology, and numerous circumlocutions. The story shall therefore be given in as concise a form as its nature will admit.

John Morley was an industrious man, who rented a small garden in the suburbs of the neighbouring village. By hard labour he maintained his wife and family on the produce of it. He had had several children, but he lost them all except one boy of eight or ten years old, and the younger one, with whom we have already been made acquainted.

It was now about eight or nine months since Miss Delassaux was proceeding to the race-ground in a sort of open phaeton, driven by a Neapolitan coachman, and followed by two outriders, one of whom was Cornelius O'Gollochar, the narrator of the story we are now telling. As

the equipage was driving down the lane, where Morley's cottage presented its smiling front, covered with vines and creepers, and where a broad gilded sign, with "FRUITS IN THEIR SEASON," invited passengers into the neatly dressed walks, and trim arbours of his garden, his eldest boy was crossing the way with a sackful of young cauliflower plants on his back. His head was so completely buried in his burden, that his ears were deafened by it, and the vehicle was upon him before he was aware of its approach. O'Gollochiar, though he was riding behind, saw the whole transaction perfectly, and some minutes before it took place, shouted both to the coachman and the boy; but to no purpose, for the ruffian, who must have seen the lad as soon as he appeared, drove on with as much indifference as if the way had been perfectly clear.

A shocking scene ensued. The boy was knocked down. His distracted father sprang from the cottage to his rescue. But his attempt was vain. The villain swept onwards like a whirlwind, and crushed the lad to death under the wheels. The miserable father was struck by the pole, thrown down, and his body so dreadfully

bruised, that he was carried senseless to his bed, and never afterwards arose from the horizontal position. On moved the gay vehicle as if nothing had happened. Its mistress, arrayed in all the splendour and magnificence of unbounded wealth, her thoughts filled with dreams of conquest, scarcely seemed to notice the accident, as it was called. But when the carriage came to the stand, poor O'Gollochar was missing. He had remained behind to give all the assistance he could to the unfortunate sufferers, and compassion kept him so well employed, that he did not rejoin the lady all that day, and, consequently, incurred her severe displeasure.

On the Coroner's inquest there were no witnesses who could throw a proper light on the matter except O'Gollochar. The other groom was not present, having been sent on to select a good place for the carriage to draw up in. Morley himself was incapable of speaking, far less of attending. Miss Delassaux denied having seen the occurrence so as to form any judgment of the circumstances. Antonio the Neapolitan protested, and was ready to swear, that the whole was accidental, and that he did not even know till after-

wards that any such thing had happened. But the sturdy Irishman strenuously insisted on giving a very different complexion to the case; he even went so far as to declare, that there was something very like design in the manner in which the boy's death had been produced, and hinted something of a quarrel that had taken place between the Italian and Morley a few days before, arising from some insolence of the former to the latter on the occasion of a little entertainment given by the Italian to some of his female acquaintances in Morley's garden. But the Neapolitan was Lady Deborah Delassaux's favourite servant, and had accompanied her and her niece from Naples to England. Very great exertions were used therefore to have him cleared of all blame. O'Gollochar's evidence was done away by the circumstance of his having had a trifling dispute with Antonio, though, in fact, there was hardly a single individual, either amongst his fellow-servants, or in the neighbourhood, who had not quarrelled with him. In short, the result was a verdict of "accidental death," and honest O'Gollochar was punished for his resolute conduct,

by being turned off, and threatened with a prosecution for perjury.

The ruin of the Morleys was complete. The garden the unfortunate man had rented, which, until that fatal day, had been his pride and his support, was the property of a wealthy hop-merchant who resided in London, and who had no feeling but for his own pocket. Unable to do any thing for its culture, he was not only obliged to give it up, but to quit his cottage, whence he was carried to a more humble dwelling. There he continued to waste away in body, and to suffer the most excruciating torments, too plainly proving that he had received some desperate and incurable internal injury.

It is unnecessary to detail how his slender stock was consumed. Where there were apothecaries' bills to pay, mouths to feed, and no hands to labour, it soon vanished away. Even his furniture was sold piecemeal, and when his wife was confined of her infant, she could hardly be said to have a bed to lie on. In fine, he and his family were compelled to quit their house, and were reduced to the necessity of creeping into the wretched habitation we have described on the

edge of the common, where, still too proud to apply for parochial relief, they endeavoured to struggle against famine, upon the miserable pittance the poor woman could earn.

In this their final distress, Mrs Morley made various attempts to see Miss Delassaux, whom she viewed only as the innocent cause of all her misfortunes and misery. But she was always unsuccessful, until one day she met her in the grounds, and was repulsed by an imperious order to go to Mr Hawkins, without being allowed time to tell her sad tale. Hawkins had a heart of flint, too hard for the reception of any kindly impression. The honest Irishman, however, was still their friend; but he was now miserably poor, for his character having been blasted by the unjust imputations thrown on it at the inquest, he could not get a place, and was therefore compelled to work at any kind of country labour he could obtain.

Pressed by famine, and stimulated by the cruel spectacle of her husband sinking daily from want of proper nourishment and assistance, and of the child she was nursing drooping from her own weak state, Mrs Morley determined to make an-

other effort to procure aid from Miss Delassaux. With the result of this last attempt we are already acquainted. No sooner had she obtained the purse, than she ran with the utmost speed to a shop in the village, hastily purchased provisions and restoratives, and hurried breathless away. There was something so wild and unsettled in her manner, and she appeared so exhausted, that the shopkeeper was induced to follow her from motives of humanity. She flew at first with such incredible rapidity, that he had some difficulty in keeping sight of her. But at length he observed her steps to falter. She reeled—put her hands to her forehead, and staggering towards a wall leaned against it for a moment—then sinking down beside it, fainted away. The shopkeeper hastened to her assistance ; and O'Gollochar happening to come up at the instant, they lifted her by their united efforts, and giving her basket to a boy to carry, they bore her between them, as we have already seen, to the hut.

CHAPTER VII.

Hark to the hurried accents of despair,
Where is my child !

Bride of Abydos.

Go, Syren, go—thy charms on others try ;
My beaten bark at length has reached the shore,
Yet on the rock my dripping garments lie ;
And let me perish, if I trust thee more.

LANGHORNE.

O'GOLLOCHAR had hardly finished his melancholy narrative, when the sound of wheels, and the glancing of the sun on its glittering windows, announced the approach of a chariot. It was Miss Delassaux's. Before Amherst could come to any determination how to avoid her, the vehicle was at the door.

The lady's manner betrayed her expectation of finding him there. Yet she affected surprise at what she pretended to call an accidental ren-

contre. On seeing O'Gollochar standing behind Amherst, her countenance underwent a considerable change, and she betrayed a genuine vexation not to be mistaken. It flashed, however, only for a moment from her eyes, and was immediately subdued, and veiled beneath a borrowed air of extreme sensibility.

“ Ah! Mr Oakenwold!” said she, “ I see your feeling heart has been beating in unison with mine. You will perhaps be surprised to see me here, but I was really so touched by the tale of woe we both heard so lately, that I could not rest until I should visit the poor woman, to endeavour to alleviate her affliction, and to administer in person to the wants of her and her family. I am resolved to have them put beyond the reach of misery. Her husband and child shall soon be restored to health; I mean to order my own physician to attend them.”

Amherst wanted words to frame a reply to so gross and unblushing an affectation of feelings which he knew were strangers to the bosom of her who uttered them. He hesitated—but he was spared the necessity of attempting it. Mrs Morley's little boy had come to the door to gaze with

childish curiosity at the gilded carriage. The mother's eye had caught a view of him, and of it from within. In the midst of her delirium, a confused recollection of her first day's affliction came suddenly upon her. She wildly threw the corpse of her baby into the lap of one of the women near her, and just as Amherst was in the act of assisting the lady with formal politeness to descend, she rushed precipitately to the door.

“ Oh Jem ! Jem ! Jem ! ” exclaimed she with frantic gestures, for in her madness she fancied it was her eldest son—“ the carriage ! the carriage ! —oh my boy ! ”

She snatched up the child in her arms, retreated two or three steps inwards, and stood with her body bent, and her eyes rolling round on the objects without, in a frenzy of terror. At last they rested on Miss Delassaux, and the sight of her seemed to give rise to a new train of ideas, for setting down the boy, and bursting into a maniac laugh, she went out to her curtsying, and composedly smiling.

“ Is it you, my Lady !—this is an honour indeed !—pray, walk in, my Lady. I dreamt a sad and frightful dream. I dreamt that poor Jem

was crushed beneath your wheels. But it was all a dream. Pray, walk in, my Lady—you have been kind, kind to me ;”—and taking Miss Delassaux by the hand with a pleased and happy smile, “ come in,” said she, “ pray, come in, my Lady ; our cottage is not so nice as it used to be—the vines and roses are all withered. But my husband and baby are quite well now ; your kind relief has saved them both. May Heaven, in its justice, reward you for it, and make you one day as happy as you have made me !”

Miss Delassaux appeared astonished and perplexed, but though young, she was an able actress. The part she was now playing was deep, and too important to be slighted. Turning half round, therefore, she said to Amherst with a look of extreme sentiment,

“ I am sure, Mr Oakenwold, you, who have doubtless often experienced such feelings, must envy me mine at this moment ;” and then putting her white handkerchief to her eyes, as if perfectly overcome, she permitted herself to be led into the hovel by the wretched lunatic.

Good Heaven ! what a scene ensued ! The corpse of Morley and the child were both lying

exposed. Amherst, anticipating what must follow, could not bear to remain to witness it. As he darted towards the lane, he heard the piercing shriek of Miss Delassaux, and the wild laugh of the maniac rang in his ears, as he hastily continued his retreat. He instinctively put up his hands to shut out the sound, but in vain, for fancy made him hear and see the whole that passed, and he shuddered to think of it.

On his way homeward, as he recovered himself, in some degree, from the agitated state of mind the melancholy and distressing events of the day had thrown him into, his thoughts naturally reverted to that brilliant dream of happiness he was lulled into, by the fascination of the enchanting Miss Delassaux, whilst he yet believed her to be an angel. How few hours had elapsed since that dream had fled!—He was almost tempted to hesitate whether he was not now under some delusion. That a heart so unfeeling should exist in the bosom of so lovely a person, and that so much art should be possessed by one so young, seemed to render her, in his eyes, a monster he could not have believed to have ex-

istence in nature. He trembled when he looked back to the precipice he had so recently stood on, and from which he had so narrowly escaped. He felt confounded, when he reflected how long, and how perfectly the mask had deceived him, and by what accident it had been at last torn off, so as to give him resolution and strength to burst the snares of her of whose hypocrisy he was now too surely convinced.

There was something in O'Gollochar's account of Antonio the Neapolitan, that gave him an air of mystery. Why should such a ruffian, as he appeared, be retained in the service of Lady Deborah and her niece, and cherished and protected, too, with all the care that might have been bestowed, with better justice, on the long tried worth of a faithful and respectable domestic? There was something very unaccountable and perplexing in this, nor could all his speculation bring him to any thing like a probable interpretation of it.

The result of Amherst's reflections was, that before he reached home, not only were all thoughts of connecting himself with Miss Delas-

saux decidedly and for ever abandoned, but as youth, in its impetuosity, pushes every thing to extremity, he determined to avoid every chance of meeting her again. As he never had been aware of his father's intentions regarding his marriage, he, of course, never once contemplated the necessity of making a confidant of the Admiral, whom he had not suspected of entertaining any idea of his transient passion, nor had it entered his head to communicate to him the resolution he had now taken, never again to set his foot within the precincts of Brokenhurst-Hall.

Amherst was sufficiently occupied for some days with the concerns of the unfortunate widow. He sent for Cornelius O'Gollochar, who became an active and willing agent in assisting the shop-keeper to provide for the decent interment of poor Morley and his infant. The widow herself had been removed to a comfortable house in the village, where the distress she had undergone produced a violent fever, during which she struggled for life for about sixty hours. The best medical advice that could be procured was sent to her by Amherst, and although she was more than once despaired of, the disease finally yielded to the

remedies employed. She was left in a very weak state for some days, during which she slept almost without intermission.

So much repose, no doubt, contributed to the reduction of her mental malady. As she began to recover strength of body, reason gradually resumed its full power over her. Her religion was of the purest and most rational description, and as the state of her mind began to permit the exercise of its influence, it became as a healing balm to her wounded soul. Having been made aware of all that had been done for her, she gradually brought herself to bow with humble submission to the will of Heaven, and breathed silent thanksgivings to that all-wise Being, who had raised her up a protector in the person of Amherst, to whom her gratitude was unbounded.

The old Admiral was for some time in happy ignorance, that his plans regarding his son's marriage were not working themselves out to his entire satisfaction. One morning, however, a servant arrived with an invitation to the family at Oakenwold Manor, to spend the next day, and to dine at Brokenhurst-Hall.

“ Amherst,” said Sir Cable, “ do you sit down,

and answer Lady Deborah's note. I don't feel myself over and above well, but I don't like to disappoint her, so you may say that we shall all come with the greatest pleasure."

"I think you had better not go, if you do not find yourself perfectly well, Sir," said Amherst.

The Admiral looked at him askance, and believing that his son dissuaded him from going, because he wished to enjoy Miss Delassaux's conversation, without being subjected to his prying eye, he became the more determined to go, were it only to see how the land lay, and, therefore, with an arch significant nod and wink Amherst did not observe, nor, if he had, could he have understood them, he said,

"No, no, Ammy, my boy, I am not quite so ill as to forego the pleasure of the society of a pretty girl; write, therefore, as I bid you."

Amherst accordingly sat down, and accepted the invitation in the name of his father and aunt, but apologized, in general terms, for himself, and the note was sealed and dispatched, without the Admiral's being aware that his son had refused to be of the party.

About half an hour after the servant was gone,

Sir Cable turned round to his son, who was reading,

“Methinks,” said he, “Lady Deborah is more than usually punctilious; a verbal message by you, when you returned from Brokenhurst-Hall yesterday, would have been just as well as that formal card.”

“I was not at Brokenhurst-Hall yesterday,” said Amherst.

“Not at Brokenhurst-Hall! where the devil were you then?”

“Some little business led me into the village,” said Amherst.

“And when did you see the Delassauxs last?” inquired the Admiral.

“It is now, I think, about a fortnight,” replied Amherst.

A prolonged whistle from the Admiral at once expressed his surprise and his vexation.—“Why, how the devil sits the wind now, young man? Why, zounds, you used to spend every day, and all the day there; what can be the meaning of this change?”

“I did, indeed, trifle off a good deal of time there, Sir, for which you must, no doubt, have

blamed me," said Amherst; "but I must now make up for my idleness, by devoting myself more to my studies. I have hardly opened Locke since I have been down here."

"Phoo, Phoo! damn Locke," said the Admiral peevishly; "you must now think of beginning to read that queer book called *Woman*, and to study the contradictions and riddles you will find in it."

"I am not altogether ignorant of it," said Amherst, with something like a sigh, "and, indeed, it does appear full of inexplicable riddles."

"Why, younker," said the Admiral, heating a little, "you seem to be somewhat of a riddle; but, perhaps, we shall have it all explained to-morrow, when you and Olivia meet. There has been some lovers' quarrel between you, I suppose."

"I do not intend being of the party to Brokenhurst to-morrow," said Amherst, "and as to being Miss Delassaux's lover, that is an honour to which I do not pretend."

The Admiral was astonished. His passion was at once blown up gunpowder height. Forgetting that he had never yet made his son ac-

quainted with the matrimonial plans which had so long occupied his own thoughts, he jumped up from his seat, shouldered his cane, and, as was usual with him on such occasions, walked violently backwards and forwards, on what he, in happier moments, called his quarter-deck, that is to say, on a breadth of the carpet, stretching in a straight line from his easy-chair to an Indian screen near the door, giving vent to a perfect whirlwind of rage.

“ What the devil, Sir ! after all I have done for you—after I had arranged and prepared, and, as I may say, as good as settled your marriage ! But it’s a lie—all a damn’d lie. Have I not seen you turning up your eyes, and languishing like a dying whiting, when the young woman was singing it, and harping it to you ? I tell ye it can’t be—after Lady Deborah and I had agreed between us that it should go on, even before you came home, ye ungrateful puppy ! Sir, I’ll have ye hanged—I’ll have ye disinherited. No, damn me, that I can’t do unfortunately ; but I’ll certainly have ye hanged, drawn, and quartered, you disobedient jackanapes—I will !”

Rage choked his farther utterance, and he

threw himself into a chair, overcome by a severe fit of coughing.

“ My dear father,” said Amherst, who had risen in absolute wonder, “ wherein can I possibly have offended you ?”

“ Offended me !” vociferated the Admiral, after recovering his breath, and resuming his quarter-deck movement—“ Is it not an offence, think ye, to run right down on my plans, to strike them a-midships, and to sink them at once in this manner, when they are in full sail with a fair wind, eh ?”

“ My dear father,” said Amherst calmly, “ I beseech you to recollect that this is the first time I ever heard of your having any plans, and I have yet to learn to what they refer.”

“ Why, aye,” said the Admiral, a little softened, “ there is something in that, Ammy ; perhaps, I have been a little hasty or so ; not that I was in any passion neither, but I am sometimes apt to speak a little high and fast when I am keen about any thing. The truth is, I thought I saw matters going on so swimmingly between you and Miss Delassaux, that I judged

it as well to keep my plans to myself for a while ; but now you shall have 'em all." He then proceeded to let his son into his schemes, and gave him a full account of his negotiations with Lady Deborah, concluding thus,

" And now, my boy, you know what I mean, and all that I intend regarding you, so I expect that we shall henceforth sail with the same wind, and to the same point of the compass, and not be running foul of each other again, by steering in the dark, as we have been doing hitherto."

Amherst had full time to recover himself during his father's long explanation. It opened to him a new view of the conduct of Lady Deborah and her niece, and accounted for all that winning attention he formerly believed to proceed from a natural kindness of disposition. But it now appeared to be merely a train of self-interested manœuvring, and it lowered both of them still more in his estimation, and very much increased the dislike he had lately taken to them. He therefore replied to the Admiral, in language the most respectful he could command, that his heart told him an union with Miss Delassaux was perfectly incompatible with his future happiness, for which

he hoped his father had too great a regard, to wish him to sacrifice it wantonly for the purpose of effecting a marriage of mere convenience.

There was, no doubt, a great deal of reason in all that the young man said. But Sir Cable was not much accustomed to listen to reason. Implicit obedience was what he had been used to, and his determinations, instead of being shaken, were always strengthened by opposition. He had thought his own arguments irresistible, and had been preparing himself, during his long harangue, to expect that his son would give an immediate compliance to his wishes, now they were fairly understood. He bit his lip during Amherst's short reply, and then giving way again to his rage, he jumped up to his quarter-deck again.

“What the devil—do ye mean to mutiny, younker?—I say, Sir, you are a silly jackanapes, and don't know what is good for you—Your heart tells you indeed!—I'll be hanged if you don't deserve a good round dozen at the gangway—Happiness truly!—just as if I don't know better than you what should make you happy—Why, what the deuce will make you happy if a fine girl and a good independent estate won't? Mayhap you

think that you won't be long of succeeding to mine, and that, when I am six feet under ground, you may do as ye like; but I tell ye, Sir, I'll live fifty years yet, were it only to torment you. But you are a silly boy—I won't allow you to make a fool of yourself and a fool of me—I say, you shall marry Miss Delassaux; do what you please, or think what you please, but marry Miss Delassaux you shall!"

Amherst was shocked at his father's expressions. He assured him that his only desire was to obey him in all things, but that in a matter on which the happiness or misery of his whole life depended, he must be permitted to exercise his judgment, and to make his own choice.

The calm resolution his son displayed served only to blow up the Admiral into a new and more boisterous whirlwind of wrath. Every reply on the part of the young man, however respectful in manner, or moderate in terms, was only throwing fresh oil on the highly excited flame of Sir Cable's ire. At last, the violence of his rage rendered his language so very offensive, that Amherst felt he had no alternative but to leave the room.

Taking up his cap as he passed outwards, he

walked down to the stables, and, ordering his servant to saddle his horse, he galloped briskly towards the coast, to dissipate the chagrin occasioned by his father's tyrannical behaviour, by the rapidity of the pace of his steed, and by inhaling the pure air of the ocean.

CHAPTER VIII.

Wonder not to see his soul extend
The bounds, and seek some other self—a friend.

DRYDEN.

The wretched sire beheld aghast,
With Wilfrid all his projects past.
All turned and centered on his son,
On Wilfrid all—and he was gone.

ROKEBY.

AMHERST rode on insensibly, ruminating on past events, until finding himself not far from Dover, he thought of taking that opportunity of visiting his old friend Cleaver, who resided under the cliffs, in a cottage roofed with the hulls of small craft, turned upside down, covering a variety of odd-looking little apartments, branching out, and germinating uncouthly in divers directions. Finding that the captain had gone down to the harbour, to superintend some little

alterations in his pleasure yacht, he desired his horse to be put up in the stable, and sallied forth in search of him.

Having made his way on board, he found Cleaver with his coat off, an apron on, and his arms bare, busily employed in assisting a blacksmith, who was fitting up a new cooking apparatus in the forecastle. There seemed to be a difference of opinion between him and the black-faced artist.

“ I tell you, Vulcan, you know nothing about it; this here should be fastened with a screw and nut, and that there should have a hook and eye, and a chain—’twill never do else; but you are all so damn’d obstinate and self-opinionated, that ——”

Here he was interrupted by Amherst, who gave him a friendly tap on the shoulder.

“ Ah! Amherst, my boy! where the deuce have you dropped from? I’m rejoiced to see you;” and the honest sailor shook him heartily by the hand. “ I’m making such an alteration here—an invention of my own too; but I can’t get these lubbers to work to my mind. This fellow has been a week at this job already, and I’ll

be bound he won't finish it in a fortnight more. But, come, I'll leave the rascal to himself for the present, so just let me wash my hands, and we'll go to my shop, and have something to eat, for there's nothing here—the jolly Dasher is not victualled.”

As they walked together towards the cabin, (for such was the name Cleaver had bestowed upon his cottage,) Amherst confided his distresses to the warm-hearted seaman.

“ Why, he is a proper Turk, to be sure,” said the Captain, after hearing him out, “ to think of marrying you against your will, and to a girl, too, whom nobody in the country can bear. I don't like these Delassaux women no more than other people do; they are proud, overbearing, cold, and cunning. It is said, too, that their extravagance has thrown them into difficulties, of which, I have no doubt, they hope to rid themselves, by getting hold of you. Depend upon it, they have been throwing their nets round the old porpoise, with the hope of catching his calf. But, damn it, we'll disappoint them. I know the old boy well. Get out of his way for a while. He'll be in a passion enough to raise a hurricane in the

channel ; but a week or two's absence will bring him round, and then he will give the world to get you back again, and will be all contrition."

Amherst approved much of his friend's advice ; but he could not devise any mode of withdrawing himself, so as to make his father lose scent of him, and to ensure a perfect concealment. He expressed his difficulty to Cleaver.

" If my new cooking stove," replied he, " had only been finished, I might have given you a trip in the Dasher. But to go to sea almost without the means of making a stew or a fry ——"

The idea immediately struck Amherst as excellent. He pressed the Captain eagerly on the subject, and soon prevailed. " It's very well with you, young man," said Cleaver ; " I dare say, you don't care a snap of a finger what you eat ; I was once so myself—salt junk and maggoty biscuits were a feast to me. But now that there is no necessity for subjecting myself to such fare, I am rather more delicate in my feeding. Besides, I should have been glad to have tried the effect of my new invention. But, come, we must e'en sail as we are. So, go home quietly, prepare every thing, and return here when all

hands at Oakenwold have gone to roost. I'll just step into the town, and get Tom Phillips, my steward, to make some provision for the voyage, and we'll be off for Scotland before daylight."

Amherst shook Cleaver warmly by the hand, and thanking him cordially for this extreme proof of his friendship, he hastened to mount his horse. By hard riding he got back to Oakenwold Manor to dinner; and, by good luck, he was saved from any unpleasant conversation with his father that evening, by the presence of one or two accidental guests.

Whilst Amherst was hastily dressing for dinner, he gave all necessary directions for his departure to Cornelius O'Gollochar, whom he had taken into his service, as a reward for his excellent conduct in the case of the poor Morleys. He retired early to his apartment, and had the satisfaction to find every thing arranged in the most masterly manner. His trunks had been already dispatched, without observation, by a hired cart to Dover, and a pair of hack saddle horses were in waiting for master and man, at a small alehouse, about three miles distant. They

remained until they heard the last servant creep sleepily to bed, and then, without noise, stepped down stairs, and left the house, O'Collochiar hastening on before to prepare, whilst his master followed at leisure.

The moon was up, and shone forth in great splendour, but was obscured, at intervals, by large opaque clouds floating heavily across the sky. The narrow path, through the fields and inclosures Amherst pursued, led him, for some part of the way, along the high wall inclosing the extensive grounds of Brokenhurst-Hall. The sight of it brought many recollections to his mind, and, as he passed a little door, he remembered how often he had found it unlocked, purposely, as he now verily believed, to admit him, during his rambles, into a walk leading to a shrubbery, where he had so frequently met Miss Delassaux, by accident, as it then appeared to him.

The path he pursued having led him to the summit of a gently elevated hillock, he was enabled to have a view over the wall into the park. The moon, at the moment, happened to emerge from beneath a dark cloud, and by its light he

descried two figures walking slowly, and apparently in deep conference. The moonlight was brightly reflected from the dewy gravel of the walk, and their forms and long shadows were boldly relieved from it, whilst the high bordering shrubbery threw occasional dark masses across their way. One of them, who seemed to be a woman, had much the figure and height of Lady Deborah Delassaux. He felt convinced it could be no one but her, and yet he could not conceive it possible that she should be walking in the park at so late an hour, and in a night that was rather too chilly and raw, to warrant the supposition of her doing so for mere pleasure. He was seized with an irresistible desire to satisfy his doubts, as well as to discover who it was whom she thus made the companion of an almost midnight promenade, at so great a distance from the house. He retraced his steps to the little door, and finding it opportunely open, he yielded to a momentary impulse, and hastily entering, he concealed himself among the evergreens close to the walk along which the figures must pass. He had no sooner done so, than he became sensible that he had been guilty of an unwarrant-

able breach of propriety, but they were already too near for him to recede.

From the tone of their voices and their gestures, he immediately discovered, as they advanced, that the female, who was indeed Lady Deborah, appeared to be expostulating with the man who accompanied her. The conversation, though here for the most part translated, was chiefly in Italian, and the first words that became intelligible were those of Lady Deborah concluding a sentence.

“ What I have advanced is perfectly true,” said she; “ but, I trust, *mio caro Antonio*, I need not waste time in assuring you, that your services at Naples never can be forgotten by me. I think I have already proved, by what I have repeatedly done for you, that I am not ungrateful, and if you will only have patience ——”

“ Patience !” exclaimed Antonio, rudely interrupting her in a fretful and passionate manner, “ why do you always preach patience to me ? I think I have had patience enough ; *San Genaro* himself could not have had more. You have, to be sure, given me some hundreds, perhaps some thousands ; but what is all that to

the mountain of debt you owe me? I must have money *per Baccho!* or Lorenzo cannot go on, and then all my schemes, and all my hopes, are at an end.—I must have money, *ti dico*, I must have money. *Pazienza!*—*per Dio! che non sono arsinaccio-io—il denaro vi dico! il denaro!*”

“Well, well,” replied the lady in a subdued tone, “be quiet, I beseech you. You shall have money in abundance. But you are reasonable, Antonio, and you are yourself aware how difficult it is for me to command it. Expensive as she is in the indulgence of every folly that strikes her, she has the heart of a miser towards the wants of others, and even I am refused what is in reality my own. She cannot understand how I have bestowed the large sums I have already received from her, and you know very well, my good Antonio, that I dare not tell her they have gone to you. Even those sums I gave you so lately, which you so well merited, and which I gave with so much satisfaction to myself,—even those sums, I say, I should not have had it in my power to bestow, had I not demanded them in advance, as the price of my assistance in forwarding her views upon that fickle fool, young Oakenwold, to whose paternal estates

she looks for the payment of the large debts she has incurred by her silly buildings and absurd decorations, and her love for trinkets and tinsel, and her fondness for show and glitter, not to mention her insatiable passion for play. But she will probably soon want my assistance again, and then you know, *mio caro Antonio* ——” Here the words began to be lost by the distance.

Amherst stood for some moments in fixed astonishment. The deep plot laid against him, or rather against his father’s wide domains, was now sufficiently apparent. The estates of Miss Delessaux were insufficient to supply her unbounded extravagance; she had incurred large debts, and a marriage with him was to be the means of paying these off. The accidental circumstances of her unfeeling treatment of Mrs Morley in his presence had let in a ray of light that showed her character in a sufficiently unfavourable point of view; but what was all he then learnt compared to that which he had just heard from the lips of her own aunt?—and what a wretch did that aunt herself appear!

A chill tremour shook him, and he hastily quitted his concealment to regain the path. As

he again wound over the knoll, he threw his eyes back, and espied the figures still walking in deep conference. The subdued and earnest attitude of Lady Deborah, and the boisterous and overbearing action of the Italian, again struck him. What services could these be, or what those obligations, which gave a low-born foreign servant so perfect a control over a woman of Lady Deborah's rank, and of that lofty and unbending spirit she so uniformly displayed to the world? And what were those debts which seemed, from the conversation he had just overheard, to be absolutely unextinguishable, however largely administered to?

By the time he reached the little alehouse, he found O'Gollochar waiting for him with the horses. They mounted directly, and rode with so much expedition, that they reached Dover in time to embark on board the yacht, to sail, and be far out of sight before day-break.

Before coming down stairs in the morning, Sir Cable had prepared himself for a tough and determined combat with his son on the subject of their late dispute, and had especially resolved to insist on the young gentleman being

of the party to Brokenhurst-Hall. He generally found Amherst reading within the deep walls of the great window when he entered the breakfast-room.

Before turning the handle of the door upon this occasion, he made up his mouth and eye, and assumed as invincible a look as he could, in order to be proof against those affectionate smiles with which Amherst usually met him. He hemmed and opened the door, and advanced boldly, but he was a good deal surprised, and somewhat chagrined, to find that there was no one in the room.

“Pshaw!” said he, “where the devil is he?” Miss Margery came in, breakfast was prepared, and the great bell rung as usual—but no Amherst.

Without saying a word to his sister, the Admiral pulled the bell with considerable violence, and dispatched a servant to see if his son was in his own apartment. He was not there, and the bed and bedclothes were undisturbed. Cornelius O’Gollochar had not been seen that morning, and, upon further examination, several articles of Amherst’s baggage were also missing. The Admi-

ral's rage was excessive, and showed itself in a thousand extravagancies.

“ The rascal has gone off to college again ; but I'll have him back with a flea in his ear. Here, saddle two horses—and, do you hear, Tom Cuddy ? get my long boots, and prepare yourself for a journey—I'll ride after the scoundrel to the end of the world !”

“ Why, to tell your Honour the truth,” said Tom, coolly turning the quid in his mouth, “ I am no great hand at piloting a horse, and no more is your Honour, if I may make bold to say so. Besides, your last fit of the gout has rather waterlogged ye a bit, so, d'ye see, I think we'd better send some lighter vessels after the chace.”

Tom was the Admiral's oracle, and although he did not always listen to him, yet he was the only person to whom he ever listened.

During the argument that ensued between them, a brace of horses, ready saddled, were brought to the door. Sir Cable, who was quarter-decking it, happened to throw a glance out of the window at the two pampered steeds, champ-ing their bits, and capering and caracolling so fu-

riously, that the grooms who led them out could hardly hold them, and the fellows were chuckling and winking to each other at the very idea of the rare horsemanship they expected to see immediately exhibited. The very sight of the animals staggered him; the justice of what Tom had said came powerfully home; and he finally determined to take his advice, and send one of his grooms to Oxford, who was forthwith dispatched accordingly.

Several days were thus lost by the messenger having gone on a wrong scent. But when he returned without having learned any intelligence of Amherst, a hot search and inquiry round the country was immediately set on foot; but all to no purpose. At length, it was accidentally discovered that the young gentleman had been last seen at Dover; and, upon further inquiry, it was found that Captain Cleaver had sailed in his yacht about that time, and that Amherst had been seen in his company the day before he sailed.

The old Admiral would have pursued them upon his own element with all his heart and soul, had he only known which way to steer. But no

one knew positively whither they had directed their course, although it was supposed that they had gone towards the coast of France. Pursuit under such circumstances was perfectly hopeless, though it required a considerable portion of Tom Cuddy's cool phlegmatic rhetoric to convince Sir Cable that it was so.

It is almost needless to say that the Admiral was so discomposed by Amherst's flight, that he was not equal to the party at Brokenhurst-Hall. A violent fit of the gout, probably brought on by the fever he had thrown himself into, nailed him to his chair. The pain of his malady did not improve his humour, and his time was spent, for a week or two, in a perpetual turmoil of temper, vented sometimes against his afflicted foot, and sometimes against those who were about him. But Amherst was the person against whom the full flood of his wrath was poured out. Tom Cuddy's marine philosophy was put to as severe a trial as it had ever suffered. But it continued invincible, though it was remarked that he expended nearly double his usual allowance of pigtail on the occasion.

As for poor Miss Margery, who was inwardly

much afflicted at the sudden and very unaccountable disappearance of her nephew, the Admiral's violence did not allow her to get out a single word but " Dear me, brother Cable !" which she uttered an hundred times a day for above a fortnight.

CHAPTER IX.

Soavè per lo scoglio sconcio e erto
 Che sarebbe alle capre duro varco :
 Indi un altro vallon mi fa scoperto.

DANTE.

Deep in the bosom of the wood,
 Where art had formed the moated isle,
 An antique castle towering stood,
 In Gothic grandeur rose the pile.

CARTWRIGHT.

WE must now return to Scotland, where we left Amherst and his friend enjoying their repose at Sanderson Mains.

The morning was pretty far spent, when a respectable, hoary-headed domestic, whose comfortable corporeal conformation seemed like an earnest of the hospitality of his master's mansion, cautiously entered Amherst's bed-chamber, and, as if half afraid to disturb him, gently opened his window-shutters. He hastily arose, and under-

standing that Sir Alisander had not yet left his room, he walked forth to breathe the air.

Accident led him to a square garden of considerable size near the house, fenced with a high stone wall, and offering a very inviting appearance of fruit. Little seemed to be sacrificed to decoration, and the *dulce* gave place to the *utile* in every part of it. On one side, indeed, a door led into a small flower-garden, connected with a shrubbery surrounding two sides of the church-yard, where there was a private passage by a little gate, generally used when the family went to church. The view from a summer-house on the top of a small artificial hillock was extensive; but although the wide country the eye rambled over was, for the most part, highly cultivated, it was flat and uninteresting, having few or no trees, except two or three mathematically shaped plantations of young Scotch firs, no hedges or hedge-rows, and, indeed, little inclosure of any kind but dry stone walls, here called dikes, and occasional ditches, the soil being naturally wet, from the vicinity of a large lake, liable at certain seasons to flood the greater part of the plain. In the midst of the marshy ground, near the lake, appeared a green mound,

surrounded by a double moat, and having on it the remains of a square tower, and the other less important ruins of an ancient fortress. The inland view was every where bounded by low ridges of uninteresting moorland, and the sea was shut out by those high sandy downs that terminated in the abrupt cliffs forming the coast.

Whilst Amherst was returning to the house, he met a servant coming to announce breakfast; and as he entered the lobby, he was saluted by Sir Alisander, who had risen earlier than usual in compliment to him, though the good man complained of the effects of his riotous party, and his unseasonable walk. He talked of a swimming in his head, a shivering chill, and a general rheumatic feeling; but though he declared himself very much out of sorts, his good-humour did not abandon him. On entering the breakfast-room, they found Lady Sanderson, an unaffected sensible woman, of prepossessing countenance, to whom Amherst was immediately introduced.

Cleaver, who had appeared before they entered, had already introduced himself. He had found Lady Sanderson easy and lady-like, and he was in the best possible spirits,—a happy state of

mind, to which the liberal preparations for a Scotch breakfast no doubt largely contributed. He and Lady Sanderson already appeared to have been friends for many years.

Cleaver's eyes opened wider and wider, as he observed fresh and smoked haddocks, most invitingly broiled, kipper salmon, hot cockles, and delicately dressed mutton cutlets, placed smoking on the breakfast table, and still more when he saw the array of the rear-guard paraded on the side-board, consisting of plates of hung beef, cold bacon, and mutton hams, sliced tongue, cold round of beef, cold turkey, and cold pigeon pye. Then there appeared honey-comb, fruit jellies, and jams of various kinds, delicious butter with toast, and barley and oaten cakes, and *flour scones*, with the richest cream, and tea and coffee in abundance.

“ I have never been in Scotland before, Lady Sanderson,” said Cleaver, after he had seen the arrangement completed : “ but, if this be your style of living, I have only to say, that I think those who call it a poor country ought to be keel-hauled.”

“ You are pleased to flatter us, Captain

Cleaver," said her Ladyship; "I wish your politeness may not be subjected to some trials before you leave Scotland."

The breakfast passed off much to the satisfaction of all parties. The Baronet, seated in his arm-chair by the fire, with two or three night-caps on, and wrapped up in several ponderous robes-de-chambre, that swelled him to an enormous bulk, and protected by a large screen of green baize from the sifting airs of the door, sipped his coffee and eat his broiled fish at a little table placed for himself. His jokes were intermixed with occasional complaints about his health it is true, but still his jokes predominated, and they were always followed by his own good natured laugh. Amherst was delighted with his host, and no less so with the good sense and unobtrusive manners of Lady Sanderson, who, though she did not shun conversation, showed rather a desire to follow than to lead in it. Cleaver's epicurean propensities were pampered to the fullest extent; and, much to the gratification of his hostess, he tasted, and was lavish in his praises, of every thing at table.

The even tenor of the life of this worthy couple

was undisturbed by any of those cares of matrimony appearing in the shape of children. Lady Sanderson was equanimity personified, and the Baronet was reduced to the necessity of creating fanciful miseries for himself, in the shape of ailments, to relieve him from the ennui that must otherwise have devoured him ; as a physician can only banish one disease by inducing some other of a less serious description. The goodness of both the Baronet and his Lady having nothing to intercept its course, flowed out interruptedly upon all mankind. It is no wonder, then, that their English guests should have very soon felt perfectly at home under so hospitable a roof.

Being supplied with all the means of amusing themselves, they were left to spend the day according to their own fancy, and they generally devoted it to the sports of the field. Meanwhile Sir Alisander resumed his old habits, and rarely, if ever, left his bedchamber before the hour of dinner. This, however, must not be supposed to imply the hours of eight or nine o'clock, at present fashionable, but rather those of one or two, then in vogue. His conversation in the evening was so agreeable, that it made ample amends for

his non-appearance during the morning, and Amherst seldom permitted himself to lose any of it. Mr Macflae was almost a constant guest at the dinner table, which was often filled up by curious country characters, who dropped in almost daily, and were always heartily welcomed, and so admirably brought out by the Baronet, that an unceasing fund of rich amusement was thus provided for the strangers, so that Amherst never stirred from the house in the evening. As for Cleaver, repletion, and an excellent bottle of Bourdeaux, made moving after dinner quite out of the question with him.

The two friends had not been inmates of Sanderson Mains above a week, when it happened that an incessant rain confined them to the house during a whole morning. After accurately cleaning and oiling the lock of his gun, Cleaver had no resource but that of turning over the two huge folio volumes of Harris's Voyages, lying on one of the window seats. Amherst having retired to the library, buried himself amid the ample cushions of a large arm-chair, and was soon deep in the pages of a favourite author, which so occupied him, that he never moved un-

til the bell warned him to prepare for the family meal. Somewhat stupified by confinement, he observed, with satisfaction, that the rain had ceased, and that the clouds were dispersing, and, contrary to custom, he resolved to avail himself of the beauty of the evening, to make up for the want of his usual exercise during the day, by a walk after dinner.

He left the table as soon as he felt that he could do so with propriety, and sprang off towards the downs, which he climbed with all that uncontrollable elasticity of limb experienced by youth, after being cramped by a long seat, when, like a pressed up spring suddenly relieved, every muscle seems to do its office from a particular volition of its own. Having gained the ridge, he rambled along in a direction he had never taken before, until he reached the extremity of these high barren grounds, from whence he was surprised and delighted by a new prospect opening under his eyes, and exhibiting a considerable contrast to any thing he had yet seen since his arrival in the neighbourhood.

The point he stood on was opposite to that end of the lake farthest from Sanderson Mains,

and its waters, embracing the extremity of the rising ground, here retired behind it into a beautiful bay, where the banks gently sloping towards it were richly diversified with noble woods. A sprightly stream here escaped from the lake, and throwing itself soon afterwards over several ledges of rock, hastened to make its way towards the sea through a sequestered glen.

On a broad swelling promontory jutting into the lake, stood a Gothic castle of great extent, and bearing all the appearance of having been calculated for powerful resistance, when artillery had as yet no share in the havoc of war. It consisted of a large internal court-yard, formed by surrounding masses of irregular buildings, strangely combined with swelling round towers of different magnitudes, some of them rising boldly from the ground, and having their tall thin necks surmounted by curiously projected square tops of various architecture, and covered with high pitched roofs of grey slate. This inner court was entered through the deep shadow of a heavy Gothic gateway, and was again protected by an outer circumvallation of lower vaulted buildings, forming a strong wall of ex-

ternal defence. The entrance through this was by a gateway similar to that already mentioned, but strongly flanked by low loop-holed towers, and wherever the outer wall presented an angle, it was strengthened by a similar tower. A moat drawn across the neck of land cut off the peninsula transversely, and, when in a state of perfect repair, must have admitted the waters of the lake from either end of it, so as entirely to insulate the castle, and the point of the promontory it stood on. Over this an antique drawbridge gave access to the outer gateway. Some magnificent oaks and beeches, and a few gigantic and grotesquely-twisted fir-trees, almost coëval with the castle itself, rose in groups on that part of the peninsula connecting the castle with the land, and gave roost to a colony of rooks and daws that soared around the airy battlements, keeping up an incessant cawing.

The broad head jutting into the lake beyond the castle was laid out in old-fashioned terrace-gardens and walks, with huge hedges of yew and holly, fruit-trees, fountains, and trimmed ever-greens, and the centre was occupied by an ample bowling-green. These gardens were defended

all round by a terrace wall, and seemed to be kept in order with scrupulous nicety, but the extensive grounds sloping to the margin of the bay, and sweeping downwards into the glen, and upwards over the brow of the surrounding elevations, bore all the appearance of an ancient and neglected park.

Amherst stretched himself on the ground, that he might look down at leisure upon a scene at once so interesting and unexpected, wondering that accident had not before disclosed it to him. As he lay absorbed in contemplation, and watched the various lights shooting across the lake from the declining sun, his rays glowing through the ruddy clouds partially veiling him, and tinging the grey battlements of the castle with golden and purple hues, he observed a figure on one of the terrace walks behind the castle. The distance was such, that he could only be certain it was a woman; but the sprightliness of all her motions convinced him she was young, and the place where she walked argued that she must be at least above the rank of a domestic. She seemed to be busied about the plants bordering the walk, and fre-

quently stooped down as if to pluck the flowers, or to arrange those stems which had been weighed down by the rain. His youthful fancy was immediately employed in painting her lovely, and he watched every motion with lively attention. She loitered not long however, for, after taking two or three turns through the labyrinth of terrace-walks, she disappeared into the castle.

Amherst's curiosity would have probably led him to endeavour to explore the beauties of the park and the glen, and the hope of catching a nearer glimpse of the fair unknown of the castle, would have had no small share in tempting him to intrude into the grounds; but the same cause which had warned her to retire, induced him also to give up the thoughts of proceeding farther that evening. The sun was now hastening to sink below the western horizon, and the clouds which had accumulated towards that part of the sky, began to pile themselves up into heaps of a dark and lurid hue, portending an approaching storm. He hastily started from his seat, and turned his steps slowly homewards,

musings on the charming scene he had just left, its picture still fresh upon his imagination.

As he sauntered carelessly along, he was roused from the reverie he had fallen into, by a sudden whirlwind, that came sweeping along the ridge with such violence, as almost to throw him down, and carrying with it a volume of loose sand, coming so sharply against his face, that he was compelled to turn his back towards it, to save his eyes. In a very little time it had passed by. But the sun was now down, and the black opaque clouds, which had by this time spread themselves over the vault of Heaven, had completely annihilated that autumnal twilight, usually enduring, in the northern part of the island, for several hours after the departure of the orb of day. Amherst looked in vain for the track he had formerly pursued. All was darkness around him, and he was compelled to wander on in perfect uncertainty, totally ignorant where he was going, groping his way with the assistance of his *couteau-de-chasse*, and frequently stumbling over the sand heaps.

After exerting his strength in vain efforts for nearly an hour, he became so bewildered, that

he was compelled to sit down, in the conviction that he lost more than he gained by his attempts. Meanwhile, the gusts of wind were renewed at intervals, with tremendous, though temporary fury. The black canopy over his head now burst asunder in one particular part, and a broad glare of forked lightning darted from the edges of the rent clouds, transiently illuminating every part of the surrounding waste. It was followed by a roll of thunder that seemed to shake the earth. To Amherst's dismay, the glimpse he thus obtained led him to suspect that he had wandered within a few yards of the brink of the crags overhanging the sea, and the succeeding flashes showed him the wide stretched ocean heaved up into mountains, their foaming crests tinged of a murky red, borrowed from the gleam. Rain now fell in torrents, and drenched the thirsty ground, so that, although the fitful blasts still came at intervals, reciprocating with the peals of thunder, and flashes of lightning, they came without bearing along with them those volumes of sand which had so nearly overwhelmed him at first.

Again Amherst endeavoured to set forward,

and to gain ground by starts, after taking a rapid glance around him during the momentary illumination of each flash. But it is easy to imagine, that in this way he could make but little progress, being obliged to move with the greatest care, lest the smallest deviation might have precipitated him over the cliff. Having gained one of the sand heaps, rather larger than any he had met with, where a few tall furze bushes grew, he was overjoyed to find amongst them a little shelter-house of sods, the work of some shepherd boy, into which he found he was just able to creep, and where he resolved to lie until the fury of the tempest should abate, and the dispersion of the clouds, by permitting the moon to shine out, should enable him to find his way to Sanderson Mains without danger.

His situation was now a very strange one: housed in a little frail building about three feet by four, and of height in the roof barely sufficient to enable him to sit upright, perched within fifteen or twenty yards of the brink of a cliff three or four hundred feet in perpendicular height above the raging ocean: the blast howling through the furze bushes, the rain lashing on

the sandy downs, the thunder rattling over his head, and even overpowering for a time the roar of the waves, and every now and then the lightning blazing forth with splendour so dazzling, as to show the smallest bush that quivered on the wild waste.

His thoughts first recurred to the smiling scene that had so lately gladdened his eyes ; then to the comfortable fireside of the hospitable Sir Alisander ; and, lastly, he ran back in imagination to the time he had spent before his departure from England : and when he recalled the luxury of those hours he had loitered away, lolling on the voluptuous sofas, and in the midst of all the glitter of the gilded drawing-rooms of Brokenhurst-Hall, or listening to the soft music of the syren, and contrasted these with the whimsical lair accident had now driven him into, and for which he even felt grateful, he laughed within himself at the odd freaks fortune indulges in, and of which man is the sport.

Whilst thus employed, he looked out occasionally from the door of the sod-house, as each successive flash came, hoping it might be the last. But the storm continued unabated.

Finding his position somewhat irksome from having sat in it too long, he changed it in such a manner, that his head was placed nearer the door, and just as he had adapted himself to the angles of the place, a more than ordinarily vivid flash of lightning blazed forth. What was Amherst's astonishment, when it distinctly, though but for the fraction of an instant, displayed to him the figure of the very mysterious being he had twice before seen! The lightning itself passed not more swiftly than did her form. She seemed to have been borne by on the wings of the whirlwind, crossing his field of view, and coming and departing with the duration of the blaze. Yet he could not possibly have been deceived. The red fillet was on her head; and he had seen her ghastly features illumined by the blue gleam, and her long grey locks streaming behind her as she flew. Amherst instinctively scrambled out, and as another flash succeeded to the last, he looked in the direction she had taken—but no creature was visible on the long stretch of waste. He remained confounded. A loud thunder-clap rolled over his head, and the torrents of rain increasing, reminded him of the ne-

cessity of creeping back into his shelter. There he lay perplexed by the strange sight he had seen, almost doubting the evidence of his senses, yet convinced that he could not have been deceived by them, and half expecting that he would be again visited by this inexplicable phantom.

CHAPTER X.

Ya los vierades juntos, ya apartados
 Ora tienden el cuerpo, ora la embeben :
 Por un lado y por otro recatados
 Se inquietan, cercan, buscan, y remuevan,
 Tientan, vuelven, revuelven, y se apuntan,
 Y al cabo con gran impetu se juntan.

ERCILLA.

Lady Ran.—How fares my Lord ?

Lord Ran.—That it fares well, thanks to this gallant youth.

Douglas.

THIS last peal of thunder seemed to be the final effort of convulsed nature, and, soon afterwards, the violence of the storm began to abate. The pitchy clouds broke up, and although some of them, as they divided themselves off in rolling detachments, like the flying squadrons of a routed army, still gave forth occasional flashes, followed by peals of more distant thunder, the rain ceased, and the moon burst forth in short fits of splendour.

Amherst, tired of his confined abode, was gladly preparing to leave it, when he was alarmed by the distant report of three pistols following one another at intervals of some seconds. The heavy sound of rapid steps advancing made him creep quickly from the sod-hut, but he hastily concealed himself among the furze, until he should judge from the event of the propriety of showing himself. He had little time to consider, for, by the partial light of the moon, he observed a tall man, wrapped up in a foreign cloak, running along the brink of the cliff towards the spot where he lay. He was pursued by two others, whose plaids bespoke them to be Highlanders. The foremost of the pursuers, as he ran, discharged a pistol after the fugitive without effect.

The tall man seemed now to be satisfied that he had no longer cause to fear the fire-arms of his enemies; for having already nearly reached the hillock, he halted, drew a long rapier from his side, and, twining the skirts of his cloak round his left arm, placed himself in a firm posture of defence, as if to await their onset. He judged rightly, for he had no sooner done this, than the broad claymores of the two Highlanders were seen

glittering over their heads in the moonlight, and they rushed on to the attack. Amherst hesitated no longer. He sprang from his concealment, armed with his *couteau-de-chasse*, and his unexpected appearance put a momentary stop to the battle. The assailants halted, as if they had seen an apparition, and the tall man in the cloak was staggered for an instant, from a doubt whether the new combatant was about to range himself on his side, or on that of his enemies. But seeing that Amherst proceeded instantly to attack one of the Highlanders, he rushed on against the other, and a desperate conflict ensued.

The weapons of the parties whom accident had thus brought into alliance were but ill adapted for encountering the weight of the tranchant claymore. Amherst's *couteau-de-chasse*, in particular, was but as a flimsy foil before it, and, notwithstanding his bravery and address, he was compelled to act very circumspectly, and very much on the defensive, to wait his opportunity, and to trust to his adversary exhausting his strength a little. The tall man in the cloak made a better fight of it. He seemed to be a most expert and practised swordsman, and by keeping his

point always opposed to his enemy, and using his guards with great adroitness, he not only perfectly protected himself, but, by repeated thrusts, wounded his opponent, and compelled him to give ground. Amherst, meanwhile, was too much occupied with his man to notice what the other combatants were doing. Though he fought with great determination, and with a perfect coolness, that enabled him frequently to wound his adversary with the edge of his weapon, yet he only exasperated him, without doing him any very material injury. He found it necessary to husband his strength and his skill, and to do so effectually, he was compelled to give way. But he retreated step by step, and readily seizing every advantage, he was enabled every now and then to inflict sudden and severe cuts upon the Highlander, when he was least prepared for them. The fury of the Celt grew into madness; he rained down his blows without judgment, and without effect, and Amherst, watching a favourable occasion, laid such a slash over his sword-arm, that he dashed the claymore from his adversary's hand, though his own weapon was shivered in the rude-

ness of the shock, by striking against the basket-hilt.

Like some furious beast of prey, who, when brought to bay by the hunter, puts forth all his fierceness and his strength, the Highlander gnashing his teeth, rushed upon Amherst, who was now unarmed, except that he still held the hilt, and a few inches of the blade, of his *couteau-de-chasse*. With one hand he seized Amherst by the throat, and with the other, drawing his dirk, he made an attempt to plunge it into the side of the young Englishman, who, grasping his enemy in his turn, warded the blow with the remains of his broken weapon, and then, fastening his fingers round the Highlander's wrist, endeavoured to prevent him from repeating it. The Highlander was a powerful man, and the struggle was desperate. They tugged, and toiled, and twisted their bodies, without either of them gaining any advantage. By this time they had got to some distance from the other combatants. All was silent around them; for the very demons of the elements appeared to have ceased their warfare, as if to watch the event of that which these mortals were waging. They uttered not a word, and the quick panting

of their breath, the stamping of their feet as they shifted their ground, and the grinding of their set teeth, were the only sounds to be heard. At length, as they wrestled, a furze-bush, or some such impediment, tripped up Amherst's feet; but both were so locked together, that they fell as one man to the earth.

Still they were twined together, still they held each other fast as with the gripe of death, and the murderous strife was continued on the ground with renewed strength. They heaved, they arched their backs, they rolled over and over, sometimes the one, and sometimes the other being uppermost, without either ever losing his vice-like grasp. The very brink of the precipice was within a yard of them, and one turn more must hurl both into eternity. Amherst, engaged as he was in this mortal combat, saw the fearful void yawning below him. Their faces were almost in contact,—the eyes of the Highlander glared on his like those of a tiger,—and, reckless of himself, he seemed bent on working the destruction of both, rather than not insure that of him with whom he was contending. Amherst already felt as if both were precipitated.

He was summoning all his strength into one last desperate effort, when, feeling the grasp of his opponent suddenly slacken, he instantly shook himself free from his lifeless arm. Looking upwards, he perceived the tall man in the cloak standing over him. His ready rapier had buried itself in the heart of the ruffian. With one blow of his foot, the stranger hurled the semi-inanimate wretch over the cliff.

Amherst instinctively thrust his nails into the soil; he felt as if still linked to the body. A hollow plunge, heard faintly from the vast depth below, told that it had found a watery bier, and every fibre shrank at the sullen sound.

Faint and breathless, he raised himself in a sitting posture, and his unknown ally, who seemed scarcely less toil-spent, seated himself opposite to him. They gazed at each other for some time before either could find breath to speak; and, as the stranger opened his cloak to take out a richly embroidered handkerchief to wipe his forehead, some precious jewels on his neck and breast sparkled in the moon-beams, their lustre being increased by the black dress he wore. A broad Spanish hat, looped up with diamonds, and

ornamented with a black plume, lay on the ground beside him. Amherst had now time to survey his person at leisure, and the moon shining bright, and full upon him, enabled him to subject it to the minutest scrutiny.

It has been already said that his height was remarkable ; but it was not vulgar height, for his whole appearance had in it something peculiarly dignified and commanding. Even as he sat thus lowly on the ground, his person betrayed a certain nobleness. He appeared to be past the prime of life ; but some secret sorrow seemed to have done more work upon him than age, and few grey locks had as yet mingled among the raven ringlets hanging amply over his neck and shoulders. His features were upon the great scale, but of the most perfect mould ; and his black eyes were full and speaking. The paleness of thought was over his countenance, and a certain cloud that sat on his brow added to the lofty seriousness of his expression.

The stranger, who had considered Amherst with as much attention as Amherst had considered him, was the first to break silence.

“ Young gentleman,” said he with a high but

courteous air, “ by what name must I know my preserver? By what name am I to salute him, but for whose timely and almost miraculous assistance, I must have had my safety set at the hazard of such odds, and whose young scion of life was so nearly sacrificed, to save a worthless, if not a withered stump? He that asks in gratitude is Lord Eaglesholme.”

“ My Lord,” said Amherst, “ whatever aid I may have rendered you at the beginning of this combat, has been more than compensated by what you have just done for me. I still shudder to think that, but for your prompt rescue, I should have accompanied the savage ruffian in his fall from this frightful precipice. The danger I have escaped was so dreadful, and so imminent, that I hardly yet feel in safety. Amherst Oakenwold shall never cease to remember this awful night, whilst the life he owes to Lord Eaglesholme shall endure.”

“ Oakenwold !” said his Lordship, as if endeavouring to recollect. “ Oakenwold? I had a friend of that name. He was a gallant officer of the British navy, and, I think, of a Kent-

ish family ;—may I ask whether you bear any relation to such a person ?”

“ I do, my Lord,” said Amherst ; “ my father, Sir Cable Oakenwold, is an admiral.”

“ The same, the very same, I have no doubt,” said Lord Eaglesholme ; “ though he was too young for that rank when I knew him. I rejoice,” said he, rising with eagerness to embrace Amherst, who, in his turn, also sprang to his feet,—“ I rejoice to find my deliverer identified with the son of my old friend. But say, how came you on this coast,—and, above all, how came you, stranger as you are, to be on these wilds in such a night, and at such an hour ?”

Amherst did not choose to make his father’s friend acquainted with the cause of his voyage to Scotland. He therefore gave his Lordship the same account of it he had given to Sir Alisander, namely, that he and his friend, Captain Cleaver, had come on an idle trip of pleasure. He then narrated shortly how they had become the inmates of Sanderson Mains, and hastily ran over the circumstances of his evening walk, until the moment of his rising in Lord Eaglesholme’s defence, sinking for the present, however, the strange ap-

pearance of the mysterious being who rode past him as it were on the lightning's wing.

His Lordship listened to him with attention, and when he had finished, "Mr Oakenwold," said he, "the castle you saw is that of Eaglesholme, where I hope you will put it in my power to prove to you, that I am not ungrateful for the signal assistance you have this night rendered me. I trust you will at all times consider it as your home, when you are pleased to make it so. At the same time, Sir, you must excuse me for being plain with you; my habits are retired, and were it not that I consider myself as in a great measure indebted to you for my life, to save which you have ventured yours in so gallant a manner, even the circumstance of your being the son of my friend would not have been sufficient passport into my mansion. Do not suppose that I say this to heighten the value of your admission there; I merely wish to inform you that I can see no one else, not even the companion of your voyage hither. My gates however, shall always be open to you, and if you are not afraid of the dulness of an old castle, and the want of all society save that of its master, it would give me pleasure to see

you make it your home. I dare say," said he, holding out his hand, and pressing that of Amherst with warmth, whilst something like a smile played over a countenance that seemed rarely to be softened by such a light,—“ I dare say you will have the good-nature to forgive me, should you sometimes be permitted to entertain yourself ; for I am not always master of my spirits, and I hope you will have charity enough to impute any strange behaviour of mine to any motives rather than ingratitude or unkindness. At present, I presume, you return to Sanderson Mains to relieve the anxiety of its inhabitants, naturally excited by your unlooked-for absence in such a stormy night. To-morrow, or as soon afterwards as you may find it convenient, it will give me pleasure to see you.”

Amherst warmly thanked Lord Eaglesholme for his invitation, of which he assured him his own inclination would not permit him to delay availing himself. He again repeated, that he should ever consider himself as indebted to his Lordship for his life, and many expressions of kindness and friendship passed between them.

As they were thus loitering along together in

conversation, the moon being now again obscured by a new veil of dense clouds, Amherst stumbled over something he immediately discovered to be a dead body.

“ ’Tis the corpse of the assassin who fell before my sword,” said Lord Eaglesholme ; “ ’twere better that he should sink or swim with his companion in iniquity.” So saying, he dragged the corpse to the edge of the cliff, and hurled it also over the precipice into the sea.

“ I must now see you safe,” said his Lordship. “ Follow me, I will be your guide ;” and with an alertness and decision of step that surprised Amherst, he moved across the pathless downs with as little hesitation as if it had been broad day, and with a speed that he had difficulty in keeping up with.

They had crossed about three-fourths of these wastes, when they descried two lights dancing at some distance before them. They soon discovered that they proceeded from lanthorns, carried by two men, and as they drew nearer, Amherst recognised the voice of his trusty servant O’Gollochar. He communicated this circumstance to Lord Eaglesholme, who immediately halted, seiz-

ed Amherst again by the hand, squeezed it with warmth, and hastily saying, "Remember, we part to meet soon again," he waited not for a reply, but darted off, and was lost amid the shades of night, before Amherst had time to recollect himself.

The lights now approached, and Amherst perceived that it was the old butler, Mr Duncan Brouster, who accompanied his servant. They were in earnest and loud conversation, and poor O'Gollochar was blubbering like an overgrown school-boy.

"Och! to go for to lose such a kind-hearted master, aye, and before I had well found him, as a body may say. Och! he was so good, and so kind to me! Sure he was an angel of light, and what had he to do with walking in such a dark and rumbunctious night as this, amongst fairies, and witches, and divils of all sorts and sizes, upon them wild and dreary downs. Och! then if he should be drowned! but no matter whether he be or not, I'll sarch all the shore for him, an I should be crossed by all the witches and divils in Scotland."

"For God's sake, dinna crack sae muckle

about thae kind o' cattle, Maister O'Gollochar," said Duncan Brouster, who seemed by his gait to have been doing the honours of the cellar to the Irishman, and afterwards to have taken an extra cup, to wind his courage up to the undertaking of assisting to search for Amherst. "Troth it's a sad pity, a very sad pity, that he should ha'e been drooned, as drooned he nae doot is. It's a very sad pity," said he, forgetting his own injunction to his companion, "that sic a noble gentleman should be food for the water-kelpies. I abhor and abominate a' sorts o' evil spirits; and, aboon a' thing, I abhor them that take pleeshur in swatterin in water, and swallowin their wames wi' sic unwholesome drink. Was I a kelpie, my certie! my element should be brandy toddy! But, believe me, it's a' nonsense to think o' seekin' for him the night, though, to be sure, they do say that a blue fire burns ower the place whare a drowned man's carcage is lyin' at the bottom."

Duncan Brouster had scarcely said this, when the ray from his lanthorn chancing to glance on Amherst's face as he was advancing, threw a palid gleam across it. The butler being already satis-

fied, in his own mind, that the Englishman had perished in the sea, had no doubt that what he saw was a spirit. He roared out, "Gude Heavens! A ghaist! a ghaist!" and staggering backwards in deadly fear upon O'Gollochar, he threw him down, and both rolled on the ground together. One of the lanthorns was extinguished, and the other on the eve of going out, had not Amherst immediately caught it up.

O'Gollochar knew his master, and actually danced like a madman for joy to see him in safety, but it required some time and argument to convince the terrified butler that he was really flesh and blood. At length his fears were overcome, and they began to move homewards. Amherst gave his servant the general outline of his night's adventures, slightly touching on the reappearance of the mysterious female dwarf. The old butler started. The very name of Lord Eaglesholme, and the allusion to the dwarf, seemed instantly to drive the fumes of the liquor from his brain. He stood quaking for a minute before he spoke, and then shook his head with a most portentous look.

"Lord, defend me frae siccan company in a

mirk night !” said he—“ Nae wonder than the storm raged, fan him and *the dwarfie carline o’ the cove* ware abroad ! Ise warrant they had been haudin some bonny rig thegither, gude keep us a’ !—wha kens but it was twa deevils the warlock lord was fightin’ wi’.—Troth, Maister Aikenwalls, it wad ha’e been better to ha’e lettin’ them tak their wull o’ him.—My certie, ye maun ha’e a stout heart to crack wi’ sic a billy as him in sic a night, on the tap o’ a craig, wi’ the sea ragin’ below, and the thunder rattlin’ owerhead.—Ugh ! I wuss we war weel hame ! Come awa’, sirs, come awa’.”

Amherst was very desirous to learn from Duncan, what he should have particularly apprehended from his meeting with Lord Eaglesholme; and, above all, he wished to have his curiosity satisfied about *the dwarfie carline o’ the cove*, of whose existence Duncan seemed to be already aware, but afraid to talk of either.

“ Ware I sittin’ ower a bowl o’ het toddy,” said he, in an under tone of voice, and drawing nearer to Amherst, that he might be the better heard by him; “ ware I in a easy arm-chair by the fireside, wi’ the candles lighted, an’ a wec

drap punch afore me, I might tell ye a' I ken'd, an' a' I ha'e heard ; but," continued he, looking fearfully around him, " this is nae place to crack about witches and warlocks."

On arriving at Sanderson Mains, Amherst found the whole house in a state of alarm, in consequence of his absence. Detachments of servants had been dispatched with lights in all directions, some of whom having already returned without any tidings of him, the general anxiety had been increased. His appearance gave universal joy. He found Cleaver and Sir Alisander occupying the arm-chairs on opposite sides of the fire, sipping their punch after supper, or, as Cleaver would have called it, putting on their night-caps. They had rung fifty times to make inquiry about him, and though it was late, Lady Sanderson was still sitting up with them, anxious to learn tidings of her young guest, before she should retire for the night.

They listened to his strange adventures with wonder. Amherst now succeeded in procuring that information from Sir Alisander about Lord Eaglesholme, which he had failed to elicit from his servant. He learned that his Lordship lived

in so retired a manner, and was so addicted to study, and otherwise so particular in his habits, that he was universally believed by the country people to be a necromancer, and that a residence for several years in foreign countries, and the circumstance of his having a number of foreign domestics, had contributed to augment this suspicion against him. For his part, he knew nothing of him, and from his having been himself so much of an invalid since his Lordship settled on his paternal estate in this country, he had, in fact, never seen him. But from all he had heard, he believed him to be a very good man, on whose mind some early and secret grief sat brooding, and that his melancholy, his abstraction, and his retirement, were to be attributed to some such unknown cause.

Amherst's curiosity was strongly excited by all he had seen and heard of this nobleman, and he resolved, if possible, to gratify it immediately, by going to Eaglesholme Castle the very next day.

As to *the dwarfie carline o' the cove*, though Sir Alisander had frequently heard of her appearance, he had hitherto believed that she was

no reality, but the creature of superstitious imagination. He therefore expressed very great surprise, when he heard Amherst mention that he had actually seen her that night on the downs, and still more when Cleaver and he joined in describing the mysterious appearances she had made on the night of their landing in Scotland. The Baronet could no longer doubt the truth of her existence, but he felt himself altogether unable to conjecture who or what she might be.

CHAPTER XI.

It is a reverend thing to see an ancient castle not in decay, or to see a fair timber tree sound and perfect ; how much more to behold an ancient noble family, which hath stood against the waves and weathers of time ?

LORD BACON.

There are millions of truths that a man is not concerned to know ; as whether Roger Bacon was a mathematician or a magician.

LOCKE.

AMHERST was so full of his visit to Eaglesholme Castle, that, notwithstanding the harassing events of the preceding night, he was earlier astir than usual. He communicated his intentions to Cleaver, and he took an opportunity, during breakfast, to inform Lady Sanderson of the invitation he had received from his father's old friend ; and having strongly expressed the sense he entertained of the hospitality of Sanderson Mains, and charged her with similar compliments to Sir Ali-

sander, and with assurances that he would take an early opportunity of returning to thank him in person, he took his leave.

After giving a few hasty orders to his servant, he set out with Cleaver, who, taking his gun, walked with him a little way, that they might arrange their future plans together. Amherst determined to regulate the length of his stay at Eaglesholme by circumstances. Cleaver resolved to sojourn in the comfortable quarters he at present occupied, where he found himself very much at ease, and where he was a great favourite with both his host and hostess. In the event of Amherst's stay at Eaglesholme being longer than he at present anticipated, Cleaver said he might probably make a trip to a large neighbouring seaport, to visit his old shipmate Maccauley, stationed there on the revenue service. But he promised to return to Sanderson Mains to meet Amherst, who, on his part, resolved to devote some days to the good Sir Alisander, before bidding a final adieu to the neighbourhood.

The friends parted on reaching the shores of the lake, Cleaver returning along its reedy margin, with the hope of shooting wild-ducks, whilst

Amherst followed a grassy road that ran skirting it in an opposite direction towards the woods of Eaglesholme. These he now saw, rising before him over the outline of that abrupt termination of the elevated downs, whence he had enjoyed so charming a prospect the previous evening, and which now intervened between him, and the bay where the castle was situated.

The road soon brought him to an old, and somewhat dilapidated gateway, consisting of two gigantic square pillars, which, from their magnitude, might have been those of Hercules. An enormous rusty iron gate stretched across the broad space between the pillars, over which were the fragments of an iron eagle, in a soaring attitude, with the motto, "*Ad solem tendo.*" The gate was locked; but the remains of steps in the high wall enabled Amherst to scale it without difficulty, when he found himself in a labyrinth of wood, where trees of all kinds, but chiefly oaks and pines, of immense growth, produced an impervious leafy canopy overhead, whilst the ground between their stems was filled with almost impenetrable thickets of undergrowth. Even the avenue running from the old gate through this

wilderness was considerably overgrown ; but it was still sufficiently obvious to preclude the chance of his losing his way.

The ground to the right sloped gently towards the lake, and, as he proceeded, he began to have occasional peeps of it through glades of rough old pasture, opening widely in the woods. To the left these openings showed considerable sweeps of the neglected lawn, stretching up the side of the hill between masses of embowering trees. The whole wore the appearance of having been given up to the uncontested dominion of the wild animals. Herds of fallow-deer were seen feeding in the more open grounds ; he disturbed hundreds of hares too ; and his path through the thickets was frequently crossed by the roebuck, that stood to gaze at him for a moment before it plunged into the brake.

As he proceeded, the woods became thinner, and at length the trees began to straggle off into the park, forming fine foregrounds to the view of the interior of the bay, the peninsula, and the castle now appearing, backed by a grand amphitheatre of elevated grounds, rising in sloping pastures, richly, though irregularly diversified with

groups and masses of trees. Amherst, who was an enthusiast in his admiration of scenery, stood for a moment enraptured; and as he wandered on towards the neck of the peninsula, he was still more enchanted with all around him.

Having passed under the old trees of the rookery, he approached the worm-eaten draw-bridge, which he crossed to the first gateway. Here he was met by an old gate, formed of strong upright and transverse bars of iron, of immense proportions. A small iron chain hung dangling from a little slender turret over the arch of the gateway, where it communicated with a large bell, suspended under the open work of a surmounting coronet, very delicately carved in stone. Over the gateway was sculptured the eagle in flight, with the motto, as before, of "*Ad solem tendo.*"

Amherst pulled the chain, and the deep sound of the bell broke upon the silence that reigned around the walls, and, vibrating for some time, died away without any one appearing. But, as he was about to repeat the summons, a man advanced from within, habited in a blue cloak, and bearing in one hand a long cane, with a round head, and in the other a massive key. He stop-

ped within a yard or two of the gate, and, eyeing Amherst through the bars with a heavy apathetical countenance, seemed by his looks to inquire what the stranger wanted, before he thought it necessary to give him entrance. Amherst demanded if his Lord was at home; but as the man did not give any reply, and appeared to be going away without answering, it occurred to him that he must be one of the foreigners of whom Sir Alexander had spoken. He, therefore, repeated his question in French, when the porter, who was in fact a Swiss, immediately turned round, and his leaden features relaxing into a grin, opened a mouth from ear to ear, and readily replied to him in a patois of the same language, that, if Monsieur would have the goodness to wait, he would go and ask Mr Robertson, the house steward; and then, begging to have his name, he waddled away.

Amherst had not waited long when the porter again showed himself, accompanied by a tall, thin, old man, of very respectable appearance, clothed in black, his shrunk shanks covered with black silk stockings, and his shoes trimly brushed, and ornamented with huge silver buckles. His

head was partially covered with a few straggling grey hairs, and he wore those which could be collected behind in a black silk bag. He walked feebly, but erectly, assisting his steps with a long white rod. He ordered the porter in French to unlock the gate, and, bowing respectfully to Amherst as he entered, ushered him onwards in silence to the inner gateway.

Amherst was struck with the great strength of the masonry around him. Ivy, of very old growth, had climbed the walls to a great height, and festooned many of the loop-hole windows above. This seemed to have been planted by nature ; but art also had done something, for roses, and numerous creeping plants, had been introduced, and trained to intertwine their shoots with those naturally growing there. Indeed every thing within showed an attention to order and neatness, very different from the neglect he had observed in his way through the park.

Having entered the inner yard, the slow steps of his guide gave Amherst time to survey the architecture of its irregular quadrangle. The most prominent feature was a large square tower, that seemed to be the oldest part of the castle,

and was probably the ancient keep, round which the other buildings had grown, as the family waxed in greatness and consequence. It was now built up in one angle of the court, and identified in some measure with the masses to which it was linked. The windows in the various parts of the castle were ornamented with whimsical scrolls and carved work, and marked with coronets, crests, initials, cyphers, and dates, denoting the persons who had built them, and the period of their erection. The great door was of thick oaken timbers, studded with large iron nails, and over it were cut the full arms, supporters, coronet, and crest, of the ancient and noble family of Eaglesholme.

Robertson now showed the way up ten or twelve winding steps into a hall, the proportions of which astonished Amherst the more, from the meanness of the approach to it. It seemed to be eighty or ninety feet long, thirty or forty broad, and at least as much in height. A gloomy light streamed in upon it from three long narrow windows at the farther end. The roof was of black oaken beams, ingeniously jointed and arched, and their ends carved into rude and frowning heads. The floor

was paved with large flags. Half-way down its length there was an immense fire-place, having its yawning chimney thrown forwards over several feet of the pavement, so as to form a canopy capable of covering a large company. The voracious grate, calculated to swallow up a waggon-load of fuel at one meal, blazed and crackled with heaps of dried billets, throwing a gleam around, that was brilliantly reflected from a number of stars and martial trophies on the walls, of musquetoons, pistols, pikes, broadswords, battle-axes, and all manner of weapons, many of them of great antiquity. Some of the rarer specimens of those warlike tools, as well as a number of coats and shirts of mail, with helmets, headpieces, targets, &c. were hung in the more conspicuous places. On the side of the hall, opposite to the fire-place, stood three figures of horses, backed by three effigies of knights in complete armour, with shields braced, and lances in the rest. Numerous tattered and moth-eaten banners hung from on high, quivering with every undulation of air. At the farther end of the hall, about a fourth part of the length of the pavement was raised a few inches higher

than the rest. On this platform, in the days of feudalism, the table of the chief was laid transversely, where he and his heads of families were served with the best fare, whilst a long table, running at right angles to it down the hall, was occupied by the retainers, down to the lowest clansman. Though many years had now passed away since this custom was practised by the noble family of Eaglesholme, yet the chief's table, and several chairs of different forms, but all heavily carved in massive oak, and of such weight as almost to deprive them of any title to the name of moveables, still remained. To add to the general effect, a gallery for musicians, the front of which was also of deeply-carved black oak, ran along over the entrance doorway, from one corner quite to the other, and in more modern times, a magnificent organ had been placed in the centre of it.

Amherst was so struck with the grandeur of this hall, that he stopped to contemplate it with admiration, apologizing to the steward for doing so. Robertson bowed in silence; but a smile of conscious pride mantling in his face, showed how much he was gratified by the stranger's astonish-

ment, and he waited patiently for him, with evident satisfaction. He then ushered him through a side door into a gallery sixty or seventy feet in length. This was a library, where many thousand volumes filled the black oak book-shelves, and where the curious in bibliography might have revelled for months together, amongst tall copies, princeps editions, unique Caxtons, and illuminated manuscripts, all in superb old bindings. A number of old-fashioned tables stood in this library, and globes, maps, and various descriptions of mathematical and philosophical instruments, were carelessly disposed in different parts of it.

The steward, having led Amherst through the whole length of this room, opened a door at the farther end of it, and showed him into an arched chamber of proportions considerably smaller than those of the preceding. There, in a red velvet cushioned arm-chair, at one end of a long table, covered with phials, jars, air-pumps, and electrifying machines, was seated Lord Eaglesholme.

He wore a large Neapolitan *vesta di camera* of flowered cinnamon-coloured silk, completely enveloping his person, and on his head was a black

velvet cap, his hair appearing in profusion from underneath it. His right elbow was resting on the table, and the right hand half supported and half covered one side of his face, whilst his left was stretched over the margin of a folio lying open before him, and his intelligent eyes, piercing through the veil of his hair, were earnestly directed towards its page. He was so much absorbed in what he was reading, that he neither heard the opening of the door, nor observed their entrance.

Robertson hesitated before he ventured to announce Amherst. "Mr Oakenwold, my Lord," said he at last. Lord Eaglesholme slowly lifted up his eyes without moving, as if he had not exactly comprehended the nature of the interruption, and as if his mind were still pursuing the thread of the subject in which he was engaged. They rested at last upon Amherst; a faint smile of recognition played for an instant over his countenance, and, rising from his chair, he advanced towards him with all the grace of an accomplished gentleman, shook him kindly by the hand, and welcomed him in the warmest manner to Eaglesholme, expressing his gratitude to him for having thus speedily performed his promise.

“ My Lord,” said Amherst, “ I fear I have unwittingly broken in upon your hours of study ; if so, I hope you will be so free as to command me away. I think,” continued he, pointing towards the library, “ I have already seen friends and acquaintances enough in the room I have just passed through, to be security for my good behaviour whilst under your roof, and who will always be ready to relieve you from my company when it threatens to be troublesome. Perhaps I had better retire now ? I well know the torture of being interrupted when engaged with a favourite author.”

Lord Eaglesholme seemed pleased. “ Though I confess myself much addicted to sedentary study,” replied he, “ I pique myself too much upon good breeding, to be guilty of so great a rudeness as to turn you out of my room, the instant you have stepped over my threshold. No, Mr Oakenwold, I am desirous to improve the acquaintance we so strangely formed last night, and must therefore devote at least the first day of your visit to the enjoyment of your society. Hereafter, I conceive, I shall be doing you, as well as myself, a favour, by placing both at ease,

and by permitting you to follow your own inclinations, whilst I indulge myself in my usual habits. Our pursuits are probably very different. You know I warned you of this unsociability of mine."

" Pardon me, my Lord," said Amherst, " though a young student, I have hitherto been a very zealous one, and I should consider it a very fortunate circumstance in my life, were I to have an useful direction given to my studies by so able and agreeable a preceptor as your Lordship."

" And I," replied Lord Eaglesholme, who took what Amherst said as mere words of course, " I would have great pleasure in assisting you, were I not afraid that the pupil might be already too learned for the master."

This last speech of Lord Eaglesholme was entirely complimentary. He supposed, that however far the young man might have gone in mere classical reading, he could possess nothing more than such a smattering of science as a college course was capable of bestowing. The conversation, however, having naturally enough turned on such subjects, he was perfectly surprised with the depth of Amherst's knowledge in the higher

departments of the philosophy both of matter and mind. The discovery delighted him. But, yesterday morning, the very idea of a young man, and a stranger, becoming the inmate of his castle, even for a day, would have been most distressing to him, and he would have done all in his power to have averted so great an evil. Even after the strange occurrences of last night, he had felt that accident had brought him into a dilemma, and he could not help cherishing a secret hope, that Amherst might hear a rumour of the recluse and studious life he led, and that, afraid of being devoured by ennui at Eaglesholme, he might have been induced to satisfy himself with sacrificing a day or two there to politeness. He had, however, given Robertson the necessary orders for Mr Oakenwold's reception, should he find it convenient to come. But when he actually saw him in his study, although his natural feelings, his gratitude, and his good breeding, led him to receive him warmly, he yet experienced a secret twinge of disappointment, to find that he had been so eager to avail himself of the invitation, though it was in some degree counterbalanced by an at-

tendant hope that his visit was early, because it was to be of short duration.

But now he viewed Amherst with different eyes. Intense study was the only resource he had against that melancholy which preyed upon his mind, and mental occupation the only means he could employ to banish those recollections that nourished it. Though his early education had been liberal, it was not until after he had retired to the castle of his ancestors, that he had begun to take to his present philosophical pursuits, with that ardour with which he now followed them. He, who alone, and in the country, attempts to find out the path through the intricate mazes of science, where he is perplexed at every turning by contrariety of opinion, can make but slow progress, and must often be led astray by those false and dazzling meteors, which bewilder instead of illuminating the path. He becomes himself a discoverer ; nay, perhaps, the individual who discovered the way at first, had, in many particulars, a less embarrassing labour.

Lord Eaglesholme had long been sensible of this. But his objections to quitting his retreat were too strong to allow him to go to drink at the

general fountain of human knowledge, to mix again in society, to know how far science had proceeded in its march; and his repugnance to admitting a stranger to his privacy prevented him from procuring a companion, whose fresh acquaintance with the facts and doctrines already considered as established, might supply his own deficiency, and afford him a stable foundation for building future theory and experiment. In the short conversation he had with Amherst, he saw that he was just such a person. He already felt warmly towards him, as being in a great measure the preserver of his life at the risk of his own. He liked his open countenance, his ingenuous and unaffected manners; and if his mind was not already altogether made up to his being a guest at Eaglesholme for months to come, he was at least gratified to find, that his stay for a few weeks, if it should even last so long, might be suffered, and could give him little interruption, nay, might even be the means of removing some of those difficulties, which had hitherto encumbered his progress in his favourite studies. It was therefore with much more cordiality, that, after a long conversation, and as he rang the bell

for Robertson to show Amherst to his apartment, he again shook him by the hand, and expressed his hope that he would find it convenient and agreeable to make his stay as long as his other arrangements would admit of.

The apartments Amherst was shown into looked into the great central court. They exhibited sufficient signs of ancient grandeur. The bed had a superb canopy attached to the ceiling, whence the rich, though tarnished crimson damask curtains descended over it. The walls of both rooms were hung with tapestry that had once been fine, but the figures were so darkened by age, as to make it now difficult to discover what had been the original design. The chairs, tables, mirrors, cabinets, and other pieces of furniture, were of a taste and age corresponding to that of the bed. Amherst found O'Gollochar in waiting, attended by another person habited as a footman, who immediately left the room along with Robertson.

O'Gollochar listened till he heard their footsteps quit the gallery, before he ventured to address Amherst.

“Och, master dear!” said he, with a look of

extreme misery ; “ this is grappling with the very divil himself, to come into the very castle of the ould warlock, who can whistle Satan and all his invisible world upon us in the turning up of a potato-shaw. Sure your Honour doesn't mané in arnest to stay ; for, if you sleep here, the not an eye will you close all night for dæmons and cacathumpions, I'll engage.”

“ Why should I fear sleeping ?” said Amherst. “ If Lord Eaglesholme has all the power you suppose, I hope he will have the hospitality to exert it to insure our sleeping the sounder. I am now on a visit here for some days.”

O'Gollochar was silenced ; but his was the silence of deep disappointment and dismay. He groaned, threw up his eyes, shrugged his shoulders, and looked so forlorn whilst he assisted Amherst to dress, that the latter could hardly keep his gravity. His compassion, however, induced him to pour a few words of consolatory reasoning upon the perturbed mind of his domestic, but evidently without effect.

A loud bell rang within the castle, and immediately afterwards steps were heard coming along the gallery. They were those of Robertson and

the same man whom Amherst had found in his room. The former came to conduct him to Lord Eaglesholme, whilst the latter seemed to have returned for the purpose of waiting on O'Gollochar.

Robertson, who still maintained his silence, showed Amherst down into the great hall, where he was met by Lord Eaglesholme. His Lordship was now habited in a black Spanish dress, resembling that he wore the evening before, and admirably adapted to display his tall figure and noble port. He seemed, indeed, to be formed by nature to move beneath the majestic roof he was then walking under.

“ Mr Oakenwold,” said his Lordship, “ I have still a duty to perform ; I mean that of introducing you to the ladies.”

Amherst was surprised ; but instantly recollecting the figure he had seen in the gardens the night before, he bowed, and waited in suspense for an explanation.

“ I must now,” continued Lord Eaglesholme, “ introduce you to my niece, and a friend of hers, who has been for many years her preceptress. These form my whole family. My niece, Eliza

Malcolm, is the orphan child of a beloved sister who died abroad. You will find that her education has not been neglected. Thanks to Madame Bossanville, she is neither ignorant of books, nor of those accomplishments which form the amusement as well as the ornament of her sex. As she has lived from her infancy to the present moment in this solitude, she is little versed in what is the most useful of all knowledge, though the most dangerous in the acquirement; I mean," added he with a sigh, "the practical knowledge of the world."

Some melancholy reflections seemed here to cross his mind. He took out his handkerchief, and, turning hastily from Amherst, clapped his hand over his brow, and walked a few hurried steps down the hall. He returned more composed.

"This way, Mr Oakenwold," said he, motioning towards a door leading off into a suite of rooms opposite to [that containing the library; "we shall find my niece in the drawing-room. I thought it necessary to prepare you for seeing a girl who has hitherto met with no one in her

own rank of life but her uncle and Madame Bos-
sanville."

Amherst's curiosity was excited to the highest
pitch by what had fallen from his noble host, and
he hastened to follow him.

CHAPTER XII.

She was a form of light and life,
That, seen, became a part of sight;
And rose where'er I turned my eye,
The morning star of memory.

BYRON.

Ainsi, loin du monde et des hommes, croissait en beauté cette jeune vierge, semblable à la fleur du désert, qui ne s'épanouit qu'en présence du soleil, et ne se pare pas moins de vives couleurs, quoiqu'elle ne puisse être vue que par l'astre à qui elle doit la vie.

MADAME COTTIN.

THE room into which Lord Eaglesholme ushered his guest was of ample dimensions. It was lighted by four large modern windows, reaching quite to the floor. They looked towards the gardens behind the castle, and one of them serving the purpose of a door, gave access to a broad terrace, running along the wall, and terminating at each end in a flight of steps leading into the walks. The whole

interior and furniture of this apartment appeared to have been recently done up in the French taste. The walls were covered, and the windows hung with light blue silk ; and large pier glasses in all directions, produced the effect of infinitely multiplied space.

But why should time be wasted in describing what was altogether unheeded by Amherst ? His eyes were only conscious of the presence of the fair inhabitant of this princely chamber. She and Madame Bossanville sat together on a sofa near one of the windows, busily employed in embroidering from some natural flowers, tastefully disposed on a stand before them. Their heads were turned away from the door at which Lord Eaglesholme and Amherst were entering, so that they had reached the middle of the room before the ladies observed them.

Eliza saw her uncle, before she perceived that he was followed by a stranger, and springing up, she ran towards him with great liveliness, and seizing him by the hand, exclaimed,

“ Oh ! I am so glad you are come, my dear, dear uncle ; now you must kiss me twice to-day,

because I shall show you such a beautiful piece of work as ——”

Here, seeing Amherst, she stopped in unspeakable confusion ; her laughing eyes fell upon the ground, and she stood blushing beside her uncle, who still retained her hand.

Amherst gazed upon them both, and he felt as if he looked upon beings of a superior race : He, tall, manly, dignified, with just enough of the traces of age to give powerful lines, and forcible expression to his finely-formed features, his dark mustachios, his raven locks hanging in graceful abundance over his shoulders, his body gently bent over his niece, and his full black eyes regarding her with the tenderest affection : She, all loveliness, gentleness, and grace, her figure rather above the middle size of woman, but soft and delicate in its mould, clothed in a long robe of rich rose-coloured silk, easily folded over the swell of her bosom, bound round her waist by a broad golden zone clasped with brilliants, and falling over her person in ample folds of drapery, covering an under garment of white embossed silk. Her hair, radiant as the sun, partly thrown aside from her alabaster forehead, and partly

shading it with natural ringlets, was collected behind by a golden comb and pearl loop, whence it strayed in luxuriant curls over her back, and around her beautiful neck, purer than the string of pearls that encircled it. Her oval countenance, her Grecian nose, her large and melting blue eyes, the regular arch of her eyebrows, her delicate mouth, the extreme clearness and brilliancy of her complexion, heightened by the modest confusion she now betrayed, and, above all, by that angelic expression of innocence naturally belonging to her, presented a contrast of the most interesting description, where the peculiar traits of each were relieved and brought out by those of the other.

“ Allow me, my love,” said Lord Eaglesholme, “ to introduce my friend, Mr Oakenwold, to your notice.”

Miss Malcolm half raised her eyes towards Amherst, and then dropped them again on the floor, slightly curtseying as she did so.

“ Mr Oakenwold, my Eliza, has double claims upon our hospitality and friendship. He is the son of my old friend, Sir Cable Oakenwold; and, last night, he saved your uncle’s life.”

This last piece of information acted like electricity on Miss Malcolm. “Your life, my dearest uncle!” said she, looking up with tender and breathless earnestness in his face. “Your life! Good Heavens, how came it in peril?”

“Last night,” said Lord Eaglesholme calmly, “last night, during my walk after dusk, I was set upon by two ruffians with the design of robbing, and probably of murdering me. But as I was about to engage in an unequal combat with them, Mr Oakenwold, who, it seems, was sent by my good angel to my rescue, rushed to my assistance, and though but imperfectly armed, bravely attacked one of the villains, and had nearly lost his life in defending mine.”

“Thank Heaven you are safe!” exclaimed Miss Malcolm, looking upwards, and clasping her hands with energy; then advancing quickly towards Amherst, and seizing his hand with the utmost fervour, “Oh! thanks, a thousand thanks to the preserver of my uncle!”

Amherst was enchanted. “Miss Malcolm,” said he, “the pleasure I at this present moment feel in receiving your approbation, would have more than rewarded me, had your uncle’s obliga-

tion been even as great as he is pleased to represent it. But he has forgotten to add, that in the conclusion of the combat, I should have been hurled over the cliff into the sea, had I not been saved by his ready sword. Any debt to me is thus more than balanced, and I shall ever bless the night, and the rencontre, which has been productive of sensations so delightful as those I now experience."

Miss Malcolm shuddered and grew pale, and Amherst felt her taper fingers clench his, as he mentioned the cliffs.

"Come, Eliza," said Lord Eaglesholme, "do you show Mr Oakenwold the way to the dining-room." Then turning to Madame Bossanville, an elderly lady, and apparently a foreigner, he gave her his arm; and Miss Malcolm, timid and trembling, led the way with Amherst, who had not relinquished her hand.

They crossed the hall, and entered a large and airy chamber running behind the library. It was pannelled with oak, and hung with historical and other pictures in old frames; the ceiling was subdivided into deep compartments, and strangely

decorated with rude figures of mermaids, tritons, satyrs, and other monsters, intermixed with wreaths of flowers, vine branches and grapes, and occasional coats of arms, all in high and heavily-relieved stucco. The side-board and other furniture, particularly the chairs, were all of massive carved oak, and the latter had high backs, and were fitted with red velvet cushions. The table was covered with old plate superbly embossed, and the viands and wines were rare and curious. Half a dozen servants in gorgeous liveries waited under Robertson, and Amherst observed, that when any of them was addressed, it was always in German, Spanish, Italian, or French, all of which seemed to be spoken with equal ease by Lord Eaglesholme and the ladies. The conversation at table was chiefly carried on in English, and Amherst was delighted to find, that Miss Malcolm soon began to view him with less restraint. The circumstances alluded to in her uncle's introduction of him made her already consider him almost in the light of a newly-acquired brother.

Madame Bossanville had evidently seen much

of the world, in the most respectable sense of the word. Her manners and observations showed that she had lived in the best society, and Amherst thought he could perceive the influence they had upon her pupil, whose mind gave tokens of an expansion much beyond what he was prepared to expect. He was charmed with the innocence, the artlessness, the liveliness, and the feeling she displayed, and, above all, with the warm attachment she manifested towards her uncle and Madame Bossanville. She had never known any necessity for concealing it, and it openly displayed itself in a thousand ways.

“How different,” thought Amherst, “from the cold unfeeling Miss Delassaux! how happy the man for whom such a heart may beat!”

The more he conversed with her, the more enraptured he became. She, too, seemed unconsciously to enjoy a new existence in his society.

After the conclusion of the family meal, Lord Eaglesholme, Amherst, and the ladies, rose together, and adjourned to the drawing-room, where, queen of her fairy palace, Miss Malcolm overcame her timidity, and exerted herself to please and to delight; but she seemed to have no self-

vanity to gratify by what she did. She took her Spanish guitar, and accompanying her voice, sang a number of little Italian and Spanish airs, gay as well as plaintive, with the purest taste and feeling. Amherst's eyes betrayed that she held the key of his heart, for he smiled or wept alternately just as her voice directed.

Lord Eaglesholme sat for a time absorbed in pleasing contemplation of her every action, and soothed as it were into a dream by her melody. By degrees his countenance became disturbed, an evident agitation of his whole frame succeeded, a flood of tears broke from his eyes, and striking his brow with both hands, he rushed out of the room as if his heart were bursting. Miss Malcolm stopped suddenly in the middle of the song she was singing, which, both in words and air, was of a lively character.

“ Oh ! Madame Bossanville, my poor uncle ! He has not been so for some days. I had hoped that I had succeeded in diverting him to-night.”

Throwing down her guitar on the sofa, she motioned to run after him. But a door that was heard to clang announced that he had retreated through the library to his apartments.

Madame Bossanville hastily arose, and ringing the bell, ordered Robertson, who appeared, to show Mr Oakenwold to his chamber, and wished him good night.

As Amherst was retiring by the door leading into the hall, he looked round towards the opposite one through which the ladies were retreating. Miss Malcolm also turned for a moment, and Amherst observed that she was bathed in tears. Her eyes met his. She smiled like the sun through a summer-shower, and running back towards him, held out her hand, and said, with the most bewitching artlessness,

“ Good night, Mr Oakenwold, we shall be happier I hope to-morrow.”

Amherst kissed her hand as she hastily withdrew it, and she tripped after her friend, leaving him to retire with food for a thousand mingled reflections.

In his apartment he found O’Gollochar, attended as before by his mute, (mute in reality as to him, since the man was a Spaniard,) who departed with Robertson as before. The Irishman seemed pregnant with something of which he was eager for an opportunity of being delivered ; and

the restlessness of his motions, the paleness of his countenance, and his loitering after he was told he might go, all seemed to whisper that his fears were the cause. But Amherst's train of thought at present was of too agreeable a nature for him to permit it to be disturbed by the absurdities of his servant, and, therefore, after various ineffectual attempts to begin a colloquy, he was obliged, though most unwillingly, to depart.

Amherst certainly fulfilled his servant's prediction, though from a different cause. He slept little during the night, but neither devils nor catathumpions had any share in disturbing his repose. It was the blue eye, the enchanting form, the angelic voice of the interesting Eliza, that still seemed to shoot its rays to his heart, that still danced before his imagination, that still swelled on his ears. The soft touch of her hand was still on his lips, and he felt as if it had conveyed an intoxicating fever into his veins, which, however, had more of pleasure than of pain in it. But the pleasure was of that gently stimulating kind that as effectually banishes sleep from the eyelids as pain can do. He lay awake till, fatigued with the various combinations of

thought engendered in his brain, he fell into a pleasing doze towards morning, with his senses steeped in an ecstasy, arising from the most delightful train of ideas that can be imagined.

But even his sleep was haunted ; and here, too, the angel of his waking dreams hovered around him. At one moment he was rambling with her among the thickets and wilds of the chace surrounding the castle ; at another, he was walking with her as a favoured lover on the sunny terraces of the gardens ; and again, by one of those whimsical transitions so common in dreams, bidding defiance to every attempt to trace any thing like an association, he was sitting with her in the same spot, near the temple of Venus, in the grounds of Brokenhurst-Hall, where he sat with Miss Delassaux at the time they were interrupted by the appearance of Mrs Morley. He thought he was assisting Miss Malcolm to string roses into wreaths, when suddenly Miss Delassaux appeared before them with the visage of a fury, her hair dishevelled, and intertwined with hissing adders : she sprang on them like a tigress from the thicket, and endeavoured to snatch and tear the roses : he, with some difficulty, succeeded

in frustrating her purpose, and, furious with disappointment, she drew a dagger from her bosom, and rushed at Miss Malcolm, who fled before her with shrieks of terror.

He strove with all his might to pursue, and to disarm the murderess ; but his limbs refused to move : in vain he toiled, in vain he essayed to shout for assistance ; not a step could he advance—not a sound could he utter ; the murderous weapon was about to descend upon her. The violence of his efforts seemed at once to have loosened both his limbs and his tongue. He leaped with one bound towards the wretch, and, screaming out “ Fiend ! monster ! fiend ! ” he grasped her envenomed hair, and was dragging her back from her prey, when—he awaked, and found himself on the floor, hauling O’Gollochar forcibly by the throat. The poor fellow sank down on his knees, clasped his hands together, and, with a countenance betraying the extremity of fear that appeared to have bereft him of his senses, roared out—

“ Och sweet Vargin ! Och holy St Patrick ! where is it, sweet master ?—Sweet Patrick, sweet holy Master Patrick, where’s the fiend ? where’s

the monster? where's the cacathumpion? where is it? Och, for the love of salvation, spake, Master Patrick Oakenwold, or I shall die!"

Amherst's eyes happening to glance towards a mirror opposite to him, he had a full view of the ludicrous attitudes of himself and his servant. The horrors of his dream were instantly obliterated by the absurdity of his present situation, and he could not resist smiling as he let go his hold of O'Gollochar, and began to put on his robe-de-chambre.

"Och master dear," said the Irishman, who felt somewhat relieved by seeing him smile; "tell me, tell me, is it gone?—Och tell me, tell me, is it gone?"

"What do you mean?" said Amherst.

"Och, the fiend your honour saw to be sure, the monster, the cacathumpion your honour was spaking to."

"You fool, I saw nothing of the kind," said Amherst, somewhat ashamed of himself; "I was only disturbed by a disagreeable dream."

"Faith and it doesn't matter at all at all whether your sleep was prevented by divils in dreams or divils in waking arnest—Didn't I tould ye,

that, sure as eggs is eggs, you would be bothered by some of Satan's legion in some soort o' way, if you ventured to stay all night in this here Castle Warlock? But what is one divil, or twenty divils, to the badgeration I have suffered ever sin I put my nose into it? First and foremost, I have been eternally followed by a fellow with a long face and a black muzzle—Pedro, I think they call him; he must be something queer, for he never spakes a word; he sets me down here, and he takes me up there, and he never laves me all day, till he brings me out beyond the inner-gate at night, to show me to my bed a top o' the western tower as they call it. Then, as we were passing under the archway, the wizard Lord himself rushed by us from behind like a whirlwind, and where he went to, Heaven knows; then, as we are crossing the inner-court, I sees a tall giant, all in white, standing up in the moonshine again the wall—he was a good sixteen feet high, plase your Honour—'What in the name of goodness is that yonder, Pedro?' says I—But, when I looked round, Pedro was gone, and I hear him shutting the gate behind me. So I looks at the apparition, and offers to

go past him, houlding up the lantern in my hand, when stride—stride—stride—he crosses the court afore me in a couple of steps; and, och! would you believe it, dear master, he had an atomy's skull on his shoulders by way of a head, or may I never see Ireland again! and he nodded at me, and grinned so, that I gave a groan, and sounded outright upon the flags. The outlandish man at the gate came out of his house, and lifted me up, and lit my lantern again, and helped me up to my chamber at the top of the narrow winding stair.

“ So I goes to bed, and lies quaking for a while, until I, somehow or other, falls asleep; but I hadn't lain long when I was awakened by an earthquake that shook the whole tower, and a smoke and a sulphureous smell, enough to throttle me—So I looks out from under the bed-clothes, and I sees a light upon the wall opposite to me, then bounce comes a great open-mouthed crocodile across my eyes, with a divil riding upon his back—then brush comes a witch riding upon a broom—then hiss comes a great big serpent—then pell-mell comes a crowd of divils and monsters of all sorts, cacathumpions and all—and

there was such a flashing of lightning, and rolling of thunder, over my head, that I burst into a parfit parforation ;—then all at once the room was dark, and I hears them tittering and laughing, no doubt, as they soared away across the battlements of the castle. Och ! Master, sure ye won't stay here any longer, to have the very souls frightened out of our bodies at this rate."

Amherst laughed heartily whilst his servant gave him this long detail of his miseries with the most rueful countenance. He at once saw that the domestics had been amusing themselves at his expence, their tricks having been probably suggested by the well known reports of the country, with which they doubtless suspected his mind to be already crammed. He kept his suspicions to himself, however, as he thought it not unlikely that, if O'Gollochar were once brought to believe that the whole had been the effect of a conspiracy against him, he might perhaps take summary vengeance upon the actors the next time they should try it, and he did not relish the idea of his valet creating a squabble in the castle. He therefore tried to persuade him that he must have been deceived by fancy, or by

a dream. But the Irishman still stoutly maintained that he had seen a real spectre in the yard, and genuine hobgoblins in his sleeping apartment; and he concluded by again earnestly entreating his master to leave the castle and return to Sanderson Mains, "where every thing was so cozy."

"Why, O'Gollochar," said Amherst, "I suspect Duncan Brouster's punch-bowl is at the bottom of all this; you want to get back to the flesh-pots of Egypt."

"Faith now and as to that, master," said Cornelius, "we are well enough off here; we have mait and drink enough yonder below, in the servants' hall, but the not a cratur can talk a mouthful of sense to saison it; to be sure, there is Miss Malcolm's maid, Mamselle Spindle, or Pingle, or Pringle, or some such outlandish name, as pretty a girl as ever I see, an she had only been born in Ireland; she tried to spake to me in English when all the rest were as dumb as King William's statute in Dame Street, and what with our tongues and our eyes, and maybe our fingers too—for we had a hold of one another's hands two or three times—we managed to be very merry to-

gether, till her young lady's bell called her, though that fellow Pedro seemed to be jealous of me, and was main glad to get her away. Faith she is the only little article I should be sorry to lave in this same enchanted castle."

"Well, O'Gollochar, you must e'en try to amuse yourself with her the best way you can for some days, for I have already told you that the duration of my stay here will depend upon circumstances, and I am not to be diverted from my intention by your foolish fancies."

Poor O'Gollochar looked piteously in his face; but he said not a word more, for he saw his master was determined.

CHAPTER XIII.

Bid me discourse. I will delight thine ear,
 Or like a fairy trip upon the green ;
 Or like a nymph with bright and flowing hair
 Dance on the sands, and yet no footing seen.

SHAKESPEARE'S *Songs.*

Seule de la nature elle a su le langage
 Elle embellit son art, elle en changea les lois ;
 L'esprit, le sentiment, le gout fut son partage ;
 L'amour fut dans ses yeux, et parla par sa voix.

VOLTAIRE.

AMHERST descended as soon as he was dressed. When he had reached the hall, his feet somehow or other inclined to carry him towards the drawing-room. But, reflecting that the apartment was more particularly appropriated to Miss Malcolm and her friend, Madame Bossanville, delicacy forbade him to intrude upon them at so early an hour on so short an acquaintance, and he checked his steps. He looked at the door leading to it with a longing eye, however. It

was unfastened, and even an inch or two ajar, as if inviting him to enter. He thought of the delights of the previous evening, and why the recollection of them should have made him sigh it is not easy to conceive, but sigh he certainly did. He then thought of turning his steps towards the library; but he felt as if there was a fascination in the spot, and he could not leave it.

“Pshaw!” said he, “I have no head for reading this morning; I’ll walk here till somebody appears to announce breakfast.”

He took a single turn in the hall—he tried to interest himself with its grandeur, and with the curiosities it contained; but the hall and its ornaments had lost their relish for him. He now loitered up and down, altogether regardless of what had so powerfully arrested his attention but the day before. His whole soul was in the drawing-room. Again he stopped, almost unconsciously, to contemplate the door that led to it; it moved—it was gently opened to its full width, and Miss Malcolm, dressed in a hat and mantle, as if prepared for a walk, came tripping forth in all the blushing loveliness of Aurora herself. She seemed at first to hesitate for a moment, but it

was only for a moment, for immediately afterwards she came smiling towards Amherst, and exchanged the compliments and inquiries of the morning with him, in a manner at once modest, easy, artless, and kind. Amherst's heart expanded at the sight of her, like the disk of the sun-flower when it opens its bosom to the first ray of the morning; the vapours which had chilled it fled at her approach, and his eyes sparkled with a joy he had no desire to conceal. He inquired for Lord Eaglesholme.

“ I am just going to see how my uncle is,” said she with an air of seriousness. “ He does not always sleep well, and when he happens to be agitated, as he was last night, he sometimes ——” Here she paused, as if she suspected that she might be saying too much about him to a stranger. “ But,” added she, “ if I should find you here when I return, Mr Oakenwold, I hope I shall have it in my power to tell you that he is well.”

So saying, she curtsied and moved towards the door leading to the library, her affection for her uncle manifesting itself in her very steps, for, though so far from his apartment, she already

prepared herself, by moving on tiptoe, for approaching his bed with the least possible noise, so as not to disturb him.

Amherst looked after her with rapture, and her image continued to fill his soul, even when she had disappeared. "How amiable," thought he, "that anxiety for her uncle ! What a blessing is it for him to have a comforting angel like this to pour balm into his wounds !" He then thought of the sudden pause she had made when talking about him. He coupled her words with the circumstance of Lord Eaglesholme having hurried out of the room the previous night, and with that of his servant having seen him crossing the courtyard ; and recollecting his own rencontre with him on the cliffs, he could not doubt that she meant to have added, that he sometimes spent the night in the open air. His thoughts were deeply occupied with this mysterious conduct of his host, when he heard the fairy tread of Miss Malcolm, who again appeared advancing towards him on tiptoe.

"He still sleeps, Mr Oakenwold," said she in a whisper ; "I kissed his brow, yet he stirred not ; I trust he will be quite well at breakfast."

Then assuming a gayer air, “ Will you walk this morning ?” said she. “ Madame Bossanville and I are going into the garden, shall I show you my flowers ?”

Amherst gladly accepted so agreeable an invitation ; and his heart bounding with pleasure, he glided after Miss Malcolm through the chamber which propriety had formerly made him consider as sacred. There he found Madame Bossanville, who laid down her book, and rose to receive him with kind greetings. Amherst opened the glass-door for the ladies, and Eliza giving her arm with great solicitude to her friend, whose steps were feeble and infirm, the trio issued upon the terrace.

The morning was fresh and beautiful. All nature was in unison with Amherst’s feelings ; and all his thoughts and expressions partook of the stirring ecstasy of his heart. The fair Eliza listened to him with delight, as he expatiated on the varied beauties of the scenery, on the calm serenity of the lake, and the richness of the surrounding woods and green lawns, diversifying the shores of the bay, as the views opened on them in succession, through the evergreens of the gardens.

She seemed to enjoy something greatly beyond the mere satisfaction, arising from the praise bestowed on the spot she loved so well ; much was perhaps owing to the person who approved, that his approval was so very sweet to her. She led him from one point to another, until Madame Bossanville, perceiving that her young friend's motions were fettered by care for her, proposed to sit down on a bench to rest for a while, until Miss Malcolm should make the tour of the gardens with Mr Oakenwold.

Eager as Eliza was to exhibit all their beauties to Amherst, her apprehension lest Madame Bossanville's proposal should have arisen from any sudden increase of suffering, instantly robbed her countenance of its smiles, and she hastily inquired with serious earnestness if any thing was the matter.

“ Nothing, indeed, my love,” said Madame Bossanville ; “ at least nothing more than usual ; but I should wish Mr Oakenwold to see all these walks before breakfast, which he cannot possibly do if condemned to my crawling pace. Besides, you know, I am partial to this seat, and generally rest a while here.”

“ I know you are particularly fond of this seat,” said Miss Malcolm with apparent relief. “ Come, then, Mr Oakenwold, we shall soon be back.” And tripping off light as a zephyr, Amherst bounded after her.

Miss Malcolm stopped for a few moments at every spot and every object that had ever given pleasure to herself. She pointed out their several charms in animated language, and waited his reply, as if she wished to estimate the value of her own judgment by the test of that he should pronounce. Each particular scene, every sheltered nook, every favourite point of view, or plant, or flower, was shown to him in turn ; and as he was far from feeling any inclination to be fastidious at that instant, all Miss Malcolm’s admiration was re-echoed with interest by the enthusiastic Amherst. Every thing in succession yielded delight to their happy and congenial minds.

“ I can’t tell how it is, Mr Oakenwold,” said the artless girl ; “ but I feel as if every thing had new beauties for me this morning. The sun looks so smiling, and the lake is so peaceful ; the very water-fowl seem to have more than usual enjoyment in their pure element ; see how the light

glances from their white wings as they soar. How bright the reflection of their fair bosoms as they rest on the liquid mirror ! and how the water sparkles as they disturb its placid surface by gently dipping into it as they fly !—How often have I rambled round these terrace-walks, yet never before have I seen nature under circumstances so happy or effects so lovely !”

“ I feel all that you express, Miss Malcolm, and more than I can myself express,” said Amherst, gazing on her with rapture ; “ my feelings are more poignantly exquisite at this moment than any I ever before experienced. But my heart tells me that it is your presence, and your enthusiastic love of nature, that augments my present ecstasy, by harmonizing with it, and by bestowing additional charms on every thing around me.”

Miss Malcolm blushed and was silent ; she hastily walked on towards a mount near the end of the promontory, whence they enjoyed a view of the castle.

“ If you are an amateur in drawing, Mr Oakwold,” said she, “ here is a fine subject for your pencil.”

Amherst confessed that he was much attached to that amusement.

“Is not this a noble composition?” continued she—“the towers and battlements of the old chateau, stretching across in broad masses, backed by those groupes of ancient trees, and those beautiful swelling distances and softly tinted woods. The blue waters of the lake, seen trembling on either side of it through the tall intervening evergreens, and, to complete the picture, these grand and singularly twisted pines shooting up from this mass of rich foliage, and these groupes of holly-hocks and other broad-leaved plants, wildly disposed among them,—is not the whole charming?”

“It is indeed magnificent,” said Amherst; “and you describe its features with so much animation, that you cannot have neglected to transfer it to your portfolio. May I hope to be permitted to see it?”

“Oh, I am but a novice in the art, Mr Oakenwold; but you shall see all my attempts, if you will condescend to look at them. I shall benefit by your remarks, and perhaps you will be good-natured enough to give me some lessons. It

will be quite delightful to sketch with a companion."

Amherst admired her perfect innocence. "Though I shall prove but a wretched instructor," said he, "the pleasure of having such a pupil is too great a temptation for me not to make the attempt. What would I not attempt, indeed, that would procure me the enjoyment of Miss Malcolm's conversation?"

"Well," said Eliza, blushing, "I shall keep you to your promise, and some time, when you are quite disengaged, I shall claim your escort into the chace, and benefit by your taste in selecting a subject for my first lesson. But we must hasten to join my dear Madame Bossanville; I have shamefully forgotten her in my own happiness, and have left her longer alone than I should have done." And saying so, she again tripped away towards that part of the gardens where they had left her aged friend.

They had no sooner entered the castle, than Miss Malcolm again went on tiptoe to her uncle's apartment. She soon returned walking with him hand in hand. Her countenance glowed with smiles, that were but coldly reflected from the

surface of his, like the sun-beam from a frozen lake, and deep melancholy was underneath. His Lordship's salutations and inquiries were kind, though his words were delivered with a pensive manner, and in a languid tone, as if with considerable effort. Miss Malcolm's conversation, as they sat down to breakfast, was playful, and evidently intended to amuse her uncle. Amherst saw her object, and joined his endeavours to hers. The young lady no sooner perceived that he was really successful in his attempts to engage him, than she became silent; her looks were anxiously divided between Amherst and her uncle, and her eyes glistened with pleasure, as she observed Lord Eaglesholme's grief-worn expression gradually yielding to the interest he felt in those topics Amherst already knew how to select, as most attractive to him. Such was the effect of his endeavours, that before the meal was at an end, his Lordship's gloom seemed to have been in a great measure dispelled.

As the ladies rose from table, and as Amherst was opening the door for them, he reminded Miss Malcolm of their proposed drawing excursion,

for which the day seemed to be peculiarly favourable.

“ Oh ! Mr Oakenwold,” replied she in a whisper, but with the utmost energy of manner, “ another time, if you please. Leave not my uncle whilst you see that he seems to enjoy your company. You have done him more good than I can describe. Even I, much as he loves me, could not have made him forget his miseries, as you have done this morning. Indeed,” added she, with a sigh, whilst the tears trembled in her eyes, “ indeed, I sometimes think that the sight of me, somehow or other, augments his woe. Good-bye, till dinner. I feel I sacrifice much in resigning your society so long ; but what will I not sacrifice for so good an uncle ? Leave him not, I beseech you.”

Amherst hastily took her hand, and sealed a promise upon it. She had acknowledged that she was making a sacrifice, and that confession was like the music of Heaven to his ears.

“ Yes, sweet angel !” said he in soliloquy, as he turned back into the room ; “ yes, I will do thy bidding. To win thy favour I would tax

my talents, my ingenuity, and my patience to the utmost stretch. Were your uncle more stern than Pluto himself, I could bend myself to please him."

CHAPTER XIV.

That which showeth them to be wise, is the gathering of principles out of their particular experiments.

HOOVER.

What drugs, what charms,
What conjuration, and what mighty magic?

SHAKESPEARE.

THE chief object of Lord Eaglesholme's pursuits at this time was a developement of the wonders of electricity, in which he thought he had made some important discoveries, but from the want of an intelligent assistant, it had not been in his power to put them to the test of a well-regulated series of experiments. He communicated his thoughts to Amherst, and after a long, and, to Lord Eaglesholme, a very interesting discussion, they agreed to prosecute the subject together. They proceeded, therefore, to the room within the library, where they arranged the

machines and the necessary implements, and began seriously to work.

They had been engaged in their operations with much keenness during the greater part of the day, and for some particular purpose connected with what they were about, they had carried a long, and almost invisible wire, from the prime conductor of the machine in the inner-room, through the whole length of the library into the anti-room,—when it so happened that Cornelius O’Gollochar, who had somehow escaped from the watchful Pedro, having thought of something he had to do in his master’s room, came into the stair for the purpose of ascending to it; and the door of the hall being accidentally open, he was induced to enter it, perhaps from curiosity, or, it may be more likely, with the hope of meeting Mademoiselle Epingle, Miss Malcolm’s French maid, who had succeeded in wounding his heart, as much as her mistress had that of his master. After walking about the hall for some time, gaping and wondering at the different rarities it contained, he was led to wander into the anti-room also, and peeping into the library, he, with utter astonishment, and no small horror,

saw through the distant door, which was wide open, his master engaged with the necromantic Lord, in what he conceived to be some horrible incantation.

He could hardly believe his eyes. Lord Eaglesholme was in his black cap, and cinnamon-coloured silk robe. Amherst, for more ease to himself, had thrown off his own habiliments, and had arrayed himself in a large black silk *robe-de-chambre*, and a high fur-cap from his Lordship's wardrobe, and was employed in turning the winch of the machine with great industry.

“Och! sure enough he's in for it!” said O'Gollochar to himself. “Och, ullaloo! who could have thought that he would have so soon sould himself to the divil, as to be working his work at this rate already? Derry, zounds, what can that be that they are doing? Whirling the air in a glass-churn, as I'm a true born Irishman! Faith, now, I'll engage some poor ould woman's cow will be well drawn afore they take butter out of that barrel-full of emptiness. I wonder, after all, what sort of stuff the butter-milk will be. By the towers of the seven churches, and St Paddy to boot, I never could have believed this

though I seen it. It is enough to make one's hair stand on end, though it were a wig itself!"

Horrified as he was by what he conceived to be the hellish operations he saw going on, his solicitude for his master led him to wish to obtain a more accurate view of them. He moved, therefore, a little nearer to the library-door. But just as he had mounted a chair, accident brought him into contact with part of the apparatus, where the electric fluid had been accumulating, and he received so tremendous a shock, that he was thrown down backwards on the floor, where he lay for some moments stunned.

The noise of his fall brought the operators in a great hurry to the spot, where Amherst, to his no small surprise, found his servant lying on his back, with the chair above him. When his senses had returned, and he saw them standing over him, he began vociferating for mercy, in the idea that he was to be put to instant death, or to be otherwise dreadfully punished, for having witnessed their magical labours.

“Och! good gentleman conjurors, dears! let me go safe, and I'll never spy your churning again. I'll take my Bible oath, backwards if

you like, that I'll never blab to a soul that I was in your dairy, or that I caught you making butter. Och! mighty Lord, don't touch me with that magic wand, or may be you'll turn me into a mad-bull. Och, dear, dear Master Amherst Oakenwold, have mercy on me!"

"Why, O'Gollochar," said Amherst, "you seem to have changed yourself into a mad-bull, if we may judge by your roaring. Why do you bellow so? And what is the cause of my finding you in this situation?"

O'Gollochar explained, as well as his perturbation would permit, how he had been led by curiosity into the apartment where they found him, and where his attention had been arrested by their operations.

"But, sure, your honour," added he, "I've been handsomely punished. I'll never be prying any more after your conjurations. I've had such a thunderbolt as might have killed a horse, let alone an ass, as myself was, for coming here. I'm sure it went through my very heart, and demolished all my ten toes into the bargain."

So saying, he walked limping away, Amherst endeavouring to stifle his laughter until his man

was sufficiently far out of hearing, when he was compelled to give full vent to it. Even the grave Lord Eaglesholme could not resist smiling at the ridiculous nature of the accident.

“ I know,” said he, “ I am supposed by the ignorant peasants to be a conjuror, but this is the first time I was ever told so to my face. Your servant seems to have been saturated with the popular prejudice.”

“ He has been so, my Lord,” said Amherst, “ and your domestics seem to have very speedily discovered his weakness, for they have been already amusing themselves at his expence ;” and he related all that O’Gollochar had told him in the morning.

Lord Eaglesholme smiled again. “ I see,” said he, “ they have been taking liberties with my magic lanthorn. But I must order Robertson to put an immediate stop to their amusement, otherwise the poor fellow may be frightened out of the house.”

The occupations of the day, and the success of their experiments, which, as far as they had gone, had all tended to establish his previous theories, conspired to put Lord Eaglesholme in

better spirits at dinner than his niece had ever before observed him enjoy. He even gave the ladies an account of the conclusion of their day's labours, and the ludicrous downfall of Amherst's servant. Miss Malcolm was perfectly overjoyed with the change his short acquaintance with Amherst had wrought upon her uncle. Numerous were the looks of approbation, and of thanks, she threw towards him, and he felt that his exertions were more than rewarded.

As he handed her to the drawing-room, she whispered in his ear, " Thanks, thanks, a thousand thanks, Mr Oakenwold! You saved my uncle's life, but now you are engaged in saving his mind!"

This evening was a most delightful one to Amherst. He felt himself more at ease in the apartment where reigned the queen of his heart. He was a welcome guest there, and the conviction that he was so, produced a flow of spirits, that made him doubly agreeable. He talked on general literature, and was amazed to discover the extent of Miss Malcolm's reading, and delighted to find that her critical taste so much resembled his own. He claimed her pro-

mise of showing him her drawings. In this art she was nearly self-taught, for Madame Bossanville's knowledge in it went no farther than its first principles. Yet her progress seemed wonderful in his eyes. She looked over his shoulder, and listened to his hints with an earnestness that delighted him; and the portfolio was shut, with a renewal of the determination, on the part of Eliza, to put his instructions in practice under his own eye.

Lord Eaglesholme sat down to chess with Madame Bossanville, and Miss Malcolm took up her Spanish guitar, and sang to Amherst, who occasionally supported her, and made her acquainted with a number of beautiful songs. Who has not felt the solace experienced by the lover, in uniting his voice with that of her he loves? 'Tis like an union of souls. In this instance both felt the full rapture of it. To Miss Malcolm it was a newly-discovered Heaven.

How delightfully have you made me spend this evening, Mr Oakenwold!" said this interesting child of nature to Amherst as they separated for the night. "I shall dream of some of the airs you have taught me, and shall long till the

arrival of to-morrow evening enables us to sing them again !”

When Amherst got to his apartment, he found O’Gollochar in a mixed humour. His spirits had been kept up all the evening by the lively Mademoiselle Epingle, to whom a tall handsome Irishman was a powerful attraction, and whose *gaiété de cœur* had banished every thought of necromancers and hobgoblins from his mind. But now the hour of his retirement to the lonely chamber at the top of the western tower approached, and his heart was fast sinking within him. Amherst rallied him on his apprehensions, and assured him that his sleep would this night be undisturbed. And, at last, after a thousand pretences for loitering a few moments longer, he was compelled to wind up his courage to the desperate effort. He shut the door, and Amherst heard his footsteps falling heavily and unwillingly along the passage, until the sound died upon his ear.

Amherst’s pillow was again haunted by the angel who hovered over it the night before, but her visits were unattended by the disagreeable fancies which then possessed him. He was en-

joying delicious repose when O'Gollochar came to him in the morning, and he was glad to observe, by his servant's face, that he also had been left unpersecuted.

“ Faith, and I was much obligated to your honour for keeping me quiet last night. There not a ghost or goblin trouble me at all, at all. I see,” said he, with a knowing wink, “ there is no harm in having a friend at court any way.”

And now Amherst's days glided on, one after the other, each more replete with happiness than the preceding. His mornings were delightfully spent in walking with Miss Malcolm, and in assisting her in the innocent amusement of trimming and arranging her plants and flowers. His forenoons were devoted to Lord Eaglesholme, to whom he had already made himself absolutely necessary; and the evenings were given up to the enchantment of his niece's conversation and music, which last had lost all relish for her, when unaccompanied by the fine tones of his mellow and manly voice. The more he was known by Lord Eaglesholme and the ladies, the more pleasure they seemed to take in his society. Even Madame Bossanville, to whose little comforts he

was studiously attentive, seemed always happy when she could engage him in conversation, and she frequently declared that he was not only a most agreeable young man, but that he was as well informed as he was agreeable, and as highly principled as well informed. In short, she protested that she had never met with his equal.

“ My dear Madame Bossanville, I am so glad you think well of him,” said Miss Malcolm to her after she had been loud in his commendations ; “ I, for my part, love him as I am sure I should have loved a brother if I had had one.”

“ A very proper kind of attachment,” said Madame Bossanville gravely. “ He seems, indeed, to have a more than brotherly affection towards you.”

“ Do you think so ?” replied Eliza with energy ; “ do you really think so ? Well, I hope I may continue to deserve his love.”

The eagerness of Lord Eaglesholme’s philosophical pursuits, assisted and fostered as his investigations now were by Amherst, continued to have the happiest effect on his mind. His sorrows, of whatever nature they were, seemed to be perfectly excluded from his thoughts. at least during

the day. It was generally when evening approached, and when his niece was doing all in her power to charm and to delight him, that some recollections would apparently cross him, and overcast the serenity of his countenance with a shade of melancholy, generally producing an agitation similar to that which took place on the first evening of Amherst's visit. On these occasions he left the room, and Amherst, whose anxiety about him led him occasionally to watch at his windows after he had retired to his apartment, saw him more than once rushing across the court-yard in his way out of the castle, and he had reason to believe that, in defiance of storms, he wandered at such times for the greater part of the night.

Whether he had any particular object that led him to follow this practice, or whether he flew from the painful thoughts of a restless pillow to lose them among the roaring elements, he could not comprehend. Could it be, that the high and honourable-minded noble, whose sentiments breathed nothing but purity, and whose heart seemed to be warmed by every human virtue,—could it be possible, that such a man had ever been guilty of crimes, that could now so load his

conscience as to drive him from his bed at midnight, to roam under the canopy of heaven? Misfortunes of the very worst description that flesh is heir to, could not account for a soul so ill at ease as his appeared to be. Yet Amherst could not bring his mind to give place for even the momentary reception of the dreadful suspicion, suggested by the alternative.

CHAPTER XV.

Spesso amor sotto la forma
 D'amista ride, e s'asconde,
 Ma nel suo diverso aspetto,
 Sempre egli è l'istesso amor.

BONDELMONTI.

Seemed all on fire that chapel proud,
 Where Roslin's chiefs uncoffined lie ;
 Each baron, for a sable shroud,
 Sheathed in his iron panoply.

— — — — —
 There are twenty of Roslin's barons bold
 Lie buried within that proud chapelle ;
 Each one the holy vault doth hold.

Lay of the Last Minstrel.

AMHERST was so much occupied in assisting Lord Eaglesholme with his electrical experiments, that more than a week elapsed before he and Miss Malcolm could carry their projected sketching excursion into effect. One morning, however, his Lordship told him, much to his satisfaction, that he was to be engaged ; and, arm in arm, they left the castle together.

Having got beyond the drawbridge, they bounded over the lawn, the motion of their steps corresponding to the dance of their spirits, which expanded with the freedom they now enjoyed. Their tongues, too, gave a ready utterance to their thoughts. Where all was purity and innocence, there was little occasion for concealment.

Ever since Amherst first saw Miss Malcolm, his love for her had been betraying itself in his every action and expression. Although she felt his attentions highly pleasing, her inexperience had never permitted her to impute them to the tender cause, from which they in reality proceeded. For her part, she, who had never known what it was to hide her affection from the only two persons who had claims on it, was equally open in manifesting that she now felt daily growing in her bosom for Amherst, what she believed to be friendship, or an attachment in no respect different from the affection she bore her uncle and Madame Bossanville. But Amherst, blest with all the quick-sightedness naturally belonging to an ardent passion, watched and recorded every artless expression that escaped the lips of the ingenuous girl. He saw with inward rapture that

she loved him, though unconsciously, and he only waited the favourable moment, when he might declare the state of his heart to her, and open her eyes to a proper understanding of her own.

They passed from the peninsula, and entered a thick wood, following a track rather worn by the deer than by human foot. It wound through the undergrowth of hazle, holly, and juniper, and here and there the lesser boughs of the bushes on each side appeared to have been twisted and peeled by the frolicksome bucks, and the more open and softer spots, occurring occasionally, bore deep traces of their wanton sports, or sylvan war, being trampled in many a ring.

The path that at first descended gradually, became steeper as they advanced, until at length the declivity increased so much, that the adventurous pair were obliged to avail themselves of the bushes, to assist them in clambering down. The rocks now appeared, and, protruding themselves from the soil, reared their bold angular masses over the glen. Their way lay down a cleft between two of these, and intrepid as Eliza showed herself, the exertion of all Amherst's skill and care became necessary to prevent accident. It is needless to

say how very delightful he felt the precious charge, or to tell how his heart beat, when, for her better security, in some of the more hazardous parts of the descent, he planted himself firmly, to receive her delicate form, as she slipped into his arms from above, or how his blood ran in riot from his hand to its fountainhead, every time she grasped it for greater security. It is enough to tell, that they at last reached the bottom in safety, and issued from among the tangled brushwood, into one of the most bewitching scenes ever fancied.

They had dropped, as it were, from the clouds into what might be called the head of the glen, where it was closed by a barrier of rock of immense height, running entirely across it, and presenting an abrupt and broken wall towards the hollow valley, that wound from its base, for nearly a mile, until it opened out to the sea. The cliffs towered up on all sides, in detached castellated masses, from the luxuriant bushes, and tall timber trees, growing wherever they could find nourishment. Having expanded into two semi-circles, they again approached each other a little way farther down, where the glen was contracted

to a narrow pass, thus forming a superb natural enclosure, of about two or three hundred yards in diameter.

Bursting from the thick foliage of the woods, the river threw itself over the precipice in front, in one white sheet of foam, losing itself behind the trees of an interposing ledge; there being broken in its fall, it again poured out in several contending columns, to be received in the clear pool at the bottom. From thence the stream ran wide and deep, towards the point of a ledge of rock, pushing itself forward from under the steeps they had descended, and rose, fringed with bushes and vegetation, about sixty feet above the level bottom; and the river, being thus diverted from the straight course, swept round by the base of the precipices on the opposite side, and, after embracing a green semicircular level, it disappeared through the narrow pass behind them.

Nothing could be more wild and solitary than this romantic and secluded spot. The thick short grass rendered it a favourite haunt of the deer. But Amherst might have fancied it fairy land, nay, he might have supposed, that he and his fair companion were the first happy mortals whose fa-

voured feet had ever been permitted to penetrate into it, had not the illusion been disturbed by the presence of a small Gothic chapel, standing on the low platform of rock, between them and the waterfall. The little building was seen in perspective, and the gable that looked towards them presented a large Gothic window, where the mullions and tracery still remained entire, intertwined with the tendrils of the ivy every where clothing the walls. Over this were the remains of a ruined belfry, where still hung the bell, though now silent, save when storms awakened its partial and unwilling tones.

A burying-ground occupied the rest of the natural terrace, and amongst the broken grave-stones an antique cross, of large dimensions, appeared leaning to one side, partly shaken from the ruined steps which propped its shaft. A stair, cut in the side of the rock, led up to the burying-ground, and to the chapel, that was entered by a door at the farther end.

Their feet no sooner pressed the velvet sod, than Eliza, her bosom heaving, and her cheeks glowing with the exertion she had just undergone, looked eagerly in Amherst's face, to watch

the effect produced on him by a scene at once so lovely, so wild, and so sequestered. He gazed around him in silent admiration, his countenance eloquently expressing the emotions of delight awakened by the contemplation of it. His silence, however, soon gave way to one of those ecstasies, usual with him on such occasions; his admiration burst forth in the full and flowing poetry of language; and he praised the good taste that had selected so exquisite a subject for the pencil. He hastened to choose a point of view, where the various objects formed the happiest composition.

A groupe of grand trees rose from the level ground, near the base of the rocks forming the pass through which the river escaped; from behind them, the whole amphitheatre was finely commanded. Here Amherst threw a shawl over some flat stones he had piled up, and formed a seat for his pupil.

“But before we begin,” said he, “I have a great curiosity to examine the chapel somewhat nearer.”

“I shall be glad to go there with you,” said Miss Malcolm; “for my hands still tremble from the agitation of the descent hither, and require a little time to render them steady enough

to begin my work. It has long ceased to be used for the purposes of religion," said she, as she bent her steps towards the rock on which it stood; "but it has been prevented from falling into utter ruin, owing to its covering the vault, where lie the mortal remains of the Lords of Eaglesholme, the massive stone roof having been so far repaired from time to time, as to keep it from falling in, though its windows have long ceased to possess the stained glass that once, no doubt, decorated them. The tomb-stones, scattered over the burying-ground, are chiefly those of the followers of the house, whose departed members sleep in the dark chamber within it."

By this time they had climbed the steps cut in the side of the rock, and winding through shrubs and mantling ivy of the wildest growth, scrambling everywhere around it. They lingered for a time among the broken and moss-covered grave-stones, picturesquely intermingled with large plants of burdock and nightshade. But the attempts of friendship, or of affection, to rescue a beloved or revered name from that oblivion to which the mass of mankind are hastening, were here, alas! already defeated, the faded hierogly-

phics still marking, but no longer distinguishing them.

They then turned towards the door of the chapel, which they found locked; but by the help of a large stone, placed by Amherst close to the wall, they were enabled to raise themselves to a level with one of the narrow windows in the side of the building, through which they had a view into the interior. The walls, and groined roof, exhibited all the rich carving and tracery of Gothic architecture, and many a grotesque and uncouth figure seemed to groan under the weight of stone it supported. In various recesses round the sides, lay the rude effigies of the perhaps still ruder warriors of the house of Eaglesholme, stretched at length under arched canopies, ornamented with finely executed foliage, and having the insignia of heraldry blended with many a pious text. At one end had stood that altar, at which masses had been sung for them, and at which, perhaps, had their bequests still remained in force, masses should have even now been chaunting for their guilty souls. There was something solemn and imposing in the sight.

Four great iron-rings, in a large oblong flag-

stone, in the centre of the pavement, indicated the mouth of the vault, through which the coffins of the members of the house of Eaglesholme had been lowered for many successive generations, and where those, who, once clad in silk, and furs, and cloth of gold, ran the gay round of unrestrained pleasure, or, cased in polished steel, and bearing proudly on their barbed steeds, had roused the din of arms, now mouldered into worthless dust,—themselves, and all their mighty deeds long since forgotten. No sound was heard, but the confused rush of the waterfall, coming mellowed on the ear, from the thick intervening foliage. All would have been still and motionless within, had not a little robin appeared, hopping proudly over the recumbent effigies of the heroes, turning up his jealous little eye toward the window occupied by the prying visitors, and rearing his tiny head, and tuning his feeble pipe of defiance, as if in mockery of the angry passions, the deadly feuds, and the warlike deeds of the mighty dead below.

After Amherst had satisfied his curiosity, he and his fair companion hastened to return to their station under the trees, where they were

soon busily employed in the work of the day. The industry of Eliza was indefatigable, and Amherst was as unwearied in his attention. How sweet were their respective tasks, and how sweetly were they seasoned by tender converse ! The result of his instruction, as well as of his soft whispers, was highly satisfactory to both ; but whether the successful sketch produced by the taper fingers of Eliza, or the ideas excited in both their bosoms by their mutual expressions, had the greater share in creating their pleasurable sensations, the reader, who may have been similarly engaged, may determine.

The day was now far spent, and Eliza was giving the last touches to her drawing, when she recollected, that at the time she last visited the glen with her uncle, she had observed a profusion of a favourite wild-flower, growing high up in one of the ravines, on the other side of the glen, by which she had at that time descended.

Having expressed her regret, that the day was now too far spent, to admit of her clambering to the spot to gather some of it,

“ Describe the place to me,” said he, “ and I

will climb thither, and fetch you some before you finish the work of that window."

"I shall, indeed, feel much obliged to you," replied she. "Then, since you are so good, you will find the remains of stepping-stones opposite to the chapel rock, on which you may cross the river to the farther bank, and just behind yonder thorn, you will find a cleft in the crag, that will lead you up to one of the loveliest haunts of Flora you ever beheld."

Eager to obey her wishes, Amherst darted off. She saw him springing actively from stone to stone, as he bounded across the river, and then, his figure dived amidst the brushwood, at the bottom of the ravine she had indicated to him.

Eliza's pencil was busily employed in darkening the deep shades of the interior of the chapel, to give greater relief to the intervening mullions, the minuter parts requiring frequent examination, and occupying all her attention, when, as her eyes were carried backwards and forwards, between the drawing and the object she was delineating, they were arrested midway by the appearance of the long shadow of a human figure, advancing on the surface of the sunny lawn,

across the line they were traversing. She immediately glanced towards the side whence it proceeded, when she perceived a tall man stealing, as it were, upon her, from the thickets to the right. When her eye first caught him, he was moving on tiptoe, but he no sooner saw that he was observed, than he advanced towards her, assuming a careless, strutting gait.

Though sufficiently bold, it is easy to imagine that Miss Malcolm felt some uneasiness at the idea of being alone, on the approach of this stranger. Her thoughts passed with inconceivable rapidity. She inwardly regretted the unlucky absence of Amherst, and the recollection of the attempt on her uncle's life flashed across her mind. What was to be done? The appearance of alarm, might be the very means of begetting a real cause for it. She, therefore, continued to employ her pencil, as busily as if totally devoid of apprehension, in the hope, that the stranger would pass by without disturbing her. But she was mistaken, for after striding slowly up to within three paces of the spot where she was seated, he abruptly halted, and with his head thrown impudently to one side, and with an air

of the most consummate assurance, he began to address her.

“ A pleasant evening, young Lady. You seem to be busy.” Eliza appeared not to mind him. “ What ! drawing plans, eh ?” continued he, moving a step nearer to her as he said so, that he might command a view of her paper. “ Methinks, you might find some better edifice to plan after, than that ricketty old mass box.”

Then, drooping his head a little, with the pretence of looking more narrowly at her drawing, he threw his eyes askance, and peered under her bonnet.

At length, a heavy gold chain, of rare and delicate workmanship, with a locket ornamented with precious stones, and letters in cypher, which she always wore round her neck, suddenly attracted his notice, and he rudely demanded,

“ Where had you that chain and locket, young woman ? I mistake if I have not had my head lanterns on it before now ; let’s have a peep at it ;” and, saying so, he, without ceremony, motioned as if to lay hold of the chain.

It was perhaps the very trepidation she was in, that had hitherto kept Eliza to her seat, but now

she started up in real terror, and retreating a step or two, with a resolution that fear alone could have inspired, she drew herself up, and looking on him with a proud and determined air, she cried,

“Dare not to touch or to approach me, Sir ! I am the niece of Lord Eaglesholme, and though apparently alone, I am not unprotected. Instantly be gone, or you will pay dearly for your insolence.”

The lofty and undaunted attitude she had assumed, her tone, and eye, seemed at first to stagger him ; but recovering himself, he looked cautiously around, and finding nobody within view to interfere with him, he bit his nether lip as if resolved on his purpose, and exclaimed, whilst his eyes flashed fire,

“Hell and the Devil ! I must, and will look at it, be ye who you may, my pretty bird !” and saying so, he sprang towards her to grasp it.

Eliza’s factitious courage having been all summoned into one effort, now gave way. She shrieked, and fled across the turf in the direction of the chapel, making for the stones by which Amherst had crossed the river. The ruffian

pursued her with all his might, and gained upon her fast. She had hardly reached the middle of the area, when he already seemed to be on the point of seizing her. She called for help in an agony of despair, for murder was in her thoughts.

The villain was in the very act of laying his impure hands on her floating drapery, when the bell of the chapel sent forth a deep knell, and the air was cleft by a loud and unearthly yell, heard far above the continued din of the waterfall, and echoing with a prolonged and piercing sound around the circle of the wooded steps. Amazement seized the wretch. He stopped, in confusion, and looked towards the chapel whence it proceeded. The dark shades of its vaulted interior were in an instant dispelled by a bright flame, rising in spiral columns to the roof, as if from the centre of the pavement. In the midst of the blaze of light appeared, through the tracery of the window, the hideous form of *the dwarfie carline o' the cove!*

She seemed supported on the thin element. She whirled her lean arms as if menacing the ruffian from his purpose, and shrieking, "Beware!" she uttered another yell more appalling

than the first, that resounded from the vaulted roof like the blast of the last dread trumpet. The villain stood aghast, as if awed by a supernatural appearance, so instantaneous and transient, and exclaiming with all the dismay of superstitious terror, "Hell and its fiends indeed!" he ran off down the glen, and quickly disappeared beyond the pass.

Eliza, who, though she had caught a glimpse of the apparition, was in too great fear of her pursuer to observe that he had left her, continued her flight as if murder was pressing at her heels. She reached the stepping-stones, and sprang from one to another with astonishing exertion. She had already gained the middle of the stream, when she saw Amherst on the opposite bank. He had heard the screams, and, impelled by the confused idea of some dreadful calamity, hastened to her assistance, and arrived just at that moment, pale with apprehension.

The next interval was much wider than those she had already cleared, the floods having removed one of the stones from its place. She hesitated for an instant, but believing her pursuer

still behind her, and seeing her protector so near, she made a violent attempt, and leaped to the opposite stone. Its surface was worn round and smooth by the action of many a winter's flood. She balanced herself with difficulty—her footing became unsteady—she quivered for an instant—and before her anxious lover could fly to her aid, she was precipitated into the stream.

It was deep and powerful, and Amherst saw her borne off before his eyes. With the utmost distraction he rushed into the water, and dashing the current aside with arms that nothing could oppose, reached her, before the buoyancy of her garments had been so far overcome as to allow of her being submerged,—caught hold of them, and bore her to the bank.

He seated her gently on the green turf, but it was some time before she recovered, so as to be able to speak. He hung over her with the most tender solicitude, and in a state of anxiety not to be described. At length she started, and threw her eyes hastily around her, as if in mortal apprehension of seeing some object of terror, but being satisfied that there was no one near her but Amherst, she clasped her hands together, and

looked up to Heaven, and then, in the anxious face of her lover, and murmuring some earnest though broken ejaculations of gratitude to both for her preservation, she sank down again exhausted by the fatigue and agitation she had undergone.

Amherst's misery was inconceivable; but it was soon relieved by her returning consciousness. She slowly regained perfect possession of herself, and he eagerly inquired into the cause of the accident. He was thunderstruck by her narration of the circumstances.

Although Eliza's view of the apparition of the chapel had been transient, and all other dread had been absorbed at the moment in the overwhelming fear of murder, that came with the ruffian who pursued her, yet it had made so strong an impression on her mind, that now, after all cause of alarm was removed, she could not think of the spectre without shuddering;—yet a faint recollection, like that of a dream, remained with her, as if it was not entirely new to her. She was far above every superstitious dread, yet to account for so strange and so sudden an appearance was impossible.

Amherst guessed, from her description, that it must have been the same mysterious being, he had three several times seen, who had thus interposed to save Miss Malcolm. He hastened to the chapel with the hope of unravelling the mystery, but he found it locked as before, and every thing in the inside remained as they had left it; nor could he perceive the marks of fire on the pavement, or on the walls.

On reaching the castle, Amherst hastened to find out Lord Eaglesholme, to whom he communicated the disastrous adventures of the day. His Lordship heard the whole particulars, with an uneasiness, strongly manifesting the extreme affection he had for his niece. When Amherst told him, how he had had the good fortune to be the means of rescuing Miss Malcolm from the stream, he grasped his hand, with a sense of gratitude, that melted him to tears.

“ My dear friend,” said he, with a more than ordinary warmth of manner, “ my dear Amherst, you seem to be fated to be the guardian angel of our family. Already have you saved me from being murdered, and now my niece has to thank

you for her life. You have made me bankrupt,— I lack the means to repay you.”

Amherst felt inwardly rejoiced at what fell from his Lordship, auguring as it did so well for his hopes. My Lord, thought he, you possess a treasure that will more than repay me for all I have done, without your being made one jot the poorer by the gift. But this was not the moment to broach such a subject. It is true, he had been sufficiently convinced, by all that passed during the day, that he already possessed the heart of the lovely and artless Eliza; and from the expressions which dropped from her as they returned homewards, he was satisfied, that gratitude had now come into alliance with love, to strengthen and to give stability to it, and had thus conspired to make her all his own. He had yet to put that question, which has made so many tremble, but which to him was pregnant with no fears of the result, and he determined to seize the first favourable opportunity, to put his happiness beyond all doubt.

Meanwhile he continued his conversation with Lord Eaglesholme, telling him what he had heard from Miss Malcolm about the extraordinary ap-

partition, which had shown itself at the window of the chapel. Lord Eaglesholme looked grave, surveyed him in silence, and then threw down his eyes to the ground, where they remained fixed for a time in profound thought.

“But this truly mysterious being is not a stranger to me, my Lord,” continued Amherst; “I have now seen her three several times, and always accompanied with circumstances perfectly inexplicable.”

He then detailed the particulars of her former appearances.—His Lordship still maintained his silence and gravity.—It was evidently a subject on which he did not wish to enter.

CHAPTER XVI.

Oh! sacred fire, that burnest mightily
In living breasts, ykindled first above
Amongst th' eternal spheres and lamping sky,
And thence poured into men, which men call love ;
Not that same which doth base affections move
In brutish mindes, and filthy lust inflame,
But that sweet fit, that does true beauty love,
And choseth virtue for his dearest dame.

SPENCER.

THEY had not sat above an hour in conversation, when they were gratified by a message from Miss Malcolm, inviting them to the drawing-room. Thither they immediately went, and had the happiness to find her already perfectly recovered, fatigue being now the only remaining effect of the accident. Her uncle's inquiries were earnest and affectionate, and he was not satisfied until he again heard the particulars from her own mouth. When she spoke of the apparition, and

eagerly begged of him to explain it, he assumed the same serious and thoughtful aspect he had shown to Amherst, met her inquiries as he had done his, and at last adroitly got rid of the subject, by adverting to Amherst's share in the adventure. This, indeed, had the desired effect. Eliza immediately became eloquent; she dwelt on the circumstances with minute detail, and gave many particulars which Amherst's modesty had induced him to keep back; and, as if the tale had been endless, she again and again reverted to it. Amherst treasured up all she said, and all she looked, and he retired to bed in the delightful certainty, that his ardent, but as yet secret passion, was requited, though unconsciously, by the lovely object of it.

Next morning he arose from a sleepless pillow. The events of the preceding day, and the anticipation of future days of bliss, had kept his eyes unclosed. He hastily dressed himself, and made his way into the gardens, where he was now in the daily habit of enjoying the society of Miss Malcolm, during her morning walk. There he met her in all her glowing beauty,—her lovely face lighted up by the angelic smile of innocence.

After he had eagerly satisfied himself, by earnest inquiries, that she had suffered nothing from the accident, he led her to a seat in a bower at the further end of the garden. There Amherst dared to tell his tender tale; and there the soft confusion, and the blushing confessions of Eliza, made him the happiest of human beings.

When their first raptures were over, and they began to talk with a little more rationality, than such a subject usually permits, they agreed upon the propriety of immediately acquainting Lord Eaglesholme with their mutual attachment; and Amherst resolved to demand an audience of him that very day.

But he was disappointed. Eliza had no sooner returned to her apartment, than her uncle entered it in a riding-dress. After making the tenderest inquiries about her health, he told her he was called to visit some upland estates, where a failure of the crops had brought distress upon the tenantry.

“Extent of territory, my dear Eliza,” said he, “has extensive duties attached to it. I have confidence in the heart, as well as in the head of Marshall, my worthy steward, who is al-

ways alive to the interests of the poor, as well as to mine ; but in a case like the present, I should not feel justified in my own mind, if I did not examine into their miseries in person. I conceive they have a right to demand this of me, for whose ancestors theirs have often bled, and but for whose hardy deeds, I perhaps should not now have possessed the glens and mountains peopled by their descendants. The length of my stay at the hunting-lodge I cannot at present determine ; it will depend on the nature and extent of the affairs I must look into ; but you, who know my habitual unwillingness to mingle in the vulgar business of men, will easily imagine, that I shall not unnecessarily delay my return. I need not tell you and Madame Bossanville, to endeavour to entertain Mr Oakenwold to the best of your power, that he may not find the castle dull in my absence, as the occupation he had with me must necessarily cease until my return, that we may both pursue it together. His society is delightful, and has become so essential to me, that I know not what I should do if he were to go away ; I hope, therefore, I shall find him here on my return."

Eliza's face was overspread with blushes, as her uncle delivered, what she felt to be so unnecessary an injunction. She stammered out, that, with the assistance of Madame Bossanville, she would do the best she could to make up to Amherst for her uncle's absence. Lord Eaglesholme, who naturally enough imputed her apparent confusion to regret at the suddenness of his departure, warmly embraced her. As they passed through the great hall, Amherst appeared, and Lord Eaglesholme shortly explained to him the necessity of his absence, and the nature of his journey; and after squeezing him kindly by the hand, and begging of him to consider himself as master of his house till his return, when he hoped to find him still his guest, he descended to the court. Marshall was already on horseback, and Lord Eaglesholme, mounting a very fine animal, with all the grace of an accomplished cavalier, rode out, followed by several attendants.

The sound of their horses' feet, echoing through the arched gateways, had hardly died away, when the eyes of Amherst and Eliza met each other, and they mutually read each other's

thoughts. All chance of an immediate explanation with Lord Eaglesholme was at an end. But neither of them felt disappointed, for, from the growing regard his Lordship had manifested towards Amherst, it was certain that there could be no objection on his part to their union.

Much as Amherst valued and respected Lord Eaglesholme, he felt little ennui during his absence, nor was he at all distressed to learn, after he had been gone about a fortnight, that circumstances compelled him to prolong his stay for another week. Before her acquaintance with Amherst, Miss Malcolm could not have believed that she could have so easily supported her uncle's absence for so long a period. But she now knew the superior force of love.

Madame Bossanville, though advanced in years, was not blind to what neither of them had the power to conceal. Ladies, particularly at her time of life, are generally pretty sharp-sighted in such matters. She spoke to her young friend on the subject, with all the tender affection of the fondest mother, and Miss Malcolm had too much candour, not to lay open her heart to the dear guardian of her youth, nor did

she hesitate to tell her of the explanation that had taken place between her and Amherst. Her disclosure was met by the fullest approbation of their mutual attachment.

Madame Bossanville's whole happiness was now centered in her pupil. She was overjoyed to find, in the solitude to which her uncle's retired habits had condemned her, that a young man so well principled, so accomplished, so agreeable as Amherst, should have been sent, as it were, by Heaven, to discover so rare and sweet a flower, in the lonely wilderness where it grew. She reflected that Lord Eaglesholme could not live for ever; that he alone of all his family remained, like the venerable tower of some goodly edifice, once large and magnificent, but now ruined and dilapidated; and that, when time should have levelled his noble form with the dust, her dear Eliza must be left without a protector. She had often had many anxious thoughts on this subject, and many a tear had glistened in her mild eye, and moistened her furrowed cheek, when at times she had gazed in silent contemplation on the innocent and beloved object of all her care, who, ignorant of the cause of her weeping, in-

creased it by her fond efforts to soothe what she supposed to be some secret affliction. She firmly believed, that much of Lord Eaglesholme's melancholy and internal suffering, arose from such reflections. As she naturally enough imagined, that he was equally quick-sighted with herself, in perceiving the beginning and growth of the mutual passion between the young people, and as she knew that he entertained the highest opinion of Mr Oakenwold, she took it very naturally for granted, that much of that improvement she had observed in the ordinary state of his Lordship's spirits, since Amherst had been an inmate of the castle, was to be attributed, to his prospect of the future happiness of his beloved niece, being secured by so desirable a matrimonial connection. It cannot be matter of wonder then, that Madame Bossanville inwardly rejoiced that things were already matured ; nor is it surprising, that, far from throwing any obstacle in the way of the lovers, she should rather have given them all those opportunities of private conversation, which an attention to propriety permitted, and of which it was equally natural for the happy pair to avail

themselves, to the fullest extent of the licence she gave them.

It was not therefore to be imagined, that a visit Amherst proposed to make to his friends at Sanderson Mains, towards the conclusion of the third week of Lord Eaglesholme's absence, was owing to time hanging heavy with him in the old castle. The fact was, his conscience began to reproach him, that he had permitted so many days, nay, weeks to pass, without fulfilling his promise of going so short a distance to see Cleaver. And he even thought the kind Sir Alisander, and Lady Sanderson, might have reason to complain of so cold a return for their hospitality. Yet it required some exertion before he could think of a separation, for even a few hours, from the idol of his heart; and when he brought himself to mention the visit to her, her eyes told him that she suffered as much as he did in the sacrifice. But her uncle was expected at the castle on the evening of the ensuing day, when Amherst would find it still more difficult to get away. After much hesitation therefore, he at last resolved to go over to Sanderson Mains to dinner, and to return in the evening. The first parting of these

fond lovers, though for so short a time, was not effected without a considerable effort to both.

“ Do not go yet, dear Amherst ?” said Eliza tenderly ; “ it is but early. Come, make one circuit of the terrace garden with me ere you leave us. It were vain for me to go thither by myself, for, without you, my flowers would refuse to smile upon me, or to give forth their wonted fragrance.”

“ My beloved Eliza !” cried the impassioned Amherst, eagerly kissing her hand, as he gave her his arm to comply with her wishes, “ all nature would be a dull and dreary blank to me, were it not for the sunshine of your kind eyes, that throws a celestial light over every thing around them. Even the beauty of these gardens would be lost, were it not for your presence, which sheds the charms of paradise over their bowery terraces, and gay parterres. When I first beheld this spot, from yonder distant and elevated point, it was your figure, that, even then, gave the chief interest to it in my eyes. But little did I at that time guess, what powerful interest I should so soon feel, in the small white speck I then saw !”

“ And do you not remember,” said Eliza,

smiling artlessly in Amherst's face, "do you not remember, how much the beauties of these terraces, were enhanced to me by your presence, the very first morning we trod them together? What a glad walk was that for me! I had always considered myself the happiest of mortals before then; yet how much more touching have been my emotions of pleasure since I have known you! The small space of time, that has glided away since you first became my uncle's guest, now appears to me to have comprised my whole life; for the very remembrance of my former years of tame existence, has been obliterated by the exquisite delight, which has filled up the short period of our intercourse."

Having wandered round the garden, they sat down together on one of the seats, to listen to the song of a thrush.

"How sweetly that innocent bird pours forth his stream of melody, from the topmost spray of that tall tree!" cried Eliza, pointing to him; "I can actually perceive his little breast, thrilling with the efforts he makes, in modulating his melody."

"His mate is doubtless nestled in some of those

evergreens near him," replied Amherst. "It is for her that all these stirring notes of passionate love have utterance."

As the lovers sat observing him, a falcon came swooping down, neither of them could tell from whence, and striking his cruel talons, with inconceivable rapidity, into the unhappy warbler, bore him piteously off. Eliza shrieked, and Amherst shouted, with the hope of making the hawk drop his prey, but all in vain.

"Poor bird!" cried Eliza, bursting into tears at the spectacle. "How short lived was thy happiness!"

A shade of melancholy overspread her lovely brow, and she sat musing with an air of sadness.

"Be not so pensive, my love!" cried Amherst. "Let not this trifling incident break in on the calm delight we were indulging in. It can have no influence on us. You surely cannot suffer any thing like superstitious dread from such an accident?"

"No," replied Eliza, "it was but the reflections it awakened that disturbed me. I am almost ashamed to tell you what they were, lest you should think me silly for giving way to them.

—Yet why should I conceal even my weakness from you?—A transient thought flashed across me, that our present happiness might be more than Heaven can well permit to be enduring to mortals, and that it might be as short lived, as that of the poor bird we have this moment seen so cruelly destroyed. What will now become of his wretched mate? And what would become of me were you to be torn from me?”

“Dry your tears, my dearest, dearest Eliza,” exclaimed Amherst with great energy. “Let not any such gloomy forebodings disturb our present joy. Let not the heaven of your eyes be overcast, when the horizon of our fate is so bright and heart-cheering. Come my love, exert yourself to shake off such thoughts. Let me see you smile once more. Let us go in, and, ere I leave you, indulge me again with some of those sweet airs, I have so often importuned you to sing and play to me.”

Eliza yielded to her lover's wish, and being led back into the castle by him, she took her guitar, and they wiled away the time in singing together, till the advanced hour called on Amherst to depart for Sanderson Mains. Even then they lingered.

At length Eliza threw a shawl over her head, and went as far as the draw-bridge with him ; and when at last he tore himself from her, she stood gazing after him, until his form was lost within the shade of the distant trees ; and she returned into the castle, to pass the first few dull and irksome hours she had experienced, since Amherst had become an inmate of it. She tried to fix herself down to a book, but the effort was vain. She took up the guitar, which had so lately given pleasure to both her lover and herself ; but she could not find one note that was in harmony with her present feelings. All her little works had lost their relish for her ; nay, even the good Madame Bossanville's conversation was dry and uninteresting to her, and nothing could dispel the gloom of this wearisome evening.

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