THE

HEADSMAN;

OR,

THE ABBAYE DES VIGNERONS.

A TALE.

BY THE AUTHOR OF THE "BRAVO," &c. &c.

"How oft the sight of means to do ill deeds,
Makes deeds ill done!"

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

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INTRODUCTION.

EARLY in October 1832, a travelling-carriage stopped on the summit of that long descent where the road pitches from the elevated plain of Moudon in Switzerland to the level of the lake of Geneva, immediately above the little city of Vévey. The postilion had dismounted to chain a wheel, and the halt enabled those he conducted to catch a glimpse of the lovely scenery of that remarkable view.

The travellers were an American family, which had long been wandering about Europe, and which was now destined it knew not whither, having just traversed a thousand miles of Germany in its devious course. Four years before, the same family had halted on the same spot, nearly on the same day of the month of October, and for precisely the same object. It was then journeying to Italy, and as its members hung over the view of the Leman, with its accessories of Chillon, Châtelard, Blonay, Meillerie, the peaks of Savoy, and the wild ranges of the Alps, they had felt regret that the fairy scene was so soon to pass away. The case was now different, and yielding to the charm of a nature so noble and yet so soft, within a few hours, the carriage was in remise, a house was taken, the baggage unpacked, and the household gods of the travellers were erected, for the twentieth time, in a strange land.

Our American (for the family had its head) was familiar with the ocean, and the sight of water awoke old

and pleasant recollections. He was hardly established in Vévey as a housekeeper, before he sought a boat. Chance brought him to a certain Jean Descloux (we give the spelling at hazard,) with whom he soon struck up a bargain, and they launched forth in company upon the lake.

This casual meeting was the commencement of an agreeable and friendly intercourse. Jean Descloux, besides being a very good boatman, was a respectable philosopher in his way; possessing a tolerable stock of general information. His knowledge of America, in particular, might be deemed a little remarkable. He knew it was a continent, which lay west of his own quarter of the world; that it had a place in it called New Vévey; that all the whites who had gone there were not yet black, and that there were plausible hopes it might one day be civilized. Finding Jean so enlightened on a subject under which most of the eastern savans break down, the American thought it well enough to prick him closely on other matters. The worthy boatman turned out to be a man of singularly just discrimination. He was a reasonably-good judge of the weather; had divers marvels to relate concerning the doings of the lake; thought the city very wrong for not making a port in the great square; always maintained that the wine of St. Saphorin was very savory drinking for those who could get no better; laughed at the idea of their being sufficient cordage in the world to reach the bottom of the Genfer See; was of opinion that the trout was a better fish than the fêrà; spoke with singular moderation of his ancient masters, the bourgeoïsie of Berne, which, however, he always affirmed kept singularly bad roads in Vaud, while those around its own city were the best

in Europe, and otherwise showed himself to be a discreet and observant man. In short, honest Jean Descloux was a fair sample of that homebred, upright common-sense which seems to form the instinct of the mass, and which it is greatly the fashion to deride in those circles in which mystification passes for profound thinking, bold assumption for evidence, a simper for wit, particular personal advantages for liberty, and in which it is deemed a mortal offence against good manners to hint that Adam and Eve were the common parents of mankind.

"Monsieur has chosen a good time to visit Vévey," observed Jean Descloux, one evening, that they were drifting in front of the town, the whole scenery resembling a fairy picture rather than a portion of this much-abused earth; "it blows sometimes at this end of the lake in a way to frighten the gulls out of it. We shall see no more of the steam-boat after the last of the month."

The American cast a glance at the mountain, drew upon his memory for sundry squalls and gales which he had seen himself, and thought the boatman's figure of speech less extravagant than it had at first seemed.

"If your lake craft were better constructed, they would make better weather," he quietly observed.

Monsieur Descloux had no wish to quarrel with a customer who employed him every evening, and who preferred floating with the current to being rowed with a crooked oar. He manifested his prudence, therefore, by making a reserved reply.

"No doubt, monsieur," he said, "that the people who live on the sea make better vessels, and know how to sail them more skilfully. We had a proof of that here at Vévey," (he pronounced the word like v-*vais*, agreeably to the sounds of the French vowels,) "last summer,

which you might like to hear. An English gentleman —they say he was a captain in the marine—had a vessel built at Nice, and dragged over the mountains to our lake. He took a run across to Meillerie one fine morning, and no duck ever skimmed along lighter or swifter! He was not a man to take advice from a Swiss boatman, for he had crossed the line, and seen water spouts and whales! Well, he was on his way back in the dark, and it came on to blow here from off the mountains, and he stood on boldly towards our shore, heaving the lead as he drew near the land, as if he had been beating into Spithead in a fog,"—Jean chuckled at the idea of sounding in the Leman—"while he flew along like a bold mariner, as no doubt he was!"

"Landing, I suppose," said the American, "among the lumber in the great square?"

"Monsieur is mistaken. He broke his boat's nose against that wall; and the next day, a piece of her, big enough to make a thole-pin, was not to be found. He might as well have sounded the heavens!"

"The lake has a bottom, notwithstanding?"

"Your pardon, monsieur. The lake has no bottom. The sea may have a bottom, but we have no bottom here."

There was little use in disputing the point.

Monsieur Descloux then spoke of the revolutions he had seen. He remembered the time when Vaud was a province of Berne. His observations on this subject were rational, and were well seasoned with wholesome common sense. His doctrine was simply this. "If one man rule, he will rule for his own benefit, and that of his parasites; if a minority rule, we have many masters instead of one," (honest Jean had got hold here of a

cant saying of the privileged, which he very ingeniously converted against themselves,) "all of whom must be fed and served; and if the majority rule, and ruled wrongfully, why the minimum of harm is done." He admitted, that the people might be deceived to their own injury, but then, he did not think it was quite as likely to happen, as that they should be oppressed when they were governed without any agency of their own. On these points, the American and the Vaudois were absolutely of the same mind.

From politics the transition to poetry was natural, for a common ingredient in both would seem to be fiction. On the subject of his mountains, Monsieur Descloux was a thorough Swiss. He expatiated on their grandeur, their storms, their height, and their glaciers, with eloquence. The worthy boatman had some such opinions of the superiority of his own country, as all are apt to form who have never seen any other. He dwelt on the glories of an Abbaye des Vignerons, too, with the gusto of a Vévaisan, and seemed to think it would be a high stroke of state policy, to get up a new *fête* of this kind as speedily as possible. In short, the world and its interests were pretty generally discussed between these two philosophers during an intercourse that extended to a month.

Our American was not a man to let instruction of this nature easily escape him. He lay hours at a time on the seats of Jean Descloux's boat, looking up at the mountains, or watching some lazy sail on the lake, and speculating on the wisdom of which he was so accidentally made the repository. His view on one side was limited by the glacier of Mont Vélan, a near neighbor of the celebrated col of St. Bernard; and on the other, his eye could range to the smiling fields that surround Gene-

va. Within this setting is contained one of the most magnificent pictures that Nature ever drew, and he bethought him of the human actions, passions, and interests of which it might have been the scene. By a connexion that was natural enough to the situation, he imagined a fragment of life passed between these grand limits, and the manner in which men could listen to the never-wearied promptings of their impulses in the immediate presence of the majesty of the Creator. He bethought him of the analogies that exist between inanimate nature and our own wayward inequalities; of the fearful admixture of good and evil of which we are composed; of the manner in which the best betray their submission to the devils, and in which the worst have gleams of that eternal principle of right, by which they have been endowed by God; of those tempests which sometimes lie dormant in our systems, like the slumbering lake in the calm, but which excited, equal its fury when lashed by the winds; of the strength of prejudices; of the worthlessness and changeable character of the most cherished of our opinions, and of that strange, incomprehensible, and yet winning *mêlange* of contradictions, of fallacies, of truths, and of wrongs, which make up the sum of our existence.

The following pages are the result of this dreaming. The reader is left to his own intelligence for the moral.

A respectable English writer observed:—"All pages of human life are worth reading; the wise instruct; the gay divert us; the imprudent teach us what to shun; the absurd cure the spleen."

THE HEADSMAN.

CHAPTER I.

> Day glimmered and I went, a gentle breeze
> Ruffling the Leman lake.
>
> ROGERS.

THE year was in its fall, according to a poetical expression of our own, and the morning bright, as the fairest and swiftest bark that navigated the Leman lay at the quay of the ancient and historical town of Geneva, ready to depart for the country of Vaud. This vessel was called the Winkelried, in commemoration of Arnold of that name, who had so generously sacrificed life and hopes to the good of his country, and who deservedly ranks among the truest of those heroes of whom we have well-authenticated legends. She had been launched at the commencement of the summer, and still bore at the fore-top-mast-head a bunch of evergreens, profusely ornamented with knots and streamers of riband, the offerings of the patron's female friends, and the fancied gage of success. The use of steam, and the presence of unemployed seamen of various nations, in this idle season of the warlike, are slowly leading to innovations and improvements in the navigation of the lakes of Italy and Switzerland, it is true; but time, even at this hour, has done little towards changing the habits and opinions of those who ply on these inland waters for a subsistence. The Winkelreid had the two low, diverging masts; the attenuated and pic-

turesquely-poised latine yards; the light, triangular sails; the sweeping and projecting gangways; the receding and falling stern; the high and peaked prow, with, in general, the classical and quaint air of those vessels that are seen in the older paintings and engravings. A gilded ball glittered on the summit of each mast, for no canvass was set higher than the slender and well-balanced yards, and it was above one of these that the wilted bush, with its gay appendages, trembled and fluttered in a fresh western wind. The hull was worthy of so much goodly apparel, being spacious, commodious, and, according to the wants of the navigation, of approved mould. The freight, which was sufficiently obvious, much the greatest part being piled on the ample deck, consisted of what our own watermen would term an assorted cargo. It was, however, chiefly composed of those foreign luxuries, as they were then called, though use has now rendered them nearly indispensable to domestic economy, which were consumed, in singular moderation, by the more affluent of those who dwelt deeper among the mountains, and of the two principal products of the dairy; the latter being destined to a market in the less verdant countries of the south. To these must be added the personal effects of an unusual number of passengers, which were stowed on the top of the heavier part of the cargo, with an order and care that their value would scarcely seem to require. The arrangement, however, was necessary to the convenience and even to the security of the bark, having been made by the patron with a view to posting each individual by his particular wallet, in a manner to prevent confusion in the crowd, and to leave the crew space and opportunity to discharge the necessary duties of the navigation.

With a vessel stowed, sails ready to drop, the

wind fair, and the day drawing on apace, the patron of the Winkelried, who was also her owner, felt a very natural wish to depart. But an unlooked-for obstacle had just presented itself at the water-gate, where the officer charged with the duty of looking into the characters of all who went and came was posted, and around whom some fifty representatives of half as many nations were now clustered in a clamorous throng, filling the air with a confusion of tongues that had some probable affinity to the noises which deranged the workmen of Babel. It appeared, by parts of sentences and broken remonstrances, equally addressed to the patron, whose name was Baptiste, and to the guardian of the Genevese laws, a rumor was rife among these truculent travellers, that Balthazar, the headsman, or executioner, of the powerful and aristocratical canton of Berne, was about to be smuggled into their company by the cupidity of the former, contrary, not only to what was due to the feelings and rights of men of more creditable callings, but, as it was vehemently and plausibly insisted, to the very safety of those who were about to trust their fortunes to the vicissitudes of the elements.

Chance and the ingenuity of Baptiste had collected, on this occasion, as party-colored and heterogeneous an assemblage of human passions, interests, dialects, wishes, and opinions, as any admirer of diversity of character could desire. There were several small traders, some returning from adventures in Germany and France, and some bound southward, with their scanty stock of wares; a few poor scholars, bent on a literary pilgrimage to Rome; an artist or two, better provided with enthusiasm than with either knowledge or taste, journeying with poetical longings towards skies and tints of Italy; a *troupe* of street-jugglers, who had been turning their Neapolitan buffoonery to

account among the duller and less sophisticated inhabitants of Swabia; divers lacqueys out of place; some six or eight capitalists who lived on their wits, and a nameless herd of that set which the French call bad "subjects;" a title that is just now, oddly enough, disputed between the dregs of society and a class that would fain become its ex clusive leaders and lords.

These with some slight qualifications that it is not yet necessary to particularise, composed that essential requisite of all fair representation—the majority. Those who remained were of a different caste. Near the noisy crowd of tossing heads and brandished arms, in and around the gate, was a party containing the venerable and still fine figure of a man in the travelling dress of one of superior condition, and who did not need the testimony of the two or three liveried menials that stood near his person, to give an assurance of his belonging to the more fortunate of his fellow-creatures, as good and evil are usually estimated in calculating the chances of life. On his arm leaned a female, so young, and yet so lovely, as to cause regret in all who observed her fading color, the sweet but melancholy smile that occasionally lighted her mild and pleasing features, at some of the more marked exuberances of folly among the crowd, and a form which, notwithstanding her lessened bloom, was nearly perfect. If these symptoms of delicate health, did not prevent this fair girl from being amused at the volubility and arguments of the different orators, she oftener manifested apprehension at finding herself the companion of creatures so untrained, so violent, so exacting, and so grossly ignorant. A young man, wearing the roquelaure and other similar appendages of a Swiss in foreign military service, a character to excite neither observation nor comment in that age, stood at her

elbow, answering the questions that from time to time were addressed to him by the others, in a manner to show he was an intimate acquaintance, though there were signs about his travelling equipage to prove he was not exactly of their ordinary society. Of all who were not immediately engaged in the boisterous discussion at the gate, this young soldier, who was commonly addressed by those near him as Monsieur Sigismund, was much the most interested in its progress. Though of herculean frame, and evidently of unusual physical force, he was singularly agitated. His cheek, which had not yet lost the freshness due to the mountain air, would, at times, become pale as that of the wilting flower near him; while at others, the blood rushed across his brow in a torrent that seemed to threaten a rupture of the starting vessels in which it so tumultuously flowed. Unless addressed, however, he said nothing; his distress gradually subsiding, until it was merely betrayed by the convulsive writhings of his fingers, which unconsciously grasped the hilt of his sword.

The uproar had now continued for some time; throats were getting sore, tongues clammy, voices hoarse, and words incoherent, when a sudden check was given to the useless clamor by an incident quite in unison with the disturbance itself. Two enormous dogs were in attendance hard by, apparently awaiting the movements of their respective masters, who were lost to view in the mass of heads and bodies that stopped the passage of the gate. One of these animals was covered with a short, thick coating of hair, whose prevailing color was a dingy yellow, but whose throat and legs, with most of the inferior parts of the body, were of a dull white. Nature, on the other hand, had given a dusky, brownish, shaggy dress to his rival, though his general hue was relieved by a few

shades of a more decided black. As respects weight and force of body, the difference between the brutes was not very obvious, though perhaps it slightly inclined in favor of the former, who in length, if not in strength, of limb, however, had more manifestly the advantage.

It would much exceed the intelligence we have brought to this task to explain how far the instincts of the dogs sympathised in the savage passions of the human beings around them, or whether they were conscious that their masters had espoused opposite sides in the quarrel, and that it became them, as faithful esquires, to tilt together by way of supporting the honor of those they followed; but, after measuring each other for the usual period with the eye, they came violently together, body to body, in the manner of their species. The collision was fearful, and the struggle, being between two creatures of so great size and strength, of the fiercest kind. The roar resembled that of lions, effectually drowning the clamor of human voices. Every tongue was mute, and each head was turned in the direction of the combatants. The trembling girl recoiled with averted face, while the young man stepped eagerly forward to protect her, for the conflict was near the place they occupied; but powerful and active as was his frame, he hesitated about mingling in an affray so ferocious. At this critical moment, when it seemed that the furious brutes were on the point of tearing each other in pieces, the crowd was pushed violently open, and two men burst, side by side, out of the mass. One wore the black robes, the conical, Asiatic-looking, tufted cap, and the white belt of an Augustine monk, and the other had the attire of a man addicted to the seas, without, however, being so decidedly maritime as to leave his character a matter that was quite beyond dispute. The former

was fair, ruddy, with an oval, happy face, of which internal peace and good-will to his fellows were the principal characteristics, while the latter had the swarthy hue, bold lineaments, and glittering eye, of an Italian.

"Uberto!" said the monk reproachfully, affecting the sort of offended manner that one would be apt to show to a more intelligent creature, willing, but at the same time afraid, to trust his person nearer to the furious conflict, "shame on thee, old Uberto! Hast forgotten thy schooling—hast no respect for thine own good name?"

On the other hand, the Italian did not stop to expostulate; but throwing himself with reckless hardihood on the dogs, by dint of kicks and blows, of which much the heaviest portion fell on the follower of the Augustine, he succeeded in separating the combatants.

"Ha, Nettuno!" he exclaimed, with the severity of one accustomed to exercise a stern and absolute authority, so soon as this daring exploit was achieved, and he had recovered a little of the breath lost in the violent exertion—"what dost mean? Canst find no better amusement than quarrelling with a dog of San Bernardo! Fie upon thee, foolish Nettuno! I am ashamed of thee, dog: thou, that hast discreetly navigated so many seas, to lose thy temper on a bit of fresh water!"

The dog, which was in truth no other than a noble animal of the well-known Newfoundland breed, hung his head, and made signs of contrition, by drawing nearer to his master with a tail that swept the ground, while his late adversary quietly seated himself with a species of monastic dignity, looking from the speaker to his foe, as if endeavoring to comprehend the rebuke which his powerful and gallant antagonist took so meekly.

"Father," said the Italian, "our dogs are both

too useful, in their several ways, and both of too good character to be enemies. I know Uberto of old, for the paths of St. Bernard and I are no strangers, and, if report does the animal no more than justice, he hath not been an idle cur among the snows."

"He hath been the instrument of saving seven Christians from death," answered the monk, beginning again to regard his mastiff with friendly looks, for at first there had been keen reproach and severe displeasure in his manner—"not to speak of the bodies that have been found by his activity, after the vital spark had fled."

"As for the latter, father, we can count little more in favor of the dog than a good intention. Valuing services on this scale, I might ere this have been the holy father himself, or at least a cardinal; but seven lives saved, for their owners to die quietly in their beds, and with opportunity to make their peace with heaven, is no bad recommendation for a dog. Nettuno, here, is every way worthy to be the friend of old Uberto, for thirteen drowning men have I myself seen him draw from the greedy jaws of sharks and other monsters of deep water. What dost thou say, father; shall we make peace between the brutes?"

The Augustine expressed his readiness, as well as his desire, to aid in an effort so laudable, and by dint of commands and persuasion, the dogs, who were predisposed to peace from having had a mutual taste of the bitterness of war, and who now felt for each other the respect which courage and force are apt to create, were soon on the usual terms of animals of their kind that have no particular grounds for contention.

The guardian of the city improved the calm produced by this little incident, to regain a portion of his lost authority. Beating back the crowd with

his cane, he cleared a space around the gate into which but one of the travellers could enter at a time, while he professed himself not only ready but determined to proceed with his duty, without further procrastination. Baptiste, the patron, who beheld the precious moments wasting, and who, in the delay, foresaw a loss of wind, which, to one of his pursuits, was loss of money, now earnestly pressed the travellers to comply with the necessary forms, and to take their stations in his bark with all convenient speed.

"Of what matter is it," continued the calculating waterman, who was rather conspicuously known for the love of thrift that is usually attributed to most of the inhabitants of that region, "whether there be one headsman or twenty in the bark, so long as the good vessel can float and steer? Our Leman winds are fickle friends, and the wise take them while in the humor. Give me the breeze at west, and I will load the Winkelried to the water's edge with executioners, or any other pernicious creatures thou wilt, and thou mayest take the lightest bark that ever swam in the *bise*, and let us see who will first make the haven of Vévey!"

The loudest, and in a sense that is very important in all such discussions, the principal, speaker in the dispute, was the leader of the Neapolitan *troupe*, who, in virtue of good lungs, an agility that had no competitor in any present, and a certain mixture of superstition and bravado, that formed nearly equal ingredients in his character, was a man likely to gain great influence with those who, from their ignorance and habits, had an inherent love of the marvellous, and a profound respect for all who possessed, in acting, more audacity, and, in believing, more credulity than themselves. The vulgar like an excess, even if it be of folly; for, in

their eyes, the abundance of any particular quality is very apt to be taken as the standard of its excellence.

"This is well for him who receives, but it may be death to him that pays," cried the son of the south, gaining not a little among his auditors by the distinction, for the argument was sufficiently wily, as between the buyer and the seller. "Thou wilt get thy silver for the risk, and we may get watery graves for our weakness. Nought but mishaps can come of wicked company, and accursed will they be, in the evil hour, that are found in brotherly communion with one whose trade is hurrying Christians into eternity, before the time that has been lent by nature is fairly up. Santa Madre! I would not be the fellow-traveller of such a wretch, across this wild and changeable lake, for the honor of leaping and showing my poor powers in the presence of the Holy Father, and the whole of the learned conclave!"

This solemn declaration, which was made with suitable gesticulation, and an action of the countenance that was well adapted to prove the speaker's sincerity, produced a corresponding effect on most of the listeners, who murmured their applause in a manner sufficiently significant to convince the patron he was not about to dispose of the difficulty, simply by virtue of fair words. In this dilemma, he bethought him of a plan of overcoming the scruples of all present, in which he was warmly seconded by the agent of the police, and to which, after the usual number of cavilling objections that were generated by distrust, heated blood, and the obstinacy of disputation, the other parties were finally induced to give their consent. It was agreed that the examination should no longer be delayed, but that a species of deputation from the crowd might take their stand within the gate,

where all who passed would necessarily be subject to their scrutiny, and, in the event of their vigilance detecting the abhorred and proscribed Balthazar, that the patron should return his money to the headsman, and preclude him from forming one of a party that was so scrupulous of its association, and, apparently, with so little reason. The Neapolitan, whose name was Pippo; one of the indigent scholars, for a century since learning was rather the auxiliary than the foe of superstition; and a certain Nicklaus Wagner, a fat Bernese, who was the owner of most of the cheeses in the bark, were the chosen of the multitude on this occasion. The first owed his election to his vehemence and volubility, qualities that the ignoble vulgar are very apt to mistake for conviction and knowledge; the second to his silence and a demureness of air which pass with another class for the stillness of deep water; and the last to his substance, as a man of known wealth, an advantage which, in spite of all that alarmists predict on one side and enthusiasts affirm on the other, will always carry greater weight with those who are less fortunate in this respect, than is either reasonable or morally healthful, provided it is not abused by arrogance or by the assumption of very extravagant and oppressive privileges. As a matter of course, these deputed guardians of the common rights were first obliged to submit their own papers to the eye of the Genevese.*

* As we have so often alluded to this examination, it may be well to explain, that the present system of gend'armerie and passports did not then prevail in Europe; taking their rise nearly a century later than that in which the events of this tale had place. But Geneva was a small and exposed state, and the regulation to which there is reference here, was one of the provisions which were resorted to, from time to time, in order to protect those liberties and that independence, of which its citizens were so unceasingly and so wisely jealous.

The Neapolitan, than whom an archer knave, or one that had committed more petty wrongs, did not present himself that day at the water-gate, was regularly fortified by every precaution that the long experience of a vagabond could suggest, and he was permitted to pass forthwith. The poor Westphalian student presented an instrument fairly written out in scholastic Latin, and escaped further trouble by the vanity of the unlettered agent of the police, who hastily affirmed it was a pleasure to encounter documents so perfectly in form. But the Bernese was about to take his station by the side of the other two, appearing to think inquiry, in his case, unnecessary. While moving through the passage in stately silence, Nicklaus Wagner was occupied in securing the strings of a well-filled purse, which he had just lightened of a small copper coin, to reward the varlet of the hostelry in which he had passed the night, and who had been obliged to follow him to the port to obtain even this scanty boon; and the Genevese was fain to believe that, in the urgency of this important concern, he had overlooked those forms which all were, just then, obliged to respect, on quitting the town.

"Thou hast a name and character?" observed the latter, with official brevity.

"God help thee, friend!—I did not think Geneva had been so particular with a Swiss;—and a Swiss who is so favorably known on the Aar, and indeed over the whole of the great canton! I am Nicklaus Wagner, a name of little account, perhaps, but which is well esteemed among men of substance, and which has a right even to the Bürgerschaft—Nicklaus Wagner of Berne—thou wilt scarce need more?"

"Naught but proof of its truth. Thou wilt remember this is Geneva; the laws of a small and

exposed state need be particular in affairs of this nature."

"I never questioned thy state being Geneva; I only wonder thou shouldst doubt my being Nicklaus Wagner! I can journey the darkest night that ever threw a shadow from the mountains, anywhere between the Jura and the Oberland, and none shall say my word is to be disputed. Look 'ee, there is the patron, Baptiste, who will tell thee, that if he were to land the freight which is shipped in my name, his bark would float greatly the lighter."

All this time Nicklaus was nothing loth to show his papers, which were quite in rule. He even held them, with a thumb and finger separating the folds, ready to be presented to his questioner. The hesitation came from a feeling of wounded vanity, which would gladly show that one of his local importance and known substance was to be exempt from the exactions required from men of smaller means. The officer, who had great practice in this species of collision with his fellow-creatures, understood the character with which he had to deal, and, seeing no good reason for refusing to gratify a feeling which was innocent, though sufficiently silly, he yielded to the Bernese pride.

"Thou canst proceed," he said, turning the indulgence to account, with a ready knowledge of his duty; "and when thou gettest again among thy burghers, do us of Geneva the grace to say, we treat our allies fairly."

"I thought thy question hasty!" exclaimed the wealthy peasant, swelling like one who gets justice, though tardily. "Now let us to this knotty affair of the headsman."

Taking his place with the Neapolitan and the Westphalian, Nicklaus assumed the grave air of a judge, and an austerity of manner which proved

that he entered on his duty with a firm resolution to do justice.

"Thou art well known here, pilgrim," observed the officer, with some severity of tone, to the next that came to the gate.

"St. Francis to speed, master, it were else wonderful! I should be so, for the seasons scarce come and go more regularly."

"There must be a sore conscience somewhere, that Rome and thou should need each other so often?"

The pilgrim, who was enveloped in a tattered coat, sprinkled with cockle-shells, who wore his beard, and was altogether a disgusting picture of human depravity, rendered still more revolting by an ill-concealed hypocrisy, laughed openly and recklessly at the remark.

"Thou art a follower of Calvin, master," he replied, "or thou would'st not have said this. My own failings give me little trouble. I am engaged by certain parishes of Germany to take upon my poor person their physical pains, and it is not easy to name another that hath done as many messages of this kind as myself, with better proofs of fidelity. If thou hast any little offering to make, thou shalt see fair papers to prove what I say;—papers that would pass at St. Peter's itself!"

The officer perceived that he had to do with one of those unequivocal hypocrites—if such a word can properly be applied to him who scarcely thought deception necessary—who then made a traffic of expiations of this nature; a pursuit that was common enough at the close of the seventeenth and in the commencement of the eighteenth centuries, and which has not even yet entirely disappeared from Europe. He threw the pass with unconcealed aversion towards the profligate, who, recovering his document, assumed unasked his station by the

side of the three who had been selected to decide on the fitness of those who were to be allowed to embark.

"Go to!" cried the officer, as he permitted this ebullition of disgust to escape him; "thou hast well said that we are followers of Calvin. Geneva has little in common with her of the scarlet mantle, and thou wilt do well to remember this, in thy next pilgrimage, lest the beadle make acquaintance with thy back.—Hold! who art thou?"

"A heretic, hopelessly damned by anticipation, if that of yonder travelling prayer-monger be the true faith;" answered one who was pressing past, with a quiet assurance that had near carried its point without incurring the risks of the usual investigation into his name and character. It was the owner of Nettuno, whose aquatic air and perfect self-possession now caused the officer to doubt whether he had not stopped a waterman of the lake—a class privileged to come and go at will.

"Thou knowest our usages," said the half-satisfied Genevese.

"I were a fool else! Even the ass that often travels the same path comes in time to tell its turns and windings. Art not satisfied with touching the pride of the worthy Nicklaus Wagner, by putting the well-warmed burgher to his proofs, but thou would'st e'en question me! Come hither, Nettuno; thou shalt answer for both, being a dog of discretion. We are no go-betweens of heaven and earth, thou knowest, but creatures that come part of the water and part of the land!"

The Italian spoke loud and confidently, and in the manner of one who addressed himself more to the humors of those near than to the understanding of the Genevese. He laughed, and looked about him in a manner to extract an echo from the crowd, though not one among them all could

probably have given a sufficient reason why he had so readily taken part with the stranger against the authorities of the town, unless it might have been from the instinct of opposition to the law.

"Thou hast a name?" continued the half-yielding, half-doubting guardian of the port.

"Dost take me to be worse off than the bark of Baptiste, there? I have papers, too, if thou wilt that I go to the vessel in order to seek them. This dog is Nettuno, a brute from a far country, where brutes swim like fishes, and my name is Maso, though wicked-minded men call me oftener Il Maledetto than by any other title."

All in the throng, who understood the signification of what the Italian said, laughed aloud, and apparently with great glee, for, to the grossly vulgar, extreme audacity has an irresistible charm. The officer felt that the merriment was against him, though he scarce knew why; and ignorant of the language in which the other had given his extraordinary appellation, he yielded to the contagion, and laughed with the others, like one who understood the joke to the bottom. The Italian profited by this advantage, nodded familiarly with a good-natured and knowing smile, and proceeded. Whistling the dog to his side, he walked leisurely to the bark, into which he was the first that entered, always preserving the deliberation and calm of a man who felt himself privileged, and safe from farther molestation. This cool audacity effected its purpose, though one long and closely hunted by the law evaded the authorities of the town, when this singular being took his seat by the little package which contained his scanty wardrobe.

CHAPTER II.

My nobiel liege! all my request
Ys for a nobile knyghte,
Who, tho' mayhap he has done wronge,
Hee thoughte ytt stylle was righte."

CHATTERTON.

WHILE this impudent evasion of vigilance was successfully practised by so old an offender, the trio of sentinels, with their volunteer assistant the pilgrim, manifested the greatest anxiety to prevent the contamination of admitting the highest executioner of the law to form one of the strangely assorted company. No sooner did the Genevese permit a traveller to pass, than they commenced their private and particular examination, which was sufficiently fierce, for more than once had they threatened to turn back the trembling, ignorant applicant on mere suspicion. The cunning Baptiste lent himself to their feelings with the skill of a demagogue, affecting a zeal equal to their own, while, at the same time, he took care most to excite their suspicions where there was the smallest danger of their being rewarded with success. Through this fiery ordeal one passed after another, until most of the nameless vagabonds had been found innocent, and the throng around the gate was so far lessened as to allow a freer circulation in the thoroughfare. The opening permitted the venerable noble, who has already been presented to the reader, to advance to the gate, accompanied by the female, and closely followed by the menials. The servitor of the police saluted the stranger with deference, for his calm exterior and imposing presence were in singular contrast with the noisy

declamation and rude deportment of the rabble that had preceded.

"I am Melchior de Willading, of Berne," said the traveller, quietly offering the proofs of what he said, with the ease of one sure of his impunity; "this is my child—my only child," the old man repeated the latter words with melancholy emphasis, "and these, that wear my livery, are old and faithful followers of my house. We go by the St. Bernard, to change the ruder side of our Alps for that which is more grateful to the weak—to see if there be a sun in Italy that hath warmth enough to revive this drooping flower, and to cause it once more to raise its head joyously, as until lately, it did ever in its native halls."

The officer smiled and repeated his reverences, always declining to receive the offered papers; for the aged father indulged the overflowing of his feelings in a manner that would have awakened even duller sympathies.

"The lady has youth and a tender parent of her side," he said; "these are much when health fails us."

"She is indeed too young to sink so early!" returned the father, who had apparently forgotten his immediate business, and was gazing with a tearful eye at the faded but still eminently attractive features of the young female, who rewarded his solicitude with a look of love; "but thou hast not seen I am the man I represent myself to be."

"It is not necessary, noble baron; the city knows of your presence, and I have it, in especial charge, to do all that may be grateful to render the passage through Geneva, of one so honored among our allies, agreeable to his recollections."

"Thy city's courtesy is of known repute," said the Baron de Willading, replacing his papers in their usual envelope, and receiving the grace like

one accustomed to honors of this sort:—"art thou a father?"

"Heaven has not been niggardly of gifts of this nature: my table feeds eleven, besides those who gave them being."

"Eleven!—The will of God is a fearful mystery! And this thou seest is the sole hope of my line;—the only heir that is left to the name and lands of Willading! Art thou at ease in thy condition?"

"There are those in our town who are less so, with many thanks for the friendliness of the question."

A slight color suffused the face of Adelheid de Willading, for so was the daughter of the Bernese called, and she advanced a step nearer to the officer.

"They who have so few at their own board, need think of those who have so many," she said, dropping a piece of gold into the hand of the Genevese: then she added, in a voice scarce louder than a whisper—"If the young and innocent of thy household can offer a prayer in the behalf of a poor girl who has much need of aid, 'twill be remembered of God, and it may serve to lighten the grief of one who has the dread of being childless."

"God bless thee, lady!" said the officer, little used to deal with such spirits, and touched by the mild resignation and piety of the speaker, whose simple but winning manner moved him nearly to tears; "all of my family, old as well as young, shall bethink them of thee and thine."

Adelheid's cheek resumed its paleness, and she quietly accompanied her father, as he slowly proceeded towards the bark. A scene of this nature did not fail to shake the pertinacity of those who stood at watch near the gate. Of course they had

nothing to say to any of the rank of Melchior de Willading, who went into the bark without a question. The influence of beauty and station united to so much simple grace as that shown by the fair actor in the little incident we have just related, was much too strong for the ill-trained feelings of the Neapolitan and his companions. They not only let all the menials pass unquestioned also, but it was some little time before their vigilance resumed its former truculence. The two or three travellers that succeeded had the benefit of this fortunate change of disposition.

The next who came to the gate was the young soldier, whom the Baron de Willading had so often addressed as Monsieur Sigismund. His papers were regular, and no obstacle was offered to his departure. It may be doubted how far this young man would have been disposed to submit to these extra-official inquiries of the three deputies of the crowd, had there been a desire to urge them, for he went towards the quay, with an eye that expressed any other sensation than that of amity or compliance. Respect, or a more equivocal feeling, proved his protection; for none but the pilgrim, who displayed ultra-zeal in the pursuit of his object, ventured so far as to hazard even a smothered remark as he passed.

"There goes an arm and a sword that might well shorten a Christian's days," said the dissolute and shameless dealer in the church's abuses, "and yet no one asks his name or calling!"

"Thou hadst better put the question thyself," returned the sneering Pippo, "since penitence is thy trade. For myself, I am content with whirling round at my own bidding, without taking a hint from that young giant's arm."

The poor scholar and the burgher of Berne appeared to acquiesce in this opinion, and no more

was said in the matter. In the mean while there was another at the gate. The new applicant had little in his exterior to renew the vigilance of the superstitious trio. A quiet, meek-looking man, seemingly of a middle condition in life, and of an air altogether calm and unpretending, had submitted his passport to the faithful guardian of the city. The latter read the document, cast a quick and inquiring glance at its owner, and returned the paper in a way to show haste, and a desire to be rid of him.

"It is well," he said; "thou canst go thy way."

"How now!" cried the Neapolitan, to whom buffoonery was a congenial employment, as much by natural disposition as by practice; "How now! —have we Balthazar at last, in this bloody-minded and fierce-looking traveller?" As the speaker had expected, this sally was rewarded by a general laugh, and he was accordingly encouraged to proceed. "Thou knowest our office, friend," added the unfeeling mountebank, "and must show us thy hands. None pass who bear the stain of blood!"

The traveller appeared staggered, for he was plainly a man of retired and peaceable habits, who had been thrown, by the chances of the road, in contact with one only too practised in this unfeeling species of wit. He showed his open palm, however, with a direct and confiding simplicity, that drew a shout of merriment from all the bystanders.

"This will not do; soap, and ashes, and the tears of victims, may have washed out the marks of his work from Balthazar himself. The spots we seek are on the soul, man, and we must look into that, ere thou art permitted to make one in this goodly company."

"Thou didst not question yonder young soldier thus," returned the stranger, whose eye kindled,

as even the meek repel unprovoked outrage, though his frame trembled violently at being subject to open insults from men so rude and unprincipled; "thou didst not dare to question yonder young soldier thus!"

"By the prayers of San Gennaro! which are known to stop running and melted lava, I would rather thou should'st undertake that office than I. Yonder young soldier is an honorable decapitator, and it is a pleasure to be his companion on a journey; for, no doubt, some six or eight of the saints are speaking in his behalf daily. But he we seek is the outcast of all, good or bad, whether in heaven or on earth, or in that other hot abode to which he will surely be sent when his time shall come."

"And yet he does no more than execute the law!"

"What is law to opinion, friend? But go thy way; none suspect thee to be the redoubtable enemy of our heads. Go thy way, for Heaven's sake, and mutter thy prayers to be delivered from Balthazar's axe."

The countenance of the stranger worked, as if he would have answered; then suddenly changing his purpose, he passed on, and instantly disappeared in the bark. The monk of St. Bernard came next. Both the Augustine and his dog were old acquaintances of the officer, who did not require any evidence of his character or errand from the former.

"We are the protectors of life and not its foes," observed the monk, as, leaving the more regular watchman of the place, he drew near to those whose claims to the office would have admitted of dispute: "we live among the snows, that Christians may not die without the church's comfort."

"Honor, holy Augustine, to thee and thy office!" said the Neapolitan, who, reckless and abandoned as he was, possessed that instinct of respect for

those who deny their natures for the good of others, which is common to all, however tainted by cupidity themselves. "Thou and thy dog, old Uberto, can freely pass, with our best good wishes for both."

There no longer remained any to examine, and, after a short consultation among the more superstitious of the travellers, they came to the very natural opinion that, intimidated by their just remonstrances, the offensive headsman had shrunk, unperceived, from the crowd, and that they were at length happily relieved from his presence. The annunciation of the welcome tidings drew much self-felicitation from the different members of the motley company, and all eagerly embarked, for Baptiste now loudly and vehemently declared that a single moment of further delay was entirely out of the question.

"Of what are you thinking, men!" he exclaimed with well-acted heat; "are the Leman winds liveried lackeys, to come and go as may suit your fancies; now to blow west, and now east, as shall be most wanted, to help you on your journeys? Take example of the noble Melchior de Willading, who has long been in his place, and pray the saints, if you will, in your several fashions, that this fair western wind do not quit us in punishment of our neglect."

"Yonder come others, in haste, to be of the party!" interrupted the cunning Italian; "loosen thy fasts quickly, Master Baptiste, or, by San Gennaro! we shall still be detained!"

The Patron suddenly checked himself, and hurried back to the gate, in order to ascertain what he might expect from this unlooked-for turn of fortune.

Two travellers, in the attire of men familiar with the road, accompanied by a menial, and fol-

lowed by a porter staggering under the burthen of their luggage, were fast approaching the water-gate, as if conscious the least delay might cause their being left. This party was led by one considerably past the meridian of life, and who evidently was enabled to maintain his post more by the deference of his companions than by his physical force. A cloak was thrown across one arm, while in the hand of the other he carried the rapier, which all of gentle blood then considered a necessary appendage of their rank.

"You were near losing the last bark that sails for the Abbaye des Vignerons, Signori," said the Genevese, recognizing the country of the strangers at a glance, "if, as I judge from your direction and haste, these festivities are in your minds."

"Such is our aim," returned the elder of the travellers, "and, as thou sayest, we are, of a certainty, tardy. A hasty departure and bad roads have been the cause—but as, happily, we are yet in time to profit by this bark, wilt do us the favor to look into our authority to pass?"

The officer perused the offered document with the customary care, turning it from side to side, as if all were not right, though in a way to show that he regretted the informality.

"Signore, your pass is quite in rule as touches Savoy and the country of Nice, but it wants the city's forms."

"By San Francesco! more's the pity. We are honest gentlemen of Genoa, hurrying to witness the revels at Vévey, of which rumor gives an enticing report, and our sole desire is to come and go peaceably. As thou seest, we are late; for hearing at the post, on alighting, that a bark was about to spread its sails for the other extremity of the lake, we had no time to consult all the observances that thy city's rules may deem necessary.

So many turn their faces the same way, to witness these ancient games, that we had not thought our quick passage through the town of sufficient importance to give thy authorities the trouble to look into our proofs."

"Therein, Signore, you have judged amiss. It is my sworn duty to stay all who want the republic's permission to proceed."

"This is unfortunate, to say no more. Art thou the patron of the bark, friend?"

"And her owner, Signore," answered Baptiste, who listened to the discourse with longings equal to his doubts. "I should be a great deal too happy to count such honorable travellers among my passengers."

"Thou wilt then delay thy departure until this gentleman shall see the authorities of the town, and obtain the required permission to quit it? Thy compliance shall not go unrewarded."

As the Genoese concluded, he dropped into a palm that was well practised in bribes a sequin of the celebrated republic of which he was a citizen. Baptiste had long cultivated an aptitude to suffer himself to be influenced by gold, and it was with unfeigned reluctance that he admitted the necessity of refusing, in this instance, to profit by his own good dispositions. Still retaining the money, however, for he did not well know how to overcome his reluctance to part with it, he answered in a manner sufficiently embarrassed, to show the other that he had at least gained a material advantage by his liberality.

"His Excellency knows not what he asks," said the patron, fumbling the coin between a finger and thumb; "our Genevese citizens love to keep house till the sun is up, lest they should break their necks by walking about the uneven streets in the dark, and it will be two long hours before a single bureau will

open its windows in the town. Besides, your man of the police is not like us of the lake, happy to get a morsel when the weather and occasion permit; but he is a regular feeder, that must have his grapes and his wine before he will use his wits for the benefit of his employers. The Winkelried would weary of doing nothing, with this fresh western breeze humming between her masts, while the poor gentleman was swearing before the town-house gate at the laziness of the officers. I know the rogues better than your Excellency, and would advise some other expedient."

Baptiste looked, with a certain expression, at the guardian of the water-gate, and in a manner to make his meaning sufficiently clear to the travellers. The latter studied the countenance of the Genevese a moment, and, better practised than the patron, or a more enlightened judge of character, he fortunately refused to commit himself by offering to purchase the officer's good-will. If there are too many who love to be tempted to forget their trusts, by a well-managed venality, there are a few who find a greater satisfaction in being thought beyond its influence. The watchman of the gate happened to be one of the latter class, and, by one of the many unaccountable workings of human feeling, the very vanity which had induced him to suffer Il Maledetto to go through unquestioned, rather than expose his own ignorance, now led him to wish he might make some return for the stranger's good opinion of his honesty.

"Will you let me look again at the pass, Signore?" asked the Genevese, as if he thought a sufficient legal warranty for that which he now strongly desired to do might yet be found in the instrument itself.

The inquiry was useless, unless it was to show that the elder Genoese was called the Signor Gri-

maldi and that his companion went by the name of Marcelli. Shaking his head he returned the paper in the manner of a disappointed man.

"Thou canst not have read half of what the paper contains," said Baptiste peevishly; "your reading and writing are not such easy matters, that a squint of the eye is all-sufficient. Look at it again, and thou mayest yet find all in rule. It is unreasonable to suppose Signori of their rank would journey like vagabonds, with papers to be suspected."

"Nothing is wanting but our city signatures, without which my duty will let none go by, that are truly travellers."

"This comes, Signore, of the accursed art of writing, which is much pushed and greatly abused of late. I have heard the aged watermen of the Leman praise the good old time, when boxes and bales went and came, and no ink touched paper between him that sent and him that carried; and yet it has now reached the pass that a christian may not transport himself on his own legs without calling on the scriveners for permission!"

"We lose the moments in words, when it were far better to be doing," returned the Signore Grimaldi. "The pass is luckily in the language of the country, and needs but a glance to get the approval of the authorities. Thou wilt do well to say thou canst remain the time necessary to see this little done."

"Were your excellency to offer me the Doge's crown as a bribe, this could not be. Our Leman winds will not wait for king or noble, bishop or priest, and duty to those I have in the bark commands me to quit the port as soon as possible."

"Thou art truly well charged with living freight already," said the Genoese, regarding the deeply loaded bark with a half-distrustful eye. "I hope

thou hast not overdone thy vessel's powers in receiving so many?"

"I could gladly reduce the number a little, excellent Signore, for all that you see piled among the boxes and tubs are no better than so many knaves, fit only to give trouble and raise questions touching the embarkation of those who are willing to pay better than themselves. The noble Swiss, whom you see seated near the stern, with his daughter and people, the worthy Melchior de Willading, gives a more liberal reward for his passage to Vévey than all those nameless rogues together."

The Genoese made a hasty movement towards the patron, with an earnestness of eye and air that betrayed a sudden and singular interest in what he heard.

"Did'st thou say de Willading?" he exclaimed, eager as one of much fewer years would have been at the unexpected announcement of some pleasurable event. "Melchior, too, of that honorable name?"

"Signore, the same. None other bears the title now, for the old line, they say, is drawing to an end. I remember this same baron, when he was as ready to launch his boat into a troubled lake, as any in Switzerland—"

"Fortune hath truly favored me, good Marcelli!" interrupted the other, grasping the hand of his companion, with strong feeling. "Go thou to the bark, master patron, and advise thy passenger that—what shall we say to Melchior? Shall we tell him at once, who waits him here, or shall we practise a little on his failing memory? By San Francesco! we will do this, Enrico, that we may try his powers! 'Twill be pleasant to see him wonder and guess—my life on it, however, that he knows me at a glance. I am truly little changed, for one that hath seen so much."

The Signor Marcelli lowered his eyes respectfully at this opinion of his friend, but he did not see fit to discourage a belief which was merely a sudden ebullition, produced by the recollection of younger days. Baptiste was instantly dispatched with a request that the baron would do a stranger of rank the favor to come to the water-gate.

"Tell him 'tis a traveller disappointed in the wish to be of his company," repeated the Genoese. That will suffice. I know him courteous, and he is not my Melchior, honest Marcelli, if he delay an instant:—thou seest! he is already quitting the bark, for never did I know him refuse an act of friendliness—dear, dear Melchior—thou art the same at seventy as thou wast at thirty!"

Here the agitation of the Genoese got the better of him, and he walked aside, under a sense of shame, lest he might betray unmanly weakness. In the mean time, the Baron de Willading advanced from the water-side, without suspecting that his presence was required for more than an act of simple courtesy.

"Baptiste tells me that gentlemen of Genoa are here, who are desirous of hastening to the games of Vévey," said the latter, raising his beaver, "and that my presence may be of use in obtaining the pleasure of their company."

"I will not unmask till we are fairly and decently embarked, Enrico," whispered the Signor Grimaldi; "nay—by the mass! not till we are fairly disembarked! The laugh against him will never be forgotten. Signore," addressing the Bernese with affected composure, endeavoring to assume the manner of a stranger, though his voice trembled with eagerness at each syllable, "we are indeed of Genoa, and most anxious to be of the party in your bark—but—he little suspects who speaks to him, Marcelli!—but, Signore, there has

been some small oversight touching the city signatures, and we have need of friendly assistance, either to pass the gate, or to detain the bark until the forms of the place shall have been respected."

"Signore, the city of Geneva hath need to be watchful, for it is an exposed and weak state, and I have little hope that my influence can cause this trusty watchman to dispense with his duty. Touching the bark, a small gratuity will do much with honest Baptiste, should there not be a question of the stability of the breeze, in which case he might be somewhat of a loser."

"You say the truth, noble Melchior," put in the patron; "were the wind ahead, or were it two hours earlier in the morning, the little delay should not cost the strangers a batz—that is to say, nothing unreasonable; but as it is, I have not twenty minutes more to lose, even were all the city magistrates cloaking to be of the party, in their proper and worshipful persons."

"I greatly regret, Signore, it should be so," resumed the baron, turning to the applicant with the consideration of one accustomed to season his refusals by a gracious manner; "but these watermen have their secret signs, by which, it would seem, they know the latest moment they may with prudence delay."

"By the mass! Marcelli, I will try him a little—I should have known him in a carnival dress. Signor Barone, we are but poor Italian gentlemen, it is true, of Genoa. You have heard of our republic, beyond question—the poor state of Genoa?"

"Though of no great pretensions to letters, Signore," answered Melchior, smiling, "I am not quite ignorant that such a state exists. You could not have named a city on the shores of your Mediterranean that would sooner warm my heart than this very town of which you speak. Many of

my happiest hours were passed within its walls, and often, even at this late day, do I live over again my life to recall the pleasures of that merry period. Were there leisure, I could repeat a list of honorable and much esteemed names that are familiar to your ears, in proof of what I say."

"Name them, Signor Barone;—for the love of the saints, and the blessed virgin, name them, I beseech you!"

A little amazed at the eagerness of the other, Melchior de Willading earnestly regarded his furrowed face; and, for an instant, an expression like incertitude crossed his own features.

"Nothing would be easier, Signore, than to name many. The first in my memory, as he has always been the first in my love, is Gaetano Grimaldi, of whom, I doubt not, both of you have often heard?"

"We have, we have! That is—yes, I think we may say, Marcelli, that we have often heard of him, and not unfavorably. Well, what of this Grimaldi?"

"Signore, the desire to converse of your noble townsman is natural, but were I to yield to my wishes to speak of Gaetano, I fear the honest Baptiste might have reason to complain."

"To the devil with Baptiste and his bark! Melchior,—my good Melchior!—dearest, dearest Melchior! hast thou indeed forgotten me?"

Here the Genoese opened wide his arms, and stood ready to receive the embrace of his friend. The Baron de Willading was troubled, but he was still so far from suspecting the real fact, that he could not have easily told the reason why. He gazed wistfully at the working features of the fine old man who stood before him, and though memory seemed to flit around the truth, it was in gleams so transient as completely to baffle his wishes.

"Dost thou deny me, de Willading?—dost thou refuse to own the friend of thy youth—the companion of thy pleasures—the sharer of thy sorrows—thy comrade in the wars—nay, more—thy confidant in a dearer tie?"

"None but Gaetano Grimaldi himself can claim these titles!" burst from the lips of the trembling baron.

"Am I aught else?—am I not this Gaetano?—that Gaetano—thy Gaetano,—old and very dear friend?"

"Thou Gaetano!" exclaimed the Bernois, recoiling a step, instead of advancing to meet the eager embrace of the Genoese, whose impetuous feelings were little cooled by time—"thou, the gallant, active, daring, blooming Grimaldi! Signore, you trifle with an old man's affections."

"By the holy mass, I do not deceive thee! Ha, Marcelli, he is slow to believe as ever, but fast and certain as the vow of a churchman when convinced. If we are to distrust each other for a few wrinkles, thou wilt find objections rising against thine own identity as well as against mine, friend Melchior. I am none other than Gaetano—the Gaetano of thy youth—the friend thou hast not seen these many long and weary years."

Recognition was slow in making its way in the mind of the Bernese. Lineament after lineament, however, became successively known to him, and most of all, the voice served to awaken long dormant recollections. But, as heavy natures are said to have the least self-command when fairly excited, so did the baron betray the most ungovernable emotion of the two, when conviction came at last to confirm the words of his friend. He threw himself on the neck of the Genoese, and the old man wept in a manner that caused him to

withdraw aside, in order to conceal the tears which had so suddenly and profusely broken from fountains that he had long thought nearly dried.

CHAPTER III.

Ha, cousin Silence, that thou hadst seen
That, that this knight and I have seen!
King Henry IV.

The calculating patron of the Winkelried had patiently watched the progress of the foregoing scene with great inward satisfaction, but now that the strangers seemed to be assured of support powerful as that of Melchior de Willading, he was disposed to turn it to account without farther delay. The old men were still standing with their hands grasping each other, after another warm and still closer embrace, and with tears rolling down the furrowed face of each, when Baptiste advanced to put in his raven-like remonstrance.

"Noble gentlemen," he said, "if the felicitations of one humble as I can add to the pleasure of this happy meeting, I beg you to accept them; but the wind has no heart for friendships nor any thought for the gains or losses of us watermen. I feel it my duty, as patron of the bark, to recall to your honors that many poor travellers, far from their homes and pining families, are waiting our leisure, not to speak of foot-sore pilgrims and other worthy adventurers, who are impatient in their hearts, though respect for their superiors keeps them tongue-tied, while we are losing the best of the breeze."

"By San Francesco! the varlet is right;" said the Genoese, hurriedly erasing the marks of his

recent weakness from his cheeks. "We are forgetful of all these worthy people while joy at our meeting is so strong, and it is time that we thought of others. Canst thou aid me in dispensing with the city's signatures?"

The Baron de Willading paused; for well-disposed at first to assist any gentlemen who found themselves in an unpleasant embarrassment, it will be readily imagined that the case lost none of its interest, when he found that his oldest and most tried friend was the party in want of his influence. Still it was much easier to admit the force of this new and unexpected appeal than to devise the means of success. The officer was, to use a phrase which most men seem to think supplies a substitute for reason and principle, too openly committed to render it probable he would easily yield. It was necessary, however, to make the trial, and the baron, therefore, addressed the keeper of the water-gate more urgently than he had yet done in behalf of the strangers.

"It is beyond my functions; there is not one of our Syndics whom I would more gladly oblige than yourself, noble baron," answered the officer; "but the duty of the watchman is to adhere strictly to the commands of those who have placed him at his post."

"Gaetano, we are not the men to complain of this! We have stood together too long in the same trench, and have too often slept soundly, in situations where failure in this doctrine might have cost us our lives, to quarrel with the honest Genevese for his watchfulness. To be frank, 'twere little use to tamper with the fidelity of a Swiss or with that of his ally."

"With the Swiss that is well paid to be vigilant!" answered the Genoese, laughing in a way to show that he had only revived one of those

standing but biting jests, that they who love each other best are perhaps most accustomed to practice.

The Baron de Willading took the facetiousness of his friend in good part, returning the mirth of the other in a manner to show that the allusion recalled days when their hours had idly passed in the indulgence of spontaneous outbreakings of animal spirits.

"Were this thy Italy, Gaetano, a sequin would not only supply the place of a dozen signatures, but, by the name of thy favorite, San Francesco! it would give the honest gate-keeper that gift of second-sight on which the Scottish seers are said to pride themselves."

"Well, the two sides of the Alps will keep their characters, even though we quarrel about their virtues—but we shall never see again the days that we have known! Neither the games of Vévey, nor the use of old jokes, will make us the youths we have been, dear de Willading!"

"Signore, a million of pardons," interrupted Baptiste, "but this western wind is more inconstant even than the spirits of the young."

"The rogue is again right, and we forget yonder cargo of honest travellers, who are wishing us both in Abraham's bosom, for keeping the impatient bark in idleness at the quay. Good Marcelli, hast thou aught to suggest in this strait?"

"Signore, you forget that we have another document that may be found sufficient"—the person questioned, who appeared to fill a middle station between that of a servant and that of a companion, rather hinted than observed:

"Thou sayest true—and yet I would gladly avoid producing it—but anything is better than the loss of thy company, Melchior."

"Name it not! We shall not separate, though

the Winkelried rot where she lies. 'Twere easier to separate our faithful cantons than two such friends."

"Nay, noble baron, you forget the wearied pilgrims and the many anxious travellers in the bark."

"If twenty crowns will purchase thy consent, honest Baptiste, we will have no further discussion."

"It is scarce in human will to withstand you, noble Sir!—Well, the pilgrims have weary feet, and rest will only fit them the better for the passage of the mountains; and as for the others, why let them quit the bark if they dislike the conditions. I am not a man to force my commerce on any."

"Nay, nay, I will have none of this. Keep thy gold, Melchior, and let the honest Baptiste keep his passengers, to say nothing of his conscience."

"I beseech your excellency," interrupted Baptiste, "not to distress yourself in tenderness for me. I am ready to do far more disagreeable things to oblige so noble a gentleman."

"I will none of it! Signor officer, wilt thou do me the favor to cast a glance at this?"

As the Genoese concluded, he placed in the hands of the watchman at the gate, a paper different from that which he had first shown. The officer perused the new instrument with deep attention, and, when half through its contents, his eyes left the page to become rivetted in respectful attention on the face of the expectant Italian. He then read the passport to the end. Raising his cap ceremoniously, the keeper of the gate left the passage free, bowing with deep deference to the strangers.

"Had I sooner known this," he said, "there would have been no delay. I hope your excellency will consider my ignorance—?"

"Name it not, friend. Thou hast done well; in proof of which I beg thy acceptance of a small token of esteem."

The Genoese dropped a sequin into the hand of the officer, passing him, at the same time, on his way to the waterside. As the reluctance of the other to receive gold came rather from a love of duty than from any particular aversion to the metal itself, this second offering met with a more favorable reception than the first. The Baron de Willading was not without surprise at the sudden success of his friend, though he was far too prudent and well-bred to let his wonder be seen.

Every obstacle to the departure of the Winkelried was now removed, and Baptiste and his crew were soon actively engaged in loosening the sails and in casting off the fasts. The movement of the bark was at first slow and heavy, for the wind was intercepted by the buildings of the town; but, as she receded from the shore, the canvass began to flap and belly, and ere long it filled outward with a report like that of a musket; after which the motion of the travellers began to bear some relation to their nearly exhausted patience.

Soon after the party which had been so long detained at the water-gate were embarked, Adelheid first learned the reason of the delay. She had long known, from the mouth of her father, the name and early history of the Signor Grimaldi, a Genoese of illustrious family, who had been the sworn friend and the comrade of Melchior de Willading, when the latter pursued his career in arms in the wars of Italy. These circumstances having passed long before her own birth, and even before the marriage of her parents, and she being the youngest and the only survivor of a numerous family of children, they were, as respected herself, events that already began to assume the hue of history.

She received the old man frankly and even with affection, though in his yielding but still fine form, she had quite as much difficulty as her father in recognizing the young, gay, gallant, brilliant, and handsome Gaetano Grimaldi that her imagination had conceived from the verbal descriptions she had so often heard, and from her fancy was still wont to draw as he was painted in the affectionate descriptions of her father. When he suddenly and affectionately offered a kiss, the color flushed her face, for no man but he to whom she owed her being had ever before taken that liberty; but, after an instant of virgin embarrassment, she laughed, and blushingly presented her cheek to receive the salute.

"The last tidings I had of thee, Melchior," said the Italian, "was the letter sent by the Swiss Ambassador, who took our city in his way as he traveled south, and which was written on the occasion of the birth of this very girl."

"Not of this, dear friend, but of an elder sister, who is, long since, a cherub in heaven. Thou seest the ninth precious gift that God bestowed, and thou seest all that is now left of his bounty."

The countenance of the Signor Grimaldi lost its joyousness, and a deep pause in the discourse succeeded. They lived in an age when communications between friends that were separated by distance, and by the frontiers of different states, were rare and uncertain. The fresh and novel affections of marriage had first broken an intercourse that was continued, under such disadvantages as marked the period, long after their duties called them different ways; and time, with its changes and the embarrassments of wars, had finally destroyed nearly every link in the chain of their correspondence. Each had, therefore, much of a near and interesting character to communi-

cate to the other, and each dreaded to speak, lest he might cause some wound, that was not perfectly healed, to bleed anew. The volume of matter conveyed in the few words uttered by the Baron de Willading, showed both in how many ways they might inflict pain without intention, and how necessary it was to be guarded in their discourse, during the first days of their renewed intercourse.

"This girl at least is a treasure of itself, of which I must envy thee the possession," the Signor Grimaldi at length rejoined.

The Swiss made one of those quick movements which betray surprise, and it was very apparent, that, just at the moment, he was more affected by some interest of his friend, than by the apprehensions which usually beset him when any very direct allusion was made to his surviving child.

"Gaetano, thou hast a son!"

"He is lost—hopelessly—irretrievably lost—at least, to me!"

These were brief but painful glimpses into each other's concerns, and another melancholy and embarrassed pause followed. As the Baron de Willading witnessed the sorrow that deeply shadowed the face of the Genoese, he almost felt that Providence, in summoning his own boys to early graves, might have spared him the still bitterer grief of mourning over the unworthiness of a living son.

"These are God's decrees, Melchior," the Italian continued of his own accord, "and we, as soldiers, as men, and more than either, as Christians, should know how to submit. The letter, of which I spoke, contained the last direct tidings that I received of thy welfare, though different travellers have mentioned thee as among the honored and trusted of thy country, without descending to the particulars of thy private life."

"The retirement of our mountains, and the little

intercourse of strangers with the Swiss, have denied me even this meagre satisfaction as respects thee and thy fortunes. Since the especial courier sent, according to our ancient agreement, to announce——"

The baron hesitated, for he felt he was again touching on forbidden ground.

"To announce the birth of my unhappy boy," continued the Signor Grimaldi, firmly.

"To announce that much-wished-for event, I have not had news of thee, except in a way so vague, as to whet the desire to know more rather than to appease the longings of love."

"These doubts are the penalties that friendship pays to separation. We enlist the affections in youth with the recklessness of hope, and, when called different ways by duties or interest, we first begin to perceive that the world is not the heaven we thought it, but that each enjoyment has its price, as each grief has its solace. Thou hast carried arms since we were soldiers in company?"

"As a Swiss only."

The answer drew a gleam of habitual humor from the keen eye of the Italian, whose countenance was apt to change as rapidly as his thoughts.

"In what service?"

"Nay, a truce to thy old pleasantries, good Grimaldi—and yet I should scarce love thee, as I do, wert thou other than thou art! I believe we come at last to prize even the foibles of those we truly esteem!"

"It must be so, young lady, or boyish follies would long since have weaned thy father from me. I have never spared him on the subjects of snows and money, and yet he beareth with me marvellously. Well, strong love endureth much. Hath the baron often spoken to thee of old Grimaldi—

young Grimaldi, I should say—and of the many freaks of our thoughtless days?"

"So much, Signore," returned Adelheid, who had wept and smiled by turns during the interrupted dialogue of her father and his friend, "that I can repeat most of your youthful histories. The castle of Willading is deep among the mountains, and it is rare indeed for the foot of stranger to enter its gates. During the long evenings of our severe winters, I have listened as a daughter would be apt to listen to the recital of most of your common adventures, and in listening, I have not only learned to know, but to esteem, one that is justly so dear to my parent."

"I make no doubt, now, thou hast the history of the plunge into the canal, by over-stooping to see the Venetian beauty, at thy finger's ends?"

"I do remember some such act of humid gallantry," returned Adelheid, laughing.

"Did thy father tell thee, child, of the manner in which he bore me off in a noble rescue from a deadly charge of the Imperial cavalry?"

"I have heard some light allusion to such an event, too," returned Adelheid, evidently trying to recall the history of the affair, to her mind, "but——"

"Light does he call it, and of small account? I wish never to see another as heavy! This is the impartiality of thy narratives, good Melchior, in which a life preserved, wounds received, and a charge to make the German quail, are set down as matters to be touched with a light hand!"

"If I did thee this service, it was more than deserved by the manner in which, before Milan——"

"Well, let it all pass together. We are old fools, young lady, and should we get garrulous in each other's praise, thou mightest mistake us for braggarts; a character that, in truth, neither wholly

merits. Didst thou ever tell the girl, Melchior, of our mad excursion into the forests of the Apennines, in search of a Spanish lady that had fallen into the hands of banditti; and how we passed weeks on a foolish enterprise of errantry, that had become useless, by the timely application of a few sequins on the part of the husband, even before we started on the chivalrous, not to say silly, excursion?"

"Say chivalrous, but not silly," answered Adelheid, with the simplicity of a young and sincere mind. "Of this adventure I have heard; but to me it has never seemed ridiculous. A generous motive might well excuse an undertaking of less favorable auspices."

"'Tis fortunate," returned the Signor Grimaldi, thoughtfully, "that, if youth and exaggerated opinions lead us to commit mad pranks under the name of spirit and generosity, there are other youthful and generons minds to reflect our sentiments and to smile upon our folly."

"This is more like the wary grey-headed expounder of wisdom than like the hot-headed Gaetano Grimaldi of old!" exclaimed the baron, though he laughed while uttering the words, as if he felt, at least a portion of the other's indifference to those exaggerated feelings that had entered much into the characters of both in youth. "The time has been when the words, policy and calculation, would have cost a companion thy favor!"

"'Tis said that the prodigal of twenty makes the miser of seventy. It is certain that even our southern sun does not warm the blood of threescore, as suddenly as it heats that of one. But we will not darken thy daughter's views of the future by a picture too faithfully drawn, lest she become wise before her time. I have often questioned, Melchior, which is the most precious gift of nature, a warm fancy, or the colder powers of reason. But

if I must say which I most love, the point becomes less difficult of decision. I would prefer each in its season, or rather the two united, with a gradual change in their influence. Let the youth commence with the first in the ascendant, and close with the last. He who begins life too cold a reasoner may end it a calculating egotist; and he who is ruled solely by his imagination is in danger of having his mind so ripened as to bring forth the fruits of a visionary. Had it pleased heaven to have left me the dear son I possessed for so short a period, I would rather have seen him leaning to the side of exaggeration in his estimate of men, before experience came to chill his hopes, than to see him scan his fellows with a too philosophical eye in boyhood. 'Tis said we are but clay at the best, but the ground, before it has been well tilled, sends forth the plants that are most congenial to its soil, and though it be of no great value, give me the spontaneous and generous growth of the weed, which proves the depth of the loam, rather than a stinted imitation of that which cultivation may, no doubt, render more useful if not more grateful."

The allusion to his lost son caused another cloud to pass athwart the brow of the Genoese.

"Thou seest, Adelheid," he continued, after a pause—"for Adelheid will I call thee, in virtue of a second father's rights—that we are making our folly respectable, at least to ourselves—Master Patron, thou hast a well-charged bark!"

"Thanks to your two honors;" answered Baptiste, who stood at the helm, near the group of principal passengers. "These windfalls come rarely to the poor, and we must make much of such as offer. The games at Vévey have called every craft on the Leman to the upper end of the lake, and a little mother-wit led me to trust to the last

turn of the wheel, which, as you see, Signore, has not come up a blank."

"Have many strangers passed by your city on their way to these sports?"

"Many hundreds, noble gentleman; and report speaks of thousands that are collecting at Vévey, and in the neighboring villages. The country of Vaud has not had a richer harvest from her games this many a year."

It is fortunate, Melchior, that the desire to witness these revels should have arisen in us at the same moment. The hope of at last obtaining certain tidings of thy welfare was the chief inducement that caused me to steal from Genoa, whither I am compelled to return forthwith. There is truly something providential in this meeting!"

"I so esteem it," returned the Baron de Willading; "though the hope of soon embracing thee was strongly alive in me. Thou art mistaken in fancying that curiosity, or a wish to mingle with the multitude at Vévey, has drawn me from my castle. Italy was in my eye, as it has long been in my heart."

"How!—Italy?"

"Nothing less. This fragile plant of the mountains has drooped of late in her native air, and skilful advisers have counselled the sunny side of the Alps as a shelter to revive her animation. I have promised Roger de Blonay to pass a night or two within his ancient walls, and then we are destined to seek the hospitality of the monks of St. Bernard. Like thee, I had hoped this unusual sortie from my hold might lead to intelligence touching the fortunes of one I have never ceased to love."

The Signor Grimaldi turned a more scrutinizing look towards the face of their female companion. Her gentle and winning beauty gave him pleasure; but, with his attention quickened by what had just

fallen from her father, he traced, in silent pain, the signs of that early fading which threatened to include this last hope of his friend in the common fate of the family. Disease had not, however, set its seal on the sweet face of Adelheid, in a manner to attract the notice of a common observer. The lessening of the bloom, the mournful character of a dove-like eye, and a look of thoughtfulness, on a brow that he had ever known devoid of care and open as day with youthful ingenuousness, were the symptoms that first gave the alarm to her father, whose previous losses, and whose solitariness, as respects the ties of the world, had rendered him keenly alive to impressions of such a nature. The reflections excited by this examination brought painful recollections to all, and it was long before the discourse was renewed.

In the mean time, the Winkelried was not idle. As the vessel receded from the cover of the buildings and the hills, the force of the breeze was felt, and her speed became quickened in proportion; though the watermen of her crew often studied the manner in which she dragged her way through the element with a shake of the head, that was intended to express their consciousness that too much had been required of the craft. The cupidity of Baptiste had indeed charged his good bark to the uttermost. The water was nearly on a line with the low stern, and when the bark had reached a part of the lake where the waves were rolling with some force, it was found that the vast weight was too much to be lifted by the feeble and broken efforts of these miniature seas. The consequences were, however, more vexatious than alarming. A few wet feet among the less quiet of the passengers, with an occasional slapping of a sheet of water against the gangways, and a consequent drift of spray across the pile of human heads in the centre

of the bark, were all the immediate personal inconveniencies. Still unjustifiable greediness of gain, had tempted the patron to commit the unseamanlike fault of overloading his vessel. The decrease of speed was another and a graver consequence of his cupidity, since it might prevent their arrival in port before the breeze had expended itself.

The lake of Geneva lies nearly in the form of a crescent, stretching from the south-west towards the north-east. Its northern, or the Swiss shore, is chiefly what is called, in the language of the country, a *côte*, or a declivity that admits of cultivation; and, with few exceptions, it has been, since the earliest periods of history, planted with the generous vine. Here the Romans had many stations and posts, vestiges of which are still visible. The confusion and the mixture of interests that succeeded the fall of the empire, gave rise, in the middle ages, to various baronial castles, ecclesiastical towns, and towers of defence, which still stand on the margin of this beautiful sheet of water, or ornament the eminences a little inland. At the time of which we write, the whole coast of the Leman, if so imposing a word may be applied to the shores of so small a body of water, was in the possession of the three several states of Geneva, Savoy, and Berne. The first consisted of a mere fragment of territory at the western, or lower horn of the crescent; the second occupied nearly the whole of the southern side of the sheet, or the cavity of the half-moon; while the latter was mistress of the whole of the convex border, and of the eastern horn. The shores of Savoy are composed, with immaterial exceptions, of advanced spurs of the high Alps, among which towers Mont Blanc, like a sovereign seated in majesty in the midst of a brilliant court, the rocks frequently rising from the water's edge in perpen-

dicular masses. None of the lakes of this remarkable region possess a greater variety of scenery than that of Geneva, which changes from the smiling aspect of fertility and cultivation, at its lower extremity, to the sublimity of a savage and sublime nature at its upper. Vévey, the haven for which the Winkelried was bound, lies at the distance of three leagues from the head of the lake, or the point where it receives the Rhone; and Geneva, the port from which the reader has just seen her take her departure, is divided by that river as it glances out of the blue basin of the Leman again, to traverse the fertile fields of France, on its hurried course towards the distant Mediterranean.

It is well known that the currents of air, on all bodies of water that lie amid high and broken mountains, are uncertain both as to their direction and their force. This was the difficulty which had most disturbed Baptiste during the delay of the bark, for the experienced waterman well knew it required the first and the freest effort of the wind to "drive the breeze home," as it is called by seamen, against the opposing currents that frequently descend from the mountains which surrounded his port. In addition to this difficulty, the shape of the lake was another reason why the winds rarely blow in the same direction over the whole of its surface at the same time. Strong and continued gales commonly force themselves down into the deep basin, and push their way, against all resistance, into every crevice of the rocks; but a power less than this, rarely succeeds in favoring the bark with the same breeze, from the entrance to the outlet of the Rhone.

As a consequence of these peculiarities, the passengers of the Winkelried had early evidence that they had trifled too long with the fickle air. The

breeze carried them up abreast of Lausanne in good season, but here the influence of the mountains began to impair its force, and, by the time the sun had a little fallen towards the long, dark, even line of the Jura, the good vessel was driven to the usual expedients of jibing and hauling-in of sheets.

Baptiste had only to blame his own cupidity for this disappointment; and the consciousness that, had he complied with the engagement, made on the previous evening with the mass of his passengers, to depart with the dawn, he should now have been in a situation to profit by any turn of fortune that was likely to arise from the multitude of strangers who were in Vévey, rendered him moody. As is usual with the headstrong and selfish when they possess the power, others were made to pay for the fault that he alone had committed. His men were vexed with contradictory and useless orders; the inferior passengers were accused of constant neglect of his instructions, a fault which he did not hesitate to affirm had caused the bark to sail less swiftly than usual, and he no longer even answered the occasional questions of those for whom he felt habitual deference, with his former respect and readiness.

CHAPTER IV.

> Thrice to thine, and thrice to mine,
> And thrice again, to make up nine.
>
> MACBETH.

BAFFLING and light airs kept the Winkelried a long time nearly stationary, and it was only by paying the greatest attention to trimming the sails, and to all the little minutiæ of the waterman's art,

that the vessel was worked into the eastern horn of the crescent, as the sun touched the hazy line of the Jura. Here the wind failed entirely, the surface of the lake becoming as glassy and smooth as a mirror, and further motion, for the time at least, was quite out of the question. The crew, perceiving the hopelessness of their exertions, and fatigued with the previous toil, threw themselves among the boxes and bales, and endeavored to catch a little sleep, in anticipation of the north breeze, which, at this season of the year, usually blew from the shores of Vaud within an hour or two of the disappearance of the sun.

The deck of the bark was now left to the undisputed possession of her passengers. The day had latterly been sultry, for the season, the even water having cast back the hot rays in fierce reflection, and, as evening drew on, a refreshing coolness came to relieve the densely packed and scorching travellers. The effect of such a change was like that which would have been observed among a flock of heavily fleeced sheep, which, after gasping for breath beneath trees and hedges, during the time of the sun's power, are seen scattering over their pastures to feed, or to play their antics, as a grateful shade succeeds to cool their panting sides.

Baptiste, as is but too apt to be the case with men possessed of brief authority, during the day had mercilessly played the tyrant with all the passengers that were beneath the privileged degrees, more than once threatening to come to extremities with several, who had betrayed restlessness under the restraint and suffering of their unaccustomed situation. Perhaps there is no man who feels less for the complaints of the novice than your weather-beaten and hardened mariner; for, familiarized to the suffering and confinement of a

vessel, and at liberty himself to seek relief in his duties and avocations, he can scarcely enter into the privations and embarrassments of those to whom all is so new and painful. But, in the patron of the Winkelried, there existed a natural indifference to the grievances of others, and a narrow selfishness of disposition, in aid of the opinions which had been formed by a life of hardship and exposure. He considered the vulgar passenger as so much troublesome freight, which, while it brought the advantage of a higher remuneration than the same cubic measurement of inanimate matter, had the unpleasant drawback of volition and motion. With this general tendency to bully and intimidate, the wary patron had, however, made a silent exception in favor of the Italian, who has introduced himself to the reader by the ill-omened name of Il Maledetto, or the accursed. This formidable personage had enjoyed a perfect immunity from the effects of Baptiste's tyranny, which he had been able to establish by a very simple and quiet process. Instead of cowering at the fierce glance, or recoiling at the rude remonstrances of the churlish patron, he had chosen his time, when the latter was in one of his hottest ebullitions of anger, and when maledictions and menaces flowed out of his mouth in torrents, coolly to place himself on the very spot that the other had proscribed, where he maintained his ground with a quietness and composure which it might have been difficult to say was more to be imputed to extreme ignorance, or to immeasurable contempt. At least so reasoned the spectators; some thinking that the stranger meant to bring affairs to a speedy issue by braving the patron's fury, and others charitably inferring that he knew no better. But thus did not Baptiste reason himself. He saw by the calm eye and resolute demeanor of his pas-

senger that he himself, his pretended professional difficulties, his captiousness, and his threats, were alike despised; and he shrank from collision with such a spirit, precisely on the principle that the intimidated among the rest of the travellers shrunk from a contest with his own. From this moment Il Maledetto, or, as he was called by Baptiste himself, who it would appear had some knowledge of his person, Maso, became as completely the master of his own movements, as if he had been one of the more honored in the stern of the bark, or even her patron. He did not abuse his advantage, however, rarely quitting the indicated station near his own effects, where he had been mainly content to repose in listless indolence, like the others, dozing away the minutes.

But the scene was now altogether changed. The instant the wrangling, discontented, and unhappy, because disappointed, patron, confessed his inability to reach his port before the coming of the expected night-breeze, and threw himself on a bale, to conceal his dissatisfaction in sleep, head arose after head from among the pile of freight, and body after body followed the nobler member, until the whole mass was alive with human beings. The invigorating coolness, the tranquil hour, the prospect of a safe if not a speedy arrival, and the relief from excessive weariness, produced a sudden and agreeable re-action in the feelings of all. Even the Baron de Willading and his friends, who had shared in none of the especial privations just named, joined in the general exhibition of satisfaction and good-will, rather aiding by their smiles and affability, than restraining by their presence the whims and jokes of the different individuals among the motley group of their nameless companions.

The aspect and position of the bark, as well as

the prospects of those on board as they were connected with their arrival, now deserve to be more particularly mentioned. The manner in which the vessel was loaded to the water's edge has already been more than once alluded to. The whole of the centre of the broad deck, a portion of the Winkelried which, owing to the over-hanging gangways, possessed, in common with all the similar craft of the Leman, a greater width than is usual in vessels of the same tonnage elsewhere, was so cumbered with freight as barely to leave a passage to the crew, forward and aft, by stepping among the boxes and bales that were piled much higher than their own heads. A little vacant space was left near the stern, in which it was possible for the party who occupied that part of the deck to move, though in sufficiently straitened limits, while the huge tiller played in its semicircle behind. At the other extremity, as is absolutely necessary in all navigation, the forecastle was reasonably clear, though even this important part of the deck was bristling with the flukes of no less than nine anchors that lay in a row across its breadth, the wild roadsteads of this end of the lake rendering such a provision of ground-tackle absolutely indispensable to the safety of every craft that ventured into its eastern horn. The effect of the whole, seen as it was in a state of absolute rest, was to give to the Winkelried the appearance of a small mound in the midst of the water, that was crowded with human beings, and seemingly so incorporated with the element on which it floated as to grow out of its bosom; an image that the fancy was not slow to form, aided as it was by the reflection of the mass that the unruffled lake threw back from its mirror-like face, as perfectly formed, as unwieldy, and nearly as distinct, as the original. To this picture of a mo-

tionless rock, or island, the spars, sails, and high, pointed beak, however, formed especial exceptions. The yards hung, as seamen term it, a cockbill, or in such negligent and picturesque positions as an artist would most love to draw, while the drapery of the canvass was suspended in graceful and spotless festoons, as it had fallen by chance, or been cast carelessly from the hands of the boatmen. The beak, or prow, rose in its sharp gallant stem, resembling the stately neck of a swan, slightly swerving from its direction, or inclining in a nearly imperceptible sweep, as the hull yielded to the secret influence of the varying currents.

When the teeming pile of freight, therefore, began so freely to bring forth, and traveller after traveller left his wallet, there was no great space found in which they could stretch their wearied limbs, or seek the change they needed. But suffering is a good preparative for pleasure, and there is no sweetner of liberty like previous confinement. Baptiste was no sooner heard to snore, than the whole hummock of cargo was garnished with upright bodies and stretching arms and legs, as mice are known to steal from their holes during the slumbers of their mortal enemy, the cat.

The reader has been made sufficiently acquainted with the moral composition of the Winkelried's living freight, in the opening chapter. As it had undergone no other alteration than that produced by lassitude, he is already prepared, therefore, to renew his communications with its different members, all of whom were well disposed to show off in their respective characters, the moment they were favored with an opportunity. The mercurial Pippo, as he had been the most difficult to restrain during the day, was the first to steal from his lair, now that the Argus-like eyes of Baptiste permitted the freedom, and the exhilarating cool-

ness of the sunset invited action. His success emboldened others, and, ere long, the buffoon had an admiring audience around him, that was well-disposed to laugh at his witticisms, and to applaud all his practical jokes. Gaining courage as he proceeded, the buffoon gradually went from liberty to liberty, until he was at length triumphantly established on what might be termed an advanced spur of the mountain formed by the tubs of Nicklaus Wagner, in the regular exercise of his art; while a crowd of amused and gaping spectators clustered about him, peopling every eminence of the height, and even invading the more privileged deck in their eagerness to see and to admire.

Though frequently reduced by adverse fortune to the lowest shifts of his calling, such as the horse-play of Policinello, and the imitation of uncouth sounds, that resembled nothing either in heaven or earth, Pippo was a clever knave in his way, and was quite equal to a display of the higher branches of his art, whenever chance gave him an audience capable of estimating his qualities. On the present occasion he was obliged to address himself both to the polished and to the unpolished; for the proximity of their position, as well as a good-natured readiness to lend themselves to fooleries that were so agreeable to most around them, had brought the more gentle portion of the passengers within the influence of his wit.

"And now, illustrissimi signori," continued the wily juggler, after having drawn a burst of applause by one of his happiest hits in a sleight-of-hand exhibition, "I come to the most imposing and the most mysterious part of my knowledge—that of looking into the future, and of foretelling events. If there are any among you who would wish to know how long they are to eat the bread of toil, let them come to me; if there is a youth

that wishes to learn whether the heart of his mistress is made of flesh or of stone—a maiden that would see into a youth's faith and constancy, while her long eyelashes cover her sight like a modest silken veil—or a noble, that would fain have an insight into the movements of his rivals at court or council, let them all put their questions to Pippo, who has an answer ready for each, and an answer so real, that the most expert among the listeners will be ready to swear that a lie from his mouth is worth more than truth from that of another man."

"He that would gain credit for knowledge of the future," gravely observed the Signor Grimaldi, who had listened to his countryman's voluble eulogium on his own merits with a good-natured laugh, "had best commence by showing his familiarity with the past. Who and what is he that speaks to thee, as a specimen of thy skill in soothsaying?"

"His eccellenza is more than he seems, less than he deserves to be, and as much as any present. He hath an old and a prized friend at his elbow; hath come because it was his pleasure, to witness the games at Vévey—will depart for the same reason, when they are over, and will seek his home at his leisure—not like a fox stealing into his hole, but as the stately ship sails, gallantly, and by the light of the sun, into her haven."

"This will never do, Pippo," returned the good-humoured old noble; "at need I might equal this myself. Thou shouldst relate that which is less probable, while it is more true."

"Signore, we prophets like to sleep in whole skins. If it be your eccellenza's pleasure and that of your noble company to listen to the truly wonderful, I will tell some of these honest people matters touching their own interests that they do not

know themselves, and yet it shall be as clear to every body else as the sun in the heavens at noonday."

"Thou wilt, probably, tell them their faults?"

"Your eccellenza has a right to my place, for no prophet could have better divined my intention;" answered the laughing knave. "Come nearer, friend," he added, beckoning to the Bernois; "thou art Nicklaus Wagner, a fat peasant of the great canton, and a warm husbandman, that fancies he has a title to the respect of all he meets because some one among his fathers bought a right in the bürgerschaft. Thou hast a large stake in the Winkelried, and art at this moment thinking what punishment is good enough for an impudent soothsayer who dares dive so unceremoniously into the secrets of so warm a citizen, while all around thee wish thy cheeses had never left the dairy, to the discomfort of our limbs and to the great detriment of the bark's speed."

This sally at the expense of Nicklaus drew a burst of merriment from the listeners; for the selfish spirit he had manifested throughout the day had won little favor with a majority of his fellow travellers, who had all the generous propensities that are usually so abundant among those who have little or nothing to bestow, and who were by this time so well disposed to be merry that much less would have served to stimulate their mirth.

"Wert thou the owner of this good freight, friend, thou might find its presence less uncomfortable than thou now appearest to think," returned the literal peasant, who had no humour for raillery, and to whom a jest on the subject of property had that sort of irreverend character that popular opinion and holy sayings have attached to waste. "The cheeses are well enough where they

find themselves; if thou dislikest their company thou hast the alternative of the water."

"A truce between us, worshipful burgher! and let our skirmish end in something that may be useful to both. Thou hast that which would be acceptable to me, and I have that which no owner of cheeses would refuse, did he know the means by which it might be come at honestly."

Nicklaus growled a few words of distrust and indifference, but it was plain that the ambiguous language of the juggler, as usual, had succeeded in awakening interest. With the affectation of a mind secretly conscious of its own infirmity, he pretended to be indifferent to what the other professed a readiness to reveal, while with the rapacity of a grasping spirit he betrayed a longing to know more.

"First I will tell thee," said Pippo, with a parade of good-nature, "that thou deservest to remain in ignorance, as a punishment of thy pride and want of faith; but it is the failing of your prophet to let that be known which he ought to conceal. Thou flatterest thyself this is the fattest cargo of cheeses that will cross the Swiss waters this season, on their way to an Italian market? Shake not thy head.—'Tis useless to deny it to a man of my learning!"

"Nay, I know there are others as heavy, and, it may be, as good; but this has the advantage of being the first, a circumstance that is certain to command a price."

"Such is the blindness of one that nature sent on earth to deal in cheeses!"—The Herr Von Willading and his friends smiled among themselves at the cool impudence of the mountebank—"Thou fanciest it is so; and at this moment, a heavily laden bark is driving before a favorable gale, near the upper end of the lake of the four cantons, while

a long line of mules is waiting at Flüellen, to bear its freight by the paths of the St. Gothard, to Milano and other rich markets of the south. In virtue of my secret power, I see that, in despite of all thy cravings, it will arrive before thine."

Nicklaus fidgeted, for the graphic particularity of Pippo almost led him to believe the augury might be true.

"Had this bark sailed according to our covenant," he said, with a simplicity that betrayed his uneasiness, "the beasts bespoken by me would now be loading at Villeneuve; and, if there be justice in Vaud, I shall hold Baptiste responsible for any disadvantage that may come of the neglect."

"Luckily, the generous Baptiste is asleep," returned Pippo, "or we might hear objections to this scheme. But, Signiori, I see you are satisfied with this insight into the character of the warm peasant of Berne, who, to say truth, has not much to conceal from us, and I will turn my searching looks into the soul of this pious pilgrim, the reverend Conrado, whose unction may well go near to be a leaven sufficient to lighten all in the bark of their burthens of backslidings. Thou carriest the penitence and prayers of many sinners, besides some merchandise of this nature of thine own."

"I am bound to Loretto, with the mental offerings of certain Christians, who are too much occupied with their daily concerns to make the journey in person," answered the pilgrim, who never absolutely threw aside his professional character, though he cared in general so little about his hypocrisy being known. "I am poor, and humble of appear ance, but I have seen miracles in my day!"

"If any trust valuable offerings to thy keeping, thou art a living miracle in thine own person! I can foresee that thou wilt bear nought else beside aves."

"Nay, I pretend to deal in little more. The rich and great, they that send vessels of gold and rich dresses to Our Lady, employ their own favorite messengers; I am but the bearer of prayer and the substitute for the penitent. The sufferings that I undergo in the flesh are passed to the credit of my employers, who get the benefit of my aches and pains. I pretend to be no more than their go-between, as yonder mariner has so lately called me."

Pippo turned suddenly, following the direction of the other's eye, and cast a glance at the self-styled Il Maledetto. This individual, of all the common herd, had alone forborne to join the gaping and amused crowd near the juggler. His forbearance, or want of curiosity, had left him in the quiet possession of the little platform that was made by the stowage of the boxes, and he now stood on the summit of the pile, conspicuous by his situation and mein, the latter being remarkable for its unmoved calmness, heightened by the understanding manner that is so peculiar to a seaman when afloat."

"Wilt thou have the history of thy coming perils, friend mariner?" cried the mercurial mountebank: "A journal of thy future risks and tempests to amuse you in this calm? Such a picture of sea-monsters and of coral that grows in the ocean's caverns, where mariners sleep, that shall give thee the night-mare for months, and cause thee to dream of wrecks and bleached bones for the rest of thy life? Thou hast only to wish it, to have the adventures of thy next voyage laid before thee, like a map."

"Thou would'st gain more credit with me, as one cunning in thy art, by giving the history of the last."

"The request is reasonable, and thou shalt have it; for I love the bold adventurer that trusts him-

self hardily upon the great deep;" answered the unabashed Pippo. "My first lessons in necromancy were received on the mole of Napoli, amid burly Inglesi, straight-nosed Greeks, swarthy Sicilians, and Maltese with spirits as fine as the gold of their own chains. This was the school in which I learned to know my art, and an apt scholar I proved in all that touches the philosophy and humanity of my craft. Signore, thy palm?"

Maso spread his sinewy hand in the direction of the juggler, without descending from his elevation, and in a way to show that, while he would not balk the common humor, he was superior to the gaping wonder and childish credulity of most of those who watched the result. Pippo affected to stretch out his neck, in order to study the hard and dark lines, and then he resumed his revelations, like one perfectly satisfied with what he had discovered.

"The hand is masculine, and has been familiar with many friends in its time. It hath dealt with steel, and cordage, and saltpetre, and most of all with gold. Signori, the true seat of a man's digestion lies in the palm of his hand; if that is free to give and to receive, he will never have a costive conscience, for of all damnable inconveniences that afflict mortals, that of a conscience that will neither give up nor take is the heaviest curse. Let a man have as much sagacity as shall make him a cardinal, if it get entangled in the meshes of one of your unyielding consciences, ye shall see him a mendicant brother to his dying day; let him be born a prince with a close-ribbed opinion of this sort, and he had better have been born a beggar, for his reign will be like a river from which the current sets outward, without any return. No, my friends, a palm like this of Maso's is a favorable sign, since it hinges on a pliant will.

that will open and shut like a well-formed eye, or the jacket of a shell-fish, at its owner's pleasure. Thou hast drawn near to many a port before this of Vévey, after the sun has fallen low, Signor Maso!"

"In that I have taken a seaman's chances which depend more on the winds than on his own wishes."

"Thou esteemest the bottom of the craft in which thou art required to sail, as far more important than her ancient. Thou hast an eye for a keel, but none for color; unless, indeed, as it may happen to be convenient to seem that thou art not."

"Nay, Master Soothsayer, I suspect thee to be an officer of some of the Holy Brotherhoods, sent in this guise to question us poor travellers to our ruin!" answered Maso. "I am, what thou seest, but a poor mariner that hath no better bark under him than this of Baptiste, and on a sea no larger than a Swiss lake."

"Shrewdly observed," said Pippo, winking to those near him, though he so little liked the eye and bearing of the other that he was not sorry to turn to some new subject. "But what matters it, Signori, to be speaking of the qualities of men! We are all alike, honorable, merciful, more disposed to help others than to help ourselves, and so little given to selfishness, that nature has been obliged to supply every mother's son of us with a sort of goad, that shall be constantly pricking us on to look after our own interests. Here are animals whose dispositions are less understood, and we will bestow a useful minute in examining their qualities. Reverend Augustine, this mastiff of thine is named Uberto?"

"He is known by that appellation throughout the cantons and their allies. The fame of the dog

reaches even to Turin and to most of the towns in the plain of Lombardy."

"Now, Signori, you perceive that this is but a secondary creature in the scale of animals. Do him good and he will be grateful; do him harm, and he will forgive. Feed him, and he is satisfied. He will travel the paths of the St. Bernard, night and day, to do credit to his training, and when the toil is ended, all he asks is just as much meat as will keep the breath within his ribs. Had heaven given Uberto a conscience and greater wit, the first might have shown him the impiety of working for travellers on holy days and festas, while the latter would be apt to say he was a fool for troubling himself about the safety of others at all."

"And yet his masters, the good Augustines themselves, do not hold so selfish a creed!" observed Adelheid.

"Ah! they have heaven in view! I cry the reverend Augustine's pardon—but, lady, the difference is in the length of the calculation. Woe 's me, brethren; I would that my parents had educated me for a bishop, or a viceroy, or some other modest employment, that this learned craft of mine might have fallen into better hands! Ye would lose in instruction, but I should be removed from the giddy heights of ambition, and die at last with some hopes of being a saint. Fair lady, thou travellest on a bootless errand, if I know the reason that tempts thee to cross the Alps at this late season of the year."

This sudden address caused both Adelheid and her father to start, for, in despite of pride and the force of reason, it is seldom that we can completely redeem our opinions from the shackles of superstition, and that dread of the unseen future which appears to have been entailed upon our nature, as

a ceaseless monitor of the eternal state of being to which all are hastening, with steps so noiseless and yet so sure. The countenance of the maiden changed, and she turned a quick, involuntary glance at her anxious parent, as if to note the effect of this rude announcement on him before she answered.

"I go in quest of the blessing, health," she said, "and I should be sorry to think thy prognostic likely to be realized. With youth, a good constitution, and tender friends of my side, there is reason to think thou mayest, in this at least, prove a false prophet."

"Lady, hast thou hope?"

Pippo ventured this question as he had adventured his opinion; that is to say, recklessly, pretendingly, and with great indifference to any effect it might have, except as it was likely to establish his reputation with the crowd. Still, it would seem, that by one of those singular coincidences that are hourly occurring in real life, he had unwittingly touched a sensitive chord in the system of his fair fellow-traveller. Her eyes sank to the deck at this abrupt question, the color again stole to her polished temples, and the least practised in the emotions of the sex might have detected painful embarrassment in her mein. She was, however, spared the awkwardness of a reply, by the unexpected and prompt interference of Maso.

"Hope is the last of our friends to prove recreant," said this mariner, "else would the cases of many in company be bad enough, thine own included, Pippo; for, judging by the outward signs, the Swabian campaign has not been rich in spoils."

"Providence has ordered the harvests of wit much as it has ordered the harvests of the field," returned the juggler, who felt the sarcasm of the other's remark with all the poignancy that it could

derive from truth; since, to expose his real situation, he was absolutely indebted to an extraordinary access of generosity in Baptiste, for his very passage across the Leman. "One year, thou shalt find the vineyard dripping liquors precious as diamonds, while, the next, barrenness shall make it its seat. To-day the peasant will complain that poverty prevents him from building the covering necessary to house his crops, while to-morrow he will be heard groaning over empty garners. Abundance and famine travel the earth hard upon each other's heels, and it is not surprising that he who lives by his wits should sometimes fail of his harvest, as well as he who lives by his hands."

"If constant custom can secure success, the pious Conrad should be prosperous," answered Maso, "for, of all machinery, that of sin is the least seldom idle. His trade at least can never fail for want of employers."

"Thou hast it, Signor Maso; and it is for this especial reason that I wish my parents had educated me for a bishoprick. He that is charged with reproving his fellow creatures for their vices need never know an idle hour."

"Thou dost not understand what thou sayest," put in Conrad; "love for the saints has much fallen away since my youth, and where there is one Christian ready now to bestow his silver, in order to get the blessing of some favorite shrine, there were then ten. I have heard the elders of us pilgrims say, that, fifty years since, 'twas a pleasure to bear the sins of a whole parish, for ours is a business in which the load does not so much depend on the amount as the quality; and, in their time, there were willing offerings, frank confessions, and generous consideration for those who undertook the toil."

"In such a trade, the less thou hast to answer

for, in behalf of others, the more will pass to thy credit on the score of thine own backslidings," pithily remarked Nicklaus Wagner, who was a sturdy Protestant, and apt enough at levelling these side-hits at those who professed a faith, obnoxious to the attacks of all who dissented from the opinions and the spiritual domination of Rome.

But Conrad was a rare specimen of what may be effected by training and well-rooted prejudices. In presenting this man to the mind of the reader, we have no intention to impugn the doctrines of the particular church to which he belonged, but simply to show, as the truth will fully warrant, to what a pass of flagrant and impudent pretension the qualities of man, unbridled by the wholesome corrective of a sound and healthful opinion, was capable of conducting abuses on the most solemn and gravest subjects. In that age usages prevailed, and were so familiar to the minds of the actors as to excite neither reflection nor comment, which would now lead to revolutions, and a general rising in defence of principles which are held to be clear as the air we breathe. Though we entertain no doubt of the existence of that truth which pervades the universe, and to which all things tend, we think the world, in its practices, its theories, and its conventional standards of right and wrong, is in a condition of constant change, which it should be the business of the wise and good to favor, so long as care is had that the advantage is not bought by a re-action of evil, that shall more than prove its counterpoise. Conrad was one of the lowest class of those fungi that grow out of the decayed parts of the moral, as their more material types prove the rottenness of the vegetable, world; and the probability of the truth of the portraiture is not to be loosely denied, without mature reflection on the similar anomalies that are yet to be found on

every side of us, or without studying the history of the abuses which then disgraced Christianity, and which, in truth, became so intolerable in their character, and so hideous in their features, as to be the chief influencing cause to bring about their own annihilation.

Pippo, who had that useful tact which enables a man to measure his own estimation with others, was not slow to perceive that the more enlightened part of his audience began to tire of this pretending buffoonery. Resorting to a happy subterfuge, by means of one of his sleight-of-hand expedients, he succeeded in transferring the whole of that portion of the spectators who still found amusement in his jugglery, to the other end of the vessel, where they established themselves among the anchors, ready as ever to swallow an aliment, that seems to find an unextinguishable appetite for its reception among the vulgar. Here he continued his exhibition, now moralizing in the quaint and often in the pithy manner, which renders the southern buffoon so much superior to his duller competitor of the north, and uttering a wild jumble of wholesome truths, loose morality, and witty inuendoes, the latter of which never failed to extort roars of laughter from all but those who happened to be their luckless subjects.

Once or twice Baptiste raised his head, and stared about him with drowsy eyes, but, satisfied there was nothing to be done in the way of forcing the vessel ahead, he resumed his nap, without interfering in the pastime of those whom he had hitherto seemed to take pleasure in annoying. Left entirely to themselves, therefore, the crowd on the forecastle represented one of those every-day but profitable pictures of life, which abound under our eyes, but which, though they are pregnant with instruction, are treated with the indifference that

would seem to be the inevitable consequence of familiarity.

The crowded and overloaded bark might have been compared to the vessel of human life, which floats at all times subject to the thousand accidents of a delicate and complicated machinery; the lake, so smooth and alluring in its present tranquillity, but so capable of lashing its iron-bound coasts with fury, to a treacherous world, whose smile is almost always as dangerous as its frown; and, to complete the picture, the idle, laughing, thoughtless, and yet inflammable group that surrounded the buffoon, to the unaccountable medley of human sympathies, of sudden and fierce passions, of fun and frolic, so inexplicably mingled with the grossest egotism that enters into the heart of man: in a word, to so much that is beautiful and divine, with so much that would seem to be derived directly from the demons, a compound which composes this mysterious and dread state of being, and which we are taught, by reason and revelation, is only a preparation for another still more incomprehensible and wonderful.

CHAPTER V.

"How like a fawning publican he looks!"
SHYLOCK.

THE change of the juggler's scene of action left the party in the stern of the barge, in quiet possession of their portion of the vessel. Baptiste and his boatmen still slept among the boxes; Maso continued to pace his elevated platform above their heads; and the meek-looking stranger, whose en-

trance into the barge had drawn so many witticisms from Pippo, sate a little apart, silent, furtively observant, and retiring, in the identical spot he had occupied throughout the day. With these exceptions, the whole of the rest of the travellers were crowding around the person of the mountebank. Perhaps we have not done well, however, in classing either of the two just named with the more common herd, for there were strong points of difference to distinguish both from most of their companions.

The exterior and the personal appointments of the unknown traveller, who had shrunk so sensitively before the hits of the Neapolitan, was greatly superior to those of any other in the bark beneath the degree of the gentle, not even excepting those of the warm peasant Nicklaus Wagner, the owner of so large a portion of the freight. There was a decency of air that commanded more respect than it was then usual to yield to the nameless, a quietness of demeanor that denoted reflection and the habit of self-study and self-correction, together with a deference to others that was well adapted to gain friends. In the midst of the noisy, clamorous merriment of all around him, his restrained and rebuked manner had won upon the favor of the more privileged, who had unavoidably noticed the difference, and had prepared the way to a more frank communication between the party of the noble, and one who, if not their equal in the usual points of worldly distinction, was greatly superior to those among whom he had been accidentally cast by the chances of his journey. Not so with Maso; he, apparently, had little in common with the unobtruding and silent being that sat so near his path, in the short turns he was making to and fro across the pile of freight. The mariner was much the younger, his years scarcely reaching

thirty, while the head of the unknown traveller was already beginning to be sprinkled with gray. The walk, attitudes, and gestures, of the former, were also those of a man confident of himself, a little addicted to be indifferent to others, and far more disposed to lead than to follow. These are qualities that it may be thought his present situation was scarcely suited to discover, but they had been made sufficiently apparent, by the cool, calculating looks he threw, from time to time, at the manœuvres commanded by Baptiste, the expressive sneer with which he criticised his decisions, and a few biting remarks which had escaped him in the course of the day, and which had conveyed any thing but compliments to the nautical skill of the patron and his fresh-water followers. Still there were signs of better stuff in this suspicious-looking person than are usually seen about men, whose attire, pursuits and situation, are so indicative of the world's pressing hard upon their principles, as happened to be the fact with this poor and unknown seaman. Though ill clad, and wearing about him the general tokens of a vagrant life, and that loose connexion with society that is usually taken as sufficient evidence of one's demerits, his countenance occasionally denoted thought, and, during the day, his eye had frequently wandered towards the group of his more intelligent fellow-passengers, as if he found subjects of greater interest in their discourse, than in the rude pleasantries and practical jokes of those nearer his person.

The high-bred are always courteous, except in cases in which presumption repels civility; for they who are accustomed to the privileges of station, think far less of their immunities, than they, who, by being excluded from the fancied advantages, are apt to exaggerate a superiority that a short experience would show becomes of very questiona-

ble value in the possession. Without this equitable provision of Providence, the laws of civilized society would become truly intolerable, for, if peace of mind, pleasure, and what is usually termed happiness, were the exclusive enjoyment of those who are rich and honoured, there would, indeed, be so crying an injustice in their present ordinances as could not long withstand the united assaults of reason and justice. But, happily for the relief of the less gifted and the peace of the world, the fact is very different. Wealth has its peculiar woes; honors and privileges pall in the use; and, perhaps, as a rule, there is less of that regulated contentment, which forms the nearest approach to the condition of the blessed of which this unquiet state of being is susceptible, among those who are usually the most envied by their fellow-creatures, than in any other of the numerous gradations into which the social scale has been divided. He who reads our present legend with the eyes that we could wish, will find in its moral the illustration of this truth; for, if it is our intention to delineate some of the wrongs that spring from the abuses of the privileged and powerful, we hope equally to show how completely they fall short of their object, by failing to confer that exclusive happiness which is the goal that all struggle to attain.

Neither the Baron de Willading, nor his noble friend, the Genoese, though educated in the opinions of their caste, and necessarily under the influence of the prejudices of the age, was addicted to the insolence of vulgar pride. Their habits had revolted at the coarseness of the majority of the travellers, and they were glad to be rid of them by the expedient of Pippo; but no sooner did the modest, decent air of the stranger who remained, make itself apparent, than they felt a desire to compensate him for the privations he had already

undergone, by showing the civilities that their own rank rendered so easy and usually so grateful. With this view, then, as soon as the noisy *troupe* had departed, the Signor Grimaldi raised his beaver with that discreet and imposing politeness which equally attracts and repels, and, addressing the solitary stranger, he invited him to descend, and stretch his legs on the part of the deck which had hitherto been considered exclusively devoted to the use of his own party. The other started, reddened, and looked like one who doubted whether he had heard aright.

"These noble gentlemen would be glad if you would come down, and take advantage of this opportunity to relieve your limbs;" said the young Sigismund, raising his own athletic arm towards the stranger, to offer its assistance in helping him to reach the deck.

Still the unknown traveller hesitated, in the manner of one who fears he might overstep discretion, by obtruding beyond the limits imposed by modesty. He glanced furtively upwards at the place where Maso had posted himself, and muttered something of an intention to profit by its present nakedness.

"It has an occupant who does not seem disposed to admit another," said Sigismund, smiling; "your mariner has a self-possession when afloat, that usually gives him the same superiority that the well-armed swasher has among the timid in the street. You would do well, then, to accept the offer of the noble Genoese."

The stranger, who had once or twice been called rather ostentatiously by Baptiste the Herr Müller, during the day, as if the patron were disposed to let his hearers know that he had those who at least bore creditable names, even among his ordinary passengers, no longer delayed. He

came down from his seat, and moved about the deck in his usual, quiet, subdued manner, but in a way to show that he found a very sensible and grateful relief in being permitted to make the change. Sigismund was rewarded for this act of good-nature by a smile from Adelheid, who thought his warm interference in behalf of one, seemingly so much his inferior, did no discredit to his rank. It is possible that the youthful soldier had some secret sentiment of the advantage he derived from his kind interest in the stranger, for his brow flushed, and he looked more satisfied with himself, after this little office of humanity had been performed.

"You are better among us here," the baron kindly observed, when the Herr Müller was fairly established in his new situation, "than among the freight of the honest Nicklaus Wagner, who, Heaven help the worthy peasant! has loaded us fairly to the water's edge, with the notable industry of his dairy people. I like to witness the prosperity of our burghers, but it would have been better for us travellers, at least, had there been less of the wealth of honest Nicklaus in our company. Are you of Berne, or of Zurich?"

"Of Berne, Herr Baron."

"I might have guessed that by finding you on the Genfer See, instead of the Wallenstätter. There are many of the Müllers in the Emmen Thal?"

"The Herr is right; the name is frequent, both in that valley, and in Entlibuch."

"It is a frequent appellation among us of the Teutonick stock. I had many Müllers in my company, Gaetano, when we lay before Mantua. I remember that two of the brave fellows were buried in the marshes of that low country; for the fever helped the enemy as much as the sword,

in the life-wasting campaign of the year we besieged the place."

The more observant Italian saw that the stranger was distressed by the personal nature of the conversation, and, while he quietly assented to his friend's remark, he took occasion to give it a new direction.

"You travel, like ourselves, Signore, to get a look at these far-famed revels of the Vévasians?"

"That, and affairs, have brought me into this honorable company;" answered the Herr Müller, whom no kindness of tone, however, could win from his timid and subdued manner of speaking. "And thou, father," turning to the Augustine, "art journeying towards thy mountain residence, after a visit of love to the valleys and their people?"

The monk of St. Bernard assented to the truth of this remark, explaining the manner in which his community were accustomed annually to appeal to the liberality of the generous in Switzerland, in behalf of an institution that was founded in the interest of humanity, without reference to distinction of faith.

"'Tis a blessed brotherhood," answered the Genoese, crossing himself, perhaps as much from habit as from devotion, "and the traveller need wish it well. I have never shared of your hospitality, but all report speaks fairly of it, and the title of a brother of San Bernardo, should prove a passport to the favor of every Christian."

"Signore," said Maso, stopping suddenly, and taking his part uninvited in the discourse, and yet in a way to avoid the appearance of an impertinent interference, "none know this better than I! A wanderer these many years, I have often seen the stony roof of the hospice with as much pleasure as I have ever beheld the entrance of my

haven, when an adverse gale was pressing against my canvass. Honor and a rich *quête* to the clavier of the convent, therefore, for it is bringing succor to the poor and rest to the weary!"

As he uttered this opinion, Maso decorously raised his cap, and pursued his straitened walk with the industry of a caged tiger. It was so unusual for one of his condition to obtrude on the discourse of the fair and noble, that the party exchanged looks of surprise; but, the Signor Grimaldi, more accustomed than most of his friends to the frank deportment and bold speech of mariners, from having dwelt long on the coast of the Mediterranean, felt disposed rather to humor than to repulse this disposition to talk.

"Thou art a Genoese, by thy dialect," he said, assuming as a matter of course the right to question one of years so much fewer, and of a condition so much inferior to his own.

"Signore," returned Maso, uncovering himself again, though his manner betrayed profound personal respect rather than the deference of the vulgar, "I was born in the city of palaces, though it was my fortune first to see the light beneath a humble roof. The poorest of us are proud of the splendor of Genova la Superba, even if its glory has come from our own groans."

The Signor Grimaldi frowned. But, ashamed to permit himself to be disturbed by an allusion so vague, and perhaps so unpremeditated, and more especially coming as it did from so insignificant a source, his brow regained its expression of habitual composure.

An instant of reflection, told him it would be in better taste to continue the conversation, than churlishly to cut it short for so light a cause.

"Thou art too young to have had much con-

nexion, either in advantage or in suffering," he rejoined, "with the erection of the gorgeous dwellings to which thou alludest."

"This is true, Signore; except as one is the better or worse for those who have gone before him. I am what I seem, more by the acts of others than by any faults of my own. I envy not the rich or great, however; for one that has seen as much of life as I, knows the difference between the gay colors of the garment, and that of the shrivelled and diseased skin it conceals. We make our feluccas glittering and fine with paint, when their timbers work the most, and when the treacherous planks are ready to let in the sea to drown us."

"Thou hast the philosophy of it, young man, and hast uttered a biting truth, for those who waste their prime in chasing a phantom. Thou hast well bethought thee of these matters, for, if content with thy lot, no palace of our city would make thee happier."

"If, Signore, is a meaning word!—Content is like the north-star—we seamen steer for it, while none can ever reach it!"

"Am I then deceived in thee, after all? Is thy seeming moderation only affected; and would'st thou be the patron of the bark in which fortune hath made thee only a passenger?"

"And a bad fortune it hath proved," returned Maso, laughing. "We appear fated to pass the night in it, for, so far from seeing any signs of this land-breeze of which Baptiste has so confidently spoken, the air seems to have gone to sleep as well as the crew. Thou art accustomed to this climate, reverend Augustine; is it usual to see so deep a calm on the Leman at this late season?"

A question like this was well adapted to effect the speaker's wish to change the discourse, for it

very naturally directed the attention of all present from a subject that was rather tolerated from idleness than interesting in itself, to the different natural phenomena by which they were surrounded. The sun-set had now fairly passed, and the travellers were at the witching moment that precedes the final disappearance of the day. A calm so deep rested on the limpid lake, that it was not easy to distinguish the line which separated the two elements, in those places where the blue of the land was confounded with the well-known and peculiar color of the Leman.

The precise position of the Winkelried was near mid-way between the shores of Vaud and those of Savoy, though nearer to the first than to the last. Not another sail was visible on the whole of the watery expanse, with the exception of one that hung lazily from its yard, in a small bark that was pulling towards St. Gingoulph, bearing Savoyards returning to their homes from the other side of the lake, and which, in that delusive landscape, appeared to the eye to be within a stone's-throw of the base of the mountain, though, in truth, still a weary row from the land.

Nature has spread her work on a scale so magnificent in this sublime region that ocular deceptions of this character abound, and it requires time and practice to judge of those measurements which have been rendered familiar in other scenes. In like manner to the bark under the rocks of Savoy, there lay another, a heavy-moulded boat, nearly in a line with Villeneuve, which seemed to float in the air instead of its proper element, and whose oars were seen to rise and fall beneath a high mound, that was rendered shapeless by refraction. This was a craft, bearing hay from the meadows at the mouth of the Rhone to their proprietors in the villages of the Swiss coast. A few

light boats were pulling about in front of the town of Vévey, and a forest of low masts and latine yards, seen in the hundred picturesque attitudes peculiar to the rig, crowded the wild anchorage that is termed its port.

An air-line drawn from St. Saphorin to Meillerie, would have passed between the spars of the Winkelried, her distance from her haven, consequently, a little exceeded a marine league. This space might readily have been conquered in an hour or two by means of the sweeps, but for the lumbered condition of the decks, which would have rendered their use difficult, and the unusual draught of the bark, which would have caused the exertion to be painful. As it has been seen, Baptiste preferred waiting for the arrival of the night-breeze to having recourse to an expedient so toilsome and slow.

We have already said, that the point just described was at the place where the Leman fairly enters its eastern horn, and where its shores possess their boldest and finest faces. On the side of Savoy, the coast was a sublime wall of rocks, here and there clothed with chestnuts, or indented with ravines and dark glens, and naked and wild along the whole line of their giddy summits. The villages so frequently mentioned, and which have become celebrated in these later times by the touch of genius, clung to the uneven declivities, their lower dwellings laved by the lake, and their upper confounded with the rugged faces of the mountains. Beyond the limits of the Leman, the Alps shot up into still higher pinnacles, occasionally showing one of those naked excrescences of granite, which rise for a thousand feet above the rest of the range—a trifle in the stupendous scale of the vast piles—and which, in the language of the country, are not inaptly termed Dents, from some

fancied and plausible resemblance to human teeth. The verdant meadows of Noville, Aigle and Bex, spread for leagues between these snow-capped barriers, so dwindled to the eye, however, that the spectator believed that to be a mere bottom, which was, in truth, a broad and fertile plain. Beyond these again, came the celebrated pass of St. Maurice, where the foaming Rhone dashed between two abutments of rock, as if anxious to effect its exit before the superincumbent mountains could come together, and shut it out for ever from the inviting basin to which it was hurrying with a never-ceasing din. Behind this gorge, so celebrated as the key of the Valais, and even of the Alps in the time of the conquerors of the world, the back-ground took a character of holy mystery. The shades of evening lay thick in that enormous glen, which was sufficiently large to contain a sovereign state, and the dark piles of mountains beyond were seen in a hazy, confused array. The setting was a grey boundary of rocks, on which fleecy clouds rested, as if tired with their long and high flight, and on which the parting day still lingered soft and lucid. One cone of dazzling white towered over all. It resembled a bright stepping-stone between heaven and earth, the heat of the hot sun falling innocuously against its sides, like the cold and pure breast of a virgin repelling those treacherous sentiments which prove the ruin of a shining and glorious innocence. Across the summit of this brilliant and cloud-like peak, which formed the most distant object in the view, ran the imaginary line that divided Italy from the regions of the north. Drawing nearer, and holding its course on the opposite shore, the eye embraced the range of rampart-like rocks that beetle over Villeneuve and Chillon, the latter a snow-white pile that seemed to rest partly on the land and partly on the

water. On the vast débris of the mountains clustered the hamlets of Clarens, Montreux, Châtelard, and all those other places, since rendered so familiar to the reader of fiction by the vivid pen of Rousseau. Above the latter village the whole of the savage and rocky range receded, leaving the lake-shore to vine-clad côtes that stretch away far to the west.

This scene, at all times alluring and grand, was now beheld under its most favorable auspices. The glare of day had deserted all that belonged to what might be termed the lower world, leaving in its stead the mild hues, the pleasing shadows, and the varying tints of twilight. It is true that a hundred châlets dotted the Alps, or those mountain pasturages which spread themselves a thousand fathoms above the Leman, on the foundation of rock that lay like a wall behind Montreux, shining still with the brightness of a bland even, but all below was fast catching the more sombre colors of the hour.

As the transition from day to night grew more palpable, the hamlets of Savoy became gray and hazy, the shades thickened around the bases of the mountains in a manner to render their forms indistinct and massive, and the milder glory of the scene was transferred to their summits. Seen by sun-light, these noble heights appear a long range of naked granite, piled on a foundation of chestnut-covered hills, and buttressed by a few such salient spurs as are perhaps necessary to give variety and agreeable shadows to their acclivities. Their outlines were now drawn in those waving lines that the pencil of Raphael would have loved to sketch, dark, distinct, and appearing to be carved by art. The inflected and capricious edges of the rocks stood out in high relief against the back-ground of pearly sky, resembling so much ebony wrought

into every fantastic curvature that a wild and vivid fancy could conceive. Of all the wonderful and imposing sights of this extraordinary region, there is perhaps none in which there is so exquisite an admixture of the noble, the beautiful, and the bewitching, as in this view of these natural arabesques of Savoy, seen at the solemn hour of twilight.

The Baron de Willading and his friends stood uncovered, in reverence of the sublime picture, which could only come from the hands of the Creator, and with unalloyed enjoyment of the bland tranquillity of the hour. Exclamations of pleasure had escaped them, as the exhibition advanced; for the view, like the shifting of scenes, was in a constant state of transition under the waning and changing light, and each had eagerly pointed out to the others some peculiar charm of the view. The sight was, in sooth, of a nature to preclude selfishness, no one catching a glimpse that he did not wish to be shared by all. Vévey, their journey, the fleeting minutes, and their disappointment, were all forgotten in the delight of witnessing this evening landscape, and the silence was broken only to express those feelings of delight which had long been uppermost in every bosom.

"I doff my beaver to thy Switzerland, friend Melchior," cried the Signor Grimaldi, after directing the attention of Adelheid to one of the peaks of Savoy, of which he had just remarked that it seemed a spot where an angel might love to light in his visits to the earth; "if thou hast much of this, we of Italy must look to it, or—by the shades of our fathers! we shall lose our reputation for natural beauty. How is it young lady; hast thou many of these sun-sets at Willading? or, is this, after all, but an exception to what thou seest in common—as much a matter of astonishment to

thyself, as—by San Francesco! good Marcelli, we must even own, it is to thee and me!"

Adelheid laughed at the old noble's good-humored rhapsody, but, much as she loved her native land, she could not pervert the truth by pretending that the sight was one to be often met with.

"If we have not this, however, we have our glaciers, our lakes, our cottages, our châlets, our Oberland, and such glens as have an eternal twilight of their own."

"Ay, my true-hearted and pretty Swiss, this is well for thee who wilt affirm that a drop of thy snow-water is worth a thousand limpid springs, or thou art not the true child of old Melchior de Willading; but it is lost on the cooler head of one who has seen other lands. Father Xavier, thou art a neutral, for thy dwelling is on the dividing ridge between the two countries, and I appeal to thee to know if these Helvetians have much of this quality of evening?"

The worthy monk met the question in the spirit with which it was asked, for the elasticity of the air, and the heavenly tranquillity and bewitching loveliness of the hour, well disposed him to be joyous.

"To maintain my character as an impartial judge," he answered, "I will say that each region has its own advantages. If Switzerland is the most wonderful and imposing, Italy is the most winning. The latter leaves more durable impressions and is more fondly cherished. One strikes the senses, but the other slowly winds its way into the affections; and he who has freely vented his admiration in exclamations and epithets in one, will, in the end, want language to express all the secret longings, the fond recollections, the deep repinings, that he retains for the other."

"Fairly reasoned, friend Melchior, and like an

able umpire, leaving to each his share of consolation and vanity. Herr Müller, dost thou agree in a decision that gives thy muchvaunted Switzerland so formidable a rival?"

"Signore," answered the meek traveller, "I see enough to admire and love in both, as is always the fact with that which God hath formed. This is a glorious world for the happy, and most might be so, could they summon courage to be innocent."

"The good Augustine will tell thee that this bears hard on certain points of theology, in which our common nature is treated with but indifferent respect. He that would continue innocent must struggle hard with his propensities."

The stranger was thoughtful, and Sigismund, whose eye had been earnestly riveted on his face, thought that it denoted more of peace then usual.

"Signore," rejoined the Herr Müller, when time had been given for reflection, "I believe it is good for us to know unhappiness. He that is permitted too much of his own will gets to be headstrong, and, like the overfed bullock, difficult to be managed; whereas, he who lives under the displeasure of his fellow-creatures is driven to look closely into himself, and comes, at last, to chasten his spirit by detecting its faults."

"Art thou a follower of Calvin?" demanded the Augustine suddenly, surprised to hear opinions so healthful in the mouth of a dissenter from the true church.

"Father, I belong neither to Rome nor to the religion of Geneva. I am a humble worshipper of God, and a believer in the blessed mediation of his holy Son."

"How!—Where dost thou find such sentiments out of the pale of the church?"

"In mine own heart. This is my temple, holy Augustine, and I never enter it without adoration

for its Almighty founder. A cloud was over the roof of my father at my birth, and I have not been permitted to mingle much with men; but the solitude of my life has driven me to study my own nature, which I hope has become none the worse for the examination. I know I am an unworthy and sinful man, and I hope others are as much better than I as their opinions of themselves would give reason to think."

The words of the Herr Müller, which lost none of their weight by his unaffected and quiet manner, excited curiosity. At first, most of the listeners were disposed to believe him one of those exaggerated spirits who exalt themselves by a pretended self-abasement, but his natural, quiet, and thoughtful deportment soon produced a more favorable opinion. There was a habit of reflection, a retreating inward look about his eye, that revealed the character of one long and truly accustomed to look more at himself than at others, and which wrought singularly in his behalf.

"We may not all have these flattering opinions of ourselves that thy words would seem to imply, Signor Müller," observed the Genoese, his tone changing to one better suited to soothe the feelings of the person addressed, while a shade insensibly stole over his own venerable features; "neither are all at peace that so seem. If it will be any consolation to thee to know that others are probably no more happy than thyself, I will add that I have known much pain, and that, too, amid circumstances which most would deem fortunate, and which, I fear, a great majority of mankind might be disposed to envy."

"I should be base indeed to seek consolation in such a source! I do not complain, Signore, though my whole life has so passed that I can hardly say that I enjoy it. It is not easy to smile when we

know that all frown upon us; else could I be content. As it is, I rather feel than repine."

"This is a most singular condition of the mind;" whispered Adelheid to young Sigismund; for both had been deeply attentive listeners to the calm but strong language of the Herr Müller. The young man did not answer, and his fair companion saw, with surprise, that he was pale, and with difficulty noticed her remark with a smile.

"The frowns of men, my son," observed the monk, "are usually reserved for those who offend its ordinances. The latter may not be always just, but there is a common sentiment which refuses to visit innocence, even in the narrow sense in which we understand the word, with undeserved displeasure."

The Herr Müller looked earnestly at the Augustine, and he seemed about to answer; but, checking the impulse, he bowed in submission. At the same time, a wild, painful smile gleamed on his face.

"I agree with thee, good canon," rejoined the simple-minded baron: "we are much addicted to quarrelling with the world, but, after all, when we look closely into the matter, it will commonly be found that the cause of our grievances exists in ourselves."

"Is there no Providence, father?" exclaimed Adelheid, a little reproachfully for one of her respectful habits and great filial tenderness. "Can we recall the dead to life, or keep those quick whom God is pleased to destroy?"

"Thou hast me, girl!—there is a truth in this that no bereaved parent can deny!"

This remark produced an embarrassed pause, during which the Herr Müller gazed furtively about him, looking from the face of one to that of another, as if seeking for some countenance on

which he could rely. But he turned away to the view of those hills which had been so curiously wrought by the finger of the Almighty, and seemed to lose himself in their contemplation.

"This is some spirit that has been bruised by early indiscretion," said the Signor Grimaldi, in a low voice, "and whose repentance is strangely mixed with resignation. I know not whether such a man is most to be envied or pitied. There is a fearful mixture of resignation and of suffering in his air."

"He has not the mien of a stabber or a knave," answered the baron. "If he comes truly of the Müllers of the Emmen Thal, or even of those of Entlibuch, I should know something of his history. They are warm burghers, and mostly of fair name. It is true, that in my youth one of the family got out of favor with the councils, on account of some concealment of their lawful claims in the way of revenue, but the man made an atonement that was deemed sufficient in amount, and the matter was forgotten. It is not usual, Herr Müller, to meet citizens in our canton who go for neither Rome nor Calvin."

"It is not usual, mein Herr, to meet men placed as I am. Neither Rome nor Calvin is sufficient for me;—I have need of God!"

"I fear thou hast taken life?"

The stranger bowed, and his face grew livid, seemingly with the intensity of his own thoughts. Melchior de Willading so disliked the expression, that he turned away his eyes in uneasiness. The other glanced frequently at the forward part of the bark, and he seemed struggling hard to speak, but, for some strong reason, unable to effect his purpose. Uncovering himself, at length, he said steadily, as if superior to shame, while he fully felt

the import of his communication, but in a voice that was cautiously suppressed—

"I am Balthazar, of your canton, Herr Baron, and I pray your powerful succor, should those untamed spirits on the forecastle come to discover the truth. My blood hath been made to curdle to-day whilst listening to their heartless threats and terrible maledictions. Without this fear, I should have kept my secret,—for God knows I am not proud of my office!"

The general and sudden surprise, accompanied as it was by a common movement of aversion, induced the Signor Grimaldi to demand the reason.

"Thy name is not in much favour apparently, Herr Müller, or Herr Balthazar, whichever it is thy pleasure to be called," observed the Genoese, casting a quick glance around the circle. "There is some mystery in it, that to me needs explanation."

"Signore, I am the headsman of Berne."

Though long schooled in the polished habits of his high condition, which taught him ordinarily to repress strong emotions, the Signor Grimaldi could not conceal the start which this unexpected announcement produced, for he had not escaped the usual prejudices of men.

"Truly, we have been fortunate in our associate, Melchior," he said drily, turning without ceremony from the man whose modest, quiet mien had lately interested him so much, but whose manner he now took to be assumed,—few pausing to investigate the motives of those who are condemned of opinion:—"here has been much excellent and useful morality thrown away upon a very unworthy subject!"

The baron received the intelligence of the real name of their travelling companion with less feeling. He had been greatly puzzled to account for

the singular language he had heard, and he found relief in so brief a solution of the difficulty.

"The pretended name, after all, then, is only a cloak to conceal the truth! I knew the Müllers of the Emmen Thal so well, that I had great difficulty in fitting the character which the honest man gave of himself fairly upon any one of them all. But it is now clear enough, and doubtless Balthazar has no great reason to be proud of the turn which Fortune has played his family in making them executioners."

"Is the office hereditary?" demanded the Genoese, quickly.

"It is. Thou knowest that we of Berne have great respect for ancient usages. He that is born to the Bürgerschaft will die in the exercise of his rights, and he that is born out of its venerable pale must be satisfied to live out of it, unless he has gold or favor. Our institutions are a hint from nature, which leaves men as they are created, preserving the order and harmony of society by venerable and well-defined laws, as is wise and necessary. In nature, he that is born strong remains strong, and he that has little force must be content with his feebleness."

The Signor Grimaldi looked like one who felt contrition.

"Art thou, in truth, an hereditary executioner?" he asked, addressing Balthazar himself.

"Signore, I am: else would hand of mine have never taken life. 'Tis a hard duty to perform, even under the obligations and penalties of the law;—otherwise, it were accursed!"

"Thy fathers deemed it a privilege!"

"We suffer for their error: Signore, the sins of the fathers, in our case, have indeed been visited on the children to the latest generations."

The countenance of the Genoese grew brighter,

and his voice resumed the polished tones in which he usually spoke.

"Here has been some injustice of a certainty," he said, "or one of thy appearance would not be found in this cruel position. Depend on our authority to protect thee, should the danger thou seemest to apprehend really occur. Still the laws must be respected, though not always of the rigid impartiality that we might wish. Thou hast owned the imperfection of human nature, and it is not wonderful that its work should have flaws."

"I complain not now of the usage, which to me has become habit, but I dread the untamed fury of these ignorant and credulous men, who have taken a wild fancy that my presence might bring a curse upon the bark."

There are accidental situations which contain more healthful morals than can be drawn from a thousand ingenious and plausible homilies, and in which facts, in their naked simplicity, are far more eloquent than any meaning that can be conveyed by words. Such was the case with this meek and unexpected appeal of Balthazar. All who heard him saw his situation under very different colors from those in which it would have been regarded had the subject presented itself under ordinary circumstances. A common and painful sentiment attested strongly against the oppression that had given birth to his wrongs, and the good Melchior de Willading himself wondered how a case of this striking injustice could have arisen under the laws of Berne.

CHAPTER VI.

Methought I saw a thousand fearful wrecks,
A thousand men that fishes gnawed upon;
Wedges of gold, great anchors, heaps of pearl,
Inestimable stones, unvalued jewels,
All scattered in the bottom of the sea.

Richard III.

The flitting twilight was now on the wane, and the shades of evening were gathering fast over the deep basin of the lake. The figure of Maso, as he continued to pace his elevated platform, was drawn dark and distinct against the southern sky, in which some of the last rays of the sun still lingered, but objects on both shores were getting to be confounded with the shapeless masses of the mountains. Here and there a pale star peeped out, though most of the vault that stretched across the confined horizon was shut in by dusky clouds. A streak of dull, unnatural light was seen in the quarter which lay above the meadows of the Rhone, and nearly in a direction with the peak of Mont Blanc, which, though not visible from this portion of the Leman, was known to lie behind the ramparts of Savoy, like a monarch of the hills entrenched in his citadel of rocks and ice.

The change, the lateness of the hour, and the unpleasant reflections left by the short dialogue with Balthazar, produced a strong and common desire to see the end of a navigation that was beginning to be irksome. Those objects which had lately yielded so much and so pure a delight were now getting to be black and menacing, and the very sublimity of the scale on which Nature had here thrown together her elements was an addi-

tional source of uncertainty and alarm. Those fairy-like, softly-delineated, natural arabesques, which had so lately been dwelt upon with rapture, were now converted into dreary crags that seemed to beetle above the helpless bark, giving unpleasant admonitions of the savage and inhospitable properties of their iron-bound bases, which were known to prove destructive to all who were cast against them while the elements were in disorder.

These changes in the character of the scene, which in some respects began to take the aspect of omens, were uneasily witnessed by all in the stern of the bark, though the careless laughter, the rude joke, and the noisy cries, which from time to time arose on the forecastle, sufficiently showed that the careless spirits it held were still indulging in the coarse enjoyments most suited to their habits. One individual, however, was seen stealing from the crowd, and establishing himself on the pile of freight, as if he had a mind more addicted to reflection, and less disposed to unmeaning revelry, than most of those whom he had just abandoned. This was the Westphalian student, who, wearied with amusements that were below the level of his acquirements, and suddenly struck with the imposing aspect of the lake and the mountains, had stolen apart to muse on his distant home and the beings most dear to him, under an excitement that suited those morbid sensibilities which he had long encouraged by a very subtle metaphysical system of philosophy. Until now, Maso had paced his lofty post with his eye fixed chiefly on the heavens in the direction of Mont Blanc, occasionally turning it, however, over the motionless bulk of the bark, but when the student placed himself across his path, he stopped and smiled at the

abstracted air and riveted regard with which the youth gazed at a star.

"Art thou an astronomer, that thou lookest so closely at yonder shining world?" demanded Il Maledetto, with the superiority that the mariner afloat is wont successfully to assume over the unhappy wight of a landsman, who is very liable to admit his own impotency on the novel and dangerous element:—"the astrologer himself would not study it more deeply."

"This is the hour agreed upon between me and one that I love to bring the unseen principle of our spirits together, by communing through its medium."

"I have heard of such means of intercourse. Dost see more than others by reason of such an assistant?"

"I see the object which is gazed upon, at this moment, by kind blue eyes that have often looked upon me in affection. When we are in a strange land, and in a fearful situation, such a communion has its pleasures!"

Maso laid his hand upon the shoulder of the student, which he pressed with the force of a vice.

"Thou art right," he said, moodily; "make the most of thy friendships, and, if there are any that love thee, tighten the knot by all the means thou hast. None know the curse of being deserted in this selfish and cruel battle of interest better than I! Be not ashamed of thy star, but gaze at it till thy eye-strings crack. See the bright eyes of her that loves thee in its twinkling, her constancy in its lustre, and her melancholy in its sadness; lose not the happy moments, for there will soon be a dark curtain to shut out its view."

The Westphalian was struck with the singular energy as well as with the poetry of the mariner, and he distrusted the obvious allusion to the clouds,

which were, in fact, fast covering the vault above their heads.

"Dost thou like the night?" he demanded, turning from his star in doubt.

"It might be fairer. This is a wild region, and your cold Swiss lakes sometimes become too hot for the stoutest seaman's heart. Gaze at thy star, young man, while thou mayest, and bethink thee of the maiden thou lovest and of all her kindness; we are on a crazy water, and pleasant thoughts should not be lightly thrown away."

Maso walked away, leaving the student alarmed, uneasy at he knew not what, and yet bent with childish eagerness on regarding the little luminary that occasionally was still seen wading among volumes of vapor. At this instant, a shout of unmeaning, clamorous merriment arose on the forecastle.

Il Maledetto did not remain any longer on the pile, but abandoning it to the new occupant, he descended among the silent, thoughtful party who were in possession of the cleared space near the stern. It was now so dark that some little attention was necessary to distinguish faces, even at trifling distances. But, by means of moving among these privileged persons with great coolness and seeming indifference, he soon succeeded in placing himself near the Genoese and the Augustine.

"Signore," he said, in Italian, raising his cap to the former with the same marked respect as before, though it was evidently no easy matter to impress him with the deference that the obscure usually feel for the great—"this is likely to prove an unfortunate end to a voyage that began with so fair appearances. I could wish that your eccellenza, with all this noble and fair company, was safely landed in the town of Vévey."

"Dost thou mean that we have cause to fear more than delay?"

"Signore, the mariner's life is one of unequal chances: now he floats in a lazy calm, and presently he is tossed between heaven and earth, in a way to make the stoutest heart sick. My knowledge of these waters is not great, but there are signs making themselves seen in the sky, here above the peak that lies in the direction of Mont Blanc, that would trouble me, were this our own blue but treacherous Mediterranean."

"What thinkest thou of this, father; a long residence in the Alps must have given thee some insight into their storms?"

The Augustine had been grave and thoughtful from the moment that he ceased to converse with Balthazar. He, too, had been struck with the omens, and, long used to study the changes of the weather, in a region where the elements sometimes work their will on a scale commensurate with the grandeur of the mountains, his thoughts had been anxiously recurring to the comforts and security of some of those hospitable roofs in the city to which they were bound, and which were always ready to receive the clavier of St. Bernard, in return for the services and self-denial of his brotherhood.

"With Maso, I could wish we were safely landed," answered the good canon; "the intense heat that a day like this creates in our valleys and on the lakes so weakens the sub-strata, or foundations of air, that the cold masses which collect around the glaciers sometimes descend like avalanches from their heights, to fill the vacuum. The shock is fearful, even to those who meet it in the glens and among the rocks, but the plunge of such a column of air upon one of the lakes is certain to be terrible."

"And thou thinkest there is danger of one of these phenomena at present?"

"I know not; but I would we were housed! That unnatural light above, and this deep tranquillity below, which surpasses an ordinary calm have already driven me to my aves."

"The reverend Augustine speaks like a book man, and one who has passed his time, up in his mountain-convent, in study and reflection," rejoined Maso; "whereas the reasons I have to offer savor more of the seaman's practice. A calm like this, will be followed, sooner or later, by a commotion in the atmosphere. I like not the absence of the breeze from the land, on which Baptiste counted so surely, and, taking that symptom with the signs of yonder hot sky, I look soon to see this extraordinary quiet displaced by some violent struggle among the winds. Nettuno, too, my faithful dog, has given notice, by the manner in which he snuffs the air, that we are not to pass the night in this motionless condition."

"I had hoped ere this to be quietly in our haven. What means yonder bright light? Is it a star in the heavens, or does it merely lie against the side of the huge mountain?"

"There shines old Roger de Blonay!" cried the baron, heartily; "he knows of our being in the bark, and he has fired his beacon that we may steer by its light."

The conjecture seemed probable, for, while the day remained, the castle of Blonay, seated on the bosom of the mountain that shelters Vévey to the north-east, had been plainly visible. It had been much admired, a pleasing object in a view that was so richly studded with hamlets and castles, and Adelheid had pointed it out to Sigismund as the immediate goal of her journey. The lord of Blonay being apprized of the intended visit,

nothing was more probable than that he, an old and tried friend of Melchior de Willading's, should show this sign of impatience; partly in compliment to those whom he expected, and partly as a signal that might be really useful to those who navigated the Leman, in a night that threatened so much murky obscurity.

The Signor Grimaldi rightly deemed the circumstances grave, and, calling to him his friend and Sigismund, he communicated the apprehensions of the monk and Maso. A braver man than Melchior de Willading did not dwell in all Switzerland, but he did not hear the gloomy predictions of the Genoese without shaking in every limb.

"My poor enfeebled Adelheid!" he said, yielding to a father's tenderness: "what will become of this frail plant, if exposed to a tempest in an unsheltered bark?"

"She will be with her father, and with her father's friend," answered the maiden herself; for the narrow limits to which they were necessarily confined, and the sudden burst of feeling in the parent, which had rendered him incautious in pitching his voice, made her the mistress of the cause of alarm. "I have heard enough of what the good Father Xavier and this mariner have said, to know that we are in a situation that might be better; but am I not with tried friends? I know already what the Herr Sigismund can do in behalf of my life, and come what may, we have all a beneficent guardian in One, who will not leave any of us to perish without remembering we are his children."

"This girl shames us all," said the Signor Grimaldi; "but it is often thus with these fragile beings, who rise the firmest and noblest in moments when prouder man begins to despair. They put their trust in God, who is a prop to sustain

even those who are feebler than our gentle Adelheid. But we will not exaggerate the causes of apprehension, which, after all, may pass away like many other threatening dangers, and leave us hours of felicitation and laughter in return for a few minutes of fright."

"Say, rather of thanksgiving," observed the clavier, "for the aspect of the heavens is getting to be fearfully solemn. Thou, who art a mariner—hast thou nothing to suggest?"

"We have the simple expedient of our sweeps, father; but, after neglecting their use so long, it is now too late to have recourse to them. We could not reach Vévey by such means, with this bark loaded to the water's edge, before the night would change, and, the water once fairly in motion, they could not be used at all."

"But we have our sails," put in the Genoese; "they at least may do us good service when the wind shall come."

Maso shook his head, but he made no answer. After a brief pause, in which he seemed to study the heavens still more closely, he went to the spot where the patron yet lay lost in sleep, and shook him rudely.—"Ho! Baptiste! awake! there is need here of thy counsel and of thy commands."

The drowsy owner of the bark rubbed his eyes, and slowly regained the use of his faculties.

"There is not a breath of wind," he muttered; "why didst awake me, Maso?—One that hath led thy life should know that sleep is sweet to those who toil."

"Ay, 'tis their advantage over the pampered and idle. Look at the heavens, man, and let us know what thou thinkest of their appearance. Is there the stuff in thy Winkelried to ride out a storm like this we may have to encounter?"

"Thou talkest like a foolish quean that has been

frightened by the fluttering of her own poultry. The lake was never more calm, or the bark in greater safety."

"Dost see yonder bright light; here, over the tower of thy Vévey church?"

"Ay, 'tis a gallant star! and a fair sign for the mariner."

"Fool, 'tis a hot flame in Roger de Blonay's beacon. They begin to see that we are in danger on the shore, and they cast out their signals to give us notice to be active. They think us bestirring ourselves like stout men, and those used to the water, while, in truth, we are as undisturbed as if the bark were a rock that might laugh at the Leman and its waves. The man is benumbed," continued Maso, turning away towards the anxious listeners; "he will not see that which is getting to be but too plain to all the others in his vessel."

Another idle and general laugh from the forecastle came to contradict this opinion of Maso's, and to prove how easy it is for the ignorant to exist in security, even on the brink of destruction. This was the moment, when nature gave the first of those signals that were intelligible to vulgar capacities. The whole vault of the heavens was now veiled, with the exception of the spot so often named, which lay nearly above the brawling torrents of the Rhone. This fiery opening resembled a window admitting of fearful glimpses into the dreadful preparations that were making up among the higher peaks of the Alps. A flash of red quivering light was emitted, and a distant, rumbling rush, that was not thunder but rather resembled the wheelings of a thousand squadrons into line, followed the flash. The forecastle was deserted to a man, and the hillock of freight was again darkly seen peopled with crouching human forms. Just then the bark

which had so long lain in a state of complete rest, slowly and heavily raised its bows, as if laboring under its great and unusual burthen, while a sluggish swell passed beneath its entire length, lifting the whole mass, foot by foot, and passing away by the stern, to cast itself on the shores of Vaud.

"'Tis madness to waste the precious moments longer!" said Maso hurriedly, on whom this plain and intelligent hint was not lost. "Signori, we must be bold and prompt, or we shall be overtaken by the tempest unprepared. I speak not for myself, since, by the aid of this faithful dog, and favored by my own arms, I have always the shore for a hope. But there is one in the bark I would wish to save, even at some hazard to myself. Baptiste is unnerved by fear, and we must act for ourselves or perish!"

"What wouldest thou?" demanded the Signor Grimaldi; "he that can proclaim the danger should have some expedient to divert it?"

"More timely exertion would have given us the resource of ordinary means; but, like those who die in their sins, we have foolishly wasted most precious minutes. We must lighten the bark, though it cost the whole of her freight."

A cry from Nicklaus Wagner announced that the spirit of avarice was still active as ever in his bosom. Even Baptiste, who had lost all his dogmatism and his disposition to command, under the imposing omens which had now made themselves apparent even to him, loudly joined in the protest against this waste of property. It is rare that any sudden and extreme proposal, like this of Maso's, meets with a quick echo in the judgments of those to whom the necessity is unexpectedly presented. The danger did not seem sufficiently imminent to have recourse to an expedient so decided; and, though startled and aroused, the untamed spirits

of those who crowded the menaced pile were rather in a state of uneasiness, than of that fierce excitement to which they were so capable of being wrought, and which was in some degree necessary to induce even them, thriftless and destitute as they were, to be the agents of effecting so great a destruction of property. The project of the cool and calculating Maso would therefore have failed entirely, but for another wheeling of those airy squadrons, and a second wave which lifted the groaning bark until the loosened yards swung creaking above their heads. The canvass flapped, too, in the darkness, like some huge bird of prey fluttering its feathers previously to taking wing.

"Holy and just Ruler of the land and the sea!" exclaimed the Augustine, "remember thy repentant children, and have us, at this awful moment, in thy omnipotent protection!"

"The winds are come down, and even the dumb lake sends us the signal to be ready!" shouted Maso. "Overboard with the freight, if ye would live!"

A sudden heavy plunge into the water, proved that the mariner was in earnest. Notwithstanding the imposing and awful signs with which they were surrounded, every individual of the nameless herd bethought him of the pack that contained his own scanty worldly effects, and there was a general and quick movement, with a view to secure them. As each man succeeded in effecting his own object, he was led away by that community of feeling which rules a multitude. The common rush was believed to be with a view to succor Maso, though each man secretly knew the falsity of the impression as respected his own particular case; and box after box began to tumble into the water, as new and eager recruits lent themselves

to the task. The impulse was quickly imparted from one to another, until even young Sigismund was active in the work. On these slight accidents do the most important results depend, when the hot impulses that govern the mass obtain the ascendant.

It is not to be supposed that either Baptiste, or Nicklaus Wagner, witnessed the waste of their joint effects with total indifference. So far from this, each used every exertion in his power to prevent it, not only by his voice, but with his hands. One menaced the law—the other threatened Maso with condign punishment for his interference with a patron's rights and duties; but their remonstrances were uttered to inattentive ears. Maso knew himself to be irresponsible by situation, for it was not an easy matter to bring him within the grasp of the authorities; and as for the others, most of them were far too insignificant to feel much apprehension for a reparation that would be most likely, if it fell at all, to fall on those who were more able to bear it. Sigismund alone exerted himself under a sense of his liabilities; but he worked for one that was far dearer to him than gold, and little did he bethink him of any other consequences than those which might befall the precious life of Adelheid de Willading.

The meagre packages of the common passengers had been thrown in a place of safety, with the sort of unreflecting instinct with which we take care of our limbs when in danger. This timely precaution permitted each to work with a zeal that found no drawback in personal interest, and the effect was in proportion. A hundred hands were busy, and nearly as many throbbing hearts lent their impulses to the accomplishment of the one important object.

Baptiste and his people, aided by laborers of the

port, had passed an entire day in heaping that pile on the deck of the Winkelried, which was now crumbling to pieces with a rapidity that seemed allied to magic. The patron and Nicklaus Wagner bawled themselves hoarse, with uttering useless threats and deprecations, for by this time the laborers in the work of destruction had received some such impetus as the rolling stone acquires by the increased momentum of its descent. Packages, boxes, bales, and everything that came to hand, were hurled into the water frantically, and without other thought than of the necessity of lightening the groaning bark of its burthen. The agitation of the lake, too, was regularly increasing, wave following wave, in a manner to cause the vessel to pitch heavily, as it rose upon the coming, or sunk with the receding swell. At length, a shout announced that, in one portion of the pile, the deck was attained!

The work now proceeded with greater security to those engaged, for, hitherto the motion of the bark, and the unequal footing, frequently rendered their situations, in the darkness and confusion, to the last degree hazardous. Maso now abandoned his own active agency in the toil, for no sooner did he see the others fairly and zealously enlisted in the undertaking, than he ceased his personal efforts to give those directions which, coming from one accustomed to the occupation, were far more valuable than any service that could be derived from a single arm.

"Thou art known to me, Signor Maso," said Baptiste, hoarse with his impotent efforts to restrain the torrent, "and thou shalt answer for this, as well as for other of thy crimes, so soon as we reach the haven of Vévey!"

"Dotard! thou would'st carry thyself and all with thee, by thy narrowness of spirit, to a port

from which, when it is once entered, none ever sail again."

"It lieth between ye both," rejoined Nicklaus Wagner; "thou art not less to blame than these madmen, Baptiste. Hadst thou left the town at the hour named in our conditions, this danger could not have overtaken us."

"Am I a god to command the winds! I would that I had never seen thee or thy cheeses, or that thou wouldst relieve me of thy presence, and go after them into the lake."

"This comes of sleeping on duty; nay, I know not but that a proper use of the oars would still bring us in, in safety, and without necessary harm to the property of any. Noble Baron de Willading, here may be occasion for your testimony, and, as a citizen of Berne, I pray you to heed well the circumstances."

Baptiste was not in a humor to bear these merited reproaches, and he rejoined upon the aggrieved Nicklaus in a manner that would speedily have brought their ill-timed wrangle to an issue, had not Maso passed rudely between them, shoving them asunder with the sinews of a giant. This repulse served to keep the peace for the moment, but the wordy war continued with so much acrimony, and with so many unmeasured terms, that Adelheid and her maids, pale and terror-struck by the surrounding scene as they were, gladly shut their ears, to exclude epithets of such bitterness and menace that they curdled the blood. Maso passed on among the workmen, when he had interposed between the disputants. He gave his orders with perfect self-possession, though his understanding eye perceived that, instead of magnifying the danger, he had himself not fully anticipated its extent. The rolling of the waves was now incessant, and the quick, washing rush of the water, a sound fa-

miliar to the seaman, announced that they had become so large that their summits broke, sending their lighter foam ahead. There were symptoms, too, which proved that their situation was understood by those on the land. Lights were flashing along the strand near Vévey, and it was not difficult to detect, even at the distance at which they lay, the evidences of a strong feeling among the people of the town.

"I doubt not that we have been seen," said Melchior de Willading, "and that our friends are busy in devising means to aid us. Roger de Blonay is not a man to see us perish without an effort, nor would the worthy bailiff, Peter Hofmeister, be idle, knowing that a brother of the bürgerschaft, and an old school associate, hath need of his assistance."

"None can come to us, without running an equal risk with ourselves," answered the Genoese. "It were better that we should be left to our own exertions. I like the coolness of this unknown mariner, and I put my faith in God!"

A new shout proclaimed that the deck had been gained, on the other side of the bark. Much the greater part of the deck-load had now irretrievably disappeared, and the movements of the relieved vessel were more lively and sane. Maso called to him one or two of the regular crew, and together they rolled up the canvass, in a manner peculiar to the latine rig; for a breath of hot air, the first of any sort that had been felt for many hours, passed athwart the bark. This duty was performed, as canvass is known to be furled at need, but it was done securely. Maso then went among the laborers again, encouraging them with his voice, and directing their efforts with his counsel.

"Thou art not equal to thy task," he said, addressing one who was vainly endeavoring to roll

a bale to the side of the vessel, a little apart from the rest of the busy crowd; "thou wilt do better to assist the others, than to waste thy force here."

"I feel the strength to remove a mountain! Do we not work for our lives?"

The mariner bent forward, and looked into the other's face. These frantic and ill-directed efforts came from the Westphalian student.

"Thy star has disappeared," he rejoined, smiling—for Maso had smiled in scenes far more imposing, than even that with which he was now surrounded.

"She gazes at it still; she thinks of one that loves her, who is journeying far from the fatherland."

"Hold! Since thou wilt have it so, I will help thee to cast this bale into the water. Place thine arm thus; an ounce of well-directed force is worth a pound that acts against itself."

Stooping together, their united strength did that which had baffled the single efforts of the scholar. The package rolled to the gangway, and the German, frenzied with excitement, shouted aloud! The bark lurched, and the bale went over the side, as if the lifeless mass were suddenly possessed with the desire to perform the evolution which its inert weight had so long resisted. Maso recovered his footing, which had been deranged by the unexpected movement, with a seaman's dexterity, but his companion was no longer at his side. Kneeling on the gangway, he perceived the dark bale disappearing in the element, with the feet of the Westphalian dragging after. He bent forward to grasp the rising body, but it never returned to the surface, being entangled in the cords, or, what was equally probable, retained by the frantic grasp of the student, whose mind had yielded to the awful character of the night.

The life of Il Maledetto had been one of great vicissitudes and peril. He had often seen men pass suddenly into the other state of existence, and had been calm himself amid the cries, the groans, and, what is far more appalling, the execrations of the dying, but never before had he witnessed so brief and silent an end. For more than a minute, he hung suspended over the dark and working water, expecting to see the student return; and, when hope was reluctantly abandoned, he arose to his feet, a startled and admonished man. Still discretion did not desert him. He saw the uselessness, and even the danger, of distracting the attention of the workmen, and the ill-fated scholar was permitted to pass away without a word of regret or a comment on his fate. None knew of his loss but the wary mariner, nor was his person missed by any of those who had spent the day in his company. But she to whom he had plighted his faith on the banks of the Elbe long gazed at that pale star, and wept in bitterness that her feminine constancy met with no return. Her true affections long outlived their object, for his image was deeply enshrined in a warm female heart. Days, weeks, months, and years passed for her in the wasting cheerlessness of hope deferred, but the dark Leman never gave up its secret, and he to whom her lover's fate alone was known little bethought him of an accident which, if not forgotten, was but one of many similar frightful incidents in his eventful career.

Maso re-appeared among the crowd, with the forced composure of one who well knew that authority was most efficient when most calm. The command of the vessel was now virtually with him, Baptiste, enervated by the extraordinary crisis, and choking with passion, being utterly incapable of giving a distinct or a useful order. It was

fortunate for those in the bark that the substitute was so good, for more fearful signs never impended over the Leman than those which darkened the hour.

We have necessarily consumed much time in relating these events, the pen not equalling the activity of the thoughts. Twenty minutes, however, had not passed since the tranquillity of the lake was first disturbed, and so great had been the exertions of those in the Winkelried, that the time appeared to be shorter. But, though it had been so well employed, neither had the powers of the air been idle. The unnatural opening in the heavens was shut, and, at short intervals, those fearful wheelings of the aërial squadrons were drawing nearer. Thrice had fitful breathings of warm air passed over the bark, and occasionally, as she plunged into a sea that was heavier than common, the faces of those on board were cooled, as it might be with some huge fan. These were no more, however, than sudden changes in the atmosphere, of which veins were displaced by the distant struggle between the heated air of the lake and that which had been chilled on the glaciers, or, they were the still more simple result of the violent agitation of the vessel.

The deep darkness which shut in the vault, giving to the embedded Leman the appearance of a gloomy, liquid glen, contributed to the awful sublimity of the night. The ramparts of Savoy were barely distinguishable from the flying clouds, having the appearance of black walls, seemingly within reach of the hand; while the more varied and softer côtes of Vaud lay an indefinable and sombre mass, less menacing, it is true, but equally confused and unattainable.

Still the beacon blazed in the grate of old Roger de Blonay, and flaring torches glided along the

strand. The shore seemed alive with human beings, able as themselves to appreciate and to feel for their situation.

The deck was now cleared, and the travellers were collected in a group between the masts Pippo had lost all his pleasantry under the dread signs of the hour, and Conrad, trembling with superstition and terror, was free from hypocrisy. They, and those with them, discoursed on their chances, on the nature of the risks they ran, and on its probable causes.

"I see no image of Maria, nor even a pitiful lamp to any of the blessed, in this accursed bark!" said the juggler, after several had hazarded their quaint and peculiar opinions. "Let the patron come forth, and answer for his negligence."

The passengers were about equally divided between those who dissented from and those who worshipped with Rome. This proposal, therefore, met with a mixed reception. The latter protested against the neglect, while the former, equally under the influence of abject fear, were loud in declaring that the idolatry itself might cost them all their lives.

"The curse of heaven alight on the evil tongue that first uttered the thought!" muttered the trembling Pippo between his teeth, too prudent to fly openly in the face of so strong an opposition, and yet too credulous not to feel the omission in every nerve—"Hast nothing by thee, pious Conrad, that may avail a Christian?"

The pilgrim reached forth his hand with a rosary and cross. The sacred emblem passed from mouth to mouth, among the believers, with a zeal little short of that they had manifested in unloading the deck. Encouraged by this sacrifice, they called loudly upon Baptiste to present himself.

Confronted with these unnurtured spirits, the patron shook in every limb, for, between anger and abject fear, his self-command had by this time absolutely deserted him. To the repeated appeals to procure a light, that it might be placed before a picture of the mother of God which Conrad produced, he objected his Protestant faith, the impossibility of maintaining the flame while the bark pitched so violently, and the divided opinions of the passengers. The Catholics bethought them of the country and influence of Maso, and they loudly called upon him, for the love of God! to come and enforce their requests. But the mariner was occupied on the forecastle, lowering one anchor after another into the water, passively assisted by the people of the bark, who wondered at a precaution so useless, since no rope could reach the bottom, even while they did not dare deny his orders. Something was now said of the curse that had alighted on the vessel, in consequence of its patron's intention to embark the headsman. Baptiste trembled to the skin of his crown, and his blood crept with a superstitious awe.

"Dost think there can really be aught in this!" he asked, with parched lips and a faltering tongue.

All distinction of faith was lost in the general ridicule. Now the Westphalian was gone, there was not a man among them to doubt that a navigation, so accompanied, would be cursed. Baptiste stammered, muttered many incoherent sentences, and finally, in his impotency, he permitted the dangerous secret to escape him.

The intelligence that Balthazar was among them produced a solemn and deep silence. The fact, however, furnished as conclusive evidence of the cause of their peril to the minds of these untutored beings, as a mathematician could have received

from the happiest of his demonstrations. New light broke in upon them, and the ominous stillness was followed by a general demand for the patron to point out the man. Obeying this order, partly under the influence of a terror that was allied to his moral weakness, and partly in bodily fear, he shoved the headsman forward, substituting the person of the proscribed man for his own, and, profiting by the occasion, he stole out of the crowd.

When the Herr Müller, or as he was now known and called, Balthazar, was rudely pushed into the hands of these ferocious agents of superstition, the apparent magnitude of the discovery induced a general and breathless pause. Like the treacherous calm that had so long reigned upon the lake, it was a precursor of a fearful and violent explosion. Little was said, for the occasion was too ominous for a display of vulgar feeling, but Conrad, Pippo, and one or two more, silently raised the fancied offender in their arms, and bore him desperately towards the side of the bark.

"Call on Maria, for the good of thy soul!" whispered the Neapolitan, with a strange mixture of Christian zeal, in the midst of all his ferocity.

The sound of words like these usually conveys the idea of charity and love, but, notwithstanding this gleam of hope, Balthazar still found himself borne towards his fate.

On quitting the throng that clustered together in a dense body between the masts, Baptiste encountered his old antagonist, Nicklaus Wagner. The fury which had so long been pent in his breast suddenly found vent, and, in the madness of the moment, he struck him. The stout Bernese grappled his assailant, and the struggle became fierce as that of brutes. Scandalized by such a spectacle, offended by the disrespect, and ignorant of what else was passing near—for the crowd had uttered

its resolutions in the suppressed voices of men determined—the Baron de Willading and the Signor Grimaldi advanced with dignity and firmness to prevent the shameful strife. At this critical moment the voice of Balthazar was heard above the roar of the coming wind, not calling on Maria, as he had been admonished, but appealing to the two old nobles to save him. Sigismund sprang forward like a lion, at the cry, but too late to reach those who were about to cast the headsman from the gangway, he was just in time to catch the body, by its garments, when actually sailing in the air. By a vast effort of strength its direction was diverted. Instead of alighting in the water, Balthazar encountered the angry combatants, who, driven back on the two nobles, forced the whole four over the side of the bark into the water.

The struggle between the two bodies of air ceased, that on the surface of the lake yielding to the avalanche from above, and the tempest came howling upon the bark.

CHAPTER VII.

——and now the glee
Of the loud hills shakes with their mountain-mirth.
BYRON.

It is necessary to recapitulate a little, in order to connect events. The signs of the hour had been gradually but progressively increasing. While the lake was unruffled, a stillness so profound prevailed, that sounds from the distant port, such as the heavy fall of an oar, or a laugh from the waterman, had reached the ears of those in the Win-

kelried, bringing with them the feeling of security, and the strong charm of a calm at even. To these succeeded the gathering in the heavens, and the roaring of the winds, as they came rushing down the sides of the Alps, in their first descent into the basin of the Leman. As the sight grew useless, except as it might study the dark omens of the impending vault, the sense of hearing became doubly acute, and it had been a powerful agent in heightening the vague but acute apprehensions of the travellers. The rushes of the wind, which at first were broken, at intervals resembling the roar of a chimney-top in a gale, had soon reached the fearful grandeur of those aërial wheelings of squadrons, to which we have more than once alluded, passing off in dread mutterings, that, in the deep quiet of all other things, bore a close affinity to the rumbling of a surf upon the sea-shore. The surface of the lake was first broken after one of these symptoms, and it was this infallible sign of a gale which had assured Maso there was no time to lose. This movement of the element in a calm is a common phenomenon on waters that are much environed with elevated and irregular head-lands, and it is a certain proof that wind is on some distant portion of the sheet. It occurs frequently on the ocean, too, where the mariner is accustomed to find a heavy sea setting in one direction, the effects of some distant storm, while the breeze around him is blowing in its opposite. It had been succeeded by the single rolling swell, like the outer circle of waves produced by dropping a stone into the water, and the regular and increasing agitation of the lake, until the element broke as in a tempest, and that seemingly of its own volition, since not a breath of air was stirring. This last and formidable symptom of the force of the coming gust, however, had now

become so unequivocal, that, at the moment when the three travellers and the patron fell from her gangway, the Winkelried, to use a seaman's phrase, was literally wallowing in the troughs of the seas.

A dull unnatural light preceded the winds, and notwithstanding the previous darkness, the nature of the accident was fully apparent to all. Even the untamed spirits that had just been bent upon so fierce a sacrifice to their superstitious dread, uttered cries of horror, while the piercing shriek of Adelheid sounded, in that fearful moment, as if beings of super-human attributes were riding in the gale. The name of Sigismund was heard, too, in one of those wild appeals that the frantic suffer to escape them, in their despair. But the interval between the plunge into the water and the swoop of the tempest was so short, that, to the senses of the travellers, the whole seemed the occurrence of the same teeming moment.

Maso had completed his work on the forecastle, had seen that other provisions which he had ordered were duly made, and had reached the tiller, just in time to witness and to understand all that occurred. Adelheid and her female attendants were already lashed to the principal masts, and ropes were given to the others around her, as indispensable precautions; for the deck of the bark, now cleared of every particle of its freight, was as exposed and as defenceless against the power of the wind, as a naked heath. Such was the situation of the Winkelried, when the omens of the night changed to their dread reality.

Instinct, in cases of sudden and unusual danger, must do the office of reason. There was no necessity to warn the unthinking but panic-struck crowd to provide for their own safety, for every man in the centre of the barge threw his body flat

on the deck, and grasped the cords that Maso had taken care to provide for that purpose, with the tenacity with which all who possess life cling to the means of existence. The dogs gave beautiful proofs of the secret and wonderful means that nature has imparted, to answer the ends of their creation. Old Uberto crouched, cowering, and oppressed with a sense of helplessness, at the side of his master, while the Newfoundland follower of the mariner went leaping from gangway to gangway, snuffing the heated air, and barking wildly, as if he would challenge the elements to close for the strife.

A vast body of warm air had passed unheeded athwart the bark, during the minute that preceded the intended sacrifice of Balthazar. It was the forerunner of the hurricane, which had chased it from the bed where it had been sleeping, since the warm and happy noon-tide. Ten thousand chariots at their speed could not have equalled the rumbling that succeeded, when the winds came booming over the lake. As if too eager to permit anything within their fangs to escape, they brought with them a wild, dull light, which filled while it clouded the atmosphere, and which, it was scarcely fanciful to imagine, had been hurried down, in their vortex, from those chill glaciers, where they had so long been condensing their forces for the present descent. The waves were not increased, but depressed by the pressure of this atmospheric column, though it took up hogshead, of water from their crests, scattering it in fine penetrating spray, till the entire space between the heavens and the earth seemed saturated with its particles.

The Winkelried received the shock at a moment when the lee-side of her broad deck was wallowing in the trough, and its weather was protruded on the summit of a swell. The wind howled,

when it struck the pent limits, as if angered at being thwarted, and there was a roar under the wide gangways, resembling that of lions. The reeling vessel was raised in a manner to cause those on board to believe it about to be lifted bodily from the water, but the ceaseless rolling of the element restored the balance. Maso afterwards affirmed that nothing but this accidental position, which formed a sort of lee, prevented all in the bark from being swept from the deck, before the first gust of the hurricane.

Sigismund had heard the heart-rending appeal of Adelheid, and, notwithstanding the awful strife of the elements and the fearful character of the night, he alone breasted the shock on his feet. Though aided by a rope, and bowed like a reed, his herculean frame trembled under the shock, in a way to render even his ability to resist seriously doubtful. But, the first blast expended, he sprang to the gangway, and leaped into the cauldron of the lake unhesitatingly, and yet in the possession of all his faculties. He was desperately bent on saving a life so dear to Adelheid, or on dying in the attempt.

Maso had watched the crisis with a seaman's eye, a seaman's resources, and a seaman's coolness. He had not refused to quit his feet, but kneeling on one knee, he pressed the tiller down, lashed it, and clinging to the massive timber, faced the tempest with the steadiness of a water-god. There was sublimity in the intelligence, deliberation, and calculating skill, with which this solitary, unknown, and nearly hopeless, mariner obeyed his professional instinct, in that fearful concussion of the elements, which, loosened from every restraint, now appeared abandoned to their own wild and fierce will. He threw aside his cap, pushed forward his thick but streaming locks, as veils to pro-

tect his eyes, and watched the first encounter of the wind, as the wary but sullen lion keeps his gaze on the hostile elephant. A grim smile stole across his features, when he felt the vessel settle again into its watery bed, after that breathless moment in which there had been reason to fear it might actually be lifted from its proper element. Then the precaution, which had seemed so useless and incomprehensible to others, came in play. The bark made a fearful whirl from the spot where it had so long lain, yielding to the touch of the gust like a vane turning on its pivot, while the water gurgled several streaks on deck. But the cables were no sooner taut than the numerous anchors resisted, and brought the bark head to wind. Maso felt the yielding of the vessel's stern, as she swung furiously round, and he cheered aloud. The trembling of the timbers, the dashing against the pointed beak, and that high jet of water, which shot up over the bows and fell heavily on the forecastle, washing aft in a flood, were so many evidences that the cables were true. Advancing from his post, with some such dignity as a master of fence displays in the exercise of his art, he shouted for his dog.

"Nettuno!—Nettuno!—where art thou, brave Nettuno?"

The faithful animal was whining near him, unheard in that war of the elements. He waited only for this encouragement to act. No sooner was his master's voice heard, than, barking bravely, he snuffed the gale, dashed to the side of the vessel, and leaped into the boiling lake.

When Melchior de Willading and his friend returned to the surface, after their plunge, it was like men making their appearance in a world abandoned to the infernal humors of the fiends of darkness. The reader will understand it was at the

instant of the swoop of the winds, that has just been detailed, for what we have taken so many pages to describe in words, scarce needed a minute of time in the accomplishment.

Maso knelt on the verge of the gangway, sustaining himself by passing an arm around a shroud, and, bending forward, he gazed into the cauldron of the lake with aching eyes. Once or twice, he thought he heard the stifled breathing of one who struggled with the raging water; but, in that roar of the winds, it was easy to be deceived. He shouted encouragement to his dog, however, and gathering a small rope rapidly, he made a heaving coil of one of its ends. This he cast far from him, with a peculiar swing and dexterity, hauling-in, and repeating the experiments, steadily and with unwearied industry. The rope was necessarily thrown at hazard, for the misty light prevented more than it aided vision; and the howling of the powers of the air filled his ears with sounds that resembled the laugh of devils.

In the cultivation of the youthful manly exercises, neither of the old nobles had neglected the useful skill of being able to buffet with the waves. But both possessed what was far better, in such a strait, than the knowledge of a swimmer, in that self-command and coolness in emergencies which they are apt to acquire, who pass their time in encountering the hazards and in overcoming the difficulties of war. Each retained a sufficiency of recollection, therefore, on coming to the surface, to understand his situation, and not to increase the danger by the ill-directed and frantic efforts that usually drown the frightened. The case was sufficiently desperate, at the best, without the additional risk of distraction, for the bark had already drifted to some unseen spot, that, as respects them, was quite unattainable. In this uncertainty, it

would have been madness to steer amid the waste of waters, as likely to go wrong as right, and they limited their efforts to mutual support and encouragement, placing their trust in God.

Not so with Sigismund. To him the roaring tempest was mute, the boiling and hissing lake had no horrors, and he had plunged into the fathomless Leman as recklessly as he could have leaped to land. The shriek, the "Sigismund! oh, Sigismund!" of Adelheid, was in his ears, and her cry of anguish thrilled on every nerve. The athletic young Swiss was a practised and expert swimmer, or it is improbable that even these strong impulses could have overcome the instinct of self-preservation. In a tranquil basin, it would have been no extraordinary or unusual feat for him to conquer the distance between the Winkelried and the shores of Vaud; but, like all the others, on casting himself into the water, he was obliged to shape his course at random, and this, too, amid such a driving spray as rendered even respiration difficult. As has been said, the waves were compressed into their bed rather than augmented by the wind; but, had it been otherwise, the mere heaving and settling of the element, while it obstructs his speed, offers a support rather than an obstacle to the practised swimmer.

Notwithstanding all these advantages, the strength of his impulses, and the numberless occasions on which he had breasted the surges of the Mediterranean, Sigismund, on recovering from his plunge, felt the fearful chances of the risk he ran, as the stern soldier meets the hazards of battle, in which he knows if there is victory there is also death. He dashed the troubled water aside, though he swam blindly, and each stroke urged him farther from the bark, his only hope of safety. He was between dark rolling mounds, and, on rising to

their summits, a hurricane of mist made him glad to sink again within a similar shelter. The breaking crests of the waves, which were glancing off in foam, also gave him great annoyance, for such was their force, that, more than once, he was hurled helpless as a log before them. Still he swam boldly, and with strength; nature having gifted him with more than the usual physical energy of man. But, uncertain in his course, unable to see the length of his own body, and pressed hard upon by the wind, even the spirit of Sigismund Steinbach could not long withstand so many adverse circumstances. He had already turned, wavering in purpose, thinking to catch a glimpse of the bark in the direction he had come, when a dark mass floated immediately before his eyes, and he felt the cold clammy nose of the dog, scenting about his face. The admirable instinct, or we might better say, the excellent training of Nettuno, told him that his services were not needed here, and, barking with wild delight, as if in mockery of the infernal din of the tempest, he sheered aside, and swam swiftly on. A thought flashed like lightning on the brain of Sigismund. His best hope was in the inexplicable faculties of this animal. Throwing forward an arm, he seized the bushy tail of the dog, and suffered himself to be dragged ahead, he knew not whither, though he seconded the movement with his own exertions. Another bark proclaimed that the experiment was successful, and voices, rising as it were from the water, close at hand, announced the proximity of human beings. The brunt of the hurricane was past, and the washing of the waves, which had been stilled by the roar and the revelry of the winds, again became audible.

The strength of the two struggling old men was sinking fast. The Signor Grimaldi had, thus far,

generously sustained his friend, who was less expert than himself in the water, and he continued to cheer him with a hope he did not feel himself, nobly refusing to the last to separate their fortunes.

"How dost find thyself, old Melchior?" he asked. "Cheer thee, friend—I think there is succor at hand."

The water gurgled at the mouth of the baron, who was near the gasp.

"'Tis late—bless thee, dearest Gaetano—God be with my child—my Adelheid—poor Adelheid!"

The utterance of this precious name, under a father's agony of spirit, most probably saved his life. The sinewy arm of Sigismund, directed by the words, grasped his dress, and he felt at once that a new and preserving power had interposed between him and the caverns of the lake. It was time, for the water had covered the face of the failing baron, ere the muscular arm of the youth came to perform its charitable office.

"Yield thee to the dog, Signore," said Sigismund, clearing his mouth of water to speak calmly, once assured of his own burthen; "trust to his sagacity, and,—God keep us in mind!—all may yet be well!"

The Signor Grimaldi retained sufficient presence of mind to follow this advice, and it was probably quite as fortunate that his friend had so far lost his consciousness, as to become an unresisting burthen in the hands of Sigismund.

"Nettuno!—gallant Nettuno!"—swept past them on the gale for the first time, the partial hushing of the winds permitting the clear call of Maso to reach so far. The sound directed the efforts of Sigismund, though the dog had swum steadily away the moment he had the Genoese in his gripe, and with a certainty of manner that showed he was at no loss for a direction.

But Sigismund had taxed his powers too far. He, who could have buffeted an ordinary sea for hours, was now completely exhausted by the unwonted exertions, the deadening influence of the tempest, and the log-like weight of his burthen. He would not desert the father of Adelheid, and yet each fainting and useless stroke told him to despair. The dog had already disappeared in the darkness, and he was even uncertain again of the true position of the bark. He prayed in agony for a single glimpse of the rocking masts and yards, or to catch one syllable of the cheering voice of Maso. But in both his wishes were vain. In place of the former, he had naught but the veiled misty light, that had come on with the hurricane; and, instead of the latter, his ears were filled with the washing of the waves and the roars of the gusts. The blasts now descended to the surface of the lake, and now went whirling and swelling upward, in a way to lead the listener to fancy that the viewless winds might, for once, be seen. For a single painful instant, in one of those disheartening moments of despair that will come over the stoutest, his hand was about to relinquish its hold of the baron, and to make the last natural struggle for life; but that fair and modest picture of maiden loveliness and truth, which had so long haunted his waking hours and adorned his night-dreams, interposed to prevent the act. After this brief and fleeting weakness, the young man seemed endowed with new energy. He swam stronger, and with greater apparent advantage, than before.

"Nettuno—gallant Nettuno!"—again drove over him, bringing with it the chilling certainty, that, turned from his course by the rolling of the water, he had thrown away these desperate efforts, by taking a direction which led him from the bark. While there was the smallest appearance of success,

no difficulties, of whatever magnitude, could entirely extinguish hope; but when the dire conviction that he had been actually aiding, instead of diminishing, the danger, pressed upon Sigismund, he abandoned his efforts. The most he endeavored or hoped to achieve, was to keep his own head and that of his companion above the fatal element, while he answered the cry of Maso with a shout of despair.

"Nettuno!—gallant Nettuno!"—again flew past on the gale.

This cry might have been an answer, or it might merely be the Italian encouraging his dog to bear on the body, with which it was already loaded. Sigismund uttered a shout, which he felt must be the last. He struggled desperately, but in vain: the world and its allurements were vanishing from his thoughts, when a dark line whirled over him, and fell thrashing upon the very wave which covered his face. An instinctive grasp caught it, and the young soldier felt himself impelled ahead. He had seized the rope which the mariner had not ceased to throw, as the fisherman casts his line, and he was at the side of the bark, before his confused faculties enabled him to understand the means employed for his rescue.

Maso took a hasty turn with the rope, and, stooping forward, favored by a roll of the vessel, he drew the Baron de Willading upon deck. Watching his time, he repeated the experiment, always with admirable coolness and dexterity, placing Sigismund also in safety. The former was immediately dragged senseless to the centre of the bark, where he received those attentions that had just been eagerly offered to the Signior Grimaldi, and with the same happy results. But Sigismund motioned all away from himself, knowing that their cares were needed elsewhere. He staggered

forward a few paces, and then, yielding to a complete exhaustion of his power, he fell at full length on the wet planks. He long lay panting, speechless, and unable to move, with a sense of death on his frame.

"Nettuno! gallant, gallant Nettuno!"—shouted the indefatigable Maso, still at his post on the gangway, whence he cast his rope with unchanging perseverance. The fitful winds, which had already played so many fierce antics that eventful night, sensibly lulled, and, giving one or two sighs, as if regretting that they were about to be curbed again by that almighty Master, from whose benevolent hands they had so furtively escaped, as suddenly ceased blowing. The yards creaked, swinging loosely above the crowded deck, and the dull washing of water filled the ear. To these diminished sounds were to be added the barking of the dog, who was still abroad in the darkness, and a struggling noise like the broken and smothered attempts of human voices. Although the time appeared an age to all who awaited the result, scarcely five minutes had elapsed since the accident occurred and the hurricane had reached them. There was still hope, therefore, for those who yet remained in the water. Maso felt the eagerness of one who had already been successful beyond his hopes, and, in his desire to catch some guiding signal, he leaned forward, till the rolling lake washed into his face.

"Ha! gallant—gallant Nettuno!"

Men certainly spoke, and that near him. But the sounds resembled words uttered beneath a cover. The wind whistled, too, though but for a moment, and then it seemed to sail upward into the dark vault of the heavens. Nettuno barked audibly, and his master answered with another shout, for the sympathy of man in his kind is inextinguishable.

"My brave, my noble Nettuno!"

The stillness was now imposing, and Maso heard the dog growl. This ill-omened signal was undeniably followed by smothered voices. The latter became clearer, as if the mocking winds were willing that a sad exhibition of human frailty should be known, or, what is more probable, violent passion had awakened stronger powers of speech. This much the mariner understood.

"Loosen thy grasp, accursed Baptiste!"

"Wretch, loosen thine own!"

"Is God naught with thee?"

"Why dost throttle so, infernal Nicklaus?"

"Thou wilt die damned!"

"Thou chokest—villain—pardon!—pardon!"

He heard no more. The merciful elements interposed to drown the appalling strife. Once or twice the dog howled, but the tempest came across the Leman again in its might, as if the short pause had been made merely to take breath. The winds took a new direction; and the bark, still held by its anchors, swung wide off from its former position, tending in towards the mountains of Savoy. During the first burst of this new blast, even Maso was glad to crouch to the deck, for millions of infinitely fine particles were lifted from the lake, and driven on with the atmosphere with a violence to take away his breath. The danger of being swept before the furious tide of the driving element was also an accident not impossible. When the lull returned, no exertion of his faculties could catch a single sound foreign to the proper character of the scene, such as the plash of the water, and the creaking of the long, swinging yards.

The mariner now felt a deep concern for his dog He called to him until he grew hoarse, but fruitlessly. The change of position, with the constant and varying drift of the vessel, had carried

them beyond the reach of the human voice. More time was expended in summoning "Nettuno! gallant Nettuno!" than had been consumed in the passage of all the events which it has been necessary to our object to relate so minutely, and always with the same want of success. The mind of Maso was pitched to a degree far above the opinions and habits of those with whom his life brought him ordinarily in contact, but as even fine gold will become tarnished by exposure to impure air, he had not entirely escaped the habitual weaknesses of the Italians of his class. When he found that no cry could recall his faithful companion, he threw himself upon the deck in a paroxysm of passion, tore his hair, and wept audibly.

"Nettuno! my brave, my faithful Nettuno!" he said. "What are all these to me, without thee! Thou alone lovedst me—thou alone hast passed with me through fair and foul—through good and evil, without change, or wish for another master! When the pretended friend has been false, thou hast remained faithful! When others were sycophants, thou wert never a flatterer!"

Struck with this singular exhibition of sorrow, the good Augustine, who, until now, like all the others, had been looking to his own safety, or employed in restoring the exhausted, took advantage of the favorable change in the weather, and advanced with the language of consolation.

"Thou hast saved all our lives, bold mariner," he said; "and there are those in the bark who will know how to reward thy courage and skill. Forget, then, thy dog, and indulge in a grateful heart to Maria and the saints, that they have been our friends and thine in this exceeding jeopardy."

"Father, I have eaten with the animal—slept with the animal—fought, swum, and made merry with him, and I could now drown with him! What

are thy nobles and their gold to me, without my dog! The gallant brute will die the death of despair, swimming about in search of the bark in the midst of the darkness, until even one of his high breed and courage must suffer his heart to burst."

"Christians have been called into the dread presence, unconfessed and unshrived, to-night; and we should bethink us of their souls, rather than indulge in this grief in behalf of one that, however faithful, ends but an unreasoning and irresponsible existence."

All this was thrown away upon Maso, who crossed himself habitually at the allusion to the drowned, but who did not the less bewail the loss of his dog, whom he seemed to love, like the affection that David bore for Jonathan, with a love surpassing that of women. Perceiving that his counsel was useless, the good Augustine turned away, to kneel and offer up his own orisons of gratitude, and to bethink him of the dead.

"Nettuno! *povera, carissima bestia!*" continued Maso, "whither art thou swimming, in this infernal quarrel between the air and water? Would I were with thee, dog! No mortal shall ever share the love I bore thee, *povero Nettuno!*—I will never take another to my heart, like thee!"

The outbreaking of Maso's grief was sudden, and it was brief in its duration. In this respect it might be likened to the hurricane that had just passed. Excessive violence, in both cases, appeared to bring its own remedy, for the irregular fitful gusts from the mountains had already ceased, and were succeeded by a strong but steady gale from the north; and the sorrow of Maso soon ended its characteristic plaints, to take a more continued and even character.

During the whole of the foregoing scenes, the common passengers had crouched to the deck,

partly in stupor, partly in superstitious dread, and, much of the time, from a positive inability to move, without incurring the risk of being driven from the defenceless vessel into the lake. But, as the wind diminished in force, and the motion of the bark became more regular, they rallied their senses, like men who had been in a trance, and one by one they rose to their feet. About this time Adelheid heard the sound of her father's voice, blessing her care, and consoling her sorrow. The north wind blew away the canopy of clouds, and the stars shone upon the angry Leman, bringing with them some such promise of divine aid as the pillar of fire afforded to the Israelites in their passage of the Red Sea. Such an evidence of returning peace brought renewed confidence. All in the bark, passengers as well as crew, took courage at the benignant signs, while Adelheid wept, in gratitude and joy, over the gray hairs of her father.

Maso had now obtained complete command of the Winkelried, as much by the necessity of the case, as by the unrivalled skill and courage he had manifested during the fearful minutes of their extreme jeopardy. No sooner did he succeed in staying his own grief, than he called the people about him, and issued his orders for the new measures that had become necessary.

All who have ever been subject to their influence know that there is nothing more uncertain than the winds. Their fickleness has passed into a proverb; but their inconstancy, as well as their power, from the fanning air to the destructive tornado, are to be traced to causes that are sufficiently clear, though hid in their nature from the calculations of our forethought. The tempest of the night was owing to the simple fact, that a condensed and chilled column of the mountains had pressed upon the heated substratum of the lake,

and the latter, after a long resistance, suddenly finding vent for its escape, had been obliged to let in the cataract from above. As in all extraordinary efforts, whether physical or moral, reaction would seem to be a consequence of excessive action, the currents of air, pushed beyond their proper limits, were now setting back again, like a tide on its reflux. This cause produced the northern gale that succeeded the hurricane.

The wind that came from off the shores of Vaud was steady and fresh. The barks of the Leman are not constructed for beating to windward, and it might even have been questioned, whether the Winkelried would have borne her canvass against so heavy a breeze. Maso, however, appeared to understand himself thoroughly, and as he had acquired the influence which hardihood and skill are sure to obtain over doubt and timidity in situations of hazard, he was obeyed by all on board with submission, if not with zeal. No more was heard of the headsman or of his supposed agency in the storm; and, as he prudently kept himself in the back-ground, so as not to endanger a revival of the superstition of his enemies, he seemed entirely forgotten.

The business of getting the anchors occupied a considerable time, for Maso refused, now there existed no necessity for the sacrifice, to permit a yarn to be cut; but, released from this hold on the water, the bark whirled away, and was soon driving before the wind. The mariner was at the helm, and, causing the head-sail to be loosened, he steered directly for the rocks of Savoy. This manœuvre excited disagreeable suspicions in the minds of several on board, for the lawless character of their pilot had been more than suspected in the course of their short acquaintance, and the coast towards which they were furiously rushing

was known to be iron-bound, and, in such a gale, fatal to all who came rudely upon its rocks. Half-an-hour removed their apprehensions. When near enough to the mountains to feel their deadening influence on the gale, the natural effect of the eddies, formed by their resistance to the currents, he luffed-to and set his main-sail. Relieved by this wise precaution, the Winkelried now wore her canvass gallantly, and she dashed along the shore of Savoy with a foaming beak, shooting past ravine, valley, glen, and hamlet, as if sailing in air.

In less than an hour, St. Gingoulph, or the village through which the dividing line between the territories of Switzerland and those of the King of Sardinia passes, was abeam, and the excellent calculations of the sagacious Maso became still more apparent. He had foreseen another shift of wind, as the consequence of all this poise and counterpoise, and he was here met by the true breeze of the night. The last current came out of the gorge of the Valais, sullen, strong, and hoarse, bringing him, however, fairly to windward of his port. The Winkelried was cast in season, and, when the gale struck her anew, her canvass drew fairly, and she walked out from beneath the mountains into the broad lake, like a swan obeying its instinct.

The passage across the width of the Leman, in that horn of the crescent and in such a breeze, required rather more than an hour. This time was occupied among the common herd in self-felicitations, and in those vain boastings that distinguish the vulgar who have escaped an imminent danger without any particular merit of their own. Among those whose spirits were better trained and more rebuked, there were attentions to the sufferers and deep thanksgivings with the touching intercourse of the grateful and happy. The late scenes, and

the fearful fate of the patron and Nicholaus Wagner, cast a shade upon their joy, but all inwardly felt that they had been snatched from the jaws of death.

Maso shaped his course by the beacon that still blazed in the grate of old Roger de Blonay. With his eye riveted on the luff of his sail, his hip bearing hard against the tiller, and a heart that relieved itself, from time to time, with bitter sighs, he ruled the bark like a presiding spirit.

At length the black mass of the côtes of Vaud took more distinct and regular forms. Here and there, a tower or a tree betrayed its outlines against the sky, and then the objects on the margin of the lake began to stand out in gloomy relief from the land. Lights flared along the strand, and cries reached them from the shore. A dark shapeless pile stood directly atwhart their watery path, and, at the next moment, it took the aspect of a ruined castle-like edifice. The canvass flapped and was handed, the Winkelried rose and set more slowly and with a gentler movement, and glided into the little, secure, artificial haven of La Tour de Peil. A forest of latine yards and low masts lay before them, but, by giving the bark a rank sheer, Maso brought her to her berth, by the side of another lake craft, with a gentleness of collision that, as the mariners have it, would not have broken an egg.

A hundred voices greeted the travellers; for their approach had been seen and watched with intense anxiety. Fifty eager Vévaisans poured upon her deck, in a noisy crowd, the instant it was possible. Among others, a dark shaggy object bounded foremost. It leaped wildly forward, and Maso found himself in the embraces of Nettuno. A little later, when delight and a more

tempered feeling permitted examination, a lock of human hair was discovered entangled in the teeth of the dog, and the following week the bodies of Baptiste and the peasant of Berne were found, still clenched in the desperate death-gripe, washed upon the shores of Vaud.

CHAPTER VIII.

> The moon is up; by Heaven a lovely eve!
> Long streams of light o'er glancing waves expand;
> Now lads on shore may sigh and maids believe:
> Such be our fate when we return to land!
>
> BYRON.

THE approach of the Winkelried had been seen from Vévey throughout the afternoon and evening. The arrival of the Baron de Willading and his daughter was expected by many in the town, the rank and influence of the former in the great canton rendering him an object of interest to more than those who felt affection for his person and respect for his upright qualities. Roger de Blonay had not been his only youthful friend, for the place contained another, with whom he was intimate by habit, if not from a community of those principles which are the best cement of friendships.

The officer charged with the especial supervision of the districts or circles, into which Berne had caused its dependent territory of Vaud to be divided, was termed a *bailli*, a title that our word bailiff will scarcely render, except as it may strictly mean a substitute for the exercise of authority that is the property of another, but which, for the want of a better term, we may be compelled occasion-

ally to use. The bailli, or bailiff, of Vévey was Peter Hofmeister, a member of one of those families of the bürgerschaft, or the municipal aristocracy of the canton, which found its institutions venerable, just, and, and if one might judge from their language, almost sacred, simply because it had been in possession of certain exclusive privileges under their authority, that were not only comfortable in their exercise but fecund in other worldly advantages. This Peter Hofmeister was, in the main, a hearty, well-meaning, and somewhat benevolent person, but, living as he did under the secret consciousness that all was not as it should be, he pushed his opinions on the subject of vested interests, and on the stability of temporal matters, a little into extremes, pretty much on the same principle as that on which the engineer expends the largest portion of his art in fortifying the weakest point of the citadel, taking care that there shall be a constant flight of shot, great and small, across the most accessible of its approaches. By one of the exclusive ordinances of those times, in which men were glad to get relief from the violence and rapacity of the baron and the satellite of the prince, ordinances that it was the fashion of the day to term liberty, the family of Hofmeister had come into the exercise of a certain charge, or monopoly, that, in truth, had always constituted its wealth and importance, but of which it was accustomed to speak as forming its principal claim to the gratitude of the public, for duties that had been performed not only so well, but for so long a period, by an unbroken succession of patriots descended from the same stock. They who judged of the value attached to the possession of this charge, by the animation with which all attempts to relieve them of the burthen were repelled, must have been in error; for, to hear their friends descant on the

difficulties of the duties, of the utter impossibility that they should be properly discharged by any family that had not been in their exercise just one hundred and seventy-two years and a half, the precise period of the hard servitude of the Hofmeisters, and the rare merit of their self-devotion to the common good, it would seem that they were so many modern Curtii, anxious to leap into the chasm of uncertain and endless toil, to save the Republic from the ignorance and peculations of certain interested and selfish knaves, who wished to enjoy the same high trusts, for a motive so unworthy as that of their own particular advantage. This subject apart, however, and with a strong reservation in favor of the supremacy of Berne, on whom his importance depended, a better or a more philanthropic man than Peter Hofmeister would not have been easily found. He was a hearty laugher, a hard drinker, a common and peculiar failing of the age, a great respecter of the law, as was meet in one so situated, and a bachelor of sixty-eight, a time of life that, by referring his education to a period more remote by half a century, than that in which the incidents of our legend took place, was not at all in favor of any very romantic predilection in behalf of the rest of the human race. In short, the Herr Hofmeister was a bailiff, much as Balthazar was a headsman, on account of some particular merit or demerit, (it might now be difficult to say which,) of one of his ancestors, by the laws of the canton, and by the opinions of men. The only material difference between them was in the fact, that the one greatly enjoyed his station, while the other had but an indifferent relish for his trust.

When Roger de Blonay, by the aid of a good glass, had assured himself that the bark which lay off St. Saphorin, in the even tide, with yards a-

cock-bill, and sails pendent in their picturesque drapery, contained a party of gentle travellers who occupied the stern, and saw by the plumes and robes that a female of condition was among them, he gave an order to prepare the beacon-fire, and descended to the port, in order to be in readiness to receive his friend. Here he found the bailiff, pacing the public promenade, which is washed by the limpid water of the lake, with the air of a man who had more on his mind than the daily cares of office. Although the Baron de Blonay was a Vaudois, and looked upon all the functionaries of his country's conquerors with a species of hereditary dislike, he was by nature a man of mild and courteous qualities, and the meeting was, as usual, friendly in the externals, and of seeming cordiality. Great care was had by both to speak in the second person; on the part of the Vaudois, that it might be seen he valued himself as, at least, the equal of the representative of Berne, and, on that of the bailiff, in order to show that his office made him as good as the head of the oldest house in all that region.

"Thou expectest to see friends from Genf in yonder bark?" said the Herr Hofmeister, abruptly.

"And thou?"

"A friend, and one more than a friend;" answered the bailiff, evasively. "My advices tell me that Melchior de Willading will sojourn among us during the festival of the Abbaye, and secret notice has been sent that there will be another here, who wishes to see our merry-making, without pretension to the honors that he might fairly claim."

"It is not rare for nobles of mark, and even princes, to visit us on these occasions, under feigned names and without the *eclat* of their rank; for

the great, when they descend to follies, seldom like to bring their high condition within their influence."

"The wiser they. I have my own troubles with these accursed fooleries, for—it may be a weakness, but it is one that is official—I cannot help imagining that a bailiff cuts but a shabby figure before the people, in the presence of so many gods and goddesses. To own to thee the truth, I rejoice that he who cometh, cometh as he doth.—Hast letters of late date from Berne?"

"None; though report says that there is like to be a change among some of those who fill the public trusts."

"So much the worse!" growled the bailiff. "Is it to be expected that men who never did an hour's duty in a charge can acquit themselves like those who have, it might be said, sucked in practice with their mother's milk?"

"Ay; this is well enough for thee; but others say that even the Erlachs had a beginning."

"Himmel! Am I a heathen to deny this? As many beginnings as thou wilt, good Roger, but I like not thy ends. No doubt an Erlach is mortal, like all of us, and even a created being; but a man is not a charge. Let the clay die, if thou wilt, but, if thou wouldst have faithful or skilful servants, look to the true successor. But we will have none of this to-day.—Hast many guests at Blonay?"

"Not one. I look for the company of Melchior de Willading and his daughter—and yet I like not the time! There are evil signs playing about the high peaks and in the neighborhood of the Dents, since the sun has set!"

"Thou art ever in a storm up in thy castle, there! The Leman was never more peaceable, and I should take it truly in evil part, were the re-

bellious lake to get into one of its fits of sudden anger with so precious a freight on its bosom."

"I do not think the Genfer See will regard even a bailiff's displeasure!" rejoined the Baron de Blonay, laughing. "I repeat it; the signs are suspicious. Let us consult the watermen, for it may be well to send a light-pulling boat to bring the travellers to land."

Roger de Blonay and the bailiff walked towards the little earthen mole, that partially protects the roadstead of Vévey, and which is for ever forming and for ever washing away before the storms of winter, in order to consult some of those who were believed to be expert in detecting the symptoms that precede any important changes of the atmosphere. The opinions were various. Most believed there would be a gust; but, as the Winkelried was known to be a new and well-built bark, and none could tell how much beyond her powers she had been loaded by the cupidity of Baptiste, and as it was generally thought the wind would be as likely to bring her up to her haven as to be against her, there appeared no sufficient reason for sending off the boat; especially as it was believed the bark would be not only drier but safer than a smaller craft, should they be overtaken by the wind. This indecision, so common in cases of uncertainty, was the means of exposing Adelheid and her father to all those fearful risks they had just run.

When the night came on, the people of the town began to understand that the tempest would be grave for those who were obliged to encounter it, even in the best bark on the Leman. The darkness added to the danger, for vessels had often run against the land by miscalculating their distances; and the lights were shown along the strand, by order of the bailiff, who manifested an interest so unusual in those on board the Winkelried, as to draw

about them more than the sympathy that would ordinarily be felt for travellers in distress. Every exertion that the case admitted was made in their behalf, and, the moment the state of the lake allowed, boats were sent off, in every probable direction, to their succor. But the Winkelried was running along the coast of Savoy, ere any ventured forth, and the search proved fruitless. When the rumor spread, however, that a sail was to be discerned coming out from under the wide shadow of the opposite mountains, and that it was steering for La Tour de Peil, a village with a far safer harbor than that of Vévey, and but an arrow's flight from the latter town, crowds rushed to the spot. The instant it was known that the missing party was in her, the travellers were received with cheers of delight and cries of hearty greeting.

The bailiff and Roger de Blonay hastened forward to receive the Baron de Willading and his friends, who were carried in a tumultuous and joyful manner into the old castle that adjoins the port, and from which, in truth, the latter derives its name. The Bernois noble was too much affected with the scenes through which he had so lately passed, and with the strong and ungovernable tenderness of Adelheid, who had wept over him as a mother sobs over her recovered child, to exchange greetings with him of Vaud, in the hearty, cordial manner that ordinarily characterized their meetings. Still their peculiar habits shone through the restraint.

"Thou seest me just rescued from the fishes of thy Leman, dear de Blonay," he said, squeezing the other's hand with emotion, as, leaning on his shoulder, they went into the château. "But for yonder brave youth, and as honest a mariner as ever floated on water, fresh or salt, all that is left of old Melchior de Willading would, at this mo-

ment, be of less value than the meanest férà in thy lake!"

"God be praised that thou art as we see thee! We feared for thee, and boats are out at this moment in search of thy bark: but it has been wiser ordered. This brave young man, who, I see, is both a Swiss and a soldier, is doubly welcome among us,—in the two characters just named, and as one that hath done thee and us so great a service."

Sigismund received the compliments which he so well merited with modesty. The bailiff, however, not content with making the usual felicitations, whispered in his ear that a service like this, rendered to one of its most esteemed nobles, would not be forgotten by the Councils on a proper occasion.

"Thou art happily arrived, Herr Melchior," he then added, aloud; "come as thou wilt, floating or sailing in air. We have thee among us none the worse for the accident, and we thank God, as Roger de Blonay has just so well observed. Our Abbaye is like to be a gallant ceremony, for divers gentlemen of name are in the town, and I hear of more that are pricking forward among the mountains from countries beyond the Rhine. Hádst thou no other companions in the bark but these I see around us?"

"There is another, and I wonder that he is not here! 'Tis a noble Genoese, that thou hast often heard me name, Sire de Blonay, as one that I love. Gaetano Grimaldi is a name familiar to thee, or the words of friendship have been uttered in an idle ear."

"I have heard so much of the Italian that I can almost fancy him an old and tried acquaintance. When thou first returnedst from the Italian wars,

thy tongue was never weary of recounting his praises: it was Gaetano said this—Gaetano thought thus—Gaetano did that! Surely he is not of thy company?"

"He, and no other! A lucky meeting on the quay of Genf brought us together again after a separation of full thirty years, and, as if Heaven had reserved its trials for the occasion, we have been made to go through the late danger in company. I had him in my arms in that fearful moment, Roger, when the sky, and the mountains, and all of earth, even to that dear girl, were fading, as I thought for ever, from my sight,—he, that had already been my partner in so many risks, who had bled for me, watched for me, ridden for me, and did all other things that love could prompt for me, was brought by Providence to be my companion in the awful strait through which I have just passed!"

While the Baron was still speaking, his friend entered with the quiet and dignified mien he always maintained, when it was not his pleasure to throw aside the reserve of high station, or when he yielded to the torrents of feeling that sometimes poured through his southern temperament, in a way to unsettle the deportment of mere convention. He was presented to Roger de Blonay and the bailiff, as the person just alluded to, and as the oldest and most tried of the friends of his introducer. His reception by the former was natural and warm, while the Herr Hofmeister was so particular in his professions of pleasure and respect as to excite not only notice but surprise.

"Thanks, thanks, good Peterchen," said the Baron de Willading, for such was the familiar diminutive by which the bustling bailiff was usually addressed by those who could take the liberty;

"thanks, honest Peterchen; thy kindness to Gaetano is so much love shown to myself."

"I honor thy friends as thyself, Herr von Willading," returned the bailiff; "for thou hast a claim to the esteem of the bürgerschaft and all its servants; but the homage paid to the Signor Grimaldi is due on his own account. We are but poor Swiss, that dwell in the midst of wild mountains, little favored by the sun if ye will, and less known to the world;—but we have our manners! A man that hath been intrusted with authority as long as I were unfit for his trust, did he not tell, as it might be by instinct, when he has those in his presence that are to be honored. Signore, the loss of Melchior von Willading before our haven, would have made the lake unpleasant to us all, for months, not to say years; but, had so great a calamity arrived as that of your death by means of our waters, I could have prayed that the mountains might fall into the basin, and bury the offending Leman under their rocks!"

Melchior de Willading and old Roger de Blonay laughed heartily at Peterchen's hyperbolical compliments; though it was quite plain that the worthy bailiff himself fancied he had said a clever thing.

"I thank you, Signore, no less than my friend de Willading," returned the Genoese, a gleam of humor lighting his eye. "This courteous reception quite outdoes us of Italy; for I doubt if there be a man south of the Alps, who would be willing to condemn either of our seas to so overwhelming a punishment, for a fault so venial, or at least so natural. I beg, however, that the lake may be pardoned; since, at the worst, it was but a secondary agent in the affair, and, I doubt not, it would have treated us as it treats all travellers, had we kept out of its embraces. The crime must be im-

puted to the winds, and as they are the offspring of the hills, I fear it will be found that these very mountains, to which you look for retribution, will be convicted at last as the true devisers and abettors of the plot against our lives."

The bailiff chuckled and simpered, like a man pleased equally with his own wit and with that he had excited in others, and the discourse changed; though, throughout the night, as indeed was the fact on all other occasions during his visit, the Signor Grimaldi received from him so marked and particular attentions, as to create a strong sentiment in favor of the Italian among those who had been chiefly accustomed to see Peterchen enact the busy, important, dignified, local functionary.

Attention was now paid to the first wants of the travellers, who had great need of refreshments after the fatigues and exposure of the day. To obtain the latter, Roger de Blonay insisted that they should ascend to his castle, in whose grate the welcoming beacon still blazed. By means of *chars-à-banc*, the peculiar vehicle of the country, the short distance was soon overcome, the bailiff, not a little to the surprise of the owner of the house, insisting on seeing the strangers safely housed within its walls. At the gate of Blonay, however, Peterchen took his leave, making a hundred apologies for his absence, on the ground of the extensive duties that had devolved on his shoulders in consequence of the approaching fête.

"We shall have a mild winter, for I have never known the Herr Hofmeister so courteous;" observed Roger de Blonay, while showing his guests into the castle. "Thy Bernese authorities, Melchior, are little apt to be lavish of their compliments to us poor nobles of Vaud."

"Signore, you forget the interest of our friend;" observed the laughing Genoese. "There are other

and better bailiwicks, beyond a question, in the gifts of the Councils, and the Signor de Willading has a loud voice in their disposal. Have I found a solution for this zeal?"

"Thou hast not," returned the baron, "for Peterchen hath little hope beyond that of dying where he has lived, the deputed ruler of a small district. The worthy man should have more credit for a good heart, his own, no doubt, being touched at seeing those who are, as it may be, redeemed from the grave. I owe him grace for the kindness, and should a better thing really offer, and could my poor voice be of account, why, I do not say it should be silent; it is serving the public well, to put men of these kind feelings into places of trust."

This opinion appeared very natural to the listeners, all of whom, with the exception of the Signor Grimaldi, joined in echoing the sentiment. The latter, more experienced in the windings of the human heart, or possessing some reasons known only to himself, merely smiled at the remarks that he heard, as if he thoroughly understood the difference between the homage that is paid to station, and that which a generous and noble nature is compelled to yield to its own impulses.

An hour later, the light repast was ended, and Roger de Blonay informed his guests that they would be well repaid for walking a short distance, by a look at the loveliness of the night. In sooth, the change was already so great, that it was not easy for the imagination to convert the soft and smiling scene that lay beneath and above the towers of Blonay, into the dark vault and the angry lake from which they had so lately escaped.

Every cloud had already sailed far away towards the plains of Germany, and the moon had climbed so high above the ragged Dent de Jaman as to suffer its rays to stream into the basin of the Le-

man. A thousand pensive stars spangled the vault images of the benign omnipotence which unceasingly pervades and governs the universe, whatever may be the local derangements or accidental struggles of the inferior agents. The foaming and rushing waves had gone down nearly as fast as they had arisen, and, in their stead, remained myriads of curling ridges along which the glittering moonbeams danced, rioting with mild impunity on the surface of the placid sheet. Boats were out again, pulling for Savoy or the neighboring villages; and the whole view betokened the renewed confidence of those who trusted habitually to the fickle and blustering elements.

"There is a strong and fearful resemblance between the human passions and these hot and angry gusts of nature;" observed the Signor Grimaldi, after they had stood silently regarding the scene for several musing minutes—"alike quick to be aroused and to be appeased; equally ungovernable while in the ascendant, and admitting the influence of a wholesome reaction, that brings a more sober tranquillity, when the fit is over. Your northern phlegm may render the analogy less apparent, but it is to be found as well among the cooler temperaments of the Teutonic stock, as among us of warmer blood. Do not this placid hill-side, yon lake, and the starry heavens, look as if they regretted their late unseemly violence, and wished to cheat the beholder into forgetfulness of their attack on our safety, as an impetuous but generous nature would repent it of the blow given in anger, or of the cutting speech that had escaped in a moment of spleen? What hast thou to say to my opinion, Signor Sigismund, for none know better than thou the quality of the tempest we have encountered?"

"Signore," answered the young soldier, mod-

estly, "you forget this brave mariner, without whose coolness and forethought all would have been lost. He has come up to Blonay, at our own request, but, until now, he has been overlooked."

Maso came forward at a signal from Sigismund, and stood before the party to whom he had rendered so signal aid, with a composure that was not easily disturbed.

"I have come up to the castle, Signore, at your commands," he said, addressing the Genoese; "but, having my own affairs on hand, must now beg to know your pleasure?"

"We have, in sooth, been negligent of thy merit. On landing, my first thought was of thee, as thou knowest: but other things had caused me to forget thee. Thou art, like myself, an Italian?"

"Signore, I am."

"Of what country?"

"Of your own, Signore; a Genoese, as I have said before."

The other remembered the circumstance, though it did not seem to please him. He looked around, as if to detect what others thought, and then continued his questions.

"A Genoese!" he repeated, slowly: "if this be so, we should know something of each other. Hast ever heard of me, in thy frequent visits to the port?"

Maso smiled; at first, he appeared disposed to be facetious; but a dark cloud passed over his swarthy lineaments, and he lost his pleasantry, in an air of thoughtfulness that struck his interrogator as singular.

"Signore," he said, after a pause, "most that follow my manner of life know something of your eccellenza; if it is only to be questioned of this that I am here, I pray leave to be permitted to go my way."

"No, by San Francesco! thou quittest us not so unceremoniously. I am wrong to assume the manner of a superior with one to whom I owe my life, and am well answered. But there is a heavy account to be settled between us, and I will do something towards wiping out the balance, which is so greatly against me, now; leaving thee to apply for a further statement, when we shall both be again in our own Genoa."

The Signor Grimaldi had reached forth an arm, while speaking, and received a well-filled purse from his countryman and companion, Marcelli. This was soon emptied of its contents, a fair show of sequins, all of which were offered to the mariner, without reservation. Maso looked coldly at the glittering pile, and, by his hesitation, left a doubt whether he did not think the reward insufficient.

"I tell thee it is but the present gage of further payment. At Genoa our account shall be fairly settled; but this is all that a traveller can prudently spare. Thou wilt come to me in our own town, and we will look to all thy interests."

"Signore, you offer that for which men do all acts, whether of good or of evil. They jeopard their souls for this very metal; mock at God's laws; overlook the right; trifle with justice, and become devils incarnate to possess it; and yet, though nearly penniless, I am so placed as to be compelled to refuse what you offer."

"I tell thee, Maso, that it shall be increased hereafter—or—we are not so poor as to go a-begging! Good Marcelli, empty thy hoards, and I will have recourse to Melchior de Willading's purse for our wants, until we can get nearer to our own supplies."

"And is Melchior de Willading to pass for nothing, in all this!" exclaimed the Baron; "put up

thy gold, Gaetano, and leave me to satisfy the honest mariner for the present. At a later day, he can come to thee, in Italy: but here, on my own ground, I claim the right to be his banker."

"Signore," returned Maso, earnestly and with more of gentle feeling than he was accustomed to betray, "you are both liberal beyond my desires, and but too well disposed for my poor wants. I have come up to the castle at your order, and to do you pleasure, but not in the hope to get money. I am poor; that it would be useless to deny, for appearances are against me—" here he laughed, his auditors thought in a manner that was forced —"but poverty and meanness are not always inseparable. You have more than suspected to-day that my life is free, and I admit it; but it is a mistake to believe that, because men quit the high-road which some call honesty, in any particular practice, they are without human feeling. I have been useful in saving your lives, Signori, and there is more pleasure in the reflection, than I should find in having the means to earn twice the gold ye offer. Here is the Signor Capitano," he added, taking Sigismund by the arm, and dragging him forward, "lavish your favors on him, for no practice of mine could have been of use without his bravery. If ye give him all in your treasuries, even to its richest pearl, ye will do no more than reason."

As Maso ceased, he cast a glance towards the attentive, breathless Adelheid, that continued to utter his meaning even after the tongue was silent. The bright suffusion that covered the maiden's face was visible even by the pale moonlight, and Sigismund shrunk back from his rude grasp in the manner in which the guilty retire from notice.

"These opinions are creditable to thee, Maso," returned the Genoese, affecting not to understand

his more particular meaning, "and they excite a stronger wish to be thy friend. I will say no more on the subject at present, for I see thy humor. Thou wilt let me see thee at Genoa?"

The expression of Maso's countenance was inexplicable, but he retained his usual indifference of manner.

"Signor Gaetano," he said, using a mariner's freedom in the address, "there are nobles in Genoa that might better knock at the door of your palace than I; and there are those, too, in the city that would gossip, were it known that you received such guests."

"This is tying thyself too closely to an evil and a dangerous trade. I suspect thee to be of the contraband, but surely it is not a pursuit so free from danger, of so much repute, or, judging by thy attire, of so much profit even, that thou needest be wedded to it for life. Means can be found to relieve thee from its odium, by giving thee a place in those customs with which thou hast so often trifled."

Maso laughed outright.

"So it is, Signore, in this moral world of ours: he who would run a fair course in any particular trust has only to make himself dangerous to be bought up. Your thief-takers are desperate rogues out of business; your tide-waiter has got his art by cheating the revenue; and I have been in lands where it was said, that all they who most fleeced the people began their calling as suffering patriots. The rule is firmly enough established without the help of my poor name, and, by your leave, I will remain as I am; one that hath his pleasure in living amid risks, and who takes his revenge of the authorities by railing at them when defeated, and in laughing at them when in success."

"Young man, thou hast in thee the materials of a better life!"

"Signore, this may be true," answered Maso, whose countenance again grew dark; "we boast of being the lords of the creation, but the bark of poor Baptista was not less master of its movements, in the late gust, than we are masters of our fortunes. Signor Grimaldi, I have in me the materials that make a man; but the laws, and the opinions, and the accursed strife of men, have left me what I am. For the first fifteen years of my career, the church was to be my stepping-stone to a cardinal's hat or a fat priory; but the briny sea-water washed out the necessary unction."

"Thou art better born than thou seemest—thou hast friends who should be grieved at this?"

The eye of Maso flashed, but he bent it aside, as if bearing down, by the force of an indomitable will, some sudden and fierce impulse.

"I was born of woman!" he said, with singular emphasis.

"And thy mother—is she not pained at thy present course—does she know of thy career?"

The haggard smile to which this question gave birth induced the Genoese to regret that he had put it. Maso evidently struggled to subdue some feeling which harrowed his very soul, and his success was owing to such a command of himself as men rarely obtain.

"She is dead," he answered, huskily; "she is a saint with the angels. Had she lived, I should never have been a mariner, and—and—" laying his hand on his throat, as if to keep down the sense of suffocation, he smiled, and added, laughingly,—"ay, and the good Winkelried would have been a wreck."

"Maso, thou must come to me at Genoa. I

must see more of thee, and question thee further of thy fortunes. A fair spirit has been perverted in thy fall, and the friendly aid of one who is not without influence may still restore its tone."

The Signor Grimaldi spoke warmly, like one who sincerely felt regret, and his voice had all the melancholy and earnestness of such a sentiment. The truculent nature of Maso was touched by this show of interest, and a multitude of fierce passions were at once subdued. He approached the noble Genoese, and respectfully took his hand.

"Pardon the freedom, Signore," he said more mildly, intently regarding the wrinkled and attenuated fingers, with the map-like tracery of veins, that he held in his own brown and hard palm; "this is not the first time that our flesh has touched each other, though it is the first time that our hands have joined. Let it now be in amity. A humor has come over me, and I would crave your pardon, venerable noble, for the freedom. Signore, you are aged, and honored, and stand high, doubtless, in Heaven's favor, as in that of man—grant me, then, your blessing, ere I go my way."

As Maso preferred this extraordinary request, he knelt with an air of so much reverence and sincerity as to leave little choice as to granting it. The Genoese was surprised, but not disconcerted. With perfect dignity and self-possession, and with a degree of feeling that was not unsuited to the occasion, the fruit of emotions so powerfully awakened, he pronounced the benediction. The mariner arose, kissed the hand which he still held, made a hurried sign of salutation to all, leaped down the declivity on which they stood, and vanished among the shadows of a copse.

Sigismund, who had witnessed this unusual scene with surprise, watched him to the last, and he saw, by the manner in which he dashed his

hand across his eyes, that his fierce nature had been singularly shaken. On recovering his thoughts, the Signor Grimaldi, too, felt certain there had been no mockery in the conduct of their inexplicable preserver, for a hot tear had fallen on his hand ere it was liberated. He was himself strongly agitated by what had passed, and, leaning on his friend, he slowly re-entered the gates of Blonay.

"This extraordinary demand of Maso's has brought up the sad image of my own poor son, dear Melchior," he said; "would to Heaven that he could have received this blessing, and that it might have been of use to him, in the sight of God! Nay, he may yet hear of it—for, canst thou believe it, I have thought that Maso may be one of his lawless associates, and that some wild desire to communicate this scene has prompted the strange request I granted."

The discourse continued, but it became secret, and of the most confidential kind. The rest of the party soon sought their beds, though lamps were burning in the chambers of the two old nobles to a late hour of the night.

CHAPTER IX.

Where are my Switzers? Let them guard the door:
What is the matter?

HAMLET.

THE American autumn, or fall, as we poetically and affectionately term this generous and mellow season among ourselves, is thought to be unsur-

passed, in its warm and genial lustre, its bland and exhilarating airs, and its admirable constancy, by the decline of the year in nearly every other portion of the earth. Whether attachment to our own fair and generous land, has led us to over-estimate its advantages or not, and bright and cheerful as our autumnal days certainly are, a fairer morning never dawned upon the Alleghanies, than that which illumined the Alps, on the reappearance of the sun after the gust of the night which has been so lately described. As the day advanced, the scene grew gradually more lovely, until warm and glowing Italy itself could scarce present a landscape more winning, or one possessing a fairer admixture of the grand and the soft, than that which greeted the eye of Adelheid de Willading, as, leaning on the arm of her father, she issued from the gate of Blonay, upon its elevated and gravelled terrace.

It has already been said that this ancient and historical building stood against the bosom of the mountains, at the distance of a short league behind the town of Vévey. All the elevations of this region are so many spurs of the same vast pile, and that on which Blonay has now been seated from the earliest period of the middle ages belongs to that particular line of rocky ramparts, which separates the Valais from the centre cantons of the confederation of Switzerland, and which is commonly known as the range of the Oberland Alps. This line of snow-crowned rocks terminates in perpendicular precipices on the very margin of the Leman, and forms, on the side of the lake, a part of that magnificent setting which renders the south-eastern horn of its crescent so wonderfully beautiful. The upright natural wall that overhangs Villeneuve and Chillon stretches along the verge of the water, barely leaving room for a

carriage-road, with here and there a cottage at its base, for the distance of two leagues, when it diverges from the course of the lake, and, withdrawing inland, it is finally lost among the minor eminences of Fribourg. Every one has observed those sloping declivities, composed of the washings of torrents, the *débris* of precipices, and what may be termed the constant drippings of perpendicular eminencies, and which lie like broad buttresses at their feet, forming a sort of foundation or basement for the superincumbent mass. Among the Alps, where nature has acted on so sublime a scale, and where all the proportions are duly observed, these *débris* of the high mountains frequently contain villages and towns, or form vast fields, vineyards, and pasturages, according to their elevation or their exposure towards the sun. It may be questioned, in strict geology, whether the variegated acclivity that surrounds Vévey, rich in villages and vines, hamlets and castles, has been thus formed, or whether the natural convulsions which expelled the upper rocks from the crust of the earth left their bases in the present broken and beautiful forms; but the fact is not important to the effect, which is that just named, and which gives to these vast ranges of rock secondary and fertile bases, that, in other regions, would be termed mountains of themselves.

The castle and family of Blonay, for both still exist, are among the oldest of Vaud. A square, rude tower, based upon a foundation of rock, one of those ragged masses that thrust their naked heads occasionally through the soil of the declivity, was the commencement of the hold. Other edifices have been reared around this nucleus in different ages, until the whole presents one of those peculiar and picturesque piles, that ornament so many

both of the savage and of the softer sites of Switzerland.

The terrace towards which Adelheid and her father advanced was an irregular walk, shaded by venerable trees that had been raised near the principal or the carriage gate of the castle, on a ledge of those rocks that form the foundation of the buildings themselves. It had its parapet walls, its seats, its artificial soil, and its gravelled *allées*, as is usual with these antiquated ornaments; but it also had, what is better than these, one of the most sublime and lovely views that ever greeted human eyes. Beneath it lay the undulating and teeming declivity, rich in vines, and carpeted with sward, here dotted by hamlets, there park-like and rural with forest trees, while there was no quarter that did not show the roof of a château or the tower of some rural church. There is little of magnificence in Swiss architecture, which never much surpasses, and is, perhaps, generally inferior to our own; but the beauty and quaintness of the sites, the great variety of the surfaces, the hill-sides, and the purity of the atmosphere, supply charms that are peculiar to the country. Vévey lay at the water-side, many hundred feet lower, and seemingly on a narrow strand, though in truth enjoying ample space; while the houses of St. Saphorin, Corsier, Montreux, and of a dozen more villages, were clustered together, like so many of the compact habitations of wasps stuck against the mountains. But the principal charm was in the Leman. One who had never witnessed the lake in its fury, could not conceive the possibility of danger in the tranquil shining sheet that was now spread like a liquid mirror, for leagues, beneath the eye. Some six or seven barks were in view, their sails drooping in negligent forms, as if disposed expressly to become models for the artist, their yards inclining as chance

had cast them, and their hulls looming large, to complete the picture. To these near objects must be added the distant view, which extended to the Jura in one direction, and which in the other was bounded by the frontiers of Italy, whose aërial limits were to be traced in that region which appears to belong neither to heaven nor to earth, the abode of eternal frosts. The Rhone was shining, in spots, among the meadows of the Valais, for the elevation of the castle admitted of its being seen, and Adelheid endeavored to trace among the mazes of the mountains the valleys which led to those sunny countries, towards which they journeyed.

The sensations of both father and daughter, when they came beneath the leafy canopy of the terrace, were those of mute delight. It was evident, by the expression of their countenances, that they were in a favorable mood to receive pleasurable impressions; for the face of each was full of that quiet happiness which succeeds sudden and lively joy. Adelheid had been weeping; but, judging from the radiance of her eyes, the healthful and brightening bloom of her cheeks, and the struggling smiles that played about her ripe lips, the tears had been sweet, rather than painful. Though still betraying enough of physical frailty to keep alive the concern of all who loved her, there was a change for the better in her appearance, which was so sensible as to strike the least observant of those who lived in daily communication with the invalid.

"If pure and mild air, a sunny sky, and ravishing scenery, be what they seek who cross the Alps, my father," said Adelheid, after they had stood a moment, gazing at the magnificent panorama, "why should the Swiss quit his native land? Is

there in Italy aught more soft, more winning, or more healthful, than this?"

"This spot has often been called the Italy of our mountains. The fig ripens near yonder village of Montreux, and, open to the morning sun while it is sheltered by the precipices above, the whole of that shore well deserves its happy reputation. Still they whose spirits require diversion, and whose constitutions need support, generally prefer to go into countries where the mind has more occupation, and where a greater variety of employments help the climate and nature to complete the cure."

"But thou forgettest, father, it is agreed between us that I am now to become strong, and active, and laughing, as we used to be at Willading, when I first grew into womanhood."

"If I could but see those days again, darling, my own closing hours would be calm as those of a saint—though Heaven knows I have little pretension to that blessed character in any other particular."

"Dost thou not count a quiet conscience and a sure hope as something, father?"

"Have it as thou wilt, girl. Make a saint of me, or a bishop, or a hermit, if thou wilt; the only reward I ask is, to see thee smiling and happy, as thou never failedst to be during the first eighteen years of thy life. Had I foreseen that thou wert to return from my good sister so little like thyself, I would have forbidden the visit, much as I love her, and all that are her's. But the wisest of us are helpless mortals, and scarce know our own wants from hour to hour. Thou saidst, I think, that this brave Sigismund honestly declared his belief that my consent could never be given to one who had so little to boast of, in the way of birth and fortune? There was, at least, good sense, and

modesty, and right feeling, in the doubt, but he should have thought better of my heart."

"He said this;" returned Adelheid, in a timid and slightly trembling voice, though it was quite apparent by the confiding expression of her eye, that she had no longer any secret from her parent. "He had too much honor to wish to win the daughter of a noble without the knowledge and approbation of her friends."

"That the boy should love thee, Adelheid, is natural; it is an additional proof of his own merit —but that he should distrust my affection and justice is an offence that I can scarce forgive. What are ancestry and wealth to thy happiness?"

"Thou forget'st, dear sir, he is yet to learn that my happiness, in any measure, depends on his."

Adelheid spoke quickly and with warmth.

"He knew I was a father and that thou art an only child; one of his good sense and right way of thinking should have better understood the feelings of a man in my situation, than to doubt his natural affection."

"As he has never been the parent of an only daughter, father," answered the smiling Adelheid, for, in her present mood, smiles came easily, "he may not have felt or anticipated all that thou imagin'st. He knew the prejudices of the world on the subject of noble blood, and they are few indeed, that, having much, are disposed to part with it to him who hath little."

"The lad reasoned more like an old miser than a young soldier, and I have a great mind to let him feel my displeasure for thinking so meanly of me. Have we not Willading, with all its fair lands, besides our rights in the city, that we need go begging money of others, like needy mendicants! Thou hast been in the conspiracy against my

character, girl, or such a fear could not have given either uneasiness for a moment."

"I never thought, father, that thou would'st reject him on account of poverty, for I knew our own means sufficient for all our own wants; but I did believe that he who could not boast the privileges of nobility might fail to gain thy favor."

"Are we not a republic?—is not the right of the bürgerschaft the one essential right in Berne—why should I raise obstacles about that on which the laws are silent?"

Adelheid listened, as a female of her years would be apt to listen to words so grateful, with a charmed ear; and yet she shook her head, in a way to express an incredulity that was not altogether free from apprehension.

"For thy generous forgetfulness of old opinions in behalf of my happiness, dearest father," she resumed, the tears starting unbidden to her thoughtful blue eye, "I thank thee fervently. It is true that we are inhabitants of a republic, but we are not the less noble."

"Dost thou turn against thyself, and hunt up reasons why I should not do that which thou hast just acknowledged to be so necessary to prevent thee from following thy brothers and sisters to their early graves?"

The blood rushed in a torrent to the face of Adelheid, for though, weeping and in the moment of tender confidence which succeeded her thanksgivings for the baron's safety, she had thrown herself on his bosom, and confessed that the hopelessness of the sentiments with which she met the declared love of Sigismund was the true cause of the apparent malady that had so much alarmed her friends, the words which had flowed spontaneously from her heart, in so tender a scene, had never appeared to her to convey a meaning so strong, or

one so wounding to virgin-pride, as that which her father, in the strength of his masculine habits, had now given them.

"In God's mercy, father, I shall live, whether united to Sigismund or not, to smooth thine own decline and to bless thy old age. A pious daughter will never be torn so cruelly from one to whom she is the last and only stay. I may mourn this disappointment, and foolishly wish, perhaps, it might have been otherwise; but ours is not a house of which the maidens die for their inclinations in favor of any youths, however deserving!"

"Noble or simple," added the baron, laughing, for he saw that his daughter spoke in sudden pique, rather than from her excellent heart. Adelheid, whose good sense, and quick recollections, instantly showed her the weakness of this little display of female feeling, laughed faintly in her turn, though she repeated his words as if to give still more emphasis to her own.

"This will not do, my daughter. They who profess the republican doctrine, should not be too rigid in their constructions of privileges. If Sigismund be not noble, it will not be difficult to obtain for him that honorable distinction, and, in failure of male line, he may bear the name and sustain the honors of our family. In any case he will become of the bürgerschaft, and that of itself will be all that is required in Berne."

"In Berne, father," returned Adelheid, who had so far forgotten the recent movement of pride as to smile on her fond and indulgent parent, though, yielding to the waywardness of the happy, she continued to trifle with her own feelings—"it is true. The bürgerschaft will be sufficient for all the purposes of office and political privileges, but will it suffice for the opinions of our equals, for the prejudices of society, or for your own perfect con-

tentment, when the freshness of gratitude shall have passed?"

"Thou puttest these questions, girl, as if employed to defeat thine own cause—Dost not truly love the boy, after all?"

"On this subject, I have spoken sincerely and as became thy child," frankly returned Adelheid. "He saved my life from imminent peril, as he has now saved thine, and although my aunt, fearful of thy displeasure, would not that thou should'st hear the tale, her prohibition could not prevent gratitude from having its way. I have told thee that Sigismund has declared his feelings, although he nobly abstained from even asking a return, and I should not have been my mother's child, could I have remained entirely indifferent to so much worth united to a service so great. . What I have said of our prejudices is, then, rather for your reflection, dearest sir, than for myself. I have thought much of all this, and am ready to make any sacrifice to pride, and to bear all the remarks of the world, in order to discharge a debt to one to whom I owe so much. But, while it is natural, perhaps unavoidable, that I should feel thus, thou art not necessarily to forget the other claims upon thee. It is true that, in one sense, we are all to each other, but there is a tyrant that will scarce let any escape from his reign; I mean opinion. Let us then not deceive ourselves—though we of Berne affect the republic, and speak much of liberty, it is a small state, and the influence of those that are larger and more powerful among our neighbors rules in every thing that touches opinion. A noble is as much a noble in Berne, in all but what the law bestows, as he is in the Empire—and thou knowest we come of the German root, which has struck deep into these prejudices."

The Baron de Willading had been much accus-

tomed to defer to the superior mind and more cultivated understanding of his daughter, who, in the retirement of her father's castle, had read and reflected far more than her years would have probably permitted in the busier scenes of the world. He felt the justice of her remark, and they had walked the entire length of the terrace in profound silence, before he could summon the ideas necessary to make a suitable answer.

"The truth of what thou sayest, is not to be denied," he at length said, "but it may be palliated. I have many friends in the German courts, and favors may be had: letters of nobility will give the youth the station he wants, after which he can claim thy hand without offence to any opinions, whether of Berne or elsewhere."

"I doubt if Sigismund will willingly become a party to this expedient. Our own nobility is of ancient origin; it dates from a period anterior to the existence of Berne as a city, and is much older than our institutions. I remember to have heard him say, that when a people refuse to bestow these distinctions themselves, their citizens can never receive them from others without a loss of dignity and character, and one of his moral firmness might hesitate to do what he thinks wrong for a boon so worthless as that we offer."

"By the soul of William Tell! should the unknown peasant dare —— But he is a brave boy, and twice has he done the last service to my race! I love him, Adelheid, little less than thyself; and we will win him over to our purpose gently, and by degrees. A maiden of thy beauty and years, to say nothing of thy other qualities, thy name, the lands of Willading, and the rights of Berne, are matters, after all, not to be lightly refused by a nameless soldier, who hath naught—"

"But his courage, his virtues, his modesty, and his excellent sense, father!"

"Thou wilt not let me have the naked satisfaction of vaunting my own wares! I see Gaetano Grimaldi making signs at his window, as if he were about to come forth: go thou to thy chamber, that I may discourse of this troublesome matter with that excellent friend; in good season thou shalt know the result."

Adelheid kissed the hand that she held in her own, and left him with a thoughtful air. As she descended from the terrace, it was not with the same elastic step as she had come up half an hour before.

Early deprived of her mother, this strong-minded but delicate girl had long been accustomed to make her father a confidant of all her hopes, thoughts, and pictures of the future. Owing to her peculiar circumstances, she would have had less hesitation than is usual to her sex in avowing to her parent any of her attachments; but a dread that the declaration might conduce to his unhappiness, without in any manner favoring her own cause, had hitherto kept her silent. Her acquaintance with Sigismund had been long and intimate. Rooted esteem and deep respect lay at the bottom of her sentiments, which were, however, so lively as to have chased the rose from her cheek in the endeavor to forget them, and to have led her sensitive father to apprehend that she was suffering under that premature decay which had already robbed him of his other children. There was in truth no serious ground for this apprehension, so natural to one in the place of the Baron de Willading; for, until thought and reflection paled her cheek, a more blooming maiden than Adelheid, or one that united more perfect health with feminine delicacy, did not dwell among her native moun-

tains. She had quietly consented to the Italian journey, in the expectation that it might serve to divert her mind from brooding over what she had long considered hopeless, and with the natural desire to see lands so celebrated, but not under any mistaken opinions of her own situation. The presence of Sigismund, so far as she was concerned, was purely accidental, although she could not prevent the pleasing idea from obtruding—an idea so grateful to her womanly affections and maiden pride—that the young soldier, who was in the service of Austria, and who had become known to her in one of his frequent visits to his native land, had gladly seized this favorable occasion to return to his colors. Circumstances, which it is not necessary to recount, had enabled Adelheid to make the youth acquainted with her father, though the interdictions of her aunt, whose imprudence had led to the accident which nearly proved so fatal, and from whose consequences she had been saved by Sigismund, prevented her from explaining all the causes she had for showing him respect and esteem. Perhaps the manner in which this young and imaginative though sensible girl was compelled to smother a portion of her feelings gave them intensity, and hastened that transition of sentiment from gratitude to affection, which, in another case, might have only been produced by a more open and prolonged association. As it was, she scarcely knew herself how irretrievably her happiness was bound up in that of Sigismund, though she had so long cherished his image in most of her day-dreams, and had unconsciously admitted his influence over her mind and hopes, until she learned that they were reciprocated.

The Signor Grimaldi appeared on one end of the terrace, as Adelheid de Willading descended at the other. The old nobles had separated late

on the previous night, after a private and confidential communication that had shaken the soul of the Italian, and drawn strong and sincere manifestations of sympathy from his friend. Though so prone to sudden shades of melancholy, there was a strong touch of the humorous in the native character of the Genoese, which came so quick upon his more painful recollection, as greatly to relieve their weight, and to render him, in appearance at least, a happy, while the truth would have shown that he was a sorrowing, man. He had been making his orisons with a grateful heart, and he now came forth into the genial mountain air, like one who had relieved his conscience of a heavy debt. Like most laymen of the Catholic persuasion, he thought himself no longer bound to maintain a grave and mortified exterior, when worship and penitence were duly observed, and he joined his friend with a cheerfulness of air and voice that an ascetic, or a puritan, might have attributed to levity, after the scenes through which he had so lately passed.

"The Virgin and San Francesco keep thee in mind, old friend!" said the Signor Grimaldi, cordially kissing the two cheeks of the Baron de Willading. "We both have reason to remember their care, though, heretic as thou art, I doubt not thou hast already found some other mediators to thank, that we now stand on this solid terrace of the Signor de Blonay, instead of being worthless clay at the bottom of yonder treacherous lake."

"I thank God for this, as for all his mercies—for thy life, Gaetano, as well as for mine own."

"Thou art right, thou art right, good Melchior; 'twas no affair for any but Him who holds the universe in the hollow of his hand, in good faith, for a minute later would have gathered both with our fathers. Still thou wilt permit me, Catholic as I

am, to remember the intercessors on whom I called in the moment of extremity."

"This is a subject on which we have never agreed, and on which we probably never shall," answered the Bernese, with somewhat of the reserve of one conscious of a stronger dissidence than he wished to express, as they turned and commenced their walk up and down the terrace, "though I believe it is the only matter of difference that ever existed between us."

"Is it not extraordinary," returned the Genoese, "that men should consort together in good and evil, bleed for each other, love each other, do all acts of kindness to each other, as thou and I have done, Melchior, nay, be in the last extremity, and feel more agony for the friend than for one's self, and yet entertain such opinions of their respective creeds, as to fancy the unbeliever in the devil's claws all this time, and to entertain a latent distrust that the very soul which, in all other matters, is deemed so noble and excellent, is to be everlastingly damned for the want of certain opinions and formalities that we ourselves have been taught to think essential?"

"To tell thee the truth," returned the Swiss, rubbing his forehead like a man who wished to brighten up his ideas, as one would brighten old silver, by friction; "this subject, as thou well knowest, is not my strong side. Luther and Calvin, with other sages, discovered that it was weakness to submit to dogmas, without close examination, merely because they were venerable, and they winnowed the wheat from the chaff. This we call a reform. It is enough for me that men so wise were satisfied with their researches and changes, and I feel little inclination to disturb a decision that has now received the sanction of nearly two centuries of practice. To be plain

with thee, I hold it discreet to reverence the opinions of my fathers."

"Though it would seem not of thy grandfathers," said the Italian, drily, but in perfect good humor. "By San Francesco! thou wouldst have made a worthy cardinal, had chance brought thee into the world fifty leagues farther south, or west, or east. But this is the way with the world, whether it be your Turk, your Hindoo, or your Lutheran, and I fear it is much the same with the children of St. Peter too. Each has his arguments for faith, or politics, or any interest that may be named, which he uses like a hammer to knock down the bricks of his opponent's reasons, and when he finds himself in the other's intrenchments, why he gathers together the scattered materials in order to build a wall for his own protection. Then what was oppression yesterday is justifiable defence to-day; fanaticism becomes logic; and credulity and pliant submission get, in two centuries, to be deference to the venerable opinion of our fathers! But let it go—thou wert speaking of thanking God, and in that, Roman though I am, I fervently and devoutly join with or without saints' intercession."

The honest baron did not like his friend's allusions, though they were much too subtle for his ready comprehension, for the intellect of the Swiss was a little frosted by constant residence among snows and in full view of glaciers, and it wanted the volatile play of the Genoese's fancy, which was apt to expand like air rarefied by the warmth of the sun. This difference of temperament, however, so far from lessening their mutual kindness, was, most probably, the real cause of its existence, since it is well known that friendship, like love, is more apt to be generated by qualities that vary a little from our own than by a perfect homogeneity of character and disposition, which is more liable

to give birth to rivalry and contention, than when each party has some distinct capital of his own on which to adventure, and with which to keep alive the interest of him who, in that particular feature, may be but indifferently provided. All that is required for a perfect community of feeling is a mutual recognition of, and a common respect for, certain great moral rules, without which there can exist no esteem between the upright. The alliance of knaves depends on motives so hackneyed and obvious, that we abstain from any illustration of its principle as a work of supererogation. The Signor Grimaldi and Melchior de Willading were both very upright and justly-minded men, as men go, in intention at least, and their opposite peculiarities and opinions had served, during hot youth, to keep alive the interest of their communications, and were not likely, now that time had mellowed their feelings and brought so many recollections to strengthen the tie, to overturn what they had been originally the principal instruments in creating.

"Of thy readiness to thank God, I have never doubted," answered the baron, when his friend had ended the remark just recorded, "but we know that his favors are commonly shown to us here below by means of human instruments. Ought we not, therefore, to manifest another sort of gratitude in favor of the individual who was so serviceable in last night's gust?"

"Thou meanest my untractable countryman? I have bethought me much since we separated of his singular refusal, and hope still to find the means of conquering his obstinacy."

"I hope thou may'st succeed, and thou well know'st that I am always to be counted on as an auxiliary. But he was not in my thoughts at the instant; there is still another who nobly risked

more than the mariner in our behalf, since he risked life."

"This is beyond question, and I have already reflected much on the means of doing him good. He is a soldier of fortune, I learn, and if he will take service in Genoa, I will charge myself with the care of his preferment. Trouble not thyself, therefore, concerning the fortunes of young Sigismund; thou knowest my means, and canst not doubt my will."

The baron cleared his throat, for he had a secret reluctance to reveal his own favorable intentions towards the young man, the last lingering feeling of worldly pride, and the consequence of prejudices which were then universal, and which are even now far from being extinct. A vivid picture of the horrors of the past night luckily flashed across his mind, and the good genius of his young preserver triumphed.

"Thou knowest the youth is a Swiss," he said, "and, in virtue of the tie of country, I claim at least an equal right to do him good."

"We will not quarrel for precedence in this matter, but thou wilt do well to remember that I possess especial means to push his interests;—means that thou canst not by possibility use."

"That is not proved;" interrupted the Baron de Willading. "I have not thy particular station, it is true, Signor Gaetano, nor thy political power, nor thy princely fortune; but, poor as I am in these, there is a boon in my keeping that is worth them all, and which will be more acceptable to the boy, or I much mistake his mettle, than any favors that thou hast named or canst name."

The Signor Grimaldi had pursued his walk, with eyes thoughtfully fastened on the ground; but he now raised them, in surprise, to the countenance of his friend, as if to ask an explanation. The

baron was not only committed by what had escaped him, but he was warming with opposition, for the best may frequently do very excellent things, under the influence of motives of but a very indifferent aspect.

"Thou knowest I have a daughter," resumed the Swiss firmly, determined to break the ice at once, and expose a decision which he feared his friend might deem a weakness.

"Thou hast; and a fairer, or a modester, or a tenderer, and yet, unless my judgment err, a firmer at need, is not to be found among all the excellent of her excellent sex. But thou wouldst scarce think of bestowing Adelheid in reward for such a service on one so little known, or without her wishes being consulted?"

"Girls of Adelheid's birth and breeding are ever ready to do what is meet to maintain the honor of their families. I deem gratitude to be a debt that must not stand long uncancelled against the name of Willading."

The Genoese looked grave, and it was evident he listened to his friend with something like displeasure.

"We who have so nearly passed through life, good Melchior," he said, "should know its difficulties and its hazards. The way is weary, and it has need of all the solace that affection and a community of feeling can yield to lighten its cares. I have never liked this heartless manner of trafficking in the tenderest ties, to uphold a failing line or a failing fortune; and better it were that Adelheid should pass her days unwooed in thy ancient castle, than give her hand, under any sudden impulse of sentiment, not less than under a cold calculation of interest. Such a girl, my friend, is not to be bestowed without much care and reflection."

"By the mass! to use one of thine own favorite

oaths, I wonder to hear thee talk thus!—thou, whom I knew a hot-blooded Italian, jealous as a Turk, and maintaining at thy rapier's point that women were like the steel of thy sword, so easily tarnished by rust, or evil breath, or neglect, that no father or brother could be easy on the score of honor, until the last of his name was well wedded, and that, too, to such as the wisdom of her advisers should choose! I remember thee once saying thou couldst not sleep soundly till thy sister was a wife or a nun."

"This was the language of boyhood and thoughtless youth, and bitterly rebuked have I been for having used it. I wived a beauteous and noble virgin, de Willading; but I much fear that, while my fair conduct in her behalf won her respect and esteem, I was too late to win her love. It is a fearful thing to enter on the solemn and grave ties of married life, without enlisting in the cause of happiness the support of the judgment, the fancy, the tastes, with the feelings that are dependent on them, and, more than all, those wayward inclinations, whose workings too often baffle human foresight. If the hopes of the ardent and generous themselves are deceived in the uncertain lottery of wedlock, the victim will struggle hard to maintain the delusion; but when the calculations of others are parent to the evil, a natural inducement, that comes of the devil I fear, prompts us to aggravate, instead of striving to lessen, the evil."

"Thou dost not speak of wedlock as one who found the condition happy, poor Gaetano?"

"I have told thee what I fear was but too true," returned the Genoese, with a heavy sigh. "My birth, vast means, and I trust a fair name, induced the kinsmen of my wife to urge her to a union, that I have since had reason to fear her feelings did not lead her to form. I had a terrible ally too

in the acknowledged unworthiness of him who had captivated her young fancy, and whom, as age brought reflection, her reason condemned. I was accepted, therefore, as a cure to a bleeding heart and broken peace, and my office, at the best, was not such as a good man could desire, or a proud man tolerate. The unhappy Angiolina died in giving birth to her first child, the unhappy son of whom I have told thee so much. She found peace at last in the grave!"

"Thou hadst not time to give thy manly tenderness and noble qualities an opportunity; else, my life on it, she would have come to love thee, Gaetano, as all love thee who know thee!" returned the baron, warmly.

"Thanks, my kind friend; but beware of making marriage a mere convenience. There may be folly in calling each truant inclination that deep sentiment and secret sympathy which firmly knits heart to heart, and doubtless a common fortune may bind the worldly-minded together; but this is not the holy union which keeps noble qualities in a family, and which fortifies against the seductions of a world that is already too strong for honesty. I remember to have heard from one that understood his fellow-creatures well, that marriages of mere propriety tend to rob woman of her greatest charm, that of superiority to the vulgar feeling of worldly calculations, and that all communities in which they prevail become, of necessity, selfish beyond the natural limits, and eventually corrupt."

"This may be true;—but Adelheid loves the youth."

"Ha! This changes the complexion of the affair. How dost thou know this?"

"From her own lips. The secret escaped her, under the warmth and sincerity of feeling that the late events so naturally excited."

"And Sigismund!—he has thy approbation?—for I will not suppose that one like thy daughter yielded her affections unsolicited."

"He has—that is—he has. There is what the world will be apt to call an obstacle, but it shall count for nothing with me. The youth is not noble."

"The objection is serious, my honest friend. It is not wise to tax human infirmity too much, where there is sufficient to endure from causes that cannot be removed. Wedlock is a precarious experiment, and all unusual motives for disgust should be cautiously avoided.—I would he were noble."

"The difficulty shall be removed by the Emperor's favor. Thou hast princes in Italy, too, that might be prevailed on to do us this grace, at need?"

"What is the youth's origin and history, and by what means has a daughter of thine been placed in a situation to love one that is simply born?"

"Sigismund is a Swiss, and of a family of Bernese burghers, I should think, though, to confess the truth, I know little more than that he has passed several years in foreign service, and that he saved my daughter's life from one of our mountain accidents, some two years since, as he has now saved thine and mine. My sister, near whose castle the acquaintance commenced, permitted the intercourse, which it would now be too late to think of prohibiting. And, to speak honestly, I begin to rejoice the boy is what he is, in order that our readiness to receive him to our arms may be the more apparent. If the young fellow were the equal of Adelheid in other things, as he is in person and character, he would have too much in his favor.—No, by the faith of Calvin!—him whom thou stylest a heretic—I think I rejoice that the boy is not noble!"

"Have it as thou wilt," returned the Genoese,

whose countenance continued to express distrust and thought, for his own experience had made him wary on the subject of doubtful or ill-assorted alliances; "let his origin be what it may, he shall not need gold. I charge myself with seeing that the lands of Willading shall be fairly balanced: and here comes our hospitable host to be witness of the pledge."

Roger de Blonay advanced upon the terrace to greet his guests, as the Signor Grimaldi concluded. The three old men continued their walk for an hour longer, discussing the fortunes of the young pair, for Melchior de Willading was as little disposed to make a secret of his intentions with one of his friends as with the other.

CHAPTER X.

———But I have not the time to pause
Upon these gewgaws of the heart.

WERNER.

THOUGH the word castle is of common use in Europe, as applied to ancient baronial edifices, the thing itself is very different in style, extent, and cost, in different countries. Security, united to dignity and the means of accommodating a train of followers suited to the means of the noble, being the common object, the position and defences of the place necessarily varied according to the general aspect of the region in which it stood. Thus ditches and other broad expanses of water were much depended on in all low countries, as in Flanders, Holland, parts of Germany, and much of France; while hills, spurs of mountains, and more especially the summits of conical rocks, were sought in Switzerland, Italy, and wherever else

these natural means of protection could readily be found. Other circumstances, such as climate, wealth, the habits of a people, and the nature of the feudal rights, also served greatly to modify the appearance and extent of the building. The ancient hold in Switzerland was originally little more than a square solid tower, perched upon a rock, with turrets at its angles. Proof against fire from without, it had ladders to mount from floor to floor, and often contained its beds in the deep recesses of the windows, or in alcoves wrought in the massive wall. As greater security or greater means enabled, offices and constructions of more importance arose around its base, inclosing a court. These necessarily followed the formation of the rock, until, in time, the confused and inartificial piles, which are now seen mouldering on so many of the minor spurs of the Alps, were created.

As is usual in all ancient holds, the Rittersaal—the Salle des Chevaliers—or the knights' hall, of Blonay, as it is differently called in different languages, was both the largest and the most laboriously decorated apartment of the edifice. It was no longer in the rude gaol-like keep that grew, as it were, from the living rock, on which it had been reared with so much skill as to render it difficult to ascertain where nature ceased and art commenced; but it had been transferred, a century before the occurrences related in our tale, to a more modern portion of the buildings that formed the south-eastern angle of the whole construction. The room was spacious, square, simple, for such is the fashion of the country, and lighted by windows that looked on one side towards Valais, and on the other over the whole of the irregular, but lovely declivity, to the margin of the Leman, and along that beautiful sheet, embracing hamlet, village, city, castle, and purple mountain, until the view was limited by the

hazy Jura. The window on the latter side of the knights' hall, had an iron balcony at a giddy height from the ground, and in this airy look-out Adelheid had taken her seat, when, after quitting her father, she mounted to the apartment common to all the guests of the castle.

We have already alluded generally to the personal appearance and to the moral qualities of the Baron de Willading's daughter, but we now conceive it necessary to make the reader more intimately acquainted with one who is destined to act no mean part in the incidents of our tale. It has been said that she was pleasing to the eye, but her beauty was of a kind that depended more on expression, on a union of character with feminine grace, than on the vulgar lines of regularity and symmetry. While she had no feature that was defective, she had none that was absolutely faultless, though all were combined with so much harmony, and the soft expression of the mild blue eye accorded so well with the gentle play of a sweet mouth, that the soul of their owner seemed ready at all times to appear through these ingenuous tell-tales of her thoughts. Still, maidenly reserve sate in constant watch over all, and it was when the spectator thought himself most in communion with her spirit, that he most felt its pure and correcting influence. Perhaps a cast of high intelligence, of a natural power to discriminate, which much surpassed the limited means accorded to females of that age, contributed their share to hold those near her in respect, and served in some degree as a mild and wise repellant, to counteract the attractions of her gentleness and candor. In short, one cast unexpectedly in her society would not have been slow to infer, and he would have decided correctly, that Adelheid de Willading was a girl of warm and tender affections, of a playful but regulated

fancy, of a firm and lofty sense of all her duties, whether natural or merely the result of social obligations, of melting pity, and yet of a habit and quality to think and act for herself, in all those cases in which it was fitting for a maiden of her condition and years to assume such self-control.

It was now more than a year since Adelheid had become fully sensible of the force of her attachment for Sigismund Steinbach, and during all that time she had struggled hard to overcome a feeling which she believed could lead to no happy result. The declaration of the young man himself, a declaration that was extorted involuntarily and in a moment of powerful passion, was accompanied by an admission of its uselessness and folly, and it first opened her eyes to the state of her own feelings. Though she had listened, as all of her sex will listen, even when the passion is hopeless, to such words coming from lips they love, it was with a self-command that enabled her to retain her own secret, and with a settled and pious resolution to do that which she believed to be her duty to herself, to her father, and to Sigismund. From that hour she ceased to see him, unless under circumstances when it would have drawn suspicion on her motives to refuse, and while she never appeared to forget her heavy obligations to the youth, she firmly denied herself the pleasure of even mentioning his name when it could be avoided. But of all ungrateful and reluctant tasks, that of striving to forget is the least likely to succeed. Adelheid was sustained only by her sense of duty and the desire not to disappoint her father's wishes, to which habit and custom had given nearly the force of law with maidens of her condition, though her reason and judgment no less than her affections were both strongly enlisted on the other side. Indeed, with the single exception of the general unfitness of a

union between two of unequal stations, there was nothing to discredit her choice, if that may be termed choice which, after all, was more the result of spontaneous feeling and secret sympathy than of any other cause, unless it were a certain equivocal reserve, and a manifest uneasiness, whenever allusion was made to the early history and to the family of the soldier. This sensitiveness on the part of Sigismund had been observed and commented on by others as well as by herself, and it had been openly ascribed to the mortification of one who had been thrown, by chance, into an intimate association that was much superior to what he was entitled to maintain by birth; a weakness but too common, and which few have strength of mind to resist or sufficient pride to overcome. The intuitive watchfulness of affection, however, led Adelheid to a different conclusion; she saw that he never affected to conceal, while with equal good taste he abstained from obtrusive allusions to the humble nature of his origin, but she also perceived that there were points of his previous history on which he was acutely sensitive, and which at first she feared must be attributed to the consciousness of acts that his clear perception of moral truth condemned, and which he could wish forgotten. For some time Adelheid clung to this discovery as to a healthful and proper antidote to her own truant inclinations, but native rectitude banished a suspicion which had no sufficient ground, as equally unworthy of them both. The effects of a ceaseless mental struggle, and of the fruitlessness of her efforts to overcome her tenderness in behalf of Sigismund, have been described in the fading of her bloom, in the painful solicitude of a countenance naturally so sweet, and in the settled melancholy of her playful and mellow eye. These were the real causes of the journey undertaken by

her father, and, in truth, of most of the other events which we are about to describe.

The prospect of the future had undergone a sudden change. The color, though more the effect of excitement than of returning health—for the tide of life, when rudely checked, does not resume its currents at the first breath of happiness—again brightened her cheek and imparted brilliancy to her looks, and smiles stole easily to those lips which had long been growing pallid with anxiety. She leaned forward from the balcony, and never before had the air of her native mountains seemed so balmy and healing. At that moment the subject of her thoughts appeared on the verdant declivity, among the luxuriant nut-trees that shade the natural lawn of Blonay. He saluted her respectfully, and pointed to the glorious panorama of the Leman, The heart of Adelheid beat violently; she struggled for an instant with her fears and her pride, and then, for the first time in her life, she made a signal that she wished him to join her.

Notwithstanding the important service that the young soldier had rendered to the daughter of the Baron de Willading, and the long intimacy which had been its fruit, so great had been the reserve she had hitherto maintained, by placing a constant restraint on her inclinations, though the simple usages of Switzerland permitted greater familiarity of intercourse than was elsewhere accorded to maidens of rank, that Sigismund at first stood rooted to the ground, for he could not imagine the waving of the hand was meant for him. Adelheid saw his embarrassment, and the signal was repeated. The young man sprang up the acclivity with the rapidity of the wind, and disappeared behind the walls of the castle.

The barrier of reserve, so long and so success-

fully observed by Adelheid, was now passed, and she felt as if a few short minutes must decide her fate. The necessity of making a wide circuit in order to enter the court still afforded a little time for reflection, however, and this she endeavored to improve by collecting her thoughts and recovering her self-possession.

When Sigismund entered the knights' hall, he found the maiden still seated near the open window of the balcony, pale and serious, but perfectly calm, and with such an expression of radiant happiness in her countenance as he had not seen reigning in those sweet lineaments for many painful months. The first feeling was that of pleasure at perceiving how well she bore the alarms and dangers of the past night. This pleasure he expressed, with the frankness admitted by the habits of the Germans.

"Thou wilt not suffer, Adelheid, by the exposure on the lake!" he said, studying her face until the tell-tale blood stole to her very temples.

"Agitation of the mind is a good antidote to the consequences of bodily exposure. So far from suffering by what has passed, I feel stronger to-day and better able to endure fatigue, than at any time since we came through the gates of Willading. This balmy air, to me, seems Italy, and I see no necessity to journey farther in search of what they said was necessary to my health, agreeable objects and a generous sun."

"You will not cross the St. Bernard!" he exclaimed in a tone of disappointment,

Adelheid smiled, and he felt encouraged, though the smile was ambiguous. Notwithstanding the really noble sincerity of the maiden's disposition, and her earnest desire to set his heart at ease, nature, or habit, or education, for we scarcely know

to which the weakness ought to be ascribed, tempted her to avoid a direct explanation.

"Why need one desire aught that is more lovely than this?" she answered, evasively. "Here is a warm air, such a scene as Italy can scarcely surpass, and a friendly roof. The experience of the last twenty-four hours gives little encouragement for attempting the St. Bernard, notwithstanding the fair promises of hospitality and welcome that have been so liberally held out by the good canon."

"Thy eye contradicts thy tongue, Adelheid; thou art happy and well enough to use pleasantry today. For heaven's sake, do not neglect to profit by this advantage, however, under a mistaken opinion that Blonay is the well-sheltered Pisa. When the winter shall arrive, thou wilt see that these mountains are still the icy Alps, and the winds will whistle through this crazy castle, as they are wont to sing in the naked corridors of Willading."

"We have time before us, and can think of this. Thou wilt proceed to Milan, no doubt, as soon as the revels of Vévey are ended."

"The soldier has little choice but duty. My long and frequent leaves of absence of late,—leaves that have been liberally granted to me on account of important family-concerns,—impose an additional obligation to be punctual, that I may not seem forgetful of favors already enjoyed. Although we all owe a heavy debt to nature, our voluntary engagements have ever seemed to me the most serious."

Adelheid listened with breathless attention. Never before had he uttered the word family, in reference to himself, in her presence. The allusion appeared to have created unpleasant recollections in the mind of the young man himself, for when he ceased to speak his countenance fell, and

he even appeared to be fast forgetting the presence of his fair companion. The latter turned sensitively from a subject which she saw gave him pain, and endeavored to call his thoughts to other things. By an unforeseen fatality, the very expedient adopted hastened the explanation she would now have given so much to postpone.

"My father has often extolled the site of the Baron de Blonay's castle," said Adelheid, gazing from the window, though all the fair objects of the view floated unheeded before her eyes: "but, until now, I have always suspected that friendly feeling had a great influence on his descriptions."

"You did him injustice then," answered Sigismund, advancing to the opening: "of all the ancient holds of Switzerland, Blonay is perhaps entitled to the palm, for possessing the fairest site. Regard yon treacherous lake, Adelheid! Can we fancy that sleeping mirror the same boiling cauldron on which we were so lately tossed, helpless and nearly hopeless?"

"Hopeless, Sigismund, but for thee!"

"Thou forgett'st the daring Italian, without whose coolness and skill we must indeed have irredeemably perished."

"And what would it be to me if the worthless bark were saved, while my father and his friend were abandoned to the frightful fate that befell the patron and that unhappy peasant of Berne!"

The pulses of the young man beat high, for there was a tenderness in the tones of Adelheid to which he was unaccustomed, and which, indeed, he had never before discovered in her voice.

"I will go seek this brave mariner," he said, trembling lest his self-command should be again lost by the seductions of such a communion:—"it is time he had more substantial proofs of our gratitude."

"No, Sigismund," returned the maiden firmly, and in a way to chain him to the spot, "thou must not quit me yet.—I have much to say—much that touches my future happiness, and, I am perhaps weak enough to believe, thine."

Sigismund was bewildered, for the manner of his companion, though the color went and came in sudden and bright flashes across her pure brows, was miraculously calm and full of dignity. He took the seat to which she silently pointed, and sat motionless as if carved in stone, his faculties absorbed in the single sense of hearing. Adelheid saw that the crisis was arrived, and that retreat, without an appearance of levity that her character and pride equally forbade, was impossible. The inbred and perhaps the inherent feelings of her sex would now have caused her again to avoid the explanation, at least as coming from herself, but that she was sustained by a high and holy motive.

"Thou must find great delight, Sigismund, in reflecting on thine own good acts to others. But for thee Melchior de Willading would have long since been childless; and but for thee his daughter would now be an orphan. The knowledge that thou hast had the power and the will to succor thy friends must be worth all other knowledge!"

"As connected with thee, Adelheid, it is," he answered in a low voice: "I would not exchange the secret happiness of having been of this use to thee, and to those thou lovest, for the throne of the powerful prince I serve. I have had my secret wrested from me already, and it is vain attempting to deny it, if I would. Thou knowest I love thee; and, in spite of myself, my heart cherishes the weakness. I rather rejoice, than dread, to say, that it will cherish it until it cease to feel. This is more than I ever intended to repeat to thy modest ears, which ought not to be wounded by idle

declarations like these, but—thou smilest—Adelheid!—can thy gentle spirit mock at a hopeless passion!"

"Why should my smile mean mockery?"

"Adelheid!—nay—this never can be. One of my birth—my ignoble, nameless origin, cannot even intimate his wishes, with honor, to a lady of thy name and expectations!"

"Sigismund, it *can* be. Thou hast not well calculated either the heart of Adelheid de Willading, or the gratitude of her father."

The young man gazed earnestly at the face of the maiden, which, now that she had disburthened her soul of its most secret thought, reddened to the temples, more however with excitement than with shame, for she met his ardent look with the mild confidence of innocence and affection. She believed, and she had every reason so to believe, that her words would give pleasure, and, with the jealous watchfulness of true love, she would not willingly let a single expression of happiness escape her. But, instead of the brightening eye, and the sudden expression of joy that she expected, the young man appeared overwhelmed with feelings of a very opposite, and indeed of the most painful, character. His breathing was difficult, his look wandered, and his lips were convulsed. He passed his hand across his brow, like a man in intense agony, and a cold perspiration broke out, as by a dreadful inward working of the spirit, upon his forehead and temples, in large visible drops.

"Adelheid — dearest Adelheid — thou knowest not what thou sayest!—One like me can never become thy husband."

"Sigismund!—why this distress? Speak to me—ease thy mind by words. I swear to thee that the consent of my father is accompanied on my

part by a willing heart. I love thee, Sigismund—wouldst thou have me—can I say more?"

The young man gazed at her incredulously, and then, as thought became more clear, as one regards a much-prized object that is hopelessly lost. He shook his head mournfully, and buried his face in his hands.

"Say no more, Adelheid—for my sake—for thine own sake, say no more—in mercy, be silent! Thou never canst be mine—No, no—honor forbids it; in thee it would be madness, in me dishonor—we can never be united. What fatal weakness has kept me near thee—I have long dreaded this—"

"Dreaded!"

"Nay, do not repeat my words,—for I scarce know what I say. Thou and thy father have yielded, in a moment of vivid gratitude, to a generous, a noble impulse—but it is not for me to profit by the accident that has enabled me to gain this advantage. What would all of thy blood, all of the republic say, Adelheid, were the noblest born, the best endowed, the fairest, gentlest, best maiden of the canton, to wed a nameless, houseless, soldier of fortune, who has but his sword and some gifts of nature to recommend him? Thy excellent father will surely think better of this, and we will speak of it no more!"

"Were I to listen to the common feelings of my sex, Sigismund, this reluctance to accept what both my father and myself offer might cause me to feign displeasure. But, between thee and me, there shall be naught but holy truth. My father has well weighed all these objections, and he has generously decided to forget them. As for me, placed in the scale against thy merits, they have never weighed at all. If thou canst not become noble in order that we may be equals, I shall find more happiness in descending to thy level, than by

living in heartless misery at the vain height where I have been placed by accident."

"Blessed, ingenuous girl!—But what does it all avail? Our marriage is impossible."

"If thou knowest of any obstacle that would render it improper for a weak, but virtuous girl—"

"Hold, Adelheid!—do not finish the sentence. I am sufficiently humbled—sufficiently debased—without this cruel suspicion."

"Then why is our union impossible—when my father not only consents, but wishes it may take place?"

"Give me time for thought—thou shalt know all, Adelheid, sooner or later. Yes, this is, at the least, due to thy noble frankness. Thou shouldst in justice have known it long before."

Adelheid regarded him in speechless apprehension, for the evident and violent physical struggles of the young man too fearfully announced the mental agony he endured. The color had fled from her own face, in which the beauty of expression now reigned undisputed mistress; but it was the expression of the mingled sentiments of wonder, dread, tenderness, and alarm. He saw that his own sufferings were fast communicating themselves to his companion, and, by a powerful effort, he so far mastered his emotions as to regain a portion of his self-command.

"This explanation has been too heedlessly delayed," he continued: "cost what it may, it shall be no longer postponed. Thou wilt not accuse me of cruelty, or of dishonest silence, but remember the failing of human nature, and pity rather than blame a weakness which may be the cause of as much future sorrow to thyself, beloved Adelheid, as it is now of bitter regret to me. I have never concealed from thee that my birth is derived from that class which, throughout Europe, is believed

to be of inferior rights to thine own; on this head, I am proud rather than humble, for the invidious distinctions of usage have too often provoked comparisons, and I have been in situations to know that the mere accidents of descent bestow neither personal excellence, superior courage, nor higher intellect. Though human inventions may serve to depress the less fortunate, God has given fixed limits to the means of men. He that would be greater than his kind, and illustrious by unnatural expedients, must debase others to attain his end. By different means than these there is no nobility, and he who is unwilling to admit an inferiority which exists only in idea can never be humbled by an artifice so shallow. On the subject of mere birth, as it is ordinarily estimated, whether it come from pride, or philosophy, or the habit of commanding as a soldier those who might be deemed my superiors as men, I have never been very sensitive. Perhaps the heavier disgrace which crushes me may have caused this want to appear lighter than it otherwise might."

"Disgrace!" repeated Adelheid, in a voice that was nearly choked. "The word is fearful, coming from one of thy regulated mind, and as applied to himself."

"I cannot choose another. Disgrace it is by the common consent of men—by long and enduring opinion—it would almost seem by the just judgment of God. Dost thou not believe, Adelheid, that there are certain races which are deemed accursed, to answer some great and unseen end—races on whom the holy blessings of Heaven never descend, as they visit the meek and well-deserving that come of other lines!"

"How can I believe this gross injustice, on the part of a Power that is wise without bounds, and forgiving to parental love?"

"Thy answer would be well, were this earth the universe, or this state of being the last. But he whose sight extends beyond the grave, who fashions justice, and mercy, and goodness, on a scale commensurate with his own attributes, and not according to our limited means, is not to be estimated by the narrow rules that we apply to men. No, we must not measure the ordinances of God by laws that are plausible in our own eyes. Justice is a relative and not an abstract quality; and, until we understand the relations of the Deity to ourselves as well as we understand our own relations to the Deity, we reason in the dark."

"I do not like to hear thee speak thus, Sigismund, and, least of all, with a brow so clouded, and in a voice so hollow!"

"I will tell my tale more cheerfully, dearest. I have no right to make thee the partner of my misery; and yet this is the manner I have reasoned, and thought, and pondered—ay, until my brain has grown heated, and the power to reason itself has nearly tottered. Ever since that accursed hour, in which the truth became known to me, and I was made the master of the fatal secret, have I endeavored to feel and reason thus."

"What truth?—what secret?—If thou lovest me, Sigismund, speak calmly and without reserve."

The young man gazed at her anxious face in a way to show how deeply he felt the weight of the blow he was about to give. Then, after a pause, he continued.

"We have lately passed through a terrible scene together, dearest Adelheid. It was one that may well lessen the distances set between us by human laws and the tyranny of opinions. Had it been the will of God that the bark should perish, what a confused crowd of ill-assorted spirits would have

passed together into eternity! We had them, there, of all degrees of vice, as of nearly all degrees of cultivation, from the subtle iniquity of the wily Neapolitan juggler to thine own pure soul. There would have died in the Winkelried the noble of high degree, the reverend priest, the soldier in the pride of his strength, and the mendicant! Death is an uncompromising leveller, and the depths of the lake, at least, might have washed out all our infamy, whether it came of real demerits or merely from received usage; even the luckless Balthazar, the persecuted and hated headsman, might have found those who would have mourned his loss."

"If any could have died unwept in meeting such a fate, it must have been one that, in common, awakes so little of human sympathy; and one too, who, by dealing himself in the woes of others, has less claim to the compassion that we yield to most of our species."

"Spare me—in mercy, Adelheid, spare me—thou speakest of my father!"

CHAPTER XI.

Fortune had smil'd upon Guelberto's birth,
The heir of Valdespesa's rich domain;
An only child, he grew in years and worth,
And well repaid a father's anxious pain.

SOUTHEY.

As Sigismund uttered this communication, so terrible to the ear of his listener, he arose and fled from the room. The possession of a kingdom would not have tempted him to remain and note

its effect. The domestics of Blonay observed his troubled air and rapid strides as he passed them, but, too simple to suspect more than the ordinary impetuosity of youth, he succeeded in getting through the inferior gate of the castle and into the fields, without attracting any embarrassing attention to his movements. Here he began to breathe more freely, and the load which had nearly choked his respiration became lightened. For half an hour the young man paced the greensward scarcely conscious whither he went, until he found that his steps had again led him beneath the window of the knights' hall. Glancing an eye upward, he saw Adelheid still seated at the balcony, and apparently yet alone. He thought she had been weeping, and he cursed the weakness which had kept him from effecting the often-renewed resolution to remove himself, and his cruel fortunes, for ever from before her mind. A second look, however, showed him that he was again beckoned to ascend! The revolutions in the purposes of lovers are sudden and easily effected; and Sigismund, through whose mind a dozen ill-digested plans of placing the sea between himself and her he loved had just been floating, was now hurriedly retracing his steps to her presence.

Adelheid had necessarily been educated under the influence of the prejudices of the age and of the country in which she lived. The existence of the office of headsman in Berne, and the nature of its hereditary duties, were well known to her; and, though superior to the inimical feeling which had so lately been exhibited against the luckless Balthazar, she had certainly never anticipated a shock so cruel as was now produced, by abruptly learning that this despised and persecuted being was the father of the youth to whom she had yielded her virgin affections. When the words which pro-

claimed the connexion had escaped the lips of Sigismund, she listened like one who fancied that her ears deceived her. She had prepared herself to learn that he derived his being from some peasant or ignoble artisan, and, once or twice, as he drew nearer to the fatal declaration, awkward glimmerings of a suspicion that some repulsive moral unworthiness was connected with his origin troubled her imagination; but her apprehensions could not, by possibility, once turn in the direction of the revolting truth. It was some time before she was able to collect her thoughts, or to reflect on the course it most became her to pursue. But, as has been seen, it was long before she could summon the self-command to request what she now saw was doubly necessary, another meeting with her lover. As both had thought of nothing but his last words during the short separation, there appeared no abruptness in the manner in which he resumed the discourse, on seating himself at her side, exactly as if they had not parted at all.

"The secret has been torn from me, Adelheid. The headsman of the canton is my father; were the fact publicly known, the heartless and obdurate laws would compel me to be his successor. He has no other child, except a gentle girl—one innocent and kind as thou."

Adelheid covered her face with both her hands, as if to shut out a view of the horrible truth. Perhaps an instinctive reluctance to permit her companion to discover how great a blow had been given by this avowal of his birth, had also its influence in producing the movement. They who have passed the period of youth, and who can recall those days of inexperience and hope, when the affections are fresh and the heart is untainted with too much communion with the world,—and, especially, they who know of what a delicate com-

pound of the imaginative and the real the master-passion is formed, how sensitively it regards all that can reflect credit on the beloved object, and with what ingenuity it endeavors to find plausible excuses for every blot that may happen, either by accident or demerit, to tarnish the lustre of a picture that fancy has so largely aided in drawing, will understand the rude nature of the shock that she had received. But Adelheid de Willading, though a woman in the liveliness and fervor of her imagination, as well as in the proneness to conceive her own ingenuous conceptions to be more founded in reality than a sterner view of things might possibly have warranted, was a woman also in the more generous qualities of the heart, and in those enduring principles, which seem to have predisposed the better part of the sex to make the heaviest sacrifices rather than be false to their affections. While her frame shuddered, therefore, with the violence and abruptness of the emotions she had endured, dawnings of the right gleamed upon her pure mind, and it was not long before she was able to contemplate the truth with the steadiness of principle, though it might, at the same time, have been with much of the lingering weakness of humanity. When she lowered her hands, she looked towards the mute and watchful Sigismund, with a smile that caused the deadly paleness of her features to resemble a gleam of the sun lighting upon a spotless peak of her native mountains.

"It would be vain to endeavor to conceal from thee, Sigismund," she said, "that I could wish this were not so. I will confess even more—that when the truth first broke upon me, thy repeated services, and, what is even less pardonable, thy tried worth, were for an instant forgotten in the reluctance I felt to admit that my fate could ever

be united with one so unhappily situated. There are moments when prejudices and habits are stronger than reason; but their triumph is short in well-intentioned minds. The terrible injustice of our laws have never struck me with such force before, though last night, while those wretched travellers were so eager for the blood of—of—"

"My father, Adelheid."

"Of the author of thy being, Sigismund," she continued, with a solemnity that proved to the young man how deeply she reverenced the tie, "I was compelled to see that society might be cruelly unjust; but now I find its laws and prohibitions visiting one like thee, so far from joining in its oppression, my soul revolts against the wrong."

"Thanks—thanks—a thousand thanks!" returned the young man, fervently. "I did not expect less than this from thee, Mademoiselle de Willading."

"If thou didst not expect more—far more, Sigismund," resumed the maiden, her ashen hue brightened to crimson, "thou hast scarcely been less unjust than the world; and I will add, thou hast never understood that Adelheid de Willading, whose name is uttered with so cold a form. We all have moments of weakness; moments when the seductions of life, the worthless ties which bind together the thoughtless and selfish in what are called the interests of the world, appear of more value than aught else. I am no visionary, to fancy imaginary and factitious obligations superior to those which nature and wisdom have created—for if there be much unjustifiable cruelty in the practices, there is also much that is wise in the ordinances, of society—or to think that a wayward fancy is to be indulged at any and every expense to the feelings and opinions of others. On the contrary, I well know that so long as men exist in the condi-

tion in which they are, it is little more than common prudence to respect their habits; and that ill-assorted unions, in general, contain in themselves a dangerous enemy to happiness. Had I always known thy history, dread of the consequences, or those cold forms which protect the fortunate, would probably have interposed to prevent either from learning much of the other's character.—I say not this, Sigismund, as by thy eye I see thou wouldst think, in reproach for any deception, for I well know the accidental nature of our acquaintance, and that the intimacy was forced upon thee by our own importunate gratitude, but simply, and in explanation of my own feelings. As it is, we are not to judge of our situation by ordinary rules, and I am not now to decide on your pretensions to my hand merely as the daughter of the Baron de Willading receiving a proposal from one whose birth is not noble, but as Adelheid should weigh the claims of Sigismund, subject to some diminution of advantages, if thou wilt, that is perhaps greater than she had at first anticipated."

"Dost thou consider the acceptance of my hand possible, after what thou knowest!" exclaimed the young man, in open wonder.

"So far from regarding the question in that manner, I ask myself if it will be right—if it be possible, to reject the preserver of my own life, the preserver of my father's life, Sigismund Steinbach, because he is the son of one that men persecute?"

"Adelheid!"

"Do not anticipate my words," said the maiden calmly, but in a way to check his impatience by the quiet dignity of her manner. "This is an important, I might say a solemn decision, and it has been presented to me suddenly and without preparation. Thou wilt not think the worse of me, for

asking time to reflect before I give the pledge that, in my eyes, will be for ever sacred. My father, believing thee to be of obscure origin, and thoroughly conscious of thy worth, dear Sigismund, authorized me to speak as I did in the beginning of our interview; but my father may possibly think the conditions of his consent altered by this unhappy exposure of the truth. It is meet that I tell him all, for thou knowest I must abide by his decision. This thine own sense and filial piety will approve."

In spite of the strong objectionable facts that he had just revealed, hope had begun to steal upon the wishes of the young man, as he listened to the consoling words of the single-minded and affectionate Adelheid. It would scarcely have been possible for a youth so endowed by nature, and one so inevitably conscious of his own value, though so modest in its exhibition, not to feel encouraged by her ingenuous and frank admission, as she betrayed his influence over her happiness in the undisguised and simple manner related. But the intention to appeal to her father caused him to view the subject more dispassionately, for his strong sense was not slow in pointing out the difference between the two judges, in a case like his.

"Trouble him not, Adelheid; the consciousness that his prudence denies what a generous feeling might prompt him to bestow, may render him unhappy. It is impossible that Melchior de Willading should consent to give an only child to a son of the headsman of his canton. At some other time, when the recollections of the late storm shall be less vivid, thine own reason will approve of his decision."

His companion, who was thoughtfully leaning her spotless brow on her hand, did not appear to hear his words. She had recovered from the shock

given by the sudden announcement of his origin, and was now musing intently, and with cooler discrimination, on the commencement of their acquaintance, its progress and all its little incidents, down to the two grave events which had so gradually and firmly cemented the sentiments of esteem and admiration in the stronger and indelible tie of affection.

"If thou art the son of him thou namest, why art thou known by the name of Steinbach, when Balthazar bears another?" demanded Adelheid, anxious to seize even the faintest hold of hope.

"It was my intention to conceal nothing, but to lay before thee the history of my life, with all the reasons that may have influenced my conduct," returned Sigismund: "at some other time, when both are in a calmer state of mind, I shall dare to entreat a hearing—"

"Delay is unnecessary—it might even be improper. It is my duty to explain every thing to my father, and he may wish to know why thou hast not always appeared what thou art. Do not fancy, Sigismund, that I distrust thy motive, but the wariness of the old and the confidence of the young have so little in common!—I would rather that thou told me now."

He yielded to the mild earnestness of her manner, and to the sweet, but sad, smile with which she seconded the appeal.

"If thou wilt hear the melancholy history, Adelheid," he said, "there is no sufficient reason why I should wish to postpone the little it will be necessary to say. You are probably familiar with the laws of the canton, I mean those cruel ordinances by which a particular family is condemned, for a better word can scarcely be found, to discharge the duties of this revolting office. This duty may have been a privilege in the dark ages,

but it is now become a tax that none, who have been educated with better hopes, can endure to pay. My father, trained from infancy to expect the employment, and accustomed to its discharge in contemplation, succeeded to his parent while yet young; and, though formed by nature a meek and even a compassionate man, he has never shrunk from his bloody tasks, whenever required to fulfil them by the command of his superiors. But, touched by a sentiment of humanity, it was his wish to avert from me what his better reason led him to think the calamity of our race. I am the eldest born, and, strictly, I was the child most liable to be called to assume the office, but, as I have heard, the tender love of my mother induced her to suggest a plan by which I, at least, might be rescued from the odium that had so long been attached to our name. I was secretly conveyed from the house while yet an infant; a feigned death concealed the pious fraud, and thus far, Heaven be praised! the authorities are ignorant of my birth!"

"And thy mother, Sigismund; I have great respect for that noble mother, who, doubtless, is endowed with more than her sex's firmness and constancy, since she must have sworn faith and love to thy father, knowing his duties and the hopelessness of their being evaded? I feel a reverence for a woman so superior to the weaknesses, and yet so true to the real and best affections, of her sex!"

The young man smiled so painfully as to cause his enthusiastic companion to regret that she had put the question.

"My mother is certainly a woman not only to be loved, but in many particulars deeply to be revered. My poor and noble mother has a thousand excellencies, being a most tender parent, with a heart so kind that it would grieve her to see injury

done even to the meanest living thing. She was not a woman, surely, intended by God to be the mother of a line of executioners!"

"Thou seest, Sigismund," said Adelheid, nearly breathless in the desire to seek an excuse for her own predilections, and to lessen the mental agony he endured—"thou seest that one gentle and excellent woman, at least, could trust her happiness to thy family. No doubt she was the daughter of some worthy and just-viewing burgher of the canton, that had educated his child to distinguish between misfortune and crime?"

"She was an only child and an heiress, like thyself, Adelheid;" he answered, looking about him as if he sought some object on which he might cast part of the bitterness that loaded his heart. "Thou art not less the beloved and cherished of thine own parent than was my excellent mother of her's!"

"Sigismund, thy manner is startling!—What wouldst thou say?"

"Neufchâtel, and other countries besides Berne, have their privileged! My mother was the only child of the headsman of the first. Thus thou seest, Adelheid, that I boast my quarterings as well as another. God be praised! we are not legally compelled, however, to butcher the condemned of any country but our own!"

The wild bitterness with which this was uttered, and the energy of his language, struck thrilling chords on every nerve of his listener.

"So many honors should not be unsupported;" he resumed. "We are rich, for people of humble wishes, and have ample means of living withou the revenues of our charge—I love to put forth our long-acquired honors! The means of a respectable livelihood are far from being wanted. I have told you of the kind intentions of my mother

to redeem one of her children, at least, from the stigma which weighed upon us all, and the birth of a second son enabled her to effect this charitable purpose, without attracting attention. I was nursed and educated apart, for many years, in ignorance of my birth. At a suitable age, notwithstanding the early death of my brother, I was sent to seek advancement in the service of the house of Austria, under the feigned name I bear. I will not tell thee the anguish I felt, Adelheid, when the truth was at length revealed! Of all the cruelties inflicted by society, there is none so unrighteous in its nature as the stigma it entails in the succession of crime or misfortune: of all its favors, none can find so little justification, in right and reason, as the privileges accorded to the accident of descent."

"And yet we are much accustomed to honor those that come of an ancient line, and to see some part of the glory of the ancestor even in the most remote descendant."

"The more remote, the greater is the world's deference. What better proof can we have of the world's weakness? Thus the immediate child of the hero, he whose blood is certain, who bears the image of the father in his face, who has listened to his counsels, and may be supposed to have derived, at least, some portion of his greatness from the nearness of his origin, is less a prince than he who has imbibed the current through a hundred vulgar streams, and, were truth but known, may have no natural claim at all upon the much-prized blood! This comes of artfully leading the mind to prejudices, and of a vicious longing in man to forget his origin and destiny, by wishing to be more than nature ever intended he should become."

"Surely, Sigismund, there is something justifia-

ble in the sentiment of desiring to belong to the good and noble!"

"If good and noble were the same. Thou hast well designated the feeling; so long as it is truly a sentiment, it is not only excusable but wise; for who would not wish to come of the brave, and honest, and learned, or by what other greatness they may be known?—it is wise, since the legacy of his virtues is perhaps the dearest incentive that a good man has for struggling against the currents of baser interest; but what hope is left to one like me, who finds himself so placed that he can neither inherit nor transmit aught but disgrace! I do not affect to despise the advantages of birth, simply because I do not possess them; I only complain that artful combinations have perverted what should be sentiment and taste, into a narrow and vulgar prejudice, by which the really ignoble enjoy privileges greater than those perhaps who are worthy of the highest honors man can bestow."

Adelheid had encouraged the digression, which, with one less gifted with strong good sense than Sigismund, might have only served to wound his pride, but she perceived that he eased his mind by thus drawing on his reason, and by setting up that which should be in opposition to that which was.

"Thou knowest," she answered, "that neither my father nor I am disposed to lay much stress on the opinions of the world, as it concerns thee."

"That is, neither will insist on nobility; but will either consent to share the obloquy of a union with an hereditary executioner?"

"Thou hast not yet related all it may be necessary to know that we may decide."

"There is left little to explain. The expedient of my kind parents has thus far succeeded. Their two surviving children, my sister and myself, were snatched, for a time at least, from their accursed

fortune, while my poor brother, who promised little, was left, by a partiality I will not stop to examine, to pass as the inheritor of our infernal privileges—Nay, pardon, dearest Adelheid, I will be more cool; but death has saved the youth from the execrable duties, and I am now the only male child of Balthazar—yes," he added, laughing frightfully, "I, too, have now a narrow monopoly of all the honors of our house!"

"Thou—thou, Sigismund—with thy habits, thy education, thy feelings, thou surely canst not be required to discharge the duties of this horrible office!"

"It is easy to see that my high privileges do not charm you, Mademoiselle de Willading; nor can I wonder at the taste. My chief surprise should be, that you so long tolerate an executioner in your presence."

"Did I not know and understand the bitterness of feeling natural to one so placed, this language would cruelly hurt me, Sigismund; but thou canst not truly mean there is a real danger of thy ever being called to execute this duty? Should there be the chance of such a calamity, may not the influence of my father avert it? He is not without weight in the councils of the canton."

"At present his friendship need not be taxed, for none but my parents, my sister, and thou, Adelheid, are acquainted with the facts I have just related. My poor sister is an artless, but an unhappy girl, for the well-intentioned design of our mother has greatly disqualified her from bearing the truth, as she might have done, had it been kept constantly before her eyes. To the world, a young kinsman of my father appears destined to succeed him, and there the matter must stand until fortune shall decide differently. As respects my poor sister, there is some little hope that the evil may be

altogether averted. She is on the point of a marriage here at Vévey, that may be the means of concealing her origin in new ties. As for me, time must decide my fate."

"Why should the truth be ever known!" exclaimed Adelheid, nearly gasping for breath, in her eagerness to propose some expedient that should rescue Sigismund for ever from so odious an office.

"Thou sayest that there are ample means in thy family—relinquish all to this youth, on condition that he assume thy place!"

"I would gladly beggar myself to be quit of it—"

"Nay, thou wilt not be a beggar while there is wealth among the de Willadings. Let the final decision, in respect to other things, be what it may, this can we at least promise!"

"My sword will prevent me from being under the necessity of accepting the boon thou wouldst offer. With this good sword I can always command an honorable existence, should Providence save me from the disgrace of exchanging it for that of the executioner. But there exists an obstacle of which thou hast not yet heard. My sister, who has certainly no admiration for the honors that have humiliated our race for so many generations —I might say ages—have we not ancient honors, Adelheid, as well as thou?—my sister is contracted to one who bargains for eternal secrecy on this point, as the condition of his accepting the hand and ample dowry of one of the gentlest of human beings! Thou seest that others are not as generous as thyself, Adelheid! My father, anxious to dispose of his child, has consented to the terms, and as the youth who is next in succession to the family-honors is little disposed to accept them, and has already some suspicion of the deception as respects her, I may be compelled to appear in order

to protect the offspring of my unoffending sister from the curse."

This was assailing Adelheid in a point where she was the weakest. One of her generous temperament and self-denying habits could scarce entertain the wish of exacting that from another which she was not willing to undergo herself, and the hope that had just been reviving in her heart was nearly extinguished by the discovery. Still she was so much in the habit of feeling under the guidance of her excellent sense, and it was so natural to cling to her just wishes, while there was a reasonable chance of their being accomplished, that she did not despair.

"Thy sister and her future husband know her birth, and understand the chances they run."

"She knows all this, and such is her generosity, that she is not disposed to betray me in order to serve herself. But this self-denial forms an additional obligation on my part to declare myself the wretch I am. I cannot say that my sister is accustomed to regard our long-endured fortunes with all the horror I feel, for she has been longer acquainted with the facts, and the domestic habits of her sex have left her less exposed to the encounter of the world's hatred, and perhaps she is partly ignorant of all the odium we sustain. My long absences in foreign services delayed the confidence as respects myself, while the yearnings of a mother towards an only daughter caused her to be received into the family, though still in secret, several years before I was told the truth. She is also much my junior; and all these causes, with some difference in our education, have less disposed her to misery than I am; for while my father, with a cruel kindness, had me well and even liberally instructed, Christine was taught as better became the hopes and origin of both. Now tell me, Adelheid, that

thou hatest me for my parentage, and despisest me for having so long dared to intrude on thy company, with the full consciousness of what I am for ever present to my thoughts!"

"I like not to hear thee make these bitter allusions to an accident of this nature, Sigismund. Were I to tell thee that I do not feel this circumstance with nearly, if not quite, as much poignancy as thyself," added the ingenuous girl, with a noble frankness, "I should do injustice to my gratitude and to my esteem for thy character. But there is more elasticity in the heart of woman than in that of thy imperious and proud sex. So far from thinking of thee as thou wouldst fain believe, I see naught but what is natural and justifiable in thy reserve. Remember, thou hast not tempted my ears by professions and prayers, as women are commonly entreated, but that the interest I feel in thee has been modestly and fairly won. I can neither say nor hear more at present, for this unexpected announcement has in some degree unsettled my mind. Leave me to reflect on what I ought to do, and rest assured that thou canst not have a kinder or more partial advocate of what truly belongs to thy honor and happiness than my own heart."

As the daughter of Melchior de Willading concluded, she extended her hand with affection to the young man, who pressed it against his breast with manly tenderness, when he slowly and reluctantly withdrew.

CHAPTER XII.

To know no more
Is woman's happiest knowledge, and her praise.
MILTON.

OUR heroine was a woman in the best meaning of that endearing, and, we might add, comprehensive word. Sensitive, reserved, and at times even timid, on points that did not call for the exercise of higher qualities, she was firm in her principles, constant as she was fond in her affections, and self-devoted when duty and inclination united to induce the concession, to a degree that placed the idea of sacrifice out of the question. On the other hand, the liability to receive lively impressions, a distinctive feature of her sex, and the aptitude to attach importance to the usages by which she was surrounded, and which is necessarily greatest in those who lead secluded and inactive lives, rendered it additionally difficult for her mind to escape from the trammels of opinion, and to think with indifference of circumstances which all near her treated with high respect, or to which they attached a stigma allied to disgust. Had the case been reversed, had Sigismund been noble, and Adelheid a headsman's child, it is probable the young man might have found the means to indulge his passion without making too great a sacrifice of his pride. By transporting his wife to his castle, conferring his own established name, separating her from all that was unpleasant and degrading in the connexion, and finding occupation for his own mind in the multiplied and engrossing employments of his station, he would have diminished motives for contemplating, and consequently for

lamenting, the objectionable features of the alliance he had made. These are the advantages which nature and the laws of society give to man over the weaker but the truer sex: and yet how few would have had sufficient generosity to make even the sacrifice of feeling which such a course required! On the other hand, Adelheid would be compelled to part with the ancient and distinguished appellation of her family, to adopt one which was deemed infamous in the canton, or, if some politic expedient were found to avert this first disgrace, it would unavoidably be of a nature to attract, rather than to avert, the attention of all who knew the facts, from the humiliating character of his origin. She had no habitual relief against the constant action of her thoughts, for the sphere of woman narrows the affections in such a way as to render them most dependent on the little accidents of domestic life; she could not close her doors against communication with the kinsmen of her husband, should it be his pleasure to command or his feeling to desire it; and it would become obligatory on her to listen to the still but never-ceasing voice of duty, and to forget, at his request, that she had ever been more fortunate, or that she was born for better hopes.

We do not say that all these calculations crossed the mind of the musing maiden, though she certainly had a general and vague view of the consequences that were likely to be drawn upon herself by a connexion with Sigismund. She sat motionless, buried in deep thought, long after his disappearance. The young man had passed by the postern around the base of the castle, and was descending the mountain-side, across the sloping meadows, with rapid steps, and probably for the first time since their acquaintance her eye followed his manly figure vacantly and with indifference.

Her mind was too intently occupied for the usual observation of the senses. The whole of that grand and lovely landscape was spread before her without conveying impressions, as we gaze into the void of the firmament with our looks on vacuum. Sigismund had disappeared among the walls of the vineyards, when she arose, and drew such a sigh as is apt to escape us after long and painful meditation. But the eyes of the high-minded girl were bright and her cheek flushed, while the whole of her features wore an expression of loftier beauty than ordinarily distinguished even her loveliness. Her own resolution was formed. She had decided with the rare and generous self-devotion of a female heart that loves, and which can love in its freshness and purity but once. At that instant footsteps were heard in the corridor, and the three old nobles whom we so lately left on the castle-terrace, appeared together in the knights' hall.

Melchior de Willading approached his daughter with a joyous face, for he too had lately gained what he conceived to be a glorious conquest over his prejudices, and the victory put him in excellent humor with himself.

"The question is for ever decided," he said, kissing the burning forehead of Adelheid with affection, and rubbing his hands, in the manner of one who was glad to be free from a perplexing doubt. "These good friends agree with me, that, in a case like this, it becomes even our birth to forget the origin of the youth. He who has saved the lives of the two last of the Willadings at least deserves to have some share in what is left of them. Here is my good Grimaldi, too, ready to beard me if I will not consent to let him enrich the brave fellow—as if we were beggars, and had not the means of supporting our kinsman in credit at

home! But we will not be indebted even to so tried a friend for a tittle of our happiness. The work shall be all our own, even to the letters of nobility, which I shall command at an early day from Vienna; for it would be cruel to let the noble fellow want so simple an advantage, which will at once raise him to our own level, and make him as good—ay, by the beard of Luther! better than the best man in Berne."

"I have never known thee niggardly before, though I have known thee often well intrenched behind Swiss frugality;" said the Signor Grimaldi, laughing. "Thy life, my dear Melchior, may have excellent value in thine own eyes, but I am little disposed to set so mean a price on my own, as thou appearest to think it should command. Thou hast decided well, I will say nobly, in the best meaning of the word, in consenting to receive this brave Sigismund as a son; but thou art not to think, young lady, because this body of mine is getting the worse for use, that I hold it altogether worthless, and that it is to be dragged from yonder lake like so much foul linen, and no questions are to be asked touching the manner in which the service has been done. I claim to portion thy husband, that he may at least make an appearance that becomes the son-in-law of Melchior de Willading. Am I of no value, that ye treat me so unceremoniously as to say I shall not pay for my own preservation?"

"Have it thine own way, good Gaetano—have it as thou wilt, so thou dost but leave us the youth—"

"Father—"

"I will have no maidenly affectation, Adelheid. I expect thee to receive the husband we offer with as good a grace as if he wore a crown. It has been agreed upon between us that Sigismund

Steinbach is to be my son; and from time immemorial, the daughters of our house have submitted, in these affairs, to what has been advised by the wisdom of their seniors, as became their sex and inexperience."

The three old men had entered the hall full of good-humor, and it would have been sufficiently apparent, by the manner of the Baron de Willading, that he trifled with Adelheid, had it not been well known to the others that her feelings were chiefly consulted in the choice that had just been made.

But, notwithstanding the high glee in which the father spoke, the pleasure and buoyancy of his manner did not communicate itself to the child as quickly as he could wish. There was far more than virgin embarrassment in the mien of Adelheid. Her color went and came, and her look turned from one to the other painfully, while she struggled to speak. The Signor Grimaldi whispered to his companions, and Roger de Blonay discreetly withdrew, under the pretence that his services were needed at Vévey, where active preparations were making for the Abbaye des Vignerons. The Genoese would then have followed his example, but the baron held his arm, while he turned an inquiring eye towards his daughter, as if commanding her to deal more frankly with him.

"Father," said Adelheid, in a voice that shook, in spite of the effort to control her feelings, "I have something important to communicate, before this acceptance of Herr Steinbach is a matter irrevocably determined."

"Speak freely, my child; this is a tried friend, and one entitled to know all that concerns us, especially in this affair. Throwing aside all pleasantry, I trust, Adelheid, that we are to have no girlish trifling with a youth like Sigismund; to

whom we owe so much, even to our lives, and in whose behalf we should be ready to sacrifice every feeling of prejudice, or habit—all that we possess, ay, even to our pride."

"All, father?"

"I have said all. I will not take back a letter of the word, though it should rob me of Willading, my rank in the canton, and an ancient name to boot. Am I not right, Gaetano? I place the happiness of the boy above all other considerations, that of Adelheid being understood to be so intimately blended with his. I repeat it, therefore, all."

"It would be well to hear what the young lady has to say, before we urge this affair any farther;" said the Signor Grimaldi, who, having achieved no conquest over himself, was not quite so exuberant in his exultation as his friend; observing more calmly, and noting what he saw with the clearness of a cooler-headed and more sagacious man. "I am much in error, or thy daughter has that which is serious, to communicate."

The paternal affection of Melchior now took the alarm, and he gave an eager attention to his child. Adelheid returned his evident solicitude by a smile of love, but its painful expression was so unequivocal as to heighten the baron's fears.

"Art not well, love? It cannot be that we have been deceived—that some peasant's daughter is thought worthy to supplant thee? Ha!—Signor Grimaldi, this matter begins, in sooth, to seem offensive;—but, old as I am—Well, we shall never know the truth, unless thou speakest frankly—this is a rare business, after all, Gaetano—that a daughter of mine should be repulsed by a hind!"

Adelheid made an imploring gesture for her father to forbear, while she resumed her seat from farther inability to stand. The two anxious old men followed her example, in wondering silence.

"Thou dost both the honor and modesty of Sigismund great injustice, father;" resumed the maiden, after a pause, and speaking with a calmness of manner that surprised even herself. "If thou and this excellent and tried friend will give me your attention for a few minutes, nothing shall be concealed."

Her companions listened in wonder, for they plainly saw that the matter was more grave than either had at first imagined. Adelheid paused again, to summon force for the ungrateful duty, and then she succinctly, but clearly, related the substance of Sigismund's communication. Both the listeners eagerly caught each syllable that fell from the quivering lips of the maiden, for she trembled, notwithstanding a struggle to be calm that was almost superhuman, and when her voice ceased they gazed at each other like men suddenly astounded by some dire and totally unexpected calamity. The baron, in truth, could scarcely believe that he had not been deceived by a defective hearing, for age had begun a little to impair that useful faculty, while his friend admitted the words as one receives impressions of the most revolting and disheartening nature.

"This is a damnable and fearful fact!" muttered the latter, when Adelheid had altogether ceased to speak.

"Did she say that Sigismund is the son of Balthazar, the public headsman of the canton!" asked the father of his friend, in the way that one reluctantly assures himself of some half-comprehended and unwelcome truth,—"of Balthazar—of that family accursed!"

"Such is the parentage it hath been the will of God to bestow on the preserver of our lives," meekly answered Adelheid.

"Hath the villain dared to steal into my family-

circle, concealing this disgusting and disgraceful fact!—Hath he endeavored to engraft the impurity of his source on the untarnished stock of a noble and ancient family! There is something exceeding mere duplicity in this, Signor Grimaldi. There is a dark and meaning crime."

"There is that which much exceeds our means of remedying, good Melchior. But let us not rashly blame the boy, whose birth is rather to be imputed to him as a misfortune than as a crime. If he were a thousand Balthazars, he has saved all our lives!"

"Thou sayest true—thou sayest no more than the truth. Thou wert always of a more reasonable brain than I, though thy more southern origin would seem to contradict it. Here, then, are all our fine fancies and liberal schemes of generosity blown to the winds!"

"That is not so evident," returned the Genoese, who had not failed the while to study the countenance of Adelheid, as if he would fully ascertain her secret wishes. "There has been much discourse, fair Adelheid, between thee and the youth on this matter?"

"Signore, there has. I was about to communicate the intentions of my father; for the circumstances in which we were placed, the weight of our many obligations, the usual distance which rank interposes between the noble and the simply born, perhaps justified this boldness in a maiden," she added, though the tell-tale blood revealed her shame. "I was making Sigismund acquainted with my father's wishes, when he met my confidence by the avowal which I have just related."

"He deems his birth—?"

"An insuperable barrier to the connexion. Sigismund Steinbach, though so little favored in the

accident of his origin, is not a beggar to sue for that which his own generous feelings would condemn."

"And thou?"

Adelheid lowered her eyes, and seemed to reflect on the nature of her answer.

"Thou wilt pardon this curiosity, which may wear too much the aspect of unwarrantable meddling, but my age and ancient friendship, the recent occurrences, and a growing love for all that concerns thee, must plead my excuses. Unless we know thy wishes, daughter, neither Melchior nor I can act as we might wish?"

Adelheid was long and thoughtfully silent. Though every sentiment of her heart, and all that inclination which is the offspring of the warm and poetical illusions of love, tempted her to declare a readiness to sacrifice every other consideration to the engrossing and pure affections of woman, opinion with its iron gripe still held her in suspense on the propriety of braving the prejudices of the world. The timidity of that sex which, however ready to make an offering of its most cherished privileges on the shrine of connubial tenderness, shrinks with a keen sensitiveness from the appearance of a forward devotion to the other, had its weight also, nor could a child so pious altogether forget the effect her decision might have on the future happiness of her sole surviving parent.

The Genoese understood the struggle, though he foresaw its termination, and he resumed the discourse himself, partly with the kind wish to give the maiden time to reflect maturely before she answered, and partly following a very natural train of his own thoughts.

"There is naught sure in this fickle state of being;" he continued. "Neither the throne, nor riches, nor health, nor even the sacred affections,

are secure against change. Well may we pause then and weigh every chance of happiness, ere we take the last and final step in any great or novel measure. Thou knowest the hopes with which I entered life, Melchior, and the chilling disappointments with which my career is likely to close. No youth was born to fairer hopes, nor did Italy know one more joyous than myself, the morning I received the hand of Angiolina; and yet two short years saw all those hopes withered, this joyousness gone, and a cloud thrown across my prospects which has never disappeared. A widowed husband, a childless father, may not prove a bad counsellor, my friend, in a moment when there is so much doubt besetting thee and thine."

"Thy mind naturally returns to thine own unhappy child, poor Gaetano, when there is so much question of the fortunes of mine."

The Signor Grimaldi turned his look on his friend, but the gleam of anguish, which was wont to pass athwart his countenance when his mind was drawn powerfully towards that painful subject, betrayed that he was not just then able to reply.

"We see in all these events," continued the Genoese, as if too full of his subject to restrain his words, "the unsearchable designs of Providence. Here is a youth who is all that a father could desire; worthy in every sense to be the depository of a beloved and only daughter's weal; manly, brave, virtuous, and noble in all but the chances of blood, and yet so accursed by the world's opinion that we might scarce venture to name him as the associate of an idle hour, were the fact known that he is the man he has declared himself to be!"

"You put the matter in strong language, Signor Grimaldi;" said Adelheid, starting.

"A youth of a form so commanding that a king

might exult at the prospect of his crown descending on such a head; of a perfection of strength and masculine excellence that will almost justify the dangerous exultation of health and vigor; of a reason that is riper than his years; of a virtue of proof; of all qualities that we respect, and which come of study and not of accident, and yet a youth condemned of men to live under the reproach of their hatred and contempt, or to conceal for ever the name of the mother that bore him! Compare this Sigismund with others that may be named; with the high-born and pampered heir of some illustrious house, who riots in men's respect while he shocks men's morals; who presumes on privilege to trifle with the sacred and the just; who lives for self, and that in base enjoyments; who is fitter to be the lunatic's companion than any other's, though destined to rule in the council; who is the type of the wicked, though called to preside over the virtuous; who cannot be esteemed, though entitled to be honored; and let us ask why this is so, what is the wisdom which hath drawn differences so arbitrary, and which, while proclaiming the necessity of justice, so openly, so wantonly, and so ingeniously sets its plainest dictates at defiance?"

"Signore, it should not be thus—God never intended it should be so!"

"While every principle would seem to say that each must stand or fall by his own good or evil deeds, that men are to be honored as they merit, every device of human institutions is exerted to achieve the opposite. This is exalted, because his ancestry is noble; that condemned for no better reason than that he is born vile. Melchior! Melchior! our reason is unhinged by subtleties, and our boasted philosophy and right are no more than

unblushing mockeries, at which the very devils laugh!"

"And yet the commandments of God tell us, Gaetano, that the sins of the father shall be visited on the descendants from generation to generation. You of Rome pay not this close attention, perhaps, to sacred writ, but I have heard it said that we have not in Berne a law for which good warranty cannot be found in the holy volume itself."

"Ay, there are sophists to prove all that they wish. The crimes and follies of the ancestor leave their physical, or even their moral taint, on the child, beyond a question, good Melchior;—but is not this sufficient? Are we blasphemously, even impiously, to pretend that God has not sufficiently provided for the punishment of the breaches of his wise ordinances, that we must come forward to second them by arbitrary and heartless rules of our own? What crime is imputable to the family of this youth beyond that of poverty, which probably drove the first of his race to the execution of their revolting office. There is little in the mien or morals of Sigismund to denote the visitations of Heaven's wise decrees, but there is everything in his present situation to proclaim the injustice of man."

"And dost thou, Gaetano Grimaldi, the ally of so many ancient and illustrious houses—thou, Gaetano Grimaldi, the honored of Genoa—dost thou counsel me to give my only child, the heiress of my lands and name, to the son of the public executioner, nay, to the very heritor of his disgusting duties!"

"There thou hast me on the hip, Melchior; the question is put strongly, and needs reflection for an answer. Oh! why is this Balthazar so rich in offspring, and I so poor? But we will not press the matter; it is an affair of many sides, and should

be judged by us as men, as well as nobles. Daughter, thou hast just learned, by the words of thy father, that I am against thee, by position and heritage, for, while I condemn the principle of this wrong, I cannot overlook its effects, and never before did a case of as tangled difficulty, one in which right was so palpably opposed by opinion, present itself for my judgment. Leave us, that we may command ourselves; the required decision exacts much care, and greater mastery of ourselves than I can exercise, with that sweet pale face of thine appealing so eloquently to my heart in behalf of the noble boy."

Adelheid arose, and first offering her marble-like brow to the salutations of both her parents, for the ancient friendship and strong sympathies of the Genoese, gave him a claim to this appellation in her affections at least, she silently withdrew. As to the conversation which ensued between the old nobles, we momentarily drop the curtain, to proceed to other incidents of our narrative. It may, however, be generally observed that the day passed quietly away, without the occurrence of any event which it is necessary to relate, all in the château, with the exception of the travellers, being principally occupied by the approaching festivities. The Signor Grimaldi sought an occasion to have a long and confidential communication with Sigismund, who, on his part, carefully avoided being seen again by her who had so great an influence on his feelings, until both had time to recover their self-command.

CHAPTER XIII.

Hold, hurt him not, for God's sake;—he is mad.
COMEDY OF ERRORS.

THE festivals of Bacchus are supposed to have been the models of those long-continued festivities, which are still known in Switzerland by the name of the Abbaye des Vignerons.

This fête was originally of a simple and rustic character, being far from possessing the labored ceremonies and classical allegories of a later day, the severity of monkish discipline most probably prohibiting the introduction of allusions to the Heathen mythology, as was afterwards practised; for certain religious communities that were the proprietors of large vineyards in that vicinity appear to have been the first known patrons of the custom. So long as a severe simplicity reigned in the festivities, they were annually observed; but, when heavier expenses and greater preparations became necessary, longer intervals succeeded; the Abbaye, at first, causing its festival to become triennial, and subsequently extending the period of vacation to six years. As greater time was obtained for the collection of means and inclination, the festival gained in *éclat*, until it came at length to be a species of jubilee, to which the idle, the curious, and the observant of all the adjacent territories were accustomed to resort in crowds. The town of Vévey profited by the circumstance, the usual motive of interest being enlisted in behalf of the usage, and, down to the epoch of the great European revolution, there would seem to have been an unbroken succession of the fêtes. The occasion to which there has so often been allusion,

was one of the regular and long-expected festivals; and, as report had spoken largely of the preparations, the attendance was even more numerous than usual.

Early on the morning of the second day after the arrival of our travellers at the neighboring castle of Blonay, a body of men, dressed in the guise of halberdiers, a species of troops then known in most of the courts of Europe, marched into the great square of Vévey, taking possession of all its centre, and posting its sentries in such a manner as to interdict the usual passages of the place. This was the preliminary step in the coming festivities; for this was the spot chosen for the scene of most of the ceremonies of the day. The curious were not long behind the guards, and by the time the sun had fairly arisen above the hills of Fribourg, some thousands of spectators were pressing in and about the avenues of the square, and boats from the opposite shores of Savoy were arriving at each instant, crowded to the water's edge with peasants and their families.

Near the upper end of the square, capacious scaffoldings had been erected to contain those who were privileged by rank, or those who were able to buy honors with the vulgar medium; while humbler preparations for the less fortunate completed the three sides of a space that was in the form of a parallelogram, and which was intended to receive the actors in the coming scene. The side next the water was unoccupied, though a forest of latine spars, and a platform of decks, more than supplied the deficiency of scaffolding and room. Music was heard, from time to time, intermingled or relieved by those wild Alpine cries which characterize the songs of the mountaineers. The authorities of the town were early afoot, and, as is customary with the important agents of small

concerns, they were exercising their municipal function with a bustle, which of itself contained reasonable evidence that they were of no great moment, and a gravity of mien with which the chiefs of a state might have believed it possible to dispense.

The estrade, or stage, erected for the superior class of spectators was decorated with flags, and a portion near its centre had a fair display of tapestry and silken hangings. The chateau-looking edifice near the bottom of the square, and whose windows, according to a common Swiss and German usage, showed the intermingled stripes that denoted it to be public property, were also gay in colors, for the ensign of the Republic floated over its pointed roofs, and rich silks waved against the walls. This was the official residence of Peter Hofmeister, the functionary whom we have already introduced to the reader.

An hour later, a shot gave the signal for the various *troupes* to appear, and soon after, parties of the different actors arrived in the square. As the little processions approached to the sound of the trumpet or horn, curiosity became more active, and the populace was permitted to circulate in those portions of the square that were not immediately required for other purposes. About this time, a solitary individual appeared on the stage. He seemed to enjoy peculiar privileges, not only from his situation, but by the loud salutations and noisy welcomes with which he was greeted from the crowd below. It was the good monk of St. Bernard, who, with a bare head and a joyous contented face, answered to the several calls of the peasants, most of whom had either bestowed hospitality on the worthy Augustine, in his many journeyings among the charitable of the lower world, or had received it at his hands in their fre-

quent passages of the mountain. These recognitions and greetings spoke well for humanity; for in every instance they wore the air of cordial good-will, and a readiness to do honor to the benevolent character of the religious community that was represented in the person of its clavier or steward.

"Good luck to thee, Father Xavier, and a rich *quête*," cried a burly peasant; "thou hast of late unkindly forgotten Benoit Emery and his. When did a clavier of St. Bernard ever knock at my door, and go away with an empty hand? We look for thee, reverend monk, with thy vessel, to-morrow; for the summer has been hot, the grapes are rich, and the wine is beginning to run freely in our tubs. Thou shalt dip without any to look at thee, and, take it of which color thou wilt, thou shalt take it with a welcome."

"Thanks, thanks, generous Benoit; St. Augustine will remember the favor, and thy fruitful vines will be none the poorer for thy generosity. We ask only that we may give, and on none do we bestow more willingly than on the honest Vaudois, whom may the saints keep in mind for their kindness and good-will!"

"Nay, I will have none of thy saints; thou knowest we are St. Calvin's men in Vaud, if there must be any canonized. But what is it to us that thou hearest mass, while we love the simple worship! Are we not equally men? Does not the frost nip the members of Catholic and Protestant the same? or does the avalanche respect one more than the other? I never knew thee, or any of thy convent, question the frozen traveller of his faith, but all are fed, and warmed, and, at need, administered to from the pharmacy, with brotherly care, and as Christians merit. Whatever thou mayest think of the state of our souls, thou on thy moun-

tain there, no one will deny thy tender services to our bodies. Say I well, neighbors, or is this only the foolish gossip of old Benoit, who has crossed the Col so often, that he has forgotten that our churches have quarrelled, and that the learned will have us go to heaven by different roads?"

A general movement among the people, and a tossing of hands, appeared in support of the truth and popularity of the honest peasant's sentiments, for in that age the hospice of St. Bernard, more exclusively a refuge for the real and poor traveller than at present, enjoyed a merited reputation in all the country round.

"Thou shalt always be welcome on the pass, thou and thy friends, and all others in the shape of men, without other interference in thy opinions than secret prayers;" returned the good-humored and happy-looking clavier, whose round contented face shone partly in habitual joy, partly in gratification at this public testimonial in favor of the brotherhood, and a little in satisfaction perhaps at the promise of an ample addition to the convent's stores; for the community of St. Bernard, while so much was going out, had a natural and justifiable desire to see some return for its incessant and unwearied liberality. "Thou wilt not deny us the happiness of praying for those we love, though it happen to be in a manner different from that in which they ask blessings for themselves."

"Have it thine own way, good canon; I am none of those who are ready to refuse a favor because it savors of Rome. But what has become of our friend Uberto? He rarely comes into the valleys, that we are not anxious to see his glossy coat."

The Augustine gave the customary call, and the mastiff mounted the stage with a grave deliberate step, as if conscious of the dignity and usefulness

of the life he led, and like a dog accustomed to the friendly notice of man. The appearance of this well-known and celebrated brute caused another stir in the throng, many pressing upon the guards to get a nearer view, and a few casting fragments of food from their wallets, as tokens of gratitude and regard. In the midst of this little by-play of good feeling, a dark shaggy animal leaped upon the scaffolding, and very coolly commenced, with an activity that denoted the influence of the keen mountain air on his appetite, picking up the different particles of meat that had, as yet, escaped the eye of Uberto. The intruder was received much in the manner that an unpopular or an offending actor is made to undergo the hostilities of pit and galleries, to revenge some slight or neglect for which he has forgotten or refused to atone. In other words, he was incontinently and mercilessly pelted with such missiles as first presented themselves. The unknown animal, which the reader, however, will not be slow in recognizing to be the water-dog of Il Maledetto, received these unusual visitations with some surprise, and rather awkwardly; for, in his proper sphere, Nettuno had been quite as much accustomed to meet with demonstrations of friendship from the race he so faithfully served, as any of the far-famed and petted mastiffs of the convent. After dodging sundry stones and clubs, as well as a pretty close attention to the principal matter in hand would allow, and with a dexterity that did equal credit to his coolness and muscle, a missile of formidable weight took the unfortunate follower of Maso in the side, and sent him howling from the stage. At the next instant, his master was at the throat of the offender, throttling him till he was black in the face.

The unlucky stone had come from Conrad. For-

getful of his assumed character, he had joined in the hue and cry against a dog whose character and service should have been sufficiently known to him, at least, to prove his protection, and had given the cruelest blow of all. It has been already seen that there was little friendship between Maso and the pilgrim, for the former appeared to have an instinctive dislike of the latter's calling, and this little occurrence was not of a character likely to restore the peace between them.

"Thou, too!" cried the Italian, whose blood had mounted at the first attack on his faithful follower, and which fairly boiled when he witnessed the cowardly and wanton conduct of this new assailant—"art not satisfied with feigning prayers and godliness with the credulous, but thou must even feign enmity to my dog, because it is the fashion to praise the cur of St. Bernard at the expense of all other brutes! Reptile!—dost not dread the arm of an honest man, when raised against thee in just anger?"

"Friends—Vévaisans—honorable citizens!" gasped the pilgrim, as the gripe of Maso permitted breath. "I am Conrad, a poor, miserable, repentant pilgrim—Will ye see me murdered for a brute?"

Such a contest could not continue long in such a place. At first the pressure of the curious, and the great density of the crowd, rather favored the attack of the mariner; but in the end they proved his enemies by preventing the possibility of escaping from those who were especially charged with the care of the public peace. Luckily for Conrad, for passion had fairly blinded Maso to the consequences of his fury, the halberdiers soon forced their way into the centre of the living mass, and they succeeded in seasonably rescuing him from the deadly gripe of his assailant. Il Maledetto

trembled with the reaction of this hot sally, the moment his gripe was forcibly released, and he would have disappeared as soon as possible, had it been the pleasure of those into whose hands he had fallen to permit so politic a step. But now commenced the war of words, and the clamor of voices, which usually succeed, as well as precede, all contests of a popular nature. The officer in charge of this portion of the square questioned; twenty answered in a breath, not only drowning each other's voices, but effectually contradicting all that was said in the way of explanation. One maintained that Conrad had not been content with attacking Maso's dog, but that he had followed up the blow by offering a personal indignity to the master himself; this was the publican in whose house the mariner had taken up his abode, and in which he had been sufficiently liberal in his expenditure fairly to entitle him to the hospitable support of its landlord. Another professed his readiness to swear that the dog was the property of the pilgrim, being accustomed to carry his wallet, and that Maso, owing to an ancient grudge against both master and beast, had hurled the stone which sent the animal away howling, and had resented a mild remonstrance of its owner in the extraordinary manner that all had seen. This witness was the Neapolitan juggler, Pippo, who had much attached himself to the person of Conrad since the adventure of the bark, and who was both ready and willing to affirm anything in behalf of a friend who had so evident need of his testimony, if it were only on the score of boon-companionship. A third declared that the dog belonged truly to the Italian, that the stone had been really hurled by one who stood near the pilgrim, who had been wrongfully accused of the offence by Maso; that the latter had made his attack under a false im-

pression, and richly merited punishment for the unceremonious manner in which he had stopped Conrad's breath. This witness was perfectly honest, but of a vulgar and credulous mind. He attributed the original offence to one near that happened to have a bad name, and who was very liable to father every sin that, by possibility, could be laid at his door, as well as some that could not. On the other hand, he had also been duped that morning by the pilgrim's superabundant professions of religious zeal, a circumstance that of itself would have prevented him from detecting Conrad's arm in the air as it cast the stone, and which served greatly to increase his certainty that the first offence came from the luckless wight just alluded to; since they who discriminate under general convictions and popular prejudices, usually heap all the odium they pertinaciously withhold from the lucky and the favored, on those who seem fated by general consent to be the common target of the world's darts.

The officer, by the time he had deliberately heard the three principal witnesses, together with the confounding explanations of those who professed to be only half-informed in the matter, was utterly at a loss to decide which had been right and which wrong. He came, therefore, to the safe conclusion to send all the parties to the guard-house, including the witnesses, being quite sure that he had hit on an effectual method of visiting the true criminal with punishment, and of admonishing all those who gave evidence in future to have a care of the manner in which they contradicted each other. Just as this equitable decision was pronounced, the sound of a trumpet proclaimed the approach of a division of the principal mummers, if so irreverent a term can be applied to men engaged in a festival as justly renowned as that of

the vine-dressers. This announcement greatly quickened the steps of Justice, for they who were charged with the execution of her decrees felt the necessity of being prompt, under the penalty of losing an interesting portion of the spectacle. Actuated by this new impulse, which, if not as respectable, was quite as strong, as the desire to do right, the disturbers of the peace, even to those who had shown a quarrelsome temper by telling stories that gave each other the lie, were hurried away in a body, and the public was left in the enjoyment of that tranquillity which, in these perilous times of revolution and changes, is thought to to be so necessary to its dignity, so especially favorable to commerce, and so grateful to those whose duty it is to preserve the public peace with as little inconvenience to themselves as possible.

A blast of the trumpet was the signal for a more general movement, for it announced the commencement of the ceremonies. As it will be presently necessary to speak of the different personages who were represented on this joyous occasion, we shall only say here, that group after group of the actors came into the square, each party marching to the sound of music from its particular point of rendezvous to the common centre. The stage now began to fill with the privileged, among whom were many of the high aristocracy of the ruling canton, most of its officials, who were too dignified to be more than complacent spectators of revels like these, many nobles of mark from France and Italy, a few travellers from England, for in that age England was deemed a distant country and sent forth but a few of her *élite* to represent her on such occasions, most of those from the adjoining territories who could afford the time and cost, and who by rank or character were entitled to the distinction, and the wives and families of the local officers

who happened to be engaged as actors in the representation. By the time the different parts of the principal procession were assembled in the square, all the seats of the estrade were crowded, with the exception of those reserved for the bailiff and his immediate friends.

CHAPTER XIV.

So once were ranged the sons of ancient Rome,
A noble show! While Roscius trod the stage.
COWPER.

THE day was not yet far advanced, when all the component parts of the grand procession had arrived in the square. Shortly after, a flourish of clarions gave notice of the approach of the authorities. First came the bailiff, filled with the dignity of station, and watching, with a vigilant but covert eye, every indication of feeling that might prove of interest to his employers, even while he most affected sympathy with the occasion and self-abandonment to the follies of the hour; for Peter Hofmeister owed his long-established favor with the bürgerschaft more to a never-slumbering regard to its exclusive interests and its undivided supremacy, than to any particular skill in the art of rendering men comfortable and happy. Next to the worthy bailiff, for apart from an indomitable resolution to maintain the authority of his masters, for good or for evil, the Herr Hofmeister merited the appellation of a worthy man, came Roger de Blonay and his guest the Baron de Willading, marching, *pari passu*, at the side of the representative of Berne himself. There might have been some

question how far the bailiff was satisfied with this arrangement of the difficult point of etiquette, for he issued from his own gate with a sort of side-long movement that kept him nearly confronted to the Signor Grimaldi, though it left him the means of choosing his path and of observing the aspect of things in the crowd. At any rate, the Genoese, though apparently occupying a secondary station, had no grounds to complain of indifference to his presence. Most of the observances and not a few of the sallies of honest Peter, who had some local reputation as a joker and a *bel esprit*, as is apt to be the case with your municipal magistrate, more especially when he holds his authority independently of the community with whom he associates, and perhaps as little likely to be the fact when he depends on popular favor for his rank, were addressed to the Signor Grimaldi. Most of these good things were returned in kind, the Genoese meeting the courtesies like a man accustomed to be the object of peculiar attentions, and possibly like one who rather rioted in the impunity from ceremonies and public observation, that he now happened to enjoy. Adelheid, with a maiden of the house of Blonay, closed the little train.

As all commendable diligence was used by the officers of the peace to make way for the bailiff, Herr Hofmeister and his companions were soon in their allotted stations, which, it is scarcely necessary to repeat, were the upper places on the estrade. Peter had seated himself, after returning numerous salutations, for none in a situation to catch his eye neglected so fair an opportunity to show their intimacy with the bailiff, when his wandering glance fell upon the happy visage of Father Xavier. Rising hastily, the bailiff went through a multitude of the formal ceremonies that distin-

guished the courtesy of the place and period, such as frequent wavings and liftings of the beaver, profound reverences, smiles that seemed to flow from the heart, and a variety of other tokens of extraordinary love and respect. When all were ended, he resumed his place by the side of Melchior de Willading, with whom he commenced a confidential dialogue.

"We know not, noble Freiherr," (he spoke in the vernacular of their common canton,) "whether we have most reason to esteem or to disrelish these Augustines. While they do so many Christian acts to the travellers on their mountain yonder, they are devils incarnate in the way of upholding popery and its abominations among the people. Look you, the commonalty—God bless them as they deserve!—have no great skill at doctrinal discussions, and are much disposed to be led away by appearances. Numberless are the miserable dolts who fancy the godliness which is content to pass its time on the top of a frozen hill, doing good, feeding the hungry, dressing the wounds of the fallen, and—but thou knowest the manner in which these sayings run—the ignorant, as I was about to add, are but too ready to believe that the religion which leads men to do this, must have some savor of Heaven in it, after all!"

"Are they so very wrong, friend Peter, that we were wise to disturb the monks in the enjoyment of a favor that is so fairly earned?"

The bailiff looked askance at his brother burgher, for such was the humble appellation that aristocracy assumed in Berne, appearing desirous to probe the depth of the other's political morals before he spoke more freely.

"Though of a house so honored and trusted, I believe thou art not much accustomed of late to mingle with the council?" he evasively observed.

"Since the heavy losses in my family, of which thou may'st have heard, the care of this sole surviving child has been my principal solace and occupation. I know not whether the frequent and near sight of death among those so tenderly loved may have softened my heart towards the Augustines, but to me theirs seems a self-denying and a right worthy life."

"'Tis doubtless as you say, noble Melchior, and we shall do well to let our love for the holy canons be seen. Ho! Mr. Officer—do us the favor to request the reverend monk of St. Bernard to draw nearer, that the people may learn the esteem in which their patient charities and never-wearying benevolence are held by the lookers-on. As you will have occasion to pass a night beneath the convent's roof, Herr von Willading, in your journey to Italy, a little honor shown to the honest and pains-taking clavier will not be lost on the brotherhood, if these churchmen have even a decent respect for the usages of their fellow-creatures."

Father Xavier took the proffered place, which was nearer to the person of the bailiff than the one he had just quitted, and insomuch the more honorable, with the usual thanks, but with a simplicity which proved that he understood the compliment to be due to the fraternity of which he was a member, and not to himself. This little disposition made, as well as all other preliminary matters properly observed, the bailiff seemed satisfied with himself and his arrangements, for the moment.

The reader must imagine the stir in the throng, the importance of the minor agents appointed to marshal the procession, and the mixture of weariness and curiosity that possessed the spectators, while the several parts of so complicated and numerous a train were getting arranged, each in its

prescribed order and station. But, as the ceremonies which followed were of a peculiar character, and have an intimate connexion with the events of the tale, we shall describe them with a little detail, although the task we have allotted to ourselves is less that of sketching pictures of local usages, and of setting before the reader's imagination scenes of real or fancied antiquarian accuracy, than the exposition of a principle, and the wholesome moral which we have always flattered ourselves might, in a greater or less degree, follow from our labors.

A short time previously to the commencement of the ceremonies, a guard of honor, composed of shepherds, gardeners, mowers, reapers, vine-dressers, escorted by halberdiers and headed by music, had left the square in quest of the abbé, as the regular and permanent presiding officer of the abbaye, or company, is termed. This escort, all the individuals of which were dressed in character, was not long in making its appearance with the officer in question, a warm, substantial citizen and proprietor of the place, who, otherwise attired in the ordinary costume of his class in that age, had decorated his beaver with a waving plume, and, in addition to a staff or baton, wore a flowing scarf pendent from his shoulder. This personage, on whom certain judicial functions had devolved, took a convenient position in the front of the stage, and soon made a sign for the officials to proceed with their duties.

Twelve vine-dressers led by a chief, each having his person more or less ornamented with garlands of vine-leaves, and bearing other emblems of his calling, marched in a body, chanting a song of the fields. They escorted two of their number who had been pronounced the most skilful and successful in cultivating the vineyards of the adjacent côtes. When they reached the front of the estrade,

the abbé pronounced a short discourse in honor of the cultivators of the earth in general, after which he digressed into especial eulogiums on the successful candidates, two pleased, abashed, and unpractised peasants, who received the simple prizes with throbbing hearts. This little ceremony observed, amid the eager and delightful gaze of friends, and the oblique and discontented regards of the few whose feelings were too contracted to open to the joys of others, even on this simple and grateful festival, the trumpets sounded again, and the cry was raised to make room.

A large group advanced from among the body of the actors to an open space, of sufficient size and elevation, immediately in front of the stage. When in full view of the multitude, those who composed it arranged themselves in a prescribed and seemly order. They were the officials of Bacchus. The high-priest, robed in a sacrificial dress, with flowing beard, and head crowned with the vine, stood foremost, chanting in honor of the craft of the vine-dresser. His song also contained a few apposite allusions to the smiling blushing candidates. The whole joined in the chorus, though the leader of the band scarce needed the support of any other lungs than those with which he had been very amply furnished by nature.

The hymn ended, a general burst of instrumental music succeeded; and, the followers of Bacchus regaining their allotted station, the general procession began to move, sweeping around the whole area of the square in a manner to pass in order before the bailiff.

The first body in the march was composed of the council of the abbaye, attended by the shepherds and gardeners. One in an antique costume, and bearing a halberd, acted as marshal. He was succeeded by the two crowned vine-dressers, after

whom came the abbé with his counsellors, and large groups of shepherds and shepherdesses, as well as a number of both sexes who toiled in gardens, all attired in costumes suited to the traditions of their respective pursuits. The marshal and the officers of the abbaye moved slowly past, with the gravity and decorum that became their stations, occasionally halting to give time for the evolutions of those who followed; but the other actors now began in earnest to play their several parts. A group of young shepherdesses, clad in closely fitting vests of sky-blue with skirts of white, each holding her crook, came forward dancing, and singing songs that imitated the bleatings of their flocks and all the other sounds familiar to the elevated pasturages of that region. These were soon joined by an equal number of young shepherds also singing their pastorals, the whole exhibiting an active and merry group of dancers, accustomed to exercise their art on the sward of the Alps; for, in this festival, although we have spoken of the performers as actors, it is not in the literal meaning of the term, since, with few exceptions, none appeared to represent any other calling than that which, in truth, formed his or her daily occupation. We shall not detain the narrative to say more of this party, than that they formed a less striking exception to the conventional picture of the appearance of those engaged in tending flocks, than the truth ordinarily betrays; and that their buoyant gaiety, blooming faces, and unwearied action, formed a good introductory preparation for the saltation that was to follow.

The male gardeners appeared in their aprons, carrying spades, rakes, and the other implements of their trade; the female supporting baskets on their heads filled with rich flowers, vegetables, and fruits. When in front of the bailiff, the young

men formed a sort of fasces of their several implements, with a readiness that denoted much study, while the girls arranged their baskets in a circle at its foot. Then, joining hands, the whole whirled around, filling the air with a song peculiar to their pursuits.

During the whole of the preparations of the morning, Adelheid had looked on with a vacant eye, as if her feelings had little connexion with that which was passing before her face. It is scarcely necessary to say, that her mind, in spite of herself, wandered to other scenes, and that her truant thoughts were busy with interests very different from those which were here presented to the senses. But, by the time the group of gardeners had passed dancing away, her feelings began to enlist with those who were so evidently pleased with themselves and all around them, and her father, for the first time that morning, was rewarded for the deep attention with which he watched the play of her features, by an affectionate and natural smile.

"This goes off right merrily, Herr Bailiff;" exclaimed the baron, animated by that encouraging smile, as the blood is quickened by a genial ray of the sun's heat when it has been long chilled and deadened by cold.—"This goes off with a joyful will, and is likely to end with credit to thy town! I only wonder that you have not more of this, and monthly. When joy can be had so cheap, it is churlish to deny it to a people."

"We complain not of the levities, noble Freiherr, for your light thinker makes a sober and dutiful subject; but we shall have more of this, and of a far better quality, or our time is wasted. —What is thought at Berne, noble Melchior, of the prospects of the Emperor's obtaining a new concession for the levy of troops in our cantons?"

"I cry thy mercy, good Peterchen, but by thy

leave, we will touch on these matters more at our leisure. Boyish though it seem to thy eyes, so long accustomed to look at matters of state, I do confess that these follies begin to have their entertainment, and may well claim an hour of idleness from him that has nothing better in hand."

Peter Hofmeister ejaculated a little expressively. He then examined the countenance of the Signor Grimaldi, who had given himself to the merriment with the perfect good-will and self-abandonment of a man of strong intellect, and who felt his powers too sensibly to be jealous of appearances. Shrugging his shoulders, like one that was disappointed, the pragmatical bailiff turned his look towards the revellers, in order to detect, if possible, some breach of the usages of the country, that might require official reproof; for Peter was of that class of governors who have an itching to see their fingers stirring even the air that is breathed by the people, lest they should get it of a quality or in a quantity that might prove dangerous to a monopoly which it is now the fashion to call the conservative principle. In the mean time the revels proceeded.

No sooner had the gardeners quitted the arena, than a solemn and imposing train appeared to occupy the sward. Four females marched to the front, bearing an antique altar that was decorated with suitable devices. They were clad in emblematical dresses, and wore garlands of flowers on their heads. Boys carrying censers preceded an altar that was dedicated to Flora, and her ministering official came after it, mitred and carrying flowers. Like all the priestesses that followed, she was laboriously attired in the robes that denoted her sacred duty. The goddess herself was borne by four females on a throne canopied by flowers, and from whose several parts

sweeping festoons of every hue and die descended to the earth. Haymakers of both sexes, gay and pastoral in their air and attire, succeeded, and a car groaning with the sweet-scented grass of the Alps, accompanied by females bearing rakes, brought up the rear.

The altar and the throne being deposited on the sward, the priestess offered sacrifice, hymning the praise of the goddess with mountain lungs. Then followed the dance of the haymakers, as in the preceding exhibition, and the train went off as before.

"Excellent well, and truer than it could be done by your real pagan!" cried the bailiff, who, in spite of his official longings, began to watch the mummery with a pleased eye. "This beateth greatly our youthful follies in the Genoese and Lombard carnivals, in which, to say truth, there are sometimes seen rare niceties in the way of representing the old deities."

"Is it the usage, friend Hofmeister," demanded the baron, "to enjoy these admirable pleasantries often here in Vaud?"

"We partake of them, from time to time, as the abbaye desires, and much as thou seest. The honorable Signor Grimaldi—who will pardon me that he gets no better treatment than he receives, and who will not fail to ascribe what, to all who know him, might otherwise pass for inexcusable neglect, to his own desire for privacy—he will tell us, should he be pleased to honor us with his real opinion, that the subject is none the worse for occasions to laugh and be gay. Now, there is Géneva, a town given to subtleties as ingenious and complicated as the machinery of their own watches; it can never have a merrymaking without a leaven of disputation and reason, two as damnable ingredients in the public humor as schism in reli-

gion, or two minds in a *ménage*. There is not a knave in the city who does not fancy himself a better man than Calvin, and some there are who believe if they are not cardinals, it is merely because the reformed church does not relish legs cased in red stockings. By the word of a bailiff! I would not be the ruler, look ye, of such a community, for the hope of becoming Avoyer of Berne itself. Here it is different. We play our antics in the shape of gods and goddesses like sober people, and, when all is over, we go train our vines, or count our herds, like faithful subjects of the great canton. Do I state the matter fairly to our friends, Baron de Blonay?"

Roger de Blonay bit his lip, for he and his had been of Vaud a thousand years, and he little relished the allusion to the quiet manner in which his countrymen submitted to a compelled and foreign dictation. He bowed a cold acquiescence to the bailiff's statement, however, as if no farther answer were needed.

"We have other ceremonies that invite our attention," said Melchior de Willading, who had sufficient acquaintance with his friend's opinions to understand his silence.

The next group that approached was composed of those who lived by the products of the dairy. Two cowherds led their beasts, the monotonous tones of whose heavy bells formed a deep and rural accompaniment to the music that regularly preceded each party, while a train of dairy-girls, and of young mountaineers of the class that tend the herds in the summer pasturages, succeeded, a car loaded with the implements of their calling bringing up the rear. In this little procession, no detail of equipment was wanting. The milking-stool was strapped to the body of the dairyman; one had the peculiarly constructed pail in his hand,

while another bore at his back the deep wooden vessel in which milk is carried up and down the precipices to the châlet. When they reached the sodded arena, the men commenced milking the cows, the girls set in motion the different processes of the dairy, and the whole united in singing the Ranz des Vaches of the district. It is generally and erroneously believed that there is a particular air which is known throughout Switzerland by this name, whereas in truth nearly every canton has its own song of the mountains, each varying from the others in the notes, as well as in the words, and we might almost add in the language. The Ranz des Vaches of Vaud is in the patois of the country, a dialect that is composed of words of Greek and Latin origin, mingled on a foundation of Celtic. Like our own familiar tune, which was first bestowed in derision, and which a glorious history has enabled us to continue in pride, the words are far too numerous to be repeated. We shall, however, give the reader a single verse of a song which Swiss feeling has rendered so celebrated, and which is said often to induce the mountaineer in foreign service to desert the mercenary standard and the tame scenes of towns, to return to the magnificent nature that haunts his waking imagination and embellishes his dreams. It will at once be perceived that the power of this song is chiefly to be found in the recollections to which it gives birth, by recalling the simple charms of rural life, and by reviving the indelible impressions that are made by nature wherever she has laid her hand on the face of the earth with the same majesty as in Switzerland.

Lé zermailli dei Colombetté
Dé bon matin, sé san léha.—

REFRAIN.

Ha, ah! ha, ah!

Liauba! Liauba! por aria.
Venidé toté,
Bllantz' et naire,
Rodz et motaile,
Dzjouvan' et etro
Dezó ou tzehano,
Io vo z' ario
Dezo ou triembllo,
Io ïe triudzo,
Liauba! Liauba! por aris.*

The music of the mountains is peculiar and wild, having most probably received its inspiration from the grandeur of the natural objects. Most of the sounds partake of the character of echoes, being high-keyed but false notes; such as the rocks send back to the valleys, when the voice is raised above its natural key in order to reach the caverns and savage recesses of inaccessible precipices. Strains like these readily recall the glens and the magnificence amid which they were first heard, and hence, by an irresistible impulse, the mind is led to indulge in the strongest of all its sympathies, those which are mixed with the unalloyed and unsophisticated delights of buoyant childhood.

The herdsmen and dairymaids no sooner uttered the first notes of this magic song, than a deep and breathing stillness pervaded the crowd. As the

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* The cowherds of the Alps
Arise at an early hour.

CHORUS.

Ha, ah! ha, ah!
Liauba! Liauba! in order to milk.
Come all of you,
Black and white,
Red and mottled,
Young and old;
Beneath this oak
I am about to milk you,
Beneath this poplar,
I am about to press,
Liauba! Liauba! in order to milk.

peculiar strains of the chorus rose on the ear, murmuring echoes issued from among the spectators, and ere the wild intonations could be repeated which accompanied the words "Liauba! Liauba!" a thousand voices were lifted simultaneously, as it were, to greet the surrounding mountains with the salutations of their children. From that moment the remainder of the Ranz des Vaches was a common burst of enthusiasm, the offspring of that national fervor, which forms so strong a link in the social chain, and which is capable of recalling to the bosom that, in other respects, has been hardened by vice and crime, a feeling of some of the purest sentiments of our nature.

The last strain died amid this general exhibition of healthful feeling. The cowherds and the dairy-girls collected their different implements, and resumed their march to the melancholy music of the bells, which formed a deep contrast to the wild notes that had just filled the square.

To these succeeded the followers of Ceres, with the altar, the priestess, and the enthroned goddess, as has been already described in the approach of Flora. Cornucopiæ ornamented the chair of the deity, and the canopy was adorned with the gifts of autumn. The whole was surmounted by a sheaf of wheat. She held the sickle as her sceptre, and a tiara composed of the bearded grain covered her brow. Reapers followed, bearing emblems of the season of abundance, and gleaners closed the train. There was the halt, the chant, the chorus, and the song in praise of the beneficent goddess of autumn, as had been done by the votaries of the deity of flowers. A dance of the reapers and gleaners followed, the threshers flourished their flails, and the whole went their way.

After these came the grand standard of the abbaye, and the vine-dressers, the real objects of the

festival, succeeded. The laborers of the spring led the advance, the men carrying their picks and spades, and the women vessels to contain the cuttings of the vines. Then came a train bearing baskets loaded with the fruit, in its different degrees of perfection and of every shade of color. Youths holding staves topped with minature representations of the various utensils known in the culture of the grape, such as the laborer with the tub on his back, the butt, and the vessel that first receives the flowing juice, followed. A great number of men, who brought forward the forge that is used to prepare the tools, closed this part of the exhibition. The song and the dance again succeeded, when the whole disappeared at a signal given by the approaching music of Bacchus. As we now touch upon the most elaborate part of the representation, we seize the interval that is necessary to bring it forward, in order to take breath ourselves.

CHAPTER XV.

> And thou, O wall, O sweet, O lovely wall,
> That stand'st between her father's ground and mine
> Thou wall, O wall, O sweet and lovely wall,
> Show me thy chink, to blink through with mine eyne.
> *Midsummer Night's Dream.*

"'Odds my life, but this goes off with a grace, brother Peter!" exclaimed the Baron de Willading, as he followed the vine-dressers in their retreat, with an amused eye—"If we have much more like it, I shall forget the dignity of the bürgerschaft, and turn mummer with the rest, though my good name for wisdom were the forfeit of the folly."

"That is better said between ourselves than performed before the vulgar eye, honorable Melchior. It would sound ill, of a truth, were these Vaudois to boast that a noble of thy estimation in Berne were thus to forget himself!"

"None of this!—are we not here to be merry, and to laugh, and to be pleased with any folly that offers? A truce, then, to thy official distrusts and superabundant dignity, honest Peterchen," for such was the good-natured name by which the worthy bailiff was most commonly addressed by his friend; "let the tongue freely answer to the heart, as if we were boys rioting together, as was once the case, long ere thou wert thought of for this office, or I knew a sorrowful hour."

"The Signor Grimaldi shall judge between us: I maintain that restraint is necessary to those in high trusts."

"I will decide when the actors have all played their parts," returned the Genoese, smiling; "at present, here cometh one to whom all old soldiers pay homage. We will not fail of respect in so great a presence, on account of a little difference in taste."

Peter Hofmeister was not a small drinker, and as the approach of the god of the cup was announced by a flourish from some twenty instruments made to speak on a key suited to the vault of heaven, he was obliged to reserve his opinions for another time. After the passage of the musicians, and a train of the abbaye's servants, for especial honors were paid to the ruby deity, there came three officials of the sacrifice, one leading a goat with gilded horns, while the two others bore the knife and the hatchet. To these succeeded the altar adorned with vines, the incense-bearers, and the high-priest of Bacchus, who led the way for the appearance of the youthful god himself. The

deity was seated astride on a cask, his head encircled with a garland of generous grapes, bearing a cup in one hand, and a vine entwined and fruit-crowned sceptre in the other. Four Nubians carried him on their shoulders, while others shaded his form with an appropriate canopy; fauns wearing tiger-skins, and playing their characteristic antics, danced in his train, while twenty laughing and light-footed Bacchantes flourished their instruments, moving in measure in the rear.

A general shout in the multitude preceded the appearance of Silenus, who was sustained in his place on an ass by two blackamoors. The half-empty skin at his side, the vacant laugh, the foolish eye, the lolling tongue, the bloated lip, and the idiotic countenance, gave reason to suspect that there was a better motive for their support than any which belonged to the truth of the representation. Two youths then advanced, bearing on a pole a cluster of grapes that nearly descended to the ground, and which was intended to represent the fruit brought from Canaan by the messengers of Joshua—a symbol much affected by the artists and mummers of the other hemisphere, on occasions suited to its display. A huge vehicle, ycleped the ark of Noah, closed the procession. It held a wine-press, having its workmen embowered among the vines, and it contained the family of the second father of the human race. As it rolled past, traces of the rich liquor were left in the tracks of its wheels.

Then came the sacrifice, the chant, and the dance, as in most of the preceding exhibitions, each of which, like this of Bacchus, had contained allusions to the peculiar habits and attributes of the different deities. The bacchanal that closed the scene was performed in character; the trumpets

flourished, and the procession departed in the order in which it had arrived.

Peter relented a little from his usual political reserve, as he witnessed these games in honor of a deity to whom he so habitually did practical homage, for it was seldom that this elaborate functionary, who might be termed quite a doctrinaire in his way, composed his senses in sleep, without having pretty effectually steeped them in the liquor of the neighboring hills; a habit that was of far more general use among men of his class in that age than in this of ours, which seems so eminently to be the season of sobriety.

"This is not amiss, of a verity;" observed the contented bailiff, as the Fauns and Bacchantes moved off the sward, capering and cutting their classical antics with far more agility and zeal than grace. "This looks like the inspiration of good wine, Signior Genoese, and were the truth known, it would be found that the rogue who plays the part of the fat person on the ass—how dost call the knave, noble Melchior?"

"Body o'me! if I am wiser than thyself, worthy bailiff; it is clearly a rogue who can never have done his mummery so expertly, without some aid from the flask."

"Twill be well to know the fellow's character, for there may be the occasion to commend him to the gentlemen of the abbaye, when all is over. Your skilful ruler has two great instruments that he need use with discretion, Baron de Willading, and these are, fear and flattery; and Berne hath no servant more ready to apply both, or either, as there may be necessity, than one of her poor bailiffs that hath not received all his dues from the general opinion, if truth were spoken. But it is well to be prepared to speak these good people of the abbaye fairly, touching their exploits. Harkee,

master halberdier; thou art of Vévey, I think, and a warm citizen in thy every-day character, or my eyes do us both injustice."

"I am, as you have said, Monsieur le Bailli, a Vévaisan, and one that is well known among our artisans."

"True, that was visible, spite of thy halberd. Thou art, no doubt, rarely gifted, and taught to the letter in these games. Wilt name the character that has just ridden past on the ass—he that hath so well enacted the drunkard, I mean? His name hath gone out of our minds for the moment, though his acting never can, for a better performance of one overcome by liquor is seldom seen."

"Lord keep you! worshipful bailiff, that is Antoine Giraud, the fat butcher of La Tour de Peil, and a better at the cup there is not in all the country of Vaud! No wonder that he hath done his part so readily; for, while the others have been reading in books, or drilling like so many awkward recruits under the school-master, Antoine hath had little more to perform than to dip into the skin at his elbow. When the officers of the abbaye complain, lest he should disturb the ceremonies, he bids them not to make fools of themselves, for every swallow he gives is just so much done in honor of the representation; and he swears, by the creed of Calvin! that there shall be more truth in his acting than in that of any other of the whole party."

"'Odds my life! the fellow hath humor as well as good acting in him—this Antoine Giraud! Will you look into the written order they have given us, fair Adelheid, that we may make sure this artisan-halberdier hath not deceived us? We in authority must not trust a Vévaisan too lightly."

"It will be vain, I fear, Herr Bailiff, since the characters, and not the names of the actors, appear in the lists. The man in question represents Sile-

nus I should think, judging from his appearance and all the other circumstances."

"Well, let it be as thou wilt. Silenus himself could not play his own part better than it hath been done by this Antoine Giraud. The fellow would gain gold like water at the court of the emperor as a mime, were he only advised to resort thither. I warrant you, now, he would do Pluto, or Minerva, or any other god, just as well as he hath done this rogue Silenus!"

The honest admiration of Peter, who, sooth to say, had not much of the learning of the age, as the phrase is, raised a smile on the lip of the beauteous daughter of the baron, and she glanced a look to catch the eye of Sigismund, towards whom all her secret sympathies, whether of sorrow or of joy, so naturally and so strongly tended. But the averted head, the fixed attention, and the nearly immovable and statue-like attitude in which he stood, showed that a more powerful interest drew his gaze to the next group. Though ignorant of the cause of his intense regard, Adelheid instantly forgot the bailiff, his dogmatism, and his want of erudition, in the wish to examine those who approached.

The more classical portion of the ceremonies was now duly observed. The council of the abbaye intended to close with an exhibition that was more intelligible to the mass of the spectators than anything which had preceded it, since it was addressed to the sympathies and habits of every people, and in all conditions of society. This was the spectacle that so engrossingly attracted the attention of Sigismund. It was termed the procession of the nuptials, and it was now slowly advancing to occupy the space left vacant by the retreat of Antoine Giraud and his companions.

There came in front the customary band, play-

ing a lively air which use has long appropriated to the festivities of Hymen. The lord of the manor, or, as he was termed, the baron, and his lady-partner led the train, both apparelled in the rich and quaint attire of the period. Six ancient couples, the representatives of happy married lives, followed by a long succession of offspring of every age, including equally the infant at the breast and the husband and wife in the flower of their days, walked next to the noble pair. Then appeared the section of a dwelling, which was made to portray the interior of domestic economy, having its kitchen, its utensils, and most of the useful and necessary objects that may be said to compose the material elements of an humble *ménage*. Within this moiety of a house, one female plied the wheel, and another was occupied in baking. The notary, bearing the register beneath an arm, with hat in hand, and dressed in an exaggerated costume of his profession, strutted in the rear of the two industrious housemaids. His appearance was greeted with a general laugh, for the spectators relished the humor of the caricature with infinite goût. But this sudden and general burst of merriment was as quickly forgotten in the desire to behold the bride and bridegroom, whose station was next to that of the officer of the law. It was understood that these parties were not actors, but that the abbaye had sought out a couple, of corresponding rank and means, who had consented to join their fortunes in reality on the occasion of this great jubilee, thereby lending to it a greater appearance of that genuine joy and festivity which it was the desire of the heads of the association to represent. Such a search had not been made without exciting deep interest in the simple communities which surrounded Vévey. Many requisites had been proclaimed to be necessary in the candidates—such as beauty,

modesty, merit, and the submission of her sex, in the bride; and in her partner those qualities which might fairly entitle him to be the repository of the happiness of a maiden so endowed.

Many had been the speculations of the Vévaisans touching the individuals who had been selected to perform these grave and important characters, which, for fidelity of representation, were to outdo that of Silenus himself; but so much care had been taken by the agents of the abbaye to conceal the names of those they had selected, that, until this moment, when disguise was no longer possible, the public was completely in the dark on the interesting point. It was so usual to make matches of this kind on occasions of public rejoicing, and marriages of convenience, as they are not unaptly termed, enter so completely into the habits of all European communities—perhaps we might say of all old communities—that common opinion would not have been violently outraged had it been known that the chosen pair saw each other for the second or third time in the procession, and that they had now presented themselves to take the nuptial vow, as it were, at the sound of the trumpet or the beat of drum. Still, it was more usual to consult the inclinations of the parties, since it gave greater zest to the ceremony, and these selections of couples on public occasions were generally supposed to have more than the common interest of marriages, since they were believed to be the means of uniting, through the agency of the rich and powerful, those whom poverty or other adverse circumstances had hitherto kept asunder. Rumor spoke of many an inexorable father who had listened to reason from the mouths of the great, rather than balk the public humor; and thousands of pining hearts, among the obscure and simple, are even now gladdened at the approach of some joyous

ceremony, which is expected to throw open the gates of the prison to the debtor and the criminal, or that of Hymen to those who are richer in constancy and affection than in any other stores.

A general murmur and a common movement betrayed the lively interest of the spectators, as the principal and real actors in this portion of the ceremonies drew near. Adelheid felt a warm glow on her cheek, and a gentler flow of kindness at her heart, when her eye first caught a view of the bride and bridegroom, whom she was fain to believe a faithful pair that a cruel fortune had hitherto kept separate, and who were now willing to brave such strictures as all must encounter who court public attention, in order to receive the reward of their enduring love and self-denial. This sympathy, which was at first rather of an abstract and vague nature, finding its support chiefly in her own peculiar situation and the qualities of her gentle nature, became intensely heightened, however, when she got a better view of the bride. The modest mien, abashed eye, and difficult breathing of the girl, whose personal charms were of an order much superior to those which usually distinguish rustic beauty in those countries in which females are not exempted from the labors of the field, were so natural and winning as to awaken all her interest; and, with instinctive quickness, the lady of Willading bent her look on the bridegroom, in order to see if one whose appearance was so eloquent in her favor was likely to be happy in her choice. In age, personal appearance, and apparently in condition of life, there was no very evident unfitness, though Adelheid fancied that the mien of the maiden announced a better breeding than that of her companion—a difference which she was willing to ascribe, however, to a greater aptitude in her own

sex to receive the first impress of the moral seal, than that which belongs to man,

"She is fair," whispered Adelheid, slightly bending her head towards Sigismund, who stood at her side, "and must deserve her happiness."

"She is good, and merits a better fate!" muttered the youth, breathing so hard as to render his respiration audible,

The startled Adelheid raised her eyes, and strong but suppressed agitation was quivering in every lineament of her companion's countenance. The attention of those near was so closely drawn towards the procession, as to allow an instant of unobserved communication.

"Sigismund, this is thy sister!"

"God so cursed her."

"Why has an occasion, public as this, been chosen to wed a maiden of her modesty and manner?"

"Can the daughter of Balthazar be squeamish? Gold, the interest of the abbaye, and the foolish *éclat* of this silly scene, have enabled my father to dispose of his child to yonder mercenary, who has bargained like a Jew in the affair, and who, among other conditions, has required that the true name of his bride shall never be revealed. Are we not honored by a connexion which repudiates us even before it is formed!"

The hollow stifled laugh of the young man thrilled on the nerves of his listener, and she ceased the stolen dialogue to return to the subject at a more favorable moment. In the mean time the procession had reached the station in front of the stage, where the mummers had already commenced their rites.

A dozen groomsmen and as many female attendants accompanied the pair who were about to take the nuptial vow. Behind these came the *trousseau*

and the *corbeille;* the first being that portion of the dowry of the bride which applies to her personal wants, and the last is an offering of the husband, and is figuratively supposed to be a pledge of the strength of his passion. In the present instance the trousseau was so ample, and betokened so much liberality, as well as means, on the part of the friends of a maiden who would consent to become a wife in a ceremony so public, as to create general surprise; while, on the other hand, a solitary chain of gold, of rustic fashion, and far more in consonance with the occasion, was the sole tribute of the swain. This difference between the liberality of the friends of the bride, and that of the individual, who, judging from appearances, had much the most reason to show his satisfaction, did not fail to give rise to many comments. They ended as most comments do, by deductions drawn against the weaker and least defended of the parties. The general conclusion was so uncharitable as to infer that a girl thus bestowed must be under peculiar disadvantages, else would there have been a greater equality between the gifts; an inference that was sufficiently true, though cruelly unjust to its modest but unconscious subject.

While speculations of this nature were rife among the spectators, the actors in the ceremony began their dances, which were distinguished by the quaint formality that belonged to the politeness of the age. The songs that succeeded were in honor of Hymen and his votaries, and a few couplets that extolled the virtues and beauty of the bride were chanted in chorus. A sweep appeared at the chimney-top, raising his cry, in allusion to the business of the ménage, and then all moved away, as had been done by those who had preceded them. A guard of halberdiers closed the procession.

That part of the mummeries which was to be enacted in front of the estrade was now ended for the moment, and the different groups proceeded to various other stations in the town, where the ceremonies were to be repeated for the benefit of those who, by reason of the throng, had not been able to get a near view of what had passed in the square. Most of the privileged profited by the pause to leave their seats, and to seek such relaxation as the confinement rendered agreeable. Among those who entirely quitted the square were the bailiff and his friends, who strolled towards the promenade on the lake-shore, holding discourse, in which there was blended much facetious merriment concerning what they had just seen.

The bailiff soon drew his companions around him, in a deep discussion of the nature of the games, during which the Signor Grimaldi betrayed a malicious pleasure in leading on the dogmatic Peter to expose the confusion that existed in his head touching the characters of sacred and profane history. Even Adelheid was compelled to laugh at the commencement of this ludicrous exhibition, but her thoughts were not long in recurring to a subject in which she felt a nearer and a more tender interest. Sigismund walked thoughtfully at her side, and she profited by the attention of all around them being drawn to the laughable dialogue just mentioned, to renew the subject that had been so lightly touched on before.

"I hope thy fair and modest sister will never have reason to repent her choice," she said, lessening her speed, in a manner to widen the distance between herself and those she did not wish to overhear the words, while it brought her nearer to Sigismund; "'t is a frightful violence to all maiden feeling to be thus dragged before the eyes

of the curious and vulgar, in a scene trying and solemn as that in which she plights her marriage-vows!"

"Poor Christine! her fate from infancy has been pitiable. A purer or milder spirit than hers, one that more sensitively shrinks from rude collision, does not exist, and yet, on whichever side she turns her eyes, she meets with appalling prejudices or opinions to drive a gentle nature like hers to madness. It may be a misfortune, Adelheid, to want instruction, and to be fated to pass a life in the depths of ignorance, and in the indulgence of brutal passions, but it is scarcely a blessing to have the mind elevated above the tasks which a cruel and selfish world so frequently imposes."

"Thou wast speaking of thy mild and excellent sister?—"

"Well hast thou described her! Christine is mild, and more than modest—she is meek. But what can meekness itself do to palliate such a calamity? Desirous of averting the stigma of his family from all he could with prudence, my father caused my sister, like myself, to be early taken from the parental home. She was given in charge to strangers, under such circumstances of secrecy, as left her long, perhaps too long, in ignorance of the stock from which she sprang. When maternal pride led my mother to seek her daughter's society, the mind of Christine was in some measure formed, and she had to endure the humiliation of learning that she was one of a family proscribed. Her gentle spirit, however, soon became reconciled to the truth, at least so far as human observation could penetrate, and, from the moment of the first terrible agony, no one has heard her murmur at the stern decree of Providence. The resignation of that mild girl has ever been a reproach to my own rebellious temper, for, Adelheid, I cannot con-

ceal the truth from thee—I have cursed all that I dared include in my wicked imprecations, in very madness at this blight on my hopes! Nay, I have even accused my father of injustice, that he did not train me at the side of the block, that I might take a savage pride in that which is now the bane of my existence. Not so with Christine; she has always warmly returned the affection of our parents, as a daughter should love the authors of her being, while I fear I have been repining when I should have loved. Our origin is a curse entailed by the ruthless laws of the land, and it is not to be attributed to any, at least to none of these later days, as a fault; and such has ever been the language of my poor sister when she has seen a merit in their wishes to benefit us at the expense of their own natural affection. I would I could imitate her reason and resignation!"

"The view taken by thy sister is that of a female, Sigismund, whose heart is stronger than her pride; and, what is more, it is just."

"I deny it not; 't is just. But the ill-judged mercy has for ever disqualified me to sympathize as I could wish with those to whom I belong. 'T is an error to draw these broad distinctions between our habits and our affections. Creatures stern as soldiers cannot bend their fancies like pliant twigs, or with the facility of female—"

"Duty," said Adelheid gravely, observing that he hesitated.

"If thou wilt, duty. The word has great weight with thy sex, and I do not question that it should have with mine."

"Thou canst not be wanting in affection for thy father, Sigismund. The manner in which thou interposedst to save his life, when we were in that fearful jeopardy of the tempest, disproves thy words."

"Heaven forbid that I should be wanting in natural feeling of this sort, and yet, Adelheid, it is horrible not to be able to respect, to love profoundly, those to whom we owe our existence! Christine in this is far happier than I, an advantage that I doubt not she owes to her simple life, and to the closer intimacies which unite females. I am the son of a headsman; that bitter fact is never absent from my thoughts when they turn to home and those scenes in which I could so gladly take pleasure. Balthazar may have meant a kindness when he caused me to be trained in habits so different from his own, but, to complete the good work, the veil should never have been removed."

Adelheid was silent. Though she understood the feelings which controlled one educated so very differently from those to whom he owed his birth, her habits of thought were opposed to the indulgence of any reflections that could unsettle the reverence of the child for its parent.

"One of a heart like thine, Sigismund, cannot hate his mother!" she said, after a pause.

"In this thou dost me no more than justice; my words have ill represented my thoughts, if they have left such an impression. In cooler moments, I have never considered my birth as more than a misfortune, and my education I deem a reason for additional respect and gratitude to my parents, though it may have disqualified me in some measure to enter deeply into their feelings. Christine herself is not more true, nor of more devoted love, than my poor mother. It is necessary, Adelheid, to see and know that excellent woman in order to understand all the wrongs that the world inflicts by its ruthless usages."

"We will now speak only of thy sister. Has she been here bestowed without regard to her own wishes, Sigismund?"

"I hope not. Christine is meek, but, while neither word nor look betrays the weakness, still she feels the load that crushes us both. She has long accustomed herself to look at all her own merits through the medium of this debasement, and has set too low a value on her own excellent qualities. Much, very much depends, in this life, on our own habits of self-estimation, Adelheid; for he who is prepared to admit unworthiness—I speak not of demerit towards God but towards men—will soon become accustomed to familiarity with a standard below his just pretensions, and will end perhaps in being the thing he dreaded. Such has been the consequence of Christine's knowledge of her birth, for, to her meek spirit, there is an appearance of generosity in overlooking this grand defect, and it has too well prepared her mind to endow the youth with a hundred more of the qualities that are absolutely necessary to her esteem, but which I fear exist only in her own warm fancy."

"This is touching on the most difficult branch of human knowledge," returned Adelheid, smiling sweetly on the agitated brother; "a just appreciation of ourselves. If there is danger of setting too low a value on our merits, there is also some danger of setting too high; though I perfectly comprehend the difference you would make between vulgar vanity, and that self-respect which is certainly in some degree necessary to success. But one, like her thou hast described, would scarce yield her affections without good reason to think them well bestowed."

"Adelheid, thou, who hast never felt the world's contempt, cannot understand how winning respect and esteem can be made to those who pine beneath its weight! My sister hath so long accustomed herself to think meanly of her hopes, that the appearance of liberality and justice in this youth

would have been sufficient of itself to soften her feelings in his favor. I cannot say I think—for Christine will soon be his wife—but I will say, I fear that the simple fact of his choosing one that the world persecutes has given him a value in her eyes he might not otherwise have possessed."

"Thou dost not appear to approve of thy sister's choice?"

"I know the details of the disgusting bargain better than poor Christine," answered the young man, speaking between his teeth, like one who repressed bitter emotion. "I was privy to the greedy exactions on the one side, and to the humiliating concessions on the other. Even money could not buy this boon for Balthazar's child, without a condition that the ineffaceable stigma of her birth should be for ever concealed."

Adelheid saw, by the cold perspiration that stood on the brow of Sigismund, how intensely he suffered, and she sought an immediate occasion to lead his thoughts to a less disturbing subject. With the readiness of her sex, and with the sensitiveness and delicacy of a woman that sincerely loved, she found means to effect the charitable purpose, without again alarming his pride. She succeeded so far in calming his feelings, that, when they rejoined their companions, the manner of the young man had entirely regained the quiet and proud composure in which he appeared to take refuge against the consciousness of the blot that darkened his hopes, frequently rendering life itself a burthen nearly too heavy to be borne.

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