

SANDOVAL;

OR,

THE FREEMASON.

A SPANISH TALE.

BY

THE AUTHOR OF "DON ESTEBAN."

IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. II.

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SANDOVAL;

OR,

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CHAPTER I.

This is a new way of begging, and a neat one.

FLETCHER'S PILGRIM.

IN manhood a severe disappointment will often produce inaction; in youth, on the contrary, the momentary depression which it causes is generally followed by restlessness and activity, because prudence, which frequently chills the ardour of maturity, is not numbered among its attributes. Thus alone can we account for

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Sandoval's resolution of returning to those places which he had left in disgust, and in which, known and beset by enemies, he could not fail to be exposed to dangers as great as he hoped to escape by flying from the province which had been the scene of the late rebellion. But the truth is, that there were other motives sufficiently powerful in themselves to induce him to return to Logroño, and risk all the perils with which such a step was likely to be attended.

Reflection, which invariably follows violent anger, though only in those who are capable of it at any other time, had much tempered the indignant feelings which had urged him to condemn Gabriela as a faithless and perfidious woman. He now thought he had judged too hastily of an accident, which though sufficiently mysterious, was not so conclusive as to warrant suspicions which destroyed in an instant that character for consistency, innocence of mind, and warmth of affection which she had manifested ever since he had become acquainted with

her. Desirous, therefore, to do her ample justice, and no less anxious to have the mystery of Fermin's nocturnal visit to her explained, he came to the resolution of requesting an interview with his brother; and, should he find that her affection for him had really vanished, sacrifice to Fermin his hopes of happiness on earth. This determination cost him many a struggle before he succeeded in making it; but his high minded generosity at last triumphed, though, if the whole truth must be told, it was not altogether unmingled with a certain portion of the pride of self-martyrdom; and, now and then too, the reflection, that the heart of a woman who could waver between him and another was not worth possessing, nor its loss hardly worth lamenting, came in to assist in reconciling him to his fate. Accordingly, on coming within two leagues of Logroño, he sent Roqué upon this message, and, turning away from the high road, entered a path leading to a farm, which adjoined a small village. The tenant of this place was an honest husbandman, rough and blunt in

his speech and manners ; but, like the generality of these men throughout Castile, frank, kind-hearted, and possessing strong good sense, mixed with shrewdness as well as an unbending consciousness of his independence. As this honest farmer had known Sandoval from his earliest infancy, and had received from our hero's father many important favours, Sandoval resolved to seek an asylum in his house, until he could devise some plan by which he might more effectually evade the persecutions to which he was exposed.

In approaching the place of his destination, through an open country, partly of vineyard ground, and partly of wood and arable land, he now and then caught sight of the house, which, like most farms in this part of Spain, did not present in its exterior a very symmetrical or attractive appearance. It was built of unbaked bricks, and exhibited on one side of it a little door at one of the extremities ; on one side of it there were several low iron-grated windows belonging to the ground floor, and three half ruined bal-

tonies above, duly decorated with branches of consecrated palm, which our host had received when he once attended in his capacity of steward of the Palm Sunday procession, and which served the house in place of an electrical conductor, as well as a preservative against the arts of the devil, and the witches, if perchance any came to sojourn in the village. Near the high projecting roof were some large holes, having neither glazing nor shutters, through which scores of sparrows got access to the granaries. The door, which opened into a kind of portal or passage, had the upper of the two compartments, into which it was divided, enclosed, and the lower shut, as is customary. Here Sandoval, having first alighted and tied his horse to one of the iron rings which were fixed to the wall of the farm, paused, and uttered the usual salutation, *Ave Maria Purisima*, before he entered the threshold.

“*Sin pecado concebida*,”* answered the rough

* Conceived without sin.

and loud voice of the honest landlord, who was at the moment in the parlour with his wife and family, and with the priest of the neighbouring village, who had just arrived to settle with him about sending him the tithes of what he himself had calculated the harvest of corn, olives, wine, &c. would amount to.

Sandoval entered the room where this party were assembled, and was immediately received by the farmer and his wife with a close embrace.—“Welcome to our house,” cried both with one accord, “we rejoice at seeing that you have not forgotten us, though there are strange things afloat concerning you.”

The priest, who sat in the only arm chair there was in the house, nodded gravely as Sandoval made his obeisance to him, while the three little boys, who were present, approached their new guest cautiously, with their thumbs stuck in their open mouths, and their large dark eyes considerably distended as they gazed with infantine curiosity on the stranger, whose military apparel excited both their wonder and awe.—

“Hipolito,” said the farmer’s wife to her husband, “did you ever see such a fine man as our Señorito is grown? Little did I think when I used to dandle him in my arms, and when he was no bigger than one of our brats, that I should see him one day taller than yourself.”

“Go, and fetch some refreshments for him quickly; and tell Francisco to take his horse to the stable, and feed him well,” said the *tio** Hipolito, “and you may then wonder as much as you please. Meantime, Señor Don Calisto, sit you down, and we will talk presently about what concerns you, even more than me. At present I must hear out our Señor *cura*† here, who is come for his share of our earnings:”

“Which belongs to us by divine-right,” immediately added the priest, who held in his hand a cash-book, in which there was an exact inventory of the amount of the farmer’s seeds, grains, and

* *Tio* means literally *uncle*; but this appellation is given to the peasants in most parts of Spain, and particularly in Castile.

† Curate, or parish priest.

all other fruits of the farm, of which he demanded the tenth, even to the last fraction, without discounting the expences of sowing, reaping, manuring, labour, conveyance, and a thousand other disbursements—"for," continued he, "as one of our wisest kings (our present excepted) said, in speaking of the tithes—"this is the word, because it is the tenth part of every thing which must be given, and hence the Christians lay it always aside; and the Saints, who spoke of it, shewed by as many reasons as they could, that men ought to give the tenth part of everything, rather than any other number; because, in the first place, our God created ten orders of angels, one of which having, on account of their pride, fallen, he wished to complete it from the lineage of men; and, in the second, because our God gave to Moses ten commandments, which he ordered should be kept, that men should live well with each other, and abstain from committing those sins which he condemns; and thereby meet with no evil hereafter. But there is yet another reason why men should give the tenth

part, and it is, because of the ten senses God gave them, to enable them to perform all their works, to preserve and better themselves, to act wisely, and keep scrupulously the ten commandments of the law, so that by following the humility of our Lord Jesus Christ, they shall merit to obtain that place which the tenth order of angels lost by their pride.* Such are the very words of one whose great wisdom is proverbial, and who besides was a king. Without therefore bringing Latin texts from the scriptures, which you don't understand, to support these reasons, I shall only mention one or two cases, that happened when I was vicar in a village of Galicia, and which prove how dangerous it is to withhold from the holy ministers of our mother church the premises due to her."

These last words seemed to be addressed

* *Don Alphonso the Wise, Tit. XX. part. I.* In this ingenious piece of reasoning, his majesty shows, that he learned mathematics and astronomy to some purpose. It is laughable to observe, how he reduces everything to numbers; but still more so, that he should have doubled the number of senses to answer his purpose better.

principally to tia Agustina, the farmer's wife, who having given her directions to Francisco, as she had been desired by her lord and master, had immediately returned to listen to the priest's discourse, unwilling to lose any part of it; for besides having the reputation of being the village devotee, which it was incumbent upon her to preserve, she was always very much edified by the little stories with which the Señor Cura was in the habit of embellishing his exhortations. In order, therefore, not to lose the best part of the priest's speech, she turned sharply round to the children to command silence; but the latter, who had seized on Sandoval's military hat, sword, and whip, as soon as their first surprise had passed, and who were now amusing themselves as noisily as they could; the one who had obtained possession of the hat, making profound bows to the company, and mimicking the priest's speech, another riding on the sword as hard as he could, and the third running after him cracking his whip, and hallooing as loudly as his little lungs per-

mitted, did not seem at all inclined to comply with their mother's desire. This produced an altercation between the contending parties, during which the mother was obliged to have recourse to her distaff, with which she succeeded in arguing them out of the room; after which she re-entered, and sat down to hear the rest of the priest's discourse.

“ You must know, tia Agustina,” resumed the priest, “ that there was a wicked sinner in a village of Galicia, of which I was vicar, so little conscientious, so lost to God and his saints, that in measuring the corn for the church, he made use of false measures to cheat her of her due. This horrible fraud God permitted for half a dozen times, though not without some warnings, such as frightful dreams, and little fits of illness; still the sinner attempted it a seventh time, when one of his eyes started at least an inch and a half from its socket; and on the eighth time he committed the deadly sin, the other did the same; but will you believe that he took no warning from such a marked testimony of God's

wrath, and that he attempted the fraud a ninth time? Yet such was the fact, but horrible was the punishment! for suddenly his tongue was seen hanging nearly a foot out of his mouth, and in this horrific state he remained, exhibiting a frightful spectacle to the world, until he restored to the church what he had so sacrilegiously withheld from her. The other case," continued he, "is no less affecting. A husbandman had a vineyard and a daughter. She was as fair as a May flower, and the vineyard as productive as a man could well wish. When the vintage came, the father formed the wicked intention of sending no tithes to the *lagar** belonging to the church, and, horrible to relate, on the day of the vintage he found the whole vineyard dried up, and his beautiful daughter a lifeless corpse beneath one of the vines! His despair may be imagined; he ran distractedly about the country, and climbing up to the summit of a high rock, sought the most precipi-

* The place where the grapes are pressed.

tous side, and taking a furious leap, dashed himself into the yawning abyss below. Thus does God punish the defrauder of our mother church in this world. And not only in this, for in the next the eternal flames shall make the very marrow of his bones boil within them, and burn without being consumed. As for yourselves, my dear parishioners, I need not recommend you to act like good Christians, and send the premises to the village as soon and as exactly as the church commands; for I am sure you will do it of your own good will, and from your strong sense of Christian duty."

Saying this, he took his large round hat, gave his hand to the little brats who had stolen into the room again, and now skulked down on their knees to kiss it, wrapped himself up in his ample black cloak, and with a "May God pour out on you all his blessings," walked out of the house with becoming gravity of demeanour, accompanied as far as the door by the honest landlord, who immediately after re-entered the room, shaking his head and saying,

“Aye, I could have sworn he would not leave in the inkstand* his everlasting stories of heavenly visitations on those who keep a few handfuls of their own corn, or a few bunches of their own grapes; and I’ll wager anything, that next week he’ll honour us again with a visit to treat about the tenth of the fowls, chickens, and eggs, of the swine, sheep, and lambs, of the oxen, cows, and calves of the”

Here a salutation of “*Deo Gratias*,” at the door interrupted the tio Hipolito’s discourse, and presently a Franciscan friar, with his grey frock, large girdle, with a rosary suspended to it round his waist, the beans of which were almost the size of eggs, and a round straw hat equal in shape and size to a good large parasol, made his appearance. He had on his shoulder a pair of *alforjas*,† and on his left arm an empty sack. “Good morning, sister Agustina,” said he, walking up to her, and sitting in the

* *Dejar en el tintero*, leave in the inkstand, or to forget.

† Saddle bags.

arm-chair with all the authority of an humble servant of God. " Good morning, gentlemen. Hard times, these, sister Agustina, for our poor community. I know not how it happens, but the faithful seem to hang back in their alms to our convent, and our poverty is extreme this year. Only think, our Reverend Father, Alonso, your venerable father Confessor, went yesterday without his chocolate in the morning, because the pious lady who furnished him usually with a few pounds of it, dying the other day, no one has had the kindness to remember that he still remains in this world. Poor holy man! how dejected he looked! He was so distressed, that he could not go to the Confessional, as he always does, so that I fear we shall soon lose him."

The tia Agustina was much moved at this pathetic account. She immediately got up, and opening a large chest, which occupied a corner of the room, took out of it six cakes of chocolate, weighing an ounce each, and putting them into the friar's hand, said, " There, brother,

give that to his Reverence, and tell him he shall hear from me before they are out, and that I hope he will include me in his prayers."

"That he will, and you may depend on it," said the friar, taking the cakes and thrusting them into his wide sleeve. "The prayers, penances, and floggings of the brethren have been very beneficial this year to the crops; for I am informed the abundance of corn was very great, and as I am come to fetch the alms for our convent, perhaps you will serve me now, for I have at the door the donkey to convey them, and as I have already said, the community being much distressed, they would be glad of a double ration, for which you will reap a double harvest next year."

"Why, brother," said the tio Hipolito, "who was the wag who informed you of this year's abundance? I'll wager he was no proprietor of corn himself, or at least he feared not your frequent applications, else he would not have told such a palpable falsehood. Why,

there is almost a famine in the province for want of it."

"I'll tell you a good joke with which our father lecturer treated us the other day at the refectory, and which suits the present occasion to a hair," said the friar, with a broad grin. "He was reading the life of Saint Patrick, and when he came to that part when the crow brings him his daily loaf, he drew back his cowl, and scratching his head, said, "Brethren, would to God our faithful would all turn crows, for, hang me if I have seen this year as much as a loaf from one of them, ha! ha! ha!"

This joke, which, in the friar's opinion, was excellent and apropos, shamed the landlady out of a couple of loaves, which he, on receiving, put into his bags; after which he walked to the middle of the room, stood beneath a little hole in the ceiling, and opening the mouth of the sack, fixed his eyes on the hole, and said in a waggish tone—"Let me see if I can perform a miracle. Now, tio Hipolito, walk upstairs,

and let it rain corn, I'll make you the god of that element, ah, ah, ah !”

The tio Hipolito shrugged up his shoulders, and walking upstairs, poured through the hole a *fanega** of corn, which the friar examined carefully, to see if it were of the best.—“ Sister Agustina,” said he, turning himself to her, “ when I am dead, come to my shrine, for if while I am alive I perform miracles like these, what must I do when I am in God's holy keeping ?”

“ 'Tis not quite certain he'll take you into his holy keeping,” said the tio Hipolito, who re-entered as the friar spoke, “ there is *Pero Botero* too, who now and then insists on having his due, and he may perhaps put in his claim for you.”

“ A pinch for that,” said the friar, grinning and stretching out his hand, in which he held a wooden snuff-box. Then addressing tia Agustina, he added,—“ is there not in your cellar

* A measure of about an hundred weight.

a glass of the old friend, for the poor brother to wet his lips with? eh?"

It was now the landlady's turn to serve. She left the room with a sanctified smile, and soon after returned with a tumbler containing half a pint of wine. The friar took it from her, and quaffed the wine off with a single jerk of the hand,—“Good,” said he, loudly smacking his lips, “I'll bet a rosary that the tio Hipolito will not forget to send his skinful to the convent this year!—But now, lend me a hand to put this sack on my donkey's back, for by Saint Francis! you are an honest man tio Hipolito, and you have given me here a good measure.”

This said, the farmer took the sack on his shoulders and carried it outside the door, where a fine large donkey was patiently waiting the brother's return with another sackful of corn upon its back, while the friar took out a handful of well handled dried raisins from his sleeve, and distributed them among the children; after which chucking the landlady under the chin, he said in a cajoling manner—“God bless you,

sister Agustina, Let me see you soon at the farm yonder, my jewel;" after which, the poor brother took up his bags, walked out of the house, saw the donkey properly loaded, and taking up his pliant switch, laid it across the ass's back, and commenced his march to the next neighbour's house to have the rest of the sack filled.

"By my soul," said the tio Hipolito, on returning to the room, "that friar is as errant a rogue as ever drank wine. He has always some misfortunes and some jokes to tell, and never remembers that he comes begging; but says roundly, he comes to fetch the alms for his convent. The worst of it is, you cannot get rid of him by saying—'there is nothing for you to-day, brother,' or by bestowing on him a rusty farthing—No, he must have his sack half full, or else, God protect us! we should soon be assailed by the whole community, and lose more than the *fanega* I have bestowed. Thus the sack goes backwards and forwards from the village to the convent, and from the convent to the village, till their granaries are pretty well

stored for the year, and no wonder that their superior says on seeing themselves so well provided against a famine,—‘Providence watches over our chosen flock.’”

“But, husband,” said the tia Agustina, looking very sanctified, “we have their prayers in return; and I suspect that were it not for their floggings, dearths and hail-storms would be more frequent than they are; as you must recollect, they said they were during the time that that strumpet the Constitution* reigned, because their prayers were not so frequent.”

“Tut, tut, wife!” exclaimed the tio Hipolito, “will you sooner believe what they say, than what you saw? For my part, I saw no difference in those times from others, and the land yielded quite as much when proper pains were bestowed on it. But where is our young Captain?—Ah,

* The tia Agustina, in bestowing this unhandsome appellation on the Constitution, said only that which many of their class had been taught to believe, the friars having impressed them with the idea that the Constitution was a woman; more wicked and dissipated than Maria Louisa, the queen of Charles IV.

there he is in the corner, deeply absorbed in meditation. I would fain know all about him and his father, God bless him! for the many good turns he did me, when he was our deputy, —yet I would not disturb him neither.”

“*Ave Maria Purissima,*” cried a deep and solemn voice at the door of the house, to which the tia Agustina immediately replying, “*Sin pecado concebida,*” there entered another friar, tall and thick-set, dressed in a chocolate coloured habit, with a frightful large conic hood, and a beard hanging down to his waist. He saluted with a nod the farmer and his wife, and with downcast eyes and melancholy voice commenced a pitiful tale of the difficulties in which his brethren the Capuchin friars were involved, on account of the scarcity felt every where, which of course was still greater among themselves. “You know,” added he, “that the rules of our holy founder do not allow us to touch money, therefore, I come to beg in provisions the trifle of half a bushel of corn from you; as otherwise it would be impossible for us to make a Nove-

nary to your patron Saint, or place on the altar the relic of Saint Anthony for any of our charitable sisters, when she has lost a lap dog, or a fan, or when she wishes to have any of her teeth drawn, or to be delivered without much labour, or have a son instead of a daughter."

In this way he went on recounting miracles and miseries, till he got his half bushel of corn, and a bottle of brandy to boot, for brother Anselmo who, he said, was very ill in the infirmary on account of the penance he had been practising to bring on the province God's blessing, and an abundant vintage. However, before he went, he gave the children, in exchange for their parents' kindness to the convent, some little prints of the Saint of the last Novenary, which they immediately stuck up against the walls of the room, beside many others which already decorated them, a present with which the tia Agustina seemed more than satisfied; for she cast a look on her husband in which one could plainly read—"have we not cheated his Reverence? How can he leave so

many sanctified prints for half a bushel of corn!"

No sooner had this frater made his exit, than a squeaking voice was heard at the door calling for sister Agustina.—“By our lady of Saragoza!” exclaimed the tio Hipolito with ruffled brows, we shall have to-day the visit of every vagabond in the province. This is the voice of brother Motilon,* the messenger from the nuns of Saint Brigida, who comes again to-day to teaze us with his eternal begging. But this comes of the blessing of having a devout wife. In God’s name give him what he wants once for all, and let us be rid of him.”

At these words the lay brother came in with his saddle bags on his shoulders, and, without any long speeches or compliments, said plainly, that he came to beg the new baked tortas† for the poor sisters, the jar of honey for sister Sin-

* Motilon means a lay brother, whose hair is cropt short, and has no crown like those in orders.

† Loaves made of the best flour, and with milk instead of water.

forosa, and the six yards of linen cloth for the mother vicaress, who had instructed him to say, "that she longed very much to hansom the home-made linen, and that every day she waited seemed to her an age."

The brother motilon's requests being satisfied, he withdrew; but, unlike his predecessors, he bestowed nothing on the boys, who, expecting at least some rosquillas* from the nuns, which they suspected he had eaten by the way, shewed their disapprobation of such greedy conduct, by following him to the door; hallooing after him the following extempore apostrophe—

Fraila motilon,
Cabeza de melon,
Eres tan comilon
Por ser hijo de cabron. †

The devout mother crossed herself half a dozen times at hearing these cries, and, seizing

* Sweet cakes.

† Brother motilon, head of a melon, thou art a greedy one, because thou art the son of a buck.

her distaff, was proceeding to punish them with the severity such an offence seemed to require, when the father, who began to be displeased with these repeated visits, stepped forward, and ordered her to go and sit down and say her rosary, as he would not have his children punished for telling the truth.

“Father, father!” shouted the boys as they re-entered, “here comes another brother. He has a white habit on, and on the breast a red round thing, like the arms we see in the large silver money, with a white cross over it on a red patch.* So fine!”

“Some mercenary friar, I’ll engage,” said the tipu Hipolito, in an impatient tone, “the devil take them all! A few more visits like these, and we shall all go, soon enough, begging our bread too.”

“Who is the hard-hearted sinner,” cried

* An escutcheon with the arms of Aragon, and the white cross in a field gules, worn by the Mercenaries, an order instituted by Jayme, king of Aragon, for the redemption of captives.

the friar, who had heard the last words of tio Hipolito, as he entered, "who can refuse his mite to better the sad lot of our brethren the captives of Algiers, who have been more than two centuries pining in those subterraneous dungeons, without any other hope of getting out than what is sent there by the father solicitor of the Mercenaries? Shall the faithful hesitate a moment in bestowing a dollar, or so, to Father Bernardo Pingue, who has been commissioned by the fraternity to go and bargain with the Moors? Go to our convent, and look there at the quantity of fetters, handcuffs, and chains, which hang about the walls, and which have been worn by some of those unhappy sufferers. Poor men! expect not your deliverance yet; for Christians have of late become so depraved, that they think a dollar mis-spent which is bestowed for your redemption."

"Hark, you, brother," cried the tio Hipolito angrily, "I have not a real to give, much less a dollar; but had I a million, hang me, if you should even get a sight of a marvedi. What!

think you I am such a gull as to be fooled by your fetters and chains? Shew me the man who has been ransomed for these forty years back. Zounds! a likely story that of the poor sufferers, who have pined in the deep subterraneous dungeons for more than two centuries! Maybe you want to bring home their bones, or what is more likely, to leave our own as bare as those of the captives who died two centuries ago."

The friar seemed a little disconcerted at the justice of the honest landlord's speech; but, recovering his assurance, immediately said—
"Why, man, you are the most matter-of-fact thick-headed simpleton I ever met. How would you have me speak? Must I not be permitted to use an hyperbole now and then? To be sure ransoming is no longer practised; but what of that?—Are there not plenty of benevolent monks, who deign to collect for themselves what the faithful give for that pious purpose? Well! how should we live otherwise, think you?"

“By working as I do,” replied the tio Hipolito; “but I suppose that your community like my landlords, the monks of the desert,—who even this morning came to demand their rent with their usual gentleness and forbearance, threatening they would cause me to be thrown into prison, sequester even my bed, and leave my family the heavens for a canopy, if I did not pay them within four-and-twenty hours,—threats which they would soon enough have carried into execution, had the temporal lordship of the manor been in their hands; for then I should have been dragged before their own tribunal, and have been completely at their mercy, unless, indeed, my daughter Rosa, or my wife, would have interceded with them in my behalf, making such trifling sacrifices as are hardly worth mentioning—I suppose, I say, that you, like those good fathers, though enjoined by your institute to earn your bread by your own labour, have likewise discovered that it is more easy and convenient to have the neighbouring lay-men to work for you, than your

hands should grow thick-skinned by manual labour ; and that, like them, you imagine, that it is impossible to raise one's soul to heaven, when the body is bent by hard labour ; and moreover, that it is not absolutely necessary for you to walk on foot with the spade on the shoulder, when it costs you nothing to go and see the journeymen work in the fields, mounted on mules like dromedaries ? And by our Lady of Mercy ! so it is ; but since you enjoy these advantages, why come you here with your impositions to draw from the poor farmers' pockets the little money which they so much need, to gratify the covetousness of your other brethren ?”

The tone of bitter irony, and the palpable truths that this discourse contained, completely silenced the impudence of the friar,—“ Well, brother,” said he after a pause, “ I see you are grown a *liberal*, and we must not expect you will either assist our community, or listen to the dictates of our holy religion, which enjoins the faithful laymen to assist its ministers, who can-

not both be on their knees praying for you in the choir, and working in the fields."

"Chaff, brother, chaff," returned the farmer, contemptuously, "I am no more a liberal than you are a Jew; but you must needs give every man who now-a-days speaks the truth some opprobrious name or other. All are liberals, jacobins, freemasons, infidels, and the like, who do not fill your pouches when called upon to do so.—Sit you down, if you are tired, and welcome to a glass of wine, if you are thirsty, and to a dish of eggs and ham, if you be hungry; but as for money, I have none to give you."

The friar, who still hoped to wring his dollar from the farmer's pocket, by changing his notes from the insolent and imperative into the supplicating tone, availed himself of this invitation, and sitting down with an air of diffidence and humility, commenced a doleful tale of the unheard of sufferings, which their predecessors had endured in Africa, to redeem from captivity the poor Christians, and which he concluded,

entitled their successors to the gratitude of the world. Meantime the tia Agustina was frying him a dish of ham and eggs in the kitchen, to which she, impelled by pious and charitable motives, added a couple of sausages, to give the bottle of wine, with which the friar was to wash them down, a better relish; and having performed her part with much skill and diligence, she summoned him thither, where he did honour to her cooking in such a gallant manner, as could be expected only from an humble servant of the church. On finishing his meal, the landlady put slyly into his hand half-a-dollar, and whispered into his ear—"Take that for the community, and let them pray that my daughter Rosa may be inspired with a vocation to be a nun, and my boys monks."

"Your pious request shall be attended to," said the monk, thrusting the money into his sleeve, and giving her a little copper medal of our Lady of the Mercy to deck her rosary with; after which he got up, and left the farm, giving

a distant nod to tio Hipolito, and, "the blessing of God" to tia Agustina.

"Now, Captain," said the honest farmer to Sandoval, who still occupied his seat in the corner, from which he had been able to observe unnoticed the scenes we have described, which had afforded him subject both for amusement and serious reflection, "come forward, and let us have a little chat on what interests you and me; for I trust we shall not be intruded upon by any more of those begging monks."

Sandoval was on the point of rising from his seat, when the father, who had performed the last missions, and tilled the vine of the Lord, with his sleeves tucked up to the elbows, and a crucifix half a yard long, made his appearance at the door. "God of mercy!" exclaimed the tio Hipolito, starting back as if he had seen a demon; "have the gates of hell been thrown open this morning, that so many devils visit us to-day? God forgive me for saying so; but the patience of Job itself would have been ex-

hausted long before now. First, the brothers of the desert, then the parish priest, afterwards a Franciscan, then a Capuchin, next brother Motilon, behind him a Mercenarian, now the missionary, and God and the devil knows who shall be next. Yet, if this happened only once a year, we might bear up with it good-humouredly, but, zounds ! they take their monthly rounds, as if the corn grew in my barns, the wine in my cellars, hams, sausages, and eggs in my kitchen, and silver and gold in my purse."

"What is the matter with the man?" said the father missionary, addressing himself to tia Agustina, "is he not glad to see me?"

"God forbid that he should not, father," said the pious tia Agustina, who, remembering the hallooings of his Reverence when he last preached at the village church, and the sighs and groans of the elderly part of the audience on that occasion, was afraid he should again conjure up with his thundering voice all the

devils from the dark abodes, and reveal the flames of the fearful abyss itself.*”

“Then what makes him angry?” enquired the father, in a more insinuating tone than when he came on his last mission, conscious, no doubt, that his present errand in search of a bushel of corn required a different language from that which he used in the pulpit on the above occasion. “God knows, that as I have no occasion for money,” continued he, “I shall ask him for none. The trifle of a bushel of corn is all I shall demand, as he must be aware that the toils of the missionaries for the good of

* It is the custom with these missionaries to play such pranks, during their missions, as would disgrace even a mountebank. Among others is that of dipping their hand into a spirituous composition, and applying a light to it, which ignites the spirit without burning the flesh, the blue flame of which they pretend to have taken from that which burns the damned in hell. If Prometheus was chained to Mount Caucasus, and condemned to have his liver perpetually gnawed by a vulture for stealing fire from heaven, what punishment will Lucifer prepare for those modern *thieves* in every sense of the word?

souls entitle them to be, at least, supported by the faithful."

"And who will support me, if to-morrow I am reduced to beggary, which by the way is more probable than impossible with such frequent visitations to my granary?" said the tio Hipolito; "do you think I should bring home such copious alms as your paternity carried to your convent when you returned from your mission; or that I should be entertained in the best houses, and eat and drink as you did on that occasion? Would your community give to me, or to any of my family, I do not say a bushel, but a handful of corn?"

"We possess nothing in the world but what the faithful bestow," said the friar; "therefore, you could not expect we should assist you or any of your family; but God who is above never abandons his creatures, particularly when they have shewn, in prosperity, the spirit of Christian charity, and assisted his holy ministers with their alms."

In this strain the father expatiated, till tio

Hipolito, who had never been very fond of long sermons, and who perceived that by delaying to satisfy his Reverence, he would only protract what he so much dreaded, was compelled to measure him a bushel of corn, and ask his blessing to get rid of him, which was accordingly done.

“Tio Hipolito,” said Sandoval, when the father missionary had made his exit, “these are the blessings arising from the existence of those monstrous institutions which our last Cortes had so judiciously done away with. It is infamous that such men as have visited you to-day, all robust and able-bodied, should be feeding upon you like so many caterpillars, eating away that which might enable your children to obtain a good education, and to establish themselves comfortably in life, and thus become more useful and valuable members of society, than there is a prospect they will ever be while they are thus shamefully robbed of their means, and left beggars at their cradle.”

The tio Hipolito, who, like many other

honest farmers of that epoch, disliked the word Constitution, without knowing why, though evidently because he had been taught to hate it before he had had an opportunity of finding out the advantages, which its existence could not have failed to produce to his industrious class, muttered something against it, but on the whole assented to the truth of Sandoval's proposition.

No sooner, however, have the clerical Vampires done with their respective exactions, than the secular ones make their appearance to collect the taxes for their royal master. What a fine opportunity would it be for the humourist to observe the countenances of the notary, and the aguacil, with his long switch in hand, (the symbol of mercy), and his busy importance of look and action! How they make the farmer tremble before them! the poor fellow knows to a certainty where he is to pass the night. Chairs, tables, bedding, and wardrobe all go either through the door or window, no matter which, to be sold by auction, and defray the direct taxes; and when this storm has blown

over, then come the expences of irrigation, though his fields were dried up; those of a field keeper, though his grounds were levelled before the harvest, by the horses and hounds of any man who chose, not only to hunt in, but make a race course of them; those of a deputy, sent by the inhabitants of the village to Madrid, to be their client in a suit against the curate, and the expences and costs of the same, in which, of course, the village is always nonsuited; the duties on salt, cod-fish, tobacco, and other articles farmed out by the government, to extort between one and two hundred per cent. from the people; those on the *alcabala*, or per centage on various things sold; those on wine and meat, called *sisá*; those on straw and agricultural implements, and, in a word, on every tangible thing in existence, which appear every year under a new name and surname, and are doubled and doubled again to infinity.

“But speaking of something else,” said the tío Hipolito, after various reflections on the abuses of church and state, “our Rosa, who on

your mother's death (may she rest in heaven), went to live at Don Antonio Lanza's as *doncella** to his daughter, sent us word yesterday, that, in consequence of some strange accidents which had happened to her Señorita since your arrival at Logroño, she was on the point of losing her altogether, and”

“How losing her?” interrupted the dismayed Sandoval anxiously, “explain for God's sake!”

“If you interrupt me,” said the tio Hipolito, “I don't see how I can; a little patience, and you shall know all in time. Well! as I was saying, our Rosa sent us word yesterday. . . .”

“You have said that already,” interrupted our hero again impatiently, “go on to say what she meant by losing her. Is she so ill then that there is no hope of her living? Ah! I thought she was not well, when I saw her last; her pale cheeks, and that long swoon into which she fell, foreboded too clearly she could not live long— And yet, great God! I could do her the injustice

* Hand-maid, or lady's maid.

to suspect her of having violated her promises and vows to me, when, perhaps I am the cause of her death! Alas, alas! I shall never survive this!"

"Well!" exclaimed the farmer, "have you done? A pretty *philosopher* (as they call you) who can never survive the loss of he knows not what! Who spoke of her being dying? She is as well in health as she ever was; but when Rosa spoke of losing her, she meant that her Señorita is either going away, or to be married, and she herself returning home."

"To be married!" repeated Sandoval, "to whom in God's name?"

"Not to you, you may be sure of that," returned the tio Hipolito, "for Rosa, says, that Doña Angela, will not have a word spoken about you; so that it must be to somebody else."

"By heavens!" cried Sandoval with his usual animation when such a subject was touched upon, "that shall not be as long as I have an arm to oppose it."

“That will be as God disposes,” said the tio Hipolito, “and I suspect you would not point a sword at your own brother’s breast, supposing he were the suitor.”

“My brother!” exclaimed Sandoval, starting back. “Are you sure of that?—Ah traitor! bane and disgrace of our family, destroyer of thy father’s peace of mind, and assassin of thy brother’s happiness, think not thou shalt escape my vengeance. By heaven thou shalt pay once for all thy villanies and treacherous arts.”

“*Ya escampa y llueven guijarros,*”* said the tio Hipolito. “I said your brother, merely to cool your anger a little, though my reasons for saying so rest only upon the very slender rumours that are afloat; and yet you explode as if you were a mine, and I had applied a match to you. But I suppose you are determined to show off your *philosophy*.”

* “At last the rain gives over, and it rains pebble stones,” a Spanish proverb, meaning, that instead of a man becoming calm and resigned by certain reasons, he grows more violent and outrageous.

“ I have no doubt that he is the suitor,—the traitor!—I knew it but too well—and I am a fool to be grieved at it—They are both unworthy my affection, and I have done with both,” said Sandoval waving his hand, and sitting down again, to think about it more deeply, and curse his fate more at leisure ; while the tio Hipolito, who observed how much he became absorbed in his own reflections, went away to assist his wife in preparing dinner, confident that the best cure for a heart affected with Sandoval disease must proceed from itself.

We shall also leave him to his meditations, and follow his servant Roque on the errand upon which his master had sent him.

CHAPTER. II.

—In soft speeches hypocrites impart
The venom'd ills that lurk beneath the heart ;
In friendship's holy guise their guilt improv'd,
And kindly kill with specious show of love.

LISLE—*The History of Porsenna.*

“ IF my master was born three-and-twenty years ago, it was because nature made a mistake. He no more belongs to our age than Don Quixote, for he is as stark-mad about love and liberty as the knight of La Mancha was about chivalry. Our last expedition, in every respect worthy of that valiant knight, shews that my master ought to have been born when that compeer of his played his pranks. The worst of it,

is, that the madness of the one could at worst only have led him to Bedlam, while that of the other is more likely to terminate at the gallows. And what will then become of Roque? will he find some Baratarian island to be governor of, or the oar of a galley-slave to pull at? The latter is more probable, if indeed he is not destined to decorate some of these trees, or a higher post in the public square. But be it as God disposes; I am bound to serve my master, and I shall stand by him in spite of swords and bullets, the gallows and the galleys, hangmen and devils."

Thus did Roque confabulate with himself, as he jogged on his way to the city, caring little whether his predictions were ever to prove true or not; but steady in his affection for his master, and in the attachment which Spanish servants pique themselves on displaying, not only for years, but for generations. By means of this they come to be looked upon more in the light of companions than menials in the family they serve, and treated with that kindness which

induces them to be as jealous of their masters interests as of their own, and to consider themselves in every respect identified with them.

Having reached the city gates, he asked the sentinel for Captain Don Fermin Sandoval's quarters.—“ You mean the Commandant, man. He lives in the great square, where you'll see a sentry posted,” said the soldier pacing up and down. “ But have you said your prayers ?” added he in a sarcastic tone, “ and can you say the Catechism ? for else I don't advise you to shew yourself there, if you love your shoulders, though they are broad enough for a couple of hundred, which might not sit badly on them neither.”

“ Thank you for your advice, friend ; but I have, even before now, been between the bull's horns,” replied Roque, pushing on towards an inn close by, where he left his nag, and then proceeded to the square, which he was not long in reaching.

As the market was held there, and as that happened to be the hour when people of all

classes repair to provide themselves with fruits, game, and poultry, it presented a scene of agreeable bustle. There might be seen ladies in their morning dishabille, with their long sable tresses floating on their shoulders, and a mantilla or light veil, half covering their oval faces, accompanied by their female attendants; the generality of them pretty brunettes, whose well formed persons, arrayed with becoming simplicity, are rendered more elegant by their tight-laced waists, and well-rounded bare arms, and whose rosy cheeks and roguish dark eyes attract the admiration and gallant compliments of the idle young men and gay soldiers, who throng the market for no other purpose, than that of seeking some assignation with their sweet-hearts, or perhaps the wish of varying their amusements. The sleek canon, the corpulent beneficiado, and the mendicant friar, who never misses a place where there is anything to be got, were also seen there, moving stately through the crowd, the two former either to look after their pretty nieces

and *amas*,* who often seize that opportunity to flirt with the beaux, *per variare la sua vita monotona*, or to select the best flavoured fruit and fatest game for their well stocked pantries ; and the latter to fill his bags at the expence of the charitable venders, and cut his vulgar jokes on the damsels who attend the market. But among this motley crowd, the busiest of all are those important personages, dressed in black, who wear powder in their hair, and a bag and pig-tail hanging behind, a three cornered hat, a short dress sword, with a highly wrought steel hilt, stuck at their side, and a small black rod in their hands, and who bustle about with all the importance of little men in office, to see that the prices of the articles sold do not exceed those which have been fixed upon at the Common Hall. These gentlemen are called Regidores,† and have the charge of rating every article that is publicly sold. Bread, meat,

* Housekeepers.

† Aldermen.

wine, fish, poultry, game, fruits, vegetables, all in a word must be rated by them, and cannot be sold under pain of a fine, payable to the alguaciles. For, who is the man so bold as to assert, that those gentlemen are not better judges of the prices which ought to be set on every production of the land, than even the gardeners or proprietors themselves? Where can the expences of labour, the loss of cattle, the drought and inundations of the lands, or whatever contributes to lower or raise the price of an article, be better appreciated than at the Common Hall? Does not one advantage, at least, result from this wise regulation; namely, that when the Regidores or their servants come to purchase for themselves, the venders instantly select the choicest article of their stock, and make them a present of it, merely to evince a little good breeding? It is true that the caprice and exactions of these gentlemen often occasion a scarcity; but in return, as there is no competition among the venders, they do not stun people with their discordant bawlings, and the gentry have the pleasure of seeing, that some

distinction is made between them and the rabble, who, unable to give the first price set on the articles, are obliged to content themselves with the refuse, which, by the way, is even too good for such ragamuffins.

Having thus satisfactorily proved the advantages and wisdom of a tarif on victuals, drawn up by the Regidores, we shall endeavour to follow through the crowd our friend Roque, who, as he stooped down to look at, and enquire the price of a basket, which might contain an *arroba** of peaches, each as large as an orange, † and for which the vender asked no less than four reals, ‡ he felt a smart pull at the short tail of his jacket, to which, however, he paid no attention, his eyes being too much engaged in the contemplation of the delightful spectacle before them, to be so easily diverted

* A Spanish weight of twenty-five pounds, of sixteen ounces each.

† This is no exaggeration, for in that province they are particularly fine, in great abundance, and very cheap.

‡ About ten-pence.

from it. But upon a second pull, which nearly laid him on his back, and on hearing the voice of a female saying—"Fool! why don't you look back? Are the peaches more worthy your attention than I am?" he looked around, and starting back with agreeable surprise, exclaimed,—"Good God! is it you? Rosa, my dear Rosa, soul of my soul, juice of my life, my best jewel, is it you, indeed, my beloved, my idol. . . ."

"Stuff, stuff," interrupted the interesting Rosa, pouting a very pretty little mouth at him, and casting her large black eyes on the ground with an expression of resentment, "your beloved, your idol, your jewel deceiver! Don't I know that you arrived in town more than ten days ago, and never came near me once?—and yet you come here with your deceit!—But let me tell you, that if I stop to speak to you now, it is only to let you know that I don't care a fig about you, and that you may go back to France or Flanders as soon as you like; for I will have nothing to say to such a worthless fellow as you

are—And yet, on your account, wretch! only the other day, I refused an offer from tio Periquillo, the miller, who, I am sure, is worth twenty like you, and loves me better too.”

“Tis false,” said Roque, stoutly, more so perhaps than politely; but the charge of indifference angered him a little, when he felt conscious that he had been as true and loving to her, as a Dutchman to his bottle. “I’ll tell you what, if you take things in that strain, without even listening to what I have to say, you may return to me what I have given you, and here,” (taking from his neckcloth a large silver-gilt ring, with some green stones, which fastened the ends of it) “is all you ever gave me, and which I have kept, as if it were part of my heart, in war and in peace, in Spain and in France, loved or despised. Here, take it, and let us be even. Zounds! a pretty reception this!”

Rosa looked more angry than abashed, and had it not been for the place, her first impulse would have been to take the ring and fling it at

his face ; but as it was, she was obliged to content herself with saying,—“ And will you be barefaced enough to say that you have not been more than ten days in town ?”

“ I'll say the truth, and say no. We left the town on the second day after our arrival, and I have just this moment returned. This is as true as I am Roque, and you may believe it or not, but such is the fact.”

“ Ah, Roque, you don't deceive me, do you ?” enquired she with a softer tone of voice, and an imploring look ; “ but why did you not come and see me when you arrived ?”

“ Because,” replied Roque, replacing the ring in the neckerchief, “ I am no conjuror to guess where you had gone to, and I could find no time to go to your father's farm and enquire it. Are you contented ?”

“ I must be contented with what you say, Roque ; but if I find you have deceived me, I'll tear your eyes out, burn everything you have given me, and forget you for ever.”

“ And I give you leave to do so too, my

pretty wench," returned he, "but come, let me carry your basket, my little heart."

"I won't, for I have not made it up with you yet."

"How now?" enquired Roque; but before she had time to reply, she caught a glance of his Reverence, Father Toribio Lobo, the family Confessor, and she hurried away as fast as a timid hare at seeing the hounds close at its heels, forbidding Roque to follow her if he loved her, and did not wish to expose her to some unpleasant consequences. The agitated yet decided manner with which she commanded it, had the same effect on him as a curb on an impatient and spirited horse; it checked his steps, but he bit his lips and darted first to one side then to another, and then again backwards and forwards, unable to understand why he should not follow her. "There is some mystery in this," said he to himself, "but let me have done with my message, and I'll sift it to the bottom."

He then proceeded to the house occupied by

Don Fermin Sandoval, which was one of the best in the square, and where he was obliged to wait the Commandant's return from church; for, as he was informed by one of the soldiers on guard, he had gone to confess, and receive communion, "which, by the bye," added the informant, "is a thing he does once a week, such is his great devotion."

"He was very devout before he entered the army," said Roque, "but I am surprised he should continue so, even now when he has so many gay companions around him."

"I don't think," said the soldier, "he associates much with any of them; on the contrary, I observe he keeps as much aloof from them all as if he held them unholy. So, while they never let a day pass without frequenting the billiard-tables, the promenades, the balls, the theatre, and every place where amusement is to be found, he is seen wandering about in lonely paths, roving by the moonlight along the water side, or among the ruins of that monastery on

the other side of the Ebro, or else closeted in his own apartment, without receiving a human being, save his father Confessor. Some say that he is an hypochondriac, others that religion has turned his brain, others, again, that it is his father's exile that makes him melancholy, and others, that he is deeply in love. I don't know who is most near the mark, but certain it is, that some deep grief preys on his heart and disturbs his mind. We have only to look at his care-worn countenance, to discover that he is far from being either happy or contented."

Whilst Roque was thus listening to what the soldier said; the sentinel presented arms, and Fermin Sandoval entered, accompanied by Father Lobo. Roque was on the point of stepping forward to demand an interview, but the soldier stopped him, saying he had better wait till the father had left the Commandant, as he never suffered any one to speak to him while his Reverence was with him. Roque took the hint, and sat down again to continue his conver-

sation with the soldier, in whose company we shall leave him, to follow the father and his penitent up-stairs.

“How do you feel now, my son?” said the monk, on reaching Fermin’s apartment, and seating himself in an arm chair by an escritoire. “Has the spiritual advice administered this morning to you been of service in quieting those restless thoughts which have of late agitated you so much?—But sit down my son, do not stand on my account.”

Fermin bowed low, and sitting down, leant his left arm on the chair, and rested his head on his hand. “Father,” said he, in a tremulous voice, and casting his eyes on the ground, “my heart is far from being at ease. Your advice I *must* follow, for obedience requires it of me; but, as I am also bound to say the truth on all occasions, (save on those when the interests of our mother church imperatively command the contrary) I will not hesitate in avowing that I am *not* convinced by your reasonings.”

“My son,” said the monk, “you are not convinced by them, because the spiritual grace, which alone opens men’s intellect to the light of truth, and to the great mysteries of our holy religion, has not yet been vouchsafed to you; but do not expect it while you repose more confidence in your own weak and fallible judgment than in the words of one, who, though as great a sinner as yourself, has been admitted to the communion of saints, and judged worthy of expounding God’s own words.”

Fermin sighed, and was silent—“Faith, faith, in the words of the ministers of our mother church, and blind obedience to their dictates, alone, can bring God’s grace on Christian man,” continued the monk. “If I have recommended that you should use all your influence with Gabriela, to induce her to follow her parents’ commands, it is because I am convinced, that it is for the good of her soul. As long as she remains in her present state, as yet probably of venial sin, but which by one step further may become mortal, there is no hope of

her being saved. Compulsion, therefore, must be resorted to, to bring her into the right path, and a convent is the only harbour where she will find shelter against all human temptations. Besides," added he, rising from his chair and gently tapping him on the shoulder, as he bent his head to whisper it into his ear, "who knows but she may, during her noviciate, change from a guilty to a virtuous affection, and fix it on an object worthy of being loved?—Opportunities shall not be wanting to persuade her to it, I promise you."

Fermin turned suddenly his head, and looked with earnestness and astonishment at the monk. —"What do you mean, father?" said he, agitatedly. "I never said I." Here he hesitated.

"Loved her, you would add," said the monk. "Come, my son, come, in vain would you strive to hide the secret from me. I know, it is true, little of these things, and, thanks to heaven! I do know so little of such worldly profanations; but the light of heaven often

enables the ministers of religion to penetrate into the inmost recesses of the heart, and I can see the cancer that feeds on yours. Understand, however, that I do not blame you for it, my son. Would to God she would do justice to your virtuous sentiments!—but it was sinful, it was irreligious, to conceal from your father Confessor such thoughts as those which agitated you, for even if it had not been in his power to remedy the evil, he might have found means to sooth its bitterness.”

These words seemed to strike awe and terror into Fermin's soul; he clasped the monk's hands in agony, and exclaimed, his eyes filling with tears—“Oh, father! forgive me, forgive me. That was the secret of my heart, and if I kept it from you, it was because I hoped to conquer it in time,—nay, father, I still hope to do so. I will not, for the sake of securing my happiness, sacrifice that of my brother—no, not were I even to gain by it every earthly blessing.”

“In this case such generous sentiments are

childish and unbecoming," said the monk in a cold scornful manner, "they can benefit nobody; for it is settled,—your brother must not have Gabriela, though I am not sure if you. . . . but no matter—for, as you say, your brother's happiness must be considered before yours. Yet, mark what I say.—You have an influence on Gabriela's mind; she persists in not yielding to her parents' commands—this is a sin, and to you I entrust the care of making her sensible of its enormity.* This, I, as your spiritual guide, demand and expect from you."

"Father!" said Firmin meekly, but firmly, "I feel all the importance of such a trust, and cannot take its responsibility upon me. To abet in reducing Gabriela to a condition which may render her miserable for life,—to be the chief promoter of my brother's despair, are in my eyes crimes, which I must not be guilty of."

The monk's eyes flashed fire at hearing this declaration. He could hardly restrain his passion; but checking it as much as he could,

said—"Hear, young man, what I have to say on this subject. Gabriela's salvation was entrusted by her parents to my care; your brother is an infidel, and while I live he shall not become her husband. A convent shall screen her from his attempts, and the wrath of heaven shall fall on your head, if you aid in preventing my purpose. This is all I have to say, and I now leave you to yourself."

Saying this, he pulled his cowl over his eyes, and proceeded towards the door.—"Stay, father, stay," cried Fermin, clasping one of his sleeves, and dropping one knee on the ground, "for God's sake, leave me not in anger. I told you before, I would do all I could to obey you, and my word shall be kept. I take God to witness that I am sincere—I am repentant, father."

"Then God forgive thee, my son, and thou hast my blessing," said the monk, in a softened tone of voice, and tendering his hand to kiss; after which he immediately withdrew, leaving his wretched penitent in a much more agitated

state than he found him.—“Sinner that I am,” said he, pacing the room rapidly, “what could possibly induce me to keep from father Lobo a secret which I had no interest in keeping? I complain of enjoying no peace of mind, of feeling a disgust for the pleasures of life, and almost a hatred for existence; but how can it be otherwise? Had I done my duty as a Christian, and made a competent confession, it is likely I should not have felt so sick at heart as I now do—nay, who knows, but, as he said, he might have found the means of softening my miseries. . . . Perhaps of doing that which I dare not do myself—letting Gabriela know how deeply, how sincerely. . . . But no, no, it shall not be.—She shall not know it.—I will not stand in the way of my brother’s happiness; and if she cannot be his, I will not add to his misery, by either forcing her inclinations, or seducing her affections from him. Father Lobo may put his plans into execution, I shall not oppose them; but neither shall I assist in reducing

her to a condition, which, however holy in itself, may render her miserable for life."

Though a fanatic in religious matters, Fermin was high minded and generous. While making those resolutions, a tapping at the door announced somebody waiting outside.—“Come in,” said he, turning his head towards the door.—“Ah, my good fellow, Roque, is it you? Welcome, my friend. Where have you left my brother?”

“As every body in town looked upon us as if we had been men affected with leprosy,” replied Roque, “we have been wandering about the country, till at last that good man, tio Hipolito, having more honesty and more gratitude than most of the town folks, has received my master under his roof; and I am here with a message from him, to request you would favour him with a call at the farm; for his mind is sorely disturbed about I know not what.”

“I hope he does not think me unkind?” said Fermin.

“I cannot think you unkind,” replied Roque,

presuming, as he was often in the habit of doing, to answer the question for his master; "but what in the name of Jerémiás prevented you from coming to see us on our arrival in town, when no sooner we set our feet in your father's house than we were requested by your soldiers to leave it almost at the point of the bayonet; and when we found neither father nor mother, mistress or friend to receive us, or care whether we slept in the street, or starved for want of money to buy a loaf of bread? Was that kind, think you? And at such a time too!"

"You must not judge harshly of me, Roque," said Firmin, visibly affected, "imperious circumstances, which I cannot explain, compelled me to act against my wishes, and even now I shall not be able to do all my heart desires. I will, however, go and see my brother, and do you tell him what I have said; for I would not have him think me his enemy. No, I love him, in spite of his principles, as sincerely as brother ever loved, and though my king and my religion have a right to be offended at it."

“I respect and love you as much as I ever did,” said Roque, “but, hang me, if you are not as mad for *your* king, as you call him, as my master is for the Constitution. Would you have him kiss the rod which lays him sprawling on the earth, after he sees himself robbed of his father, his mistress, and his money? And, then, why lug religion in? Is he not as good a Christian as ever? That those whose interest it is to enjoy what belongs to him should *say* he is not, is perfectly natural; but how you should *think* it, when you are as great a loser yourself by his misfortunes, I must leave you to explain, for I don't understand it.”

“That I will at another time; at present return to my brother, and tell him to meet me alone to-night at ten o'clock by the fountain, between tio Hipolito's farm, and the road leading to the village.”

Roque took his leave, and withdrew, not a little gratified at the manner he had acquitted himself of his message, the happy issue of which he attributed rather to his cleverness and supe-

rior management than to the affection Fermin might still entertain for his brother. Full of this idea, he hurried away as fast as his nag's legs could carry him, to impart to his master the conciliating tone of his brother's answer. This was hailed by the latter with joy; for notwithstanding the great anger he had manifested an hour or two before, the meditations in which we left him engaged had considerably allayed it, and made him come to the resolution of deferring, until he had heard his brother's explanation, his final judgment, both of his and Gabriela's conduct; and he now anticipated, by the tenor of Firmin's answer to his request, such an explanation as his wishes had framed for him. Such are the sudden transitions to which men who feel and love deeply are exposed, when, as was the case with our hero, their strong passions get the better of their judgment.

Meantime, the reception that Roque met from his sweetheart's father was such as could not but be highly gratifying to his feelings. The good farmer showed the pleasure he felt at seeing him

there, by bestowing on him sundry vigorous blows on the shoulder, compressures of the neck, and smart pinches in the arms, all which demonstrations of affection, though somewhat mulish in the mode of their expression, are considered among these honest folks as unequivocal proofs of a hearty welcome.

CHAPTER III.

How great a toil to stem the raging flood,
When beauty stirs the mass of youthful blood.
When the swoln veins with circling torrents rise,
And softer passions speak through wishing eyes!
The voice of reason's drown'd : in vain it speaks,
When hasty anger dyes the gloomy cheeks :
And vengeful pride hurries the mortal on
To deeds unheard.

SPENCER.

THE hour appointed by Fermin to see his brother was anxiously expected by Calisto, who on observing Hipolito's family retire to their respective rooms, sallied forth, enveloped in his cloak, and armed with his trusty sword, to proceed to the place of rendezvous. His way lay through an olive plantation, the symmetrical rows of which were intersected by small canals, cut for the purpose of irrigation ; and their waters,

curled in the moon-beams, as they fell from their little elevations with a gentle murmur, the more agreeable as no other sound was to be heard at that hour of night. To Sandoval, whose imagination loved to luxuriate in whatever beauties nature or art offered to his sight, these gentle sounds, and the stillness which reigned in the arched groves of olive trees, had in them something unusually soothing, and deeply interesting. He sat to listen to the murmur of the waters, and thought, as he saw them pursue their course so uninterruptedly, what happy hours men might enjoy if their minds were less occupied in devising schemes for injuring each other, and, if imitating the objects by which they are surrounded, they were less eager to throw obstacles in the way of each other's happiness. "From the prince to the peasant, from one extremity of the world to the other," thought he, "men war with each other; interest or prejudice arm them all to disturb the harmony of nature. One drags the other into his quarrels, no matter whether by fair or foul means; they fight till

the weakest sinks into a slave, and if open violence fails, deceit and treachery are resorted to, until the world becomes at last divided into three great classes, tyrants or knaves, slaves and fools."

Thus reasoned Sandoval with himself as he glided through his solitary path, towards the appointed place, which he reached at the critical moment when Firmin was alighting from his horse. Prepared as the minds of the two brothers were for a reconciliation, they flew into each other's arms, and the tears of both mingled as they fell, till at last their hearts relieved by the indulgence of their feelings from the heavy weight of contending passions which had oppressed them, they broke the silence of this affectionate greeting. "Dear Calisto," said Firmin, "appearances are much against me. A chain of mysterious accidents have contributed to excite in your mind suspicions derogatory to my affection as a brother, and perhaps to my honour as a man, but I can assure you in truth that the peculiar circumstances under which I labour

have alone given to my conduct an air of criminality which does not in reality exist."

"Then my suspicions are erroneous," interrupted Calisto hastily, "and you do not love Gabriela?"

Firmin stated visibly; his conscience was struck, and his heart whispered he did; but he answered evasively—"What would it signify if I did, you are the man she loves, the one she has always loved, and will ever love. But I fear. . . ."

"What in God's name," exclaimed the other, seizing his arm.

"That it will be all in vain," added Firmin. "To-morrow, perhaps, she will take leave of her friends, and the day after a convent will separate her from the world."

"Oh no,—no," said Calisto in that tone of calmness that sudden madness is apt to assume, "fear it not. You know I love her."

"I know you do, my dear brother," said Firmin, observing the agony of mind he endured

by the great change in his voice, and kindly pressing both his hands in his. "But how can you oppose what her parents have resolved upon? You know her devoted obedience to their commands, and how essential it is to a child's virtue and happiness to submit to their dictates."

Here Calisto burst forth into a paroxysm of rage. "Talk you of obedience?" said he, pushing his brother from him, "have you found out it is essential to secure a child's virtue and happiness? Out upon your hypocrisy! They are not her parents. Not they. A father, and still less a mother, never immolate to their own caprice, or that of another, an only daughter—they do not bury her alive between two walls—nor condemn her to live among fanatics and idiots, only to curse the hour of her birth, and those who gave it—they do not send her to hell the shortest road.—But it shall not be; I am her only father and protector, and, by heavens! I'll take care they do not send her there. I have a hand, and I have a sword, and

know the use of both. Let them come and tear her from me if they dare."

At these words he walked agitatedly to and fro, uttering the wildest rhapsodies, while his brother stood with his arms folded across his breast, reclining against the erect stone of the fountain, reflecting on the words which had escaped Calisto, and which had made a deep impression on his mind. "Am I wretched, then," said he to himself, his head bent upon his chest, "because I have disobeyed my father's commands? Heaven knows it has cost me many a struggle! but, were they not reprov'd by religion, and could I have obeyed them without offending the king? No, I could not; and both were sins too deadly to be thought of. Disobedience then, in my case, was meritorious; not so in Gabriela's; her undutifulness militates against her eternal salvation. Father Lobo proved it this morning to me. Her conduct and mine, then, differ as widely as light does from darkness."

In this way Firmin exculpated his conduct from the charge of disobedience, and drew favourable inferences, which only the man whose mind is warped by fanatical prejudices could have thought of finding. Meantime, Calisto's rage having gradually subsided, he approached the place where his brother was, and after gazing awhile on him with looks of surprise, said he had made up his mind to go to town with him, and take Gabriela away from her parents' house. "You know," added he, "that our laws permit a suitor to take his mistress away from her parents, and place her in a friend's house till the tribunal take proper cognizance of the case. I should never have thought of recurring to means which may appear violent to some, and raise in others suspicions prejudicial to the purity of Gabriela's character; but there is now no alternative left, and I must lose her, and lose her for ever."

"And *where* will you place her, supposing you actually succeeded in carrying her off? for it is well to consider that first," said Firmin.

The question staggered his brother. "Where are those powerful friends of your's, who will take charge of such a trust?" continued he, "or who will set at defiance the indignation and influence of Don Antonio, to oblige you? Unless, indeed, you intend placing her in a nunnery, where alone she may find shelter against those injurious suspicions which you so justly fear might prejudice her in the opinion of the world."

"A nunnery!" exclaimed Calisto; "there are none to which your father Confessor finds not free access; and I would rather have Satan himself visit the dwelling of my Gabriela, than that such a monster should come within ten leagues of her."

Fermin crossed himself. "Hark, Calisto!" cried he, fixing his resolute eye upon him, "I can endure all the opprobrious epithets you may please to heap on me, but another blasphemy against Father Lobo, and we part for ever."

"You are a fool, then," said his brother, "and a fanatical dupe to boot."

“Be it so,” said Fermin, “but to your wise plan. Let me suppose you find a house, the respectability of which will preclude the suspicions of the world, think you, you will come triumphantly off in the decision of the tribunal? Does not every man in office know your political principles, and every one of the clergymen, through whose hands it must pass before the affair can be said to be finished, your religious ones? What then would be the use of making the attempt? None in the world but this—to come out defeated in every stage of the proceedings, leave Gabriela exposed to the excited wrath of her parents, and to the laughter or contempt of the world; and lastly, deprive yourself of every hope of becoming one day reconciled to her family.”

These were reasons too cogent not to make an impression on Sandoval's mind. “Can you procure me an interview with Gabriela?” said he, after much hesitation, on the proper course to take.

“I cannot,” replied his brother; “I have

pledged my word not to interfere in the matter, and I should be acting against my conscience, and the express commands of those whom I am bound to obey. Besides," added he, "I advise you not to come within the walls of Logroño. You are an object of suspicion on the part of the government, and your safety would be endangered by shewing yourself there."

"I see," said Calisto, despondingly, "I have no favour to expect from any living man, not even from my own brother. I am an outcast from society,—and yet why, why am I an outcast?—for having kept my honour undefiled; for having done my duty to my country, and for remaining faithful to the oaths I took before God and the world. Such are the crimes to which I owe all my miseries!"

"It gives me pain to refuse you my assistance," said Fermin; "but do you recollect the night when you surprised me with Gabriela in the garden of her house? The object of that visit was no other, than to apprise her of a

determination taken against you, and to obtain from her a pledge which might have added force to my arguments, in persuading you to quit Logroño; but before I could see you, you were apprehended, and taken before the *Comisionado Regio*. Anxious still to save you, I followed you there, and by my presence prevented the design set on foot against you. You were then dismissed, and I had the pleasure of seeing, that aware of the danger of your situation, you left the town immediately, which rendered useless any further interference from me. The pangs, however, which I endured for having thus innocently given rise to suspicions in your mind, against Gabriela's faith, and my own honour, and those added by the remorse of a conscience struggling with the reflection, that I had acted contrary to the religious vows I had made at the feet of the confessional, wrung from me a promise, that I would never again interfere in any matters that concerned you and Gabriela, and that oath must not be violated."

Calisto was too well aware of the all-subduing influence of religious prejudices on the mind of his brother, as well as of the inflexibility of his character, to resort to entreaties which could only have the effect of distressing his feelings, without inducing him to yield; therefore, unwilling to make useless solicitations about what, he thought, ought to proceed from the impulse of brotherly affection alone, he resolved to seek in his own resources means for the prevention of the meditated attempt on Gabriela's personal liberty; and thanking his brother, though somewhat coldly, for what he had done for him, wished him more happiness than he himself enjoyed, and a speedy recovery from his political and religious errors.

Fermin, urged by the purest motives of affection, earnestly begged to be made acquainted with his intentions or designs respecting Gabriela, that he might at least give his opinion as to their practicability; but Calisto assured him, he hardly knew them himself, and could not say whether the vague ideas that floated in his

mind would be realized into a feasible plan or not. Consequently the two brothers parted, after an affectionate embrace, the one to return to town, and the other to betake himself to his own anxious thoughts and plans.

There are few hours more favourable for concentrating our imaginative powers, and bringing them into action, than the season of midnight, particularly if to the undisturbed silence of the time, a solitary and secluded spot be added, both of which our hero enjoyed, in his way to Hipolito's farm, and which contributed to aid him in forming a plan for visiting Gabriela, on the following night, which might be unattended with risk either to her or himself. This done he re-entered the farm by the yard at the back of it. At the extremity of this yard was a kind of shed, under which a few oxen and mules, a mare, two or three donkeys, and a sow with half a dozen sucking pigs, were lying amicably together, and at a little distance, in one corner of the same shed, and perched on the wheels and barandas of a cart, about two

dozen hens, capons, and turkeys. Facing this shed, stood a pile of faggots made from the vine-shoots, and further on was the *pajar** where the farmer's serving men slept, in company with some hounds, on the straw with which it was filled. The *lagar*, or place in which the grapes are pressed, occupied another side of the yard ; and, lastly, the family dung-hill stood in the middle of it, rearing its bulky summit considerably above the surrounding objects, and diffusing odours very much in unison with the cleanliness of the rest of the farm, and probably very grateful to honest tio Hipolito's hens and pigs, but not at all so to Sandoval, who made the best of his way to the room which had been assigned to him, and which unfortunately looked upon the said yard.

He found in one corner of it a bed, or rather some planks, raised from the ground by a couple of stands, on which there was a straw mattress,

* The house in which the straw for the cattle is contained, which being cut very small to give it them, mixed with barley and oats, must be enclosed under cover.

and over it a woollen one, which had served through many generations; some idea may be formed of its value when we say, that it had been left untouched by the thousands of foreigners who had entered the village, during the late war, most of whom were not at all nice in carrying away anything which might be of use in forming their bivouacs. On this same mattress, however, there was a sheet, which, for want of a companion, was doubled; and so well tucked up and pinned to the mattress that it was more strictly speaking a sack, the materials of which also resembled it in quality and texture, and to complete the bedding, something between a blanket and a coverlet, decorated with as many holes, and of about the same colour as a standard of Napoleon's imperial guard, covered the whole. Such was the resting place prepared for him by the tia Agustina; who, however, ought not to be blamed if it was not a better one, for the kind-hearted woman had got together what she had best in the house, and it is very probable her own was not

more elegant or commodious.—“With what the monks and friars carried away this morning,” thought Sandoval, as he stretched himself on the bed with his clothes on, “the tia Agustina might have furnished half of her house as commodiously as any man could wish. But these are happy beings; few of them consider in the light of privation the misery they live in. Yet it is not that they are deficient in intellect, or the capability of enjoying a happier state of things, very far from it; but bereft of the hard earned fruits of their labours almost as soon as they obtain them, they are compelled to look at last with indifference on the comforts of life, which, under the present order of things, (all or which concur to depress their natural genius) it is impossible they should ever enjoy, so that this hardy, intelligent, and reflecting peasantry, gradually become poor, and consequently indolent; till at last, habit, which, they justly say, is a second nature, reconciles them to filth and misery.”

After these reflections, he endeavoured to re-

sign his senses to the influence of sleep; which probably he would have enjoyed, had it not been for the noise and rummaging of the rats (who got admittance into his room through the large crevices of the door,) among a heap of dry peas, that lay in one corner of it, and which, to judge by the cracking and grinding of their teeth, they seemed to relish amazingly. To this must be added also the cooings of the pigeons, occupying the room next to his, who, frightened probably by the same sounds that disturbed him, flew about the room, frequently striking and pecking against the door. Daylight, however, soon drove the rats to their holes; but then the bustle in the yard of tio Hipolito's servants, who commenced getting ready their beasts to go with them to their usual labours in the fields, the crowing of the cock, the grunting of the disturbed pigs, the twitterings of the sparrows, that had their nests close by the window, and came into his room to pick up whatever they could find; and, above all, the fleas, that fed on him with an eagerness which inti-

mated a conciousness that they should make the most of their time, as they were likely soon to lose their prey, drove him out of his room to ramble about the country, and thus get rid at once of his troublesome companions.

In this walk, Sandoval observed the cheerfulness of that industrious and much injured class of society, who from three in the morning till seven at night, under all the changes of the weather, whether in summer or winter, with cold, rain, or a scorching sun over their heads, labour to make the earth produce what they are hardly allowed to taste of, much less to enjoy. He heard with a pleasure mixed with compassion, the merry sounds of the labourer, who thrusting vigorously with one hand the plough-share in the ground, and directing the oxen or the mules with the other, pursued his labour and his song, as if both were inseparable from each other, though now and then an oath to the mules, or a little pause where unusual exertion was required, interrupted the latter for the moment. Seldom do these men return to the

village or farms, before the setting of the sun, particularly if the fields they labour in are at a distance from their homes. A loaf of bread, some cheese, or a piece of cold meat, and a pitcher of water, serves them till they return at night, where a bason of *sopas de ajo*,* a dish of bacon and eggs, a few vegetables, and a pint of wine is served up to them for their supper. The generality of these men are robust, and well made, temperate, and honest, kind-hearted, and fond of obliging; but in order to obtain favour with them, it is absolutely necessary to treat them with something more than condescension, with kindness and almost deference; for if you hurt their pride, or treat them with haughtiness, or anything like the levity of contempt, they become enemies, as inveterate as they are capable of being faithful friends. To the truth of this, let the French under Napoleon, who to their sorrow experienced it, testify.

On his return from his ramble, Sandoval par-

* Garlic soup.

took of *tia Agustina's* homely breakfast of fried eggs, sausages, and bacon, furnished by the pigs and hens of her own yard. He also tasted some of her wine, which though not very old, (for in a wine country people seldom keep it more than two or three years,) was nevertheless very good. This morning duty done, he wrote a letter to *Gabriola*, in which he requested an interview in her garden at any hour of the night that might be convenient to herself; after which he called *Roque* aside, and desired him to set off immediately to town, with instructions to see *Rosa*, and request her to deliver to her mistress the letter he had written, without one minute's loss of time.—“Now,” added he, “avoid any of the family to whom you are known, and use all possible diligence to obtain, and bring back an answer to this message. Above all do not, by your chattering and laziness, spoil all again, if you should succeed.—Now, away, and do not stand there like a fool.”

“I stood,” said *Roque*, trying to look very much surprised, “endeavouring to catch the

echo of your words; for I could hardly persuade myself it was you who spoke. How now? I spoil things by chattering, and by the other nasty word you have just used? When have I done so, I pray you? Was it yesterday or when was it?—It is well for you that you are my master;” added he, shaking his head, “otherwise I would sooner tear my tongue from my throat than say another word to you.”

Having said this, he hastened away to saddle his horse, and immediately set off for Logroño, rejoiced at the opportunity thus afforded him of seeing his mistress, and serving his master. His eagerness to reach Don Antonio's house, soon brought him into the town, where, no sooner had he alighted at his favourite inn, and saw his horse well accommodated, than he marched up to the place which enclosed his heart's best treasure. Unfortunately for him the Biscayan porter, who was an avowed, and what is worse, an unsuccessful rival of his, kept sentry at the door with more than usual vigilance, and prevented him from making any

attempt to penetrate into the house, as he would otherwise have done. In this emergency, he had no other alternative than to pace up and down before the door, and watch a favourable opportunity of gaining admittance; but several hours elapsed before one offered itself. Meantime he observed a good deal of bustle going on about the house. Ladies and gentlemen decked in their gala dresses arrived in carriages, sedan-chairs, and on foot, followed by servants, also dressed in their holy-day clothes. Within the house, too, he heard an unusual noise, though he could not tell whether it was that of merriment alone. There were, however, various indications that a great festival was about to take place; for the servants went out with empty salvers, and returned loaded with things, which, though carefully covered, emitted rich and pleasant odours.—“A pretty joke if it were Doña Gabriela’s marriage!” said Roque to himself, “I should do wisely to stand aloof from my master; for as sure as day-light he’ll kill the first man who tells him of it.—But,

by Barrabas! can I find no way to get in, and see what is going on?"

By dint of racking his brains, he recollected, that in a narrow lane leading to the banks of the river by a steep descent, there was a small private door which opened into the garden, and through which he had frequently gained admittance into the house, being sometimes left unlocked. He immediately went round to try his luck that way, and, to his great relief, found that it opened at the first effort. He now stole in with cautious steps towards the servants hall, which he found so crowded with male and female servants of the company who were in the house, that he took his corner among them without being particularly noticed. Here he remained in momentary expectation of seeing Rosa appear; but in this he was also disappointed; for Rosa was at that moment with her young mistress, occupied as may be seen in the next chapter.

CHAPTER IV.

Nought is there under heaven's wide hallowedness
That moves more dear compassion of the mind,
Than beauty brought to unworthy wretchedness
By envy's snares, or fortune's freaks unkind :
I, whither lately through her brightness blind,
Or through allegiance and fast fealty,
Which I do owe unto all womankind,
Feel my heart pierced with so great agony,
When such I see, that all for pity I could die.

SPENSER.

FROM what has been hinted above, our readers doubtless guess, that the festive preparations going on at Don Antonio's house, had no other object than the celebration of an event, which was to reduce the unhappy Gabriela to the state of a nun. We will not tire their patience by detailing here the various arguments urged by Father Lobo to persuade her parents to make a sacrifice, as unnatural as it was cruel ; but

which he represented as the most gratifying they could offer to the Divinity. His artful reasonings, falling as they did upon two beings, who had no will but his, could not be received by them otherwise than with the utmost deference and submission. In justice to Don Antonio, however, we must say, that, notwithstanding his constitutional weakness, he withheld his consent as long as he was allowed to fight it out in single combat with the father Confessor; but when Doña Angela, who seemed to take as much pleasure in opposing her husband's wishes, as in granting those of Father Lobo, stepped forward to back his antagonist, the poor man's strength soon failed him, and he was gradually driven from the field of battle in utter and impotent despair.

As for Gabriela herself, she had in vain exhausted all her tears and entreaties, her bigoted and imperious mother being deaf and blind to everything, except the dictates of her own mistaken devotion. Thus the day for her taking leave of the world, as it is called, that in which

the unhappy victim sees for the last time her friends, being fixed, Gabriela saw it arrive with agonies not easily to be described.

About the same time when Sandoval's servant reached Don Antonio's house, the unfortunate Gabriela was in her own apartment, bewailing the cruel lot that was preparing for her. Hardly able to support herself, she had sunk into an arm-chair, where for some minutes she lay in a state of exhaustion; her head reclining against Rosa's arm, who at the same time pressed one of her mistress's hands to her lips and wept over her, endeavouring by the most soothing expressions to allay her deep-rooted grief, and exhorting her to collect herself, and exert all her fortitude. Gabriela opened her eyes, swollen by the tears she had shed during a sleepless night, and fixing them on Rosa's, gently shook her head, and said in a faint and thrilling voice, while the flash of fever overspread her pale cheeks, and a smile of agony played on her almost livid lips: "No fortitude of mine, Rosa, can bear me through this

painful trial. To take leave of the world is not what grieves me; for painful as the sacrifice seems, I could accomplish it; but to be torn from what my heart most loves, to hear his voice no more, to relinquish all hope of ever seeing him, alas! I cannot, Rosa, I cannot."

These words she uttered amidst sighs and sobs, which were quickly followed by a flood of tears. "Good God!" she exclaimed, when this first burst of grief was over, sitting up in the chair, and throwing back with both her hands the black shining locks that fell in ringlets over her face and neck, "must I be forced into a condition I abhor? Must I be dragged to a place where, instead of living resigned, I shall only die miserable? And is it indeed possible that this compulsion proceeds from my own parents? That to them I shall owe a life of wretchedness in this world, and the eternal torments of the world to come? Alas! can this really be?"

"For heaven's sake, my dear Señorita, calm your grief. Here comes your mother, wipe off

your tears, I entreat you," said the affectionate Rosa, giving her a handkerchief, which Gabriela hastily passed over her eyes, as a child, who, fearing her mother's rebuke, seeks to conceal what might give rise to them.

Doña Angela now came in, preceded by two maid-servants bringing two handsome salvers, in one of which the splendid apparel which Gabriela was to wear to take an eternal farewell of her friends, was carefully folded; and in the other a wreath of white roses and several costly trinkets, belonging to the family, to adorn her person on this occasion. The sight of these, and still more the stern countenance of her mother, made her blood run cold in her veins. The salvers being deposited on a toilet before a large looking glass, the two maid-servants withdrew, both casting a look of pity on their young mistress, who continued trembling in her chair. The mother then drew a chair beside Gabriela's, and commanded Rosa to bring her the salver which contained the jewels. "This diamond necklace," said she, pointing to it with a

fan she held in her hand, "was your grandmother's by your father's side. It was bequeathed by her to our miraculous lady of the Pilar of Zaragoza. It decked that holy image for more than thirty years, till the profane French laid siege to that city, when a friend of your father, the pious archdeacon of the Cathedral, obtained possession of it, and returned it to Don Antonio, who has since paid one hundred thousand reals,* to preserve in the family this precious relic. No one has ever worn it yet, for it would be the height of profanation, even to touch what our Lady of the Pilar has worn; but on an occasion when you, happy child! are to consecrate yourself to the service of Jesus Christ, (crossing herself) I have resolved, after taking our father Confessor's advice, that you should wear it, and I have no doubt that it will enable you to discover that the greatest good we can enjoy in this world is the spiritual grace. The other trinkets have been

* One thousand pounds.

also blessed by our pious bishop, and will likewise contribute to inspire you with the resignation which you are so much in want of."

"Alas! dear mother," said Gabriela, clasping Doña Angela's hand between both her own, "am I then really to be led to a convent? Must I lose my home, my parents, my friends, my" (a frown the mother caused her to withhold the word which so readily came to her lips,) "all, in a word?" she added. "Does not the voice of nature disapprove in that bosom from which I drew my first sustenance, the sacrifice you are on the point of making of your only child? Why bring me into the world, if you now deprive me of my liberty, and render my existence wretched? For heaven's sake, mother, have pity on me. Be moved by my tears. Hear my entreaties. Where shall I find compassion if my mother refuses it to me? For the sake of what you love most in this life, I entreat you, here at your feet, to shut me up in this apartment, and exclude from it the light of day, rather than force me into a life which I

abhor even more than death itself, and which must be the cause of my eternal despair.”

Even Doña Angela's rigidity of character was not proof against this warm and passionate appeal. She turned her head aside and raised one hand to her eyes while holding the other back she gently repelled the efforts of her daughter, who, on her knees, extended her arms towards her in an imploring attitude, her eyes streaming with tears, and her bosom heaving painfully. It is probable that the termination of this scene would have been favourable to Gabriela's wishes; but while the mother's heart wavered between feelings of compassion, and those, properly speaking, of bigotry, the father Confessor made his appearance at the door of the apartment, and one glance of displeasure from him was enough to stifle the voice of nature, and complete the triumph of fanaticism. She immediately extricated her hand from Gabriela's grasp, and rising from her chair, stood up and gazed sternly on her.—“No more words,” she said, “there is your dress, and there are

the ornaments which you are to wear with it. In an hour's time I expect to see you enter the drawing-room in your new habit, and let me see that you attend to my commands, or you shall rue your obstinacy and disobedience."

Gabriela implored her mother by all the Saints in heaven not to enforce her commands; but Father Lobo nodding to the mother, she immediately left the room. Gabriela rushed after her; but the monk arrested her steps by seizing on her arm.—“Why, lady, fly you thus from yourself?” said he, with an austere voice, “ought you not rather to be rejoiced at finding a place where you will be sheltered from the continual dangers and wicked suggestions of the world, the devil, and the flesh, than risk your eternal salvation by remaining exposed to its dangers? Ought the temporal and perishable pleasures of the world to be preferred to the good of your soul? The guilty passion you are inwardly cherishing, in spite of your excellent parents' admonitions, alone makes you look upon the religious state with horror and detestation.—But

believe me, my dear child," he added, with a softer tone of voice, "when you are once in the convent, and the grace of God begins to enlighten your heart, your sentiments will very soon alter; those sinful tears will be changed into sweet smiles; and those unworthy sighs into heavenly joy. Once the spouse of Jesus Christ, doubt it not, you will be an angel on earth."

Gabriela found it very difficult to extricate her arm from the monk's grasp; but having succeeded in it, she said in a firm and resolved manner—"Leave me, Sir, and I beg you another time not to intrude into my apartment, as you have done to-day. As for your specious reasonings, I have sense enough not to be deluded by them; I was born a woman, for my misfortune, and can never be an angel. Besides, more than one nun have confided secrets to me, which they would not disclose even to their confessors; and I have sufficient reasons to appeal to heaven against the unjust violence of my parents, and the pious bribes with which you have stifled in them the voice of parental affec-

tion. What motives have urged you to it, you yourself know best ; but He who is above knows them also, and woe to you if they sin against his laws !”

The monk made an attempt to speak ; but she, pointing to the door with a high and commanding look, turned away from him, and he left the room, casting on her a sidelong glance of resentment mixed with scorn.—“ Villain !” cried Gabriela, as he withdrew, “ I know you well ; but your wickedness shall not avail you with me, whether at home or in a convent” (here she made a pause,) “ a convent ! said I ?—alas ? must I think of it ?—Ah ! I fear there is no remedy.—Where is my father, Rosa ?”

“ He left town yesterday,” replied the maid, “ and, as he did not leave word where he was going, I suspect the design of his journey was to avoid an appeal from you, which, I am certain, he could not have withstood ; and by which he could not have failed to give offence to your mother.”

“ So then he too has forsaken his daughter,

and she has no protection left!" said Gabriela, with a deep drawn sigh; "I must leave my home for ever, and without a farewell embrace from him who gave me being!—from him, who wept with joy whenever I imprinted on his cheek the good-night kiss! Alas! Rosa, I cannot bear this, my heart is bursting."

As the unfortunate girl spoke, she threw herself into Rosa's arms, whose bosom she moistened with a flood of tears; but grief, which also exhausts itself by continued exertion, was now beginning to abate, and her natural high-mindedness, firmness, and resolution soon took their place in her bosom. She raised her head from Rosa's shoulder, wiped off her tears, and sat down composedly at her toilet—"Begin the undress," she said to her maid, "and let me assume that bridal dress, or rather that shroud in which I am to be buried alive.—Dress my hair first,—though to-morrow these curling locks," added she, passing her hand on a cluster of them that fell on her heaving bosom, "of which I was so proud, will all fall to the earth. But they, like

their mistress, will no longer excite envy.—Yet stay, give me the scissors.—Which are the two handsomest ?”

“ You are not going to cut them, my dear Señorita ?” said the weeping maid, alarmed at seeing with what a bold hand she took the scissors and applied them to the locks.

“ Why not, you foolish thing ?” said Gabriela, her countenance enlivened by a soft smile—“ would you not rather have one of them, than see them all the pray of the winds, or doomed to some yet meaner destiny ?—Here put this in your bosom, and keep it as a remembrance from me. The other, give me a green ribbon to tie it with (for I will not yet give up hope) and keep it,—you know for whom. A few days ago, I would sooner have parted with the very apples of my eyes than with those two locks ; but the times are changed, and we see even the proudest things of nature fall never to rise again !”

“ Are these strings of pearls in this salver to be fixed round your tresses ? They contrast

beautifully with your ebony hair," said Rosa, holding them against her mistress's head.

"I suppose they are," said Gabriela, taking them in her hand and examining them, "pretty baubles enough, the toys of our sex, and I have heard some friends of mine say, often the pledges of the villainy and deceit of the other."

"Ah, 'tis even so," said Rosa, "for I have myself observed, that when men give us these things they think they have a claim to all they ask; but woe to her who gives them all they ask as a recompense for those gifts; she is sure to be deceived, and afterwards laughed at by the very man she listened to."

"But men are not all so, Rosa," said her mistress.

"God forbid!" exclaimed the maid, "I can say for myself, that the only man I ever loved, though he has given me many fine things,—fine for me I mean,—has never asked anything in return."

Gabriela smiled, and said, "You are fortunate in your choice, then?"

“So far,” said Rosa, “I have certainly been fortunate.”

“So far !” repeated her mistress; “why, child, you don’t mean to try another, do you?”

“Not if I can help it; but if ever he should forsake me, I promise you I will.—But will you wear this garland to-day?” said Rosa.

“Garland !” exclaimed Gabriela, “call it a crown of thorns, and you will speak more to the purpose.”

“You look well in it, though. It seems so innocent and pure, and matches so well your smooth and white forehead, that it appears as if it were a part of it.”

“You little flatterer,” said Gabriela, gently striking her cheek with one of her fingers, “you strive to make me conceited; but this same smooth forehead will be wrinkled ere many months are over.”

“Ah, do not say so,” added Rosa kissing it, “you said just now that you would not give up hope yet.”

“Well, be it so,” returned Gabriela with a sigh, “and if I said it, may God grant it.—But

hand me that white silk gown, and the other which I am to wear over it of French lace."

"Holy Virgin! what a magnificent robe!" cried Rosa, as she unfolded the lace dress, "what splendid embroidery this of the borders, and how beautifully worked it is! There never was another like this seen any where. It sets sweetly too. It makes your small waist look still smaller, and fits without forming a single wrinkle. But allow me to assist you in putting on these white satin shoes."

Gabriela now stood opposite a full-length looking-glass, and said, as she turned herself various ways with still some worldly complacency;—"The dress is well made and splendid; but I am deadly pale. I look more like the spirit of some murdered being rising from the tomb, than one who yet breathes the air of life, and feels her heart throb within her bosom.—But give me the veil, and let us complete this heart-sickening toilet. Yet too soon shall I say farewell, and for ever, to all this finery!"

The veil being now carefully pinned to her

hair, she let down her face the fore-part of it, and made one or two steps towards the door; but the agitation which she felt at this moment, and the violent throbbings of her heart overcame her for some instants, and she sat down gasping for breath, and thinking that although some degree of courage is required to form a resolution, it is chiefly at the moment of its execution that all its springs must be brought into action, or else the purpose falls to the ground. She then exerted herself to recover all her firmness, in which she succeeded, after drawing a deep sigh, which seemed considerably to relieve her, and then she stood up again breathing freely. — “Now Rosa,” she said, in a resolved tone, “my mind is made up, and let come what may I’ll not shrink again.”

Saying this she walked out of her apartment with a firm step, and passing through several rooms, she reached the ante-saloon, where the servants of the house with several others belonging to the friends of the family, who had been invited to spend the day with Gabriela, were assembled in various groups, conversing on the

approaching festival. On seeing her appear, they all drew up into two files, and bowed and God blessed her, as she passed, some whispering,—“what a pity it is, that such a beautiful creature should be lost to the world!” others, “how pale she looks, poor thing!” others again,—“she is used tyrannically, but they should drag me if I were her,”—every beholder, in a word, felt pity for this devoted victim of monkish villainy and blind bigotry.

Among this crowd of servants our faithful Roque was waiting impatiently Rosa's appearance. No sooner he observed her behind her mistress than he thrust himself forward to attract her notice, and then beckoned her to follow him. The maid, whose duty to her mistress terminated at the ante-saloon, which adjoined the drawing-room whither, according to strict etiquette she could not follow her, unless called for, left her now, and ran after Roque down a narrow staircase which led to the garden, where, after one or two minutes running, she overtook him in one of the thick leaved pavilions that looked

on the river.—“ I marvel at your impudence,” said she to him, as soon as she recovered her breath, “ who invited you here ?”

“ Your eyes, and my sovereign will, light of my heart,” said Roque, passing his hand under her chin.

“ Come, no nonsense,” said she, slapping his hand, “ I am not in a humour to listen to your extravagances now.”

“ And how am I to know when you are in humour or out of it ?” enquired Roque. “ Did’nt you tell me yesterday that you were angry with me, because I didn’t come to see you ; well ! here I am, and yet you look more peevish now than yesterday.—But I ought to know that a weather-cock is another word for woman.”

“ And fool another name for Roque,” added Rosa sharply. “ Else, why come on a day like this ? Don’t you know that my young mistress is going to-day to take leave of her friends, and to-morrow I shall lose her for ever ? Is this not enough to occupy me ? You might have chosen your time better, I think.”

“ Well, do not be angry, my jewel ; for after all I come only with a message from my master to your mistress.” He then delivered the errand with which he was entrusted, at full length, and with all the additions which he thought were wanting to obtain Rosa’s good word ; but she shook her head, and said she did not know whether her mistress would consent to it or not ; though on her part she would try, as soon as she found an opportunity, to give her the note and persuade her to grant the interview, which, however, she feared would not be so easily obtained as she would probably be watched by her mother.—“ Meantime,” she added, “ give Don Calisto this lock of my mistress’s hair, and tell him to keep up his spirits, and lose no hope ; for such are her commands. And now, for God’s sake, be off, and do not appear again here till to-night, about eight, when I will endeavour to see you.”

Saying this she tripped her way back as lightly as a deer, without paying the least attention to the earnest entreaties of Roque to

remain one minute longer.—“The jade?” cried he, “is gone without giving me a single kiss! —But, how now?” added he starting back, “are you also here?”

“Sirrah!” cried his master, emerging from behind a thick cluster of laurel bushes, “is this the way you serve me? I send you at six in the morning, and it is now near noon, and you are still here. You might have kept your love affairs for another opportunity, I should think.”

“Now, by the twelve Apostles, this is too bad!” exclaimed Roque, “how could I help it? Have I not been waiting and kicking my heels about this place till this moment, and at the risk of having my shoulders well warmed by a shower of blows? And”

“And what answer?” interrupted his master impatiently.

“You must wait till I get it, and that, if God pleases, not till eight to-night,” said Roque, “and, moreover, I advise you to make the best of your way out of this house; for, I wot, there

are now many friends of yours within, who would not wish a better sight than to see you hanging from the highest gallows in Spain.—This way, this way ; for I have found the back garden door open, and I think it will admit us again to-night.”

Saying this he led, or rather dragged, his master to the little door that led out to the narrow lane above mentioned ; and, carefully shutting the door after him, they both disappeared.

CHAPTER V.

Old Error thus, with shades impure,
Throws sacred Truth behind :
Yet, sometimes, through the deep obscure
She bursts upon the mind.

Sleep, and her sister, Silence, reign,
They lock the shepherd's fold,
But, hark—I hear a lamb complain,
'Tis lost upon the wold !

CUNNINGHAM.

OUR narrative, interrupted by Roque's intrusion, leads us back to the drawing-room door, where we left our young vestal on the point of appearing before a crowd of friends, or more properly speaking acquaintances, who were in momentary expectation of seeing her appear. Among such a numerous company as were there assem-

bled; it was natural that there should be some kind-hearted and friendly, others lukewarm and indifferent, and others (we trust the smallest portion,) malignant and wicked. To judge from the different expressions of their countenances, we are justified in saying, that such a division is perfectly correct; for no sooner did those to whom we have given the place of preference see Gabriela walk in with almost the paleness of death stamped on her fine countenance, than their faces changed to an expression of grief and anxiety, and their eyes were seen suddenly filling with tears. There even was a young friend of Gabriela's, who, forgetful at the moment of the place and object of her visit, sprung from her chair, and running towards her friend, threw her arms round her neck, exclaiming amidst sighs and tears, "Gabriela, my dear, you are sacrificed!"

Gabriela, who had till then kept up her resolution well, was greatly moved at this affecting proof of friendship. Her firm step began to vacillate, she trembled in all her limbs, and

was at length compelled to throw herself in a fainting state on the first chair she saw vacant, unable to reach the principal sofa in the middle of the room, where a place had been assigned to her near the greatest devotee of Logroño. This lady, who longed to have her near her, to congratulate her on the holy vocation she had so wisely adopted, and treat her with a long lecture about the most effective way of obtaining the spiritual grace, got into a great passion against the silly girl, as she called her, who had discomposed the placidity of Gabriela's mind, by yielding to such worldly impulses, as did also Doña Angela, who sat on one side of her. Meantime, the indifferent part of the company, who, wishing to be thought very much interested in Gabriela's welfare, were obliged to have recourse to appearances, added considerably to the confusion created by this little incident, by running backwards and forwards, wringing their hands, and uttering various exclamations, while the worse part of the visitors interchanged a malignant smile with each other,

when not observed by the rest, and tried to look very much concerned when they met more charitable eyes. "These are unfortunate accidents, but the fish is well hooked, it will not escape us," whispered into Father Lobo's ear his worthy nephew, who, as our readers have doubtless anticipated, was one of the company, and had not forgotten his white kerseymere pantaloons, hessian boots, trimmed with gold cord and tassels, and his best embroidered coat, with the cross of Charles III. on the left flap.

"Thanks to me, then," said the monk, with an air of complacency. "I had to grapple with more than one prejudice; but they all gave way to my superior management. Strike terror into people's souls, and you are sure to triumph over every human obstacle; that is the great secret by which I have accomplished deeds, which to the pusillanimous appeared impossible; and it is what I recommend to our friends of the capital."

"Aye, and what they follow too," my respected champion of the faith, true disciple of

Saint Dominic, and worthy successor of Torquemada," added Artimaña, with that peculiar grin of his with which he usually accompanied his own jocular observations.

While Gabriela's friends flocked around her, each to offer either consolation or elixirs, there was in a corner of the room one, who, feeling the horror of her situation more acutely than even herself, now and then cast his anxious eyes over the people's heads towards the place where she sat, and then withdrawing them slowly fixed them on the ground in silent meditation. "Can such a forced sacrifice be grateful to the Almighty?" said he to himself. "Will not the reluctant victim inwardly murmur against the violence offered to her feelings—accuse her parents of barbarity,—and even call in question the justice of heaven? And if she do so, is not her future happiness on the brink of eternal perdition? It is,—it is! And yet I, who have an influence over her parents' minds, —I who can save her, am here to witness it—to see, perhaps, the demons of hell rise and drag her

to the abodes of the guilty—there to tear asunder with their lacerating claws those delicate limbs, mangle that divine form under their cloven feet, and torment her everlastingly, now in cauldrons of sulphur and burning pitch, and now in their pits of freezing ice.* And shall I permit this? No, not while I breathe,” added the impetuous Fermin, rushing to the middle of the room, his mind so worked up by the horrors his imagination had depicted, that, unconscious of those who were around him, he vociferated with all his might, his features distorted by horror and dismay, “Doña Angela, no more of this!—I see legions of devils rising!—they come, they come!—save her, save her!—holy water, a crucifix, the gospels, the gospels!”

At these cries, the terrified company suddenly rose from their places, and the most timid, rushing towards the door, gave the impulse to the rest, who in their hurry to leave the house,

* Such is the picture of hell drawn by most Spanish preachers.

stumbled upon each other, and called upon every Saint in Paradise to assist them, as if all the inmates of hell were actually at their heels, while only a few men, and some ladies, whose stronger nerves or minds, enabled them to resist the impulse of their legs, remained behind staring at each other in mute astonishment.

Gabriela herself, roused by these cries, more than by the elixirs of her female friends, now stood in the middle of the room, immovably fixed to the spot, resembling one of those visions which the imagination sometimes pictures to itself, when at the midnight hour we see by moonlight the vapours rising from a distant hill, and forming themselves into a thousand unreal shapes—"What is the meaning of this?" enquired she in a feeble voice, seeing that no one seemed inclined to break the silence; but nobody could tell, he who might have done so having made his exit along with the others.

At last the father Confessor, who had withdrawn to a distant window, to give vent to the irresistible fit of laughter that the fanaticism of

his gulled penitent, and the ludicrous incident by which it had been accompanied, had excited, thinking this a favourable opportunity to forward his designs, advanced with that gravity which a long practice in hypocrisy enabled him to assume, and declared that this was a warning from heaven for the rebellious conduct observed by Gabriela towards her parents, and that the only way to avert God's wrath was to proceed on the afternoon of that day, instead of the next, to the convent, where she would be received with open arms by the nuns, and the usual ceremonies for her reception be performed with the pomp and solemnity befitting the occasion.

This advice was received by the mother, as everything which he suggested, with much deference and submission, and was thought by the few remaining friends of the family, very advisable and judicious; but the unfortunate Gabriela, who had reckoned on one day longer, and who experienced an undefined sentiment, which expiring hope often gives, even when no

plausible foundation exists, of being at length released from the impending misery of her situation by some unforeseen accident, could not refrain from shewing her disappointment and indignation at the shameless imposture of the monk, by reproaching him with it, and declaring, she would not go unless dragged there by force. —“ Then,” said the mother, greatly incensed at the boldness with which Gabriela had expressed herself, “ you shall go, whether you will or not.”

She then sent a footman to the convent with a note to the mother abbess, apprising her of their intention to proceed there with Gabriela on the afternoon of that day, and requesting her to issue her orders for her reception. “ We shall see whether your pleasure or mine is to be fulfilled,” said she, to her daughter, when she sent this message.

The wretched Gabriela saw well there was now no remedy left; the inflexibility of her mother’s character, which neither tears nor entreaties could soften, and the violence and

impetuosity of her passions, which seemed to gain strength by opposition, rendered useless whatever feeble efforts of her own she might be inclined to offer. Consequently she summoned all her fortitude, and even repressed that sentiment of anger, which it was impossible not to feel at the barbarous tyranny of a parent, who, having against every impulse of nature, premeditatedly determined to sacrifice her to her own bigotry and caprice, had forfeited the right to filial obedience and affection to which parents are entitled.—“Mother!” said the generous and affectionate Gabriela, with a firm yet respectful voice, “you have done everything in your power to tear asunder those sacred ties of affection, which as your daughter unite me to you;—you are, even now, on the point of leading me to a place, from which, if I am ever released, I can never hope to go but to the mansions of eternal darkness;—for never expect I can for an instant be reconciled to live as a recluse, when my heart wanders in the wide world with one to whom it was pledged, even

with your consent, nay, by your command, and in the presence of our Creator.—Yet I think of those days, when you held me to your breast with motherly fondness, and, though it would have been by far more fortunate for me had you stifled me in the cradle, the recollection of your kindness then, will ever keep alive in my heart the warmest gratitude and veneration,—nay, the sincerest filial devotion.—God forgive you, mother, as I do now, on the day when we shall all give an account of our words and actions before his almighty throne.—And now take me where you will—but remember, that with you lies the responsibility of my future perdition.”

Doña Angela listened with great impatience to this impressive discourse of Gabriela, which she delivered with an energy corresponding to the depth of her feelings, and the important nature of the subject—“Rebellious daughter,” exclaimed the mother, exasperated at the force and truth of those words, “what! the Almighty will punish me for preferring the salvation of your soul, to your own whims and wishes, will

he? and you think the nuns will not inspire you with resignation, either by force, good example, or exhortation, do you? But, oh! your heart is wandering, you'll soon recal it, I promise you; and then I shall hear no more of this, but rather thanks and congratulations."

By this time most of the guests who had been frightened out of the room, or the house, by Fermin's fit of religious enthusiasm, had returned, and were invited by Doña Angela to sit down to the sumptuous dinner that had been prepared, to celebrate an event, which, in Spain, is looked upon as similar to a wedding. We shall not attempt a description of this entertainment, the dishes being too numerous for particular notice, the wines and liqueurs, too sparingly used, notwithstanding their great variety and abundance, and the spirits of the company too much depressed with the melancholy occurrences of the morning, to afford much amusement to our readers. Consequently, we will proceed towards the carriages, which the footmen announced to be at the street door, as soon

after dinner as Father Lobo had said his *benedicite* with his usual assumed air of sanctity.

The guests having risen from table, Doña Angela waved her hand to Gabriela to lead the funeral march. She armed herself with patience and resignation, and immediately proceeded with slow but firm steps towards the door, followed by her friends, and leaning against the arm of the young lady who acted as bride's-maid; for on occasions like the present, when a female is to consecrate herself to the service of the church, everything assumes the aspect of an espousal. In passing through the anti-saloon, the servants of the family, who were assembled there to take the last farewell of their beloved Señorita, pressed around her with eyes big with tears, and poured blessings upon her with voices interrupted by the sobs that swelled their bosoms. The grief manifested by them all, but in particular by Rosa, who, being her favourite and confidante, felt her loss still more acutely than her companions, and evinced it by the most affecting demonstrations

of grief, moved Gabriela to tears, as she pressed her to her bosom. But, on observing the marks of impatience of her mother, she tore herself from her arms, and wishing them all an affectionate adieu, continued her way to the carriage. In stepping into it, she cast a last look round the patio, and heaved a farewell sigh at quitting her once happy home. The bride's-maid then followed her, as did also the old devotee, of whom we have already spoken, and the mother, the rest of the company following in other carriages.

It is the custom, when a young female is led to take the veil, that she should be taken by her friends in her way to the convent, round the different nunneries to be admired, praised, and flattered, by the recluses who inhabit them, in order to complete the pious seductions of her devout friends and confessor. Agreeable, therefore, to this custom, the unhappy Gabriela was obliged to undergo the numerous embraces of nuns she had never seen, and many of whom, though they themselves had been sacrificed to the interests or ambition of a brother or a favourite sister, and conscious of the misery of a

monastic life, seemed anxious to impress in her mind the idea that all around them breathed happiness and content, when indeed their looks and their hearts disavowed the eulogies they lavished on their wretched condition. The indifference, however, with which Gabriela listened to these praises, and the still greater apathy, which she manifested at the fulsome flattery offered to her beauty, dress, jewels, and every ornament about her, which they examined with a minuteness and eagerness, peculiar to the confined ideas of the secluded state in which they lived, each asking ten thousand questions respecting the quality of the materials, countries where they came from, persons who made them, &c. &c. proved clearly, that she too was an unwilling victim,—a discovery which some of those, whose hearts had become hardened and perverted by the miseries they had endured, and who instead of reconciling their minds to such a life, had year after year been cherishing a horror of it, made with fiend-like pleasure; while those who had at last conquered their aversion to it, and wept away the remembrance of their sorrows,

blamed her attachment to the pleasures and vanities of the world, which they declared to be incompatible with the salvation of her soul. None, indeed, but the very young nuns, who had not yet forgotten the innocent pleasures of infancy and youth, sympathised with Gabriela; though even they were obliged to disguise their compassion under the cloak of austerity, lest their superiors should find it out, and make them feel their displeasure for entertaining emotions which their condition forbade: thus her visit to these places added to, rather than diminished, the aversion she felt at becoming one of their partners.

Every step, however, brought her nearer and nearer to the convent, which Doña Angela and her Confessor had selected for her, and which, being of the order of Dominicans, was under the special spiritual directorship of this monk. In their progress to it, a multitude of idle people, who are always to be met about the streets in the towns of Spain, and artizans, who do not hesitate an instant in quitting their work to

attend a pious exhibition, or who, like the former, are always ready to go wherever pleasure or curiosity is to be gratified, collected around the carriages, and followed in the rear; some passing their heartless jokes on the unhappy and reluctant victim, and the more religiously inclined, blessing her and her friends, who had induced her to consecrate herself to God.

When the carriages came within sight of the convent, the quick and repeated peals of its bells resounded loudly and merrily through the air; but they fell on Gabriela's ear like the funeral knell on the culprit who is carried to the scaffold; she shrunk back with a chilling sentiment of horror, and her already pallid countenance assumed the look of death. Her bride's-maid observed it; but Doña Angela, who noticed it too, signed to her, to leave her undisturbed, and Gabriela soon after recovered from that momentary depression, by one powerful effort of her superior mind. At last they reached the fatal portals, that were soon forever to be closed upon her, and the clergy-

man who was to consummate the sacrifice came forward, richly decked in his sacerdotal robes, to receive and lead the victim to the altar. He presented his hand to her, and she alighted, her own firmly grasping that of her bride's-maid's, between whom and the priest she was led thither; her friends and acquaintances following and surrounding her, and a crowd of people closing in the procession. No sooner had they entered the precincts of the temple, than the bells redoubled their peals, the organ burst forth, and a band of instrumental music, accompanied by the treble voices of the nuns, chaunting an appropriate anthem, saluted them, and resounded through the long aisles and high vaults of the church, with a vibration that thrilled every nerve in Gabriela's frame.

The high altar, which was at the opposite extremity of the choir, where the nuns were assembled, occupied the whole of that part of the church, and rose amidst gilt columns and ornaments to its very roof, whilst the light, which fell from the cupola above the altar-piece,

caused these rich gildings to shine with uncommon brilliancy, and gave to it a picturesque effect, the more novel and grand as the body of the church was thrown into obscurity, by its high windows being covered with dark-coloured thick moreen curtains. There, on the marble steps that rose to the foot of the altar, and with the monastic weeds before her eyes, knelt the unhappy Gabriela, her mind far otherwise occupied than in the pomp of the religious ceremonies which were performing in honour of her own consecration. She thought of other days, other scenes, and other objects; she could have sighed and wept at the fate that hung over her; but she suppressed her sorrow, and made an effort to fix her attention on what was going on around her.

After various hymns, chaunted by the nuns, and orisons from the priest, Father Lobo mounted the pulpit to deliver a sermon on the perfection of the life which she was about to adopt, and the efficacious means which it offers to labour in the great work of salvation,

and find the road of heaven, whilst in the world a thousand obstacles are met at every step, by those who wish to live like Christians. The text which he used upon this occasion, was couched in the following words; "*Forsake the paternal roof; tear yourself from the arms of your parents; cast off the vanities of the world; and come to the land which I will show you.*"— Thereupon, he commenced by endeavouring to prove by examples, the advantages of the monastic state, the facilities which it presents to innocent minds for spending a life of happiness, and the powerful motives which impelled so many great men to abandon the wealth and pleasures of the world, to pass the rest of their days in the solitude of the cloister, the better to enable themselves to meditate on the hour of death. Afterwards, presenting the obverse of the medal, he pictured the world as the school of pride, vanity, and deceit; the simile which he employed (in imitation of almost every preacher) being that of a tempestuous ocean, in which the vessel of virtue was combated by

the violent waves of tumultuous passions, and every moment exposed to be dashed against the rocks of pride, avarice, lust, and the rest of the capital vices—"In the world," added he, "rage dissension, fury, caprice, dissimulation, artifice, implacable hatred, ferocious jealousies, voluptuous frenzies;—in the world, ruinous gambling, loose harams, the most profane and sinful games and spectacles, sensual banquets, scandalous luxury, corruption, immorality, and libertinage are things of the first consideration,—in the world, every body runs breathless with anxiety after wealth and honours,—in the world, in fine, man devotes his whole life to whatever flatters his senses, and seldom or never to the exercises of virtue and charity. But in the cloister, the contrary of all this happens, because there all think and act with nobleness and solidity. There virtue is sought after, and practised, without fear,—there, gentle charity, unspotted candour and purity, piety without hypocrisy, and wisdom without arrogance, are found; but if their inmates sometimes undergo crosses and

mortifications, they are always very slight, salutary and consoling in their results. In a word, every good Christian ought to look upon the monastic state as the surest harbour of salvation, the centre of love and union, the school of celestial doctrine, the inexhaustible fountain of the most heroic perfection.*

Such were the sentiments delivered from the chair of the Holy Ghost by the hypocritical monk, who was heard by the audience with that kind of veneration which is usually entertained for a man eminently virtuous. Little did the majority of them know the real moral character

* The above is copied almost word for word from a sermon preached by a monk at the time when a young lady, with whom the author was acquainted, took the veil. It is very likely, that notwithstanding the beauty of that flattering picture of monastic life, and the frightful one made of the world, by that father, were the monks of our days to feed only on bread and water, fruits and herbs, as did the primitive founders of their state, and go about badly clothed, uncomfortably lodged, and obliged besides to work much and assiduously, as did their betters, it is very likely, we repeat, that society would then appear less contagious in their fastidious eyes.

of this religious instructor; for he had been always too cautious with the million, and too careful in hiding his villanies from the world to become at all notorious; but Gabriela, who had better reasons for knowing him, heard his words, if not for what they contained, at least for the hypocrisy they concealed, with the utmost scorn.—“Were this deluded audience,” she thought, “acquainted with the actions of his life, how few would listen to his discourse with that breathless attention which they now manifest! how their pious veneration would change into wrath and indignation at hearing this profane and sacrilegious wretch moralizing about that which in his heart he laughs to scorn!”

The sermon being now over, the priest blessed before her the monastic weeds, and after the usual prayers and hymns sung on such occasions, the music suddenly ceasing, the most awful silence, both in the church and in the choir, prevailed, and Gabriela was requested by the priest to rise. She obeyed with an emotion impossible to be described, and stood prominent

on the highest step at the foot of the altar, her face turned towards the choir, and her arms folded across her breast. The sun-beams falling perpendicularly over her head, her beautiful figure, clad in white, realized the idea of some heavenly apparition, resplendent in unearthly beauty and unspotted innocence, descending from the clouds amidst a volume of "light of her own making." At this moment also her mother rose and stepped forward, her arms quite extended, to give her the farewell embrace, while all the spectators kept their eyes rivetted on Gabriela. At length the mother approached, and her daughter threw her arms open, and closed her to her bosom, exclaiming—"I forgive you, mother, though you have dug a dreadful pit for me!"

At a moment like this, such awful words would have caused even the atheist to shudder with apprehension; but the bigoted Doña Angela, rejoiced at the offering she had laid at the foot of the altar, heard them without emotion, and saw her daughter pass from her arms to

those of her friends in almost a fainting state, without even shedding a tear! On Gabriela's receiving the last embrace of her friends, the lady, who acted as bride's-maid, took her by the hand, and, accompanied by the priest, and preceded by the clerks, clad in their white surplices, and bearing *ciriales*,* traversed the length of the church, on both sides of which rose small chapels, communicating with each other by low vaulted passages, and before the altars of which the feeble glimmerings of the lamps hanging from the roof just shewed the statue or picture of the Virgin or Saint to whose honour they had been raised. On one side of the grating, through which the nuns looked into the church, was a small door opening into their choir, which on the arrival of the procession was immediately thrown wide by one of the nuns, who came forward to receive Gabriela's hand from the bride's-maid. The unhappy victim shrunk back as the recluse approached, and grasped convulsively the hand of

* Large silver candlesticks borne on poles.

her friend, who in endeavouring to unclasp it, fell back half fainting into the priest's arms, while Gabriela was led into the choir. Immediately the door being shut, and the curtain of the grating drawn over, she was no longer visible to the people who were in the church, though the eyes of all were turned to the choir in momentary expectation of seeing her appear.

Suddenly, however, they were withdrawn to fix themselves on another object. A stranger, enveloped in his cloak, rushed into the church, casting wild looks around him, and gasping for breath. He stood for a moment shaking violently with agitation in the middle of the church, his eyes wandering from the altar to the choir, and then darted like an arrow towards the grating. At the moment he reached it, the organ sounded the anthem of "the children of Babylon," the curtains, which till then had kept the body of the church in darkness, were drawn aside, as was also that of the grating which hid the nuns from the people's eyes, and Gabriela was seen standing facing the altar, dressed in

the monastic garb, her face covered with the white veil of the noviciate, fixed on her head (whose curling tresses had now fallen) by a wreath of flowers, and surrounded by nuns bearing lighted tapers. At this sight, the stranger threw his cloak aside, and shrieking wildly—"God of mercy! 'tis she!—'tis she! I am too late!" fell senseless on the marble floor; and Gabriela, who instantly recognized Sandoval's voice, uttered a piercing scream, and sunk into the arms of the nuns.

All this was the work of an instant, and its effect on the astonished spectators was in proportion to the suddenness of the incident. Powerfully moved at the affecting scene, several of them hastened to Sandoval's assistance, and bore him on their shoulders out of the church, in a state of insensibility, while the nuns removed Gabriela to the farthest end of the choir. They then continued chaunting their *Laudate Dominum omnes gentes*, with which the awful drama terminated.

Doña Angela's party then returned to her

house, to take their *refresco*,* for though it is the custom on these occasions for the parents and friends of the novice to go and see her after these ceremonies from behind the iron grating of the *Locutorio*,† where a collation of ices and sweetmeats is served to them, they were all unanimous in declining this invitation, as neither their own feelings nor Gabriela's state of mind permitted it. The melancholy termination of this religious espousal had thrown a gloom on the minds of the guests, who no sooner reached Don Antonio's house than one after another left it, under some excuse or other, till at length Doña Angela found herself with only her particular friend the old devotée, Don Aniceto Artimaña, the father Confessor, and the priests who had officiated at the convent; with whom she remained very well contented; for, though few in number, they were a host in sanctity, and

* Afternoon entertainments of chocolate, sweetmeats, ices, and other beverages.

† Locutory, or visiting room.

moreover sure to agree with her in the justice, piety, and acceptability of that day's offering to the Almighty. Leaving, however, the whole benefit of their edifying conversation to themselves, we will request our readers to follow us to the place where Sandoval was safely lodged.

CHAPTER VI.

Here, too, the sick their final doom receive
Here brought, amid new scenes of grief, to grieve ;
Where the loud groan from some sad chamber flow,
Mixed with the clamours of the crowd below ;
Here, sorrowing, they each kindred sorrow scan,
And the cold charities of man to man.

CRABBE.

Not very distant from the convent of which Gabriela was now an inmate, is an edifice, built in the dark ages, the front of which presents two small castellated turrets, with lattices well barred, and a door in the middle of considerable size and thickness, studded with large nails from top to bottom, and generally kept shut, both to prevent the intrusion of strangers

into this secluded place, and the egress of its inmates, for whose safety and retirement those who kept them there seemed rather anxious. To this place, Father Lobo, who had followed the men that carried Sandoval out of the church, desired them to convey him ; and the ostensible reason he gave to induce them to follow his directions, was, that as an humble servant of the church, he was bound to prevent and see duly punished every kind of scandal within the precincts of sacred ground ; and that as Sandoval had, in his opinion, entered the church of the convent with intentions more hostile than devout, he must see him lodged in a safe place, until his conduct should undergo a thorough investigation. Urged by these reasons, the men who carried Sandoval followed the monk to the gate of the above-mentioned building, and at his call, a wicket in the door was opened by a man of rather an unprepossessing appearance, who acted as porter or turnkey to that dark palace, in which he had himself been a prisoner for more than twenty years. The door opened into

a narrow vaulted passage, which led to a small court, at one extremity of which was the door of the *alcaide* or governor's apartment, whither Sandoval was carried, through a winding staircase in the form of a cork-screw. At the top of the stairs, the *alcaide* himself, a long and dry visaged personage, with a countenance as stern and sour as that of any *alcaide*'s needed to be, was waiting to receive his new guest, with that impatience which might be expected in the great lion of a menagerie towards feeding time.—“Welcome,” said he to Father Lobo, who ushered in the new visitor: “I was afraid I should see no more of you, reverend father; for here two days have elapsed without having seen your Reverence's face, and God and the Virgin know there is still many a wicked sinner at large, who might be quite as safe under my care as under that of anybody else.”

“Hold your tongue,” whispered the monk into his ear, “for this is worth all the ragamuffins I could bring you throughout a whole year. ... 'Tis the eldest son of Don Fabricio

Sandoval, of whom I have already spoken to you."

"What! Don Calisto?" enquired the delighted alcaide.

The monk nodded assent, and the other rubbed his hands.—"I have been looking for him I know not how long.—But, by Saint Peter's keys! you make me here a fine present, he is dead!" added he, as he saw the men enter with their load.

"Never mind that," whispered the monk; "for, if he were, you are entitled to his clothes, and whatever money and valuables he may have about him, with a bill upon his brother for extra expences, you know."

"True, true," said the alcaide; and then addressing the men who brought Sandoval, he added—"this way, gentlemen, this way;—for," thought he, "it won't do to give him at first the best room I have in my quarters. Let him pay first, or let him rot, as many honest fellows than himself have done before him." After this reflection, he led the way through a suite of

rooms, which became more and more unfurnished, dark, and dreary, as they were more remote from his own apartments, and the locks and bolts of their doors more complicated, huge, and clamorous, till they arrived at another staircase, as narrow and winding as the first, which, descending, brought them to a long, dark, narrow passage, having on both sides, and from space to space, doors, through the key-holes of which now and then issued a doleful cry, a groan, or the sound of a faint voice, asking for a little water. At the furthest extremity of this passage the murmur of a multitude of voices was heard, which increased gradually as the party approached, till at length it grew into a deafening din, sufficient of itself to make the stoutest heart quake. The turnkey, who preceded the party, performing his office with the ease of one who had practised it a long time, now applied a huge key to the strong lock of the door which opened into the place where the noise issued, and drawing aside the heavy bolt, flung the door open with a tremendous kick,

when such a scene presented itself as baffles all description.—First of all, a thick column of tobacco smoke, impregnated with every possible morbid emanation, rushed out of that horrid den, and nearly overpowered the whole party, who, however, entering, found themselves in a room fifty feet long by thirty wide, containing above two hundred prisoners, some loaded with chains fastened to the stone walls, others suffered to move about but fettered in couples, others disencumbered in the arms, but with heavy shackles to their ancles, others, with only a long chain round one of their legs and secured to the wall; all were, it can be scarcely said, *covered* with filthy rags, their forms were lean and withered, and their countenances emaciated and pale. There were some, indeed, who looked more like demons than human beings, with their long beards reaching to their waists, their yellow-bronzed bodies covered only by a pair of torn trowsers, and their eyes dark, scowling, and flashy; while others with haggard looks, squalid countenances, attenuated bodies, white skins,

and sparkling consumptive eyes; looked like spectres hovering about the gloom of a charnel house. In this place, men and women, young and old, innocent and guilty, were huddled together—here the man, who had grown hardened in vice and crime, was tied to the one who had only committed an error,—the exalted patriot to the remorseless assassin,—the insolvent debtor to the felon,—the lover who had incurred the displeasure of his mistress's parents, to the false coiner. All were condemned to breathe the same confined, malignant, infected air; unless, indeed, any one chose to purchase by weight of gold the privilege of being shut up in a solitary cell, from the avaricious keeper, whose ingenuity in inventing new modes of tormenting his victims, in order to extort their last real, did honor to his employers.

When our party entered this dungeon, the deafening noise of the prisoners was for a moment suspended, and many of those unfortunate beings (perchance the most innocent) no

sooner saw the alcaide appear, followed by his minions, every one of whom was armed with a pizzle, than they began to shake with terror and apprehension, while those who had become seasoned to blows, or despised them, and their gaolers too, recommenced their loud talk, their oaths, and their blasphemies, unmindful of the visitors, or of the consequences that might follow the displeasure of the frowning alcaide. Meantime, this last caused Sandoval, who continued still in a state of insensibility, to be laid in a corner of the room, on some of the rotten straw strewed all round the walls, and which served as beds for the prisoners; and then fastening on his legs a pair of heavy fetters, and pinioning his arms with an iron ring, retired with his retinue, amidst the hootings, whistlings, and yells of a large majority of the prisoners.

The immense noise thus raised, and the efforts which a crowd of the most abandoned of those wretches, who had not yet forgotten

their criminal practices, made to get possession of his clothes, roused him at last from the sort of lethargy in which he had sunk; but on opening his eyes, and seeing himself surrounded by those demon-like forms, those ghastly countenances, those tattered and disgusting objects, who seemed to vie with each other in the villainess and blasphemy of their language, and who, with segars in their mouths, and enveloped in clouds of smoke, stared at him with the grimness of fiends; on feeling every sense assailed by some unpleasant sensation, and finding his limbs pinioned to the earth, his head began to swim, his brain grew confused, and he at length imagined that he had died, and was now in the infernal abodes. For a considerable time this idea kept possession of his mind, and every time he gazed at the men by whom he was surrounded, and who took a savage pleasure in terrifying him by clanking their chains, and distorting their sufficiently horrid faces, he shrunk back and hid his face with his hands, while his teeth chattered in his head, and his

frame was convulsed with agitation. At last, like the man whose sleep is disturbed by some frightful dream, and asks himself whether it be a reality, he made a powerful effort, and became awake to his real situation. He then sat up, and shook his pinioned hands scornfully at the group of malefactors who were around him, and who burst into astounding peals of laughter at the excellent joke they had passed upon him, till at length, one after another, gradually withdrawing to other parts of the room, he was left to himself, but relieved of some of the principal articles of his dress.

He endeavoured now to compose his mind, and conceive how he had got into this infernal den ; but unable to form any satisfactory conjecture, he dropped the subject altogether, and began to look about him more leisurely. Not far from him, he saw a group of wretches, who, with one knee bent on the ground, and their bodies leaning forward, formed a circle, and were gambling among themselves for his own coat, boots, and hat at a low game called *la*

taba.* A little further on was a knot of true gamesters and sharpers, sitting squat on the damp ground, and staking at a cheating game, called *el cané*, what they had plundered from others, their withered but ferocious countenances exhibiting those boisterous passions with which the hearts of such men are usually agitated. The oath and the imprecation went loudly round, the threat was quickly followed by the blow; and this by the struggle; and while the two foes fought it out, dragging into their quarrel those who were fettered to them, the rest of their companions scrambled for whatever had been hoarded up by the disputants, and made the best of their way to another part of the room. In casting his eyes to a distant corner of it, Sandoval observed an old man in a dying state, stretched on the straw, and attended by a young woman, who with haggard looks and

* This vulgar game is played with sheep's shanks by the very lowest rabble; and, tradition says, it was the same with which the Jews gambled for the tunic of Jesus Christ.

dishevelled hair, tried to support his head on her lap, while three half-naked boys were kneeling at his feet uttering lamentable cries. He turned his head away from this heart-rending spectacle, his eyes swimming in tears ; but they alighted on a spectral figure chained to the wall, so withered and ghastly, that were it not for the rags with which he was covered, and the painful sighs which now and then swelled his bosom, he might have been mistaken for the skeleton of a man once in existence. A group were here singing obscene and profane songs, and further on another absorbed in prayer. The very walls themselves presented a frightful representation of the horrors of that abode of wretchedness and guilt. On them the bigot had drawn Virgins, saints, and crucifixes, beside the revolting obscenities sketched by the immoral and degraded beings who had spent the greatest part of their lives in this horrific abode ; here a memento of past pleasures was engraven, and beneath it one of present suffering and grief ; further on was a ridiculous epigram be-

side a melancholy epitaph. The strange confusion thus visible in this horrible dungeon, could not but furnish a reflecting mind, like that of Sandoval, with matter for grief and indignation, pity and disgust, tenderness and detestation.

He was before aware, that in most prisons, the condition of the prisoners was by no means proportionate to their crimes, but rather to the money they could afford to pay the alcaide, who, without cause or motive, inflicted on them the most brutal and disgraceful punishments, with no other object but to extort from them all the money he could. He knew also that these places were not only the receptacle for the remorseless criminals, who had outraged society by their frequent crimes, but likewise for those unfortunate individuals who had infringed the arbitrary edicts of the government; that the most effectual means were not always used to correct or reform the delinquent or the misguided man; but, on the contrary, that vengeance was often executed there in a shameless

and barbarous manner; that filth and misery fell more frequently to the lot of the unhappy inmates, than cleanliness or comfort. But how was it possible, even to imagine, that the disorder had reached such a frightful height without having thus experienced it? It was, however, evident that these places being now as much destined for victims of personal resentment, malignity, or hatred, as for men who had violated the laws, they were here to be made to suffer the insults and lashes of a gaoler and his satellites, the exquisite misery of the place itself, and if possible, to be made to undergo a moral degradation, by becoming infected with the vices of those who had been confined there for years on account of real crimes. To this may be added, that as there was no fixed occupation for the prisoners, who were, at most, taken out only from time to time, chained in pairs, to sweep the public streets, or perform some other degrading employment, the idleness in which they were kept contributed in a powerful degree to create and perpetuate among this hetero-

geneous assemblage every vice and every evil that can afflict humanity ; and as no remedy, either physical or moral, was applied to check the desolating effects of the infectious diseases by which body and mind were contaminated and destroyed, except, indeed, what the caprice or interest of the gaoler prompted ; and this, it may be supposed, was not always the most wisely or justly imagined, it is not at all surprising, that these dreadful abodes should present such scenes of horror as would not disgrace the realms of Lucifer. The effects, too, of such a cruel and impolitic system, were most pernicious to the morality and tranquillity of the country ; for those really vicious men who outlived these miseries, and returned to the bosom of society, having lost there the little remaining shame or fear, which had restrained them before, now came out determined to take deep vengeance on a world that had permitted the iniquitous treatment they had endured ; hence murders and robberies, felonies and viola-

tions were seldom more common than at that epoch.

Sandoval was engaged in these reflections, when the heavy bolts of the door creaked, and as it turned upon its hinges, half-a-dozen men, marshalled by the alcaide, and his myrmidons, entered, bearing large pails, in which there were leaves of cabbages, peas, slices of pimpkins, and melons, the remains of fowls and rabbits, bones half picked, skinny pieces of meat, bits of bread and cheese, with various other things, all swimming in a hotch-potch of broth, milk, wine, and water mixed up together,—the refuse of some of the convents and hospitals where no swine were kept, or where no money could be raised by it. At sight of this enticing meal, the prisoners seemed to have at once recovered their liberty, such was the joy manifested, in their squalid countenances. They all ran eagerly with their wooden basins, to have them filled with some of the multifarious ingredients above described, the distribution of which was made

with as much regularity as could be expected from the justice of the alcaide, and the rapacity of most of his guests; some of the boldest of whom took the liberty of helping themselves from one of the pails, which they succeeded in snatching from the men who brought it, notwithstanding the shower of lashes that fell about their backs, while engaged in the attempt. The eagerness of the rest, though quite as great as that of their bold companions, was somewhat tempered by the sight of the pizzlies, and though some of them had the address to obtain a double ration, upon the whole, the distribution was pretty equal, and made with some regularity, there being only about a dozen prisoners who went without any food, owing to the state of great weakness and exhaustion in which they were, and which prevented them from pushing their way through the crowd.

This affair being concluded, the alcaide and his men proceeded towards the door, unaccompanied this time by the yells of the prisoners,

who were too busy in picking the bones that had fallen to the lot of each, to think of paying them those parting attentions; but Sandoval, who saw this opportunity on the point of escaping him, and afraid he should be left in that horrible place to rot, like those who were near him, called the alcaide to know whether it was possible for him to have a separate room.—“Oh, oh!” said the alcaide, with a nod and a grin, “so you don’t like your company, eh! or think you they are not gentlemanly enough for you?—But you may have a separate chamber, if,” added he in a whisper, “you are disposed to touch the palm of my hand in the way you know.”

“My weight in gold you shall have,” cried Sandoval with animation, “rather than remain another instant here.”

“’Tis well spoken,” said the alcaide; and then turning to his turnkey, he added, “holla! here man, undo the lock of these manacles and fetters, and let us take this gentleman into another

apartment; for he says, he is dying, and in truth he looks very ill. We must show the poor fellow some humanity."

These words, which he pronounced in a loud tone of voice, were heard by some of the prisoners with marked scorn; but the young woman, of whom we have already spoken, springing from her place, threw herself on her knees, and with uplifted hands, and tears in her eyes, begged the alcaide to order that her father should also be removed, as otherwise he must perish there. — "Let him," said the humane alcaide; "think you I am to be tricked by his impositions or your's? Away with you, you weeping crocodile!"

The poor woman, who probably knew but too well the brutal insensibility of this wretch, immediately got up, and went silently to sit down again beside her father's straw pillow; while Sandoval, who felt a tug at his heart-strings at leaving the poor man and his daughter there, without being able to offer them any assistance, followed the alcaide and his men out of that

place of wretchedness and guilt.—“Now,” said the alcaide, “we must shew the Captain a comfortable apartment, though by so doing I may be running a risk with the *justicia* ;* still something is owing to a gentleman.”

While he spoke thus, he walked on in an opposite direction to that they had at first entered the passage, that brought them to another staircase, which they descended groping in the dark, and which seemed as if it led to the bottomless pit, so many were the steps down which they went. Having, however, found the bottom, they entered another long passage, in which the alcaide said, there was a room where the Captain would be very comfortably lodged, only that he would expect two *pesetas*† a day, which, considering the many conveniences it offered, it was giving it for nothing. Notwithstanding this panegyric, San-

* In Spain the members composing a tribunal, from the chief judge down to the last alguacil is called La Justicia.

† A peseta is about ten-pence.

doval, who felt his feet wet by the water with which even the stone floor of the passage was filled, suspected he was not to take the gaoler's words for gospel, in which suspicion he was confirmed as soon as the door of the cell was thrown open. It was a small but deep dungeon, with a high roof, the floor of which was literally flooded with water, and the walls dripping wet, for it was considerably beneath the level of the river that washed the walls of the prison.—“And is it in this lake that I am to dwell?” enquired Sandoval in a jocular manner; for he was aware that any other tone did not suit; “now, come, my friend, as I am neither fish nor water-fowl, you must show me something else.”

“Umph! must?” said the alcaide looking fiercely.

“Nay, if you please; but this you know is always a matter of course.”

“Ay, but not with me,” said the alcaide; “But you seem to dislike this snug cell, without even noticing the conveniences which it presents. Look only at that little platform,—with its straw

mattress, and a blanket to boot, to the top of which you mount by steps, and where you might sit completely out of the damp, and of the reach of reptiles, as comfortably as a king on his throne. Then mark the convenience of the iron ring, fastened to the wall just above it, to tie the chain which would go around your neck, to prevent your falling down during your sleep! 'Tis the most comfortable cell that I could show a gentleman; but if you don't like it, I'll not force you into it, and we will even go back to the hall; for I see you like company."

Sandoval, although he felt his neck stiffen at the idea of having a chain fastened round it, would much sooner have become an inmate of that pond, and have all the fetters of the prison round his limbs than return to the place he had just left, if however there was no other alternative; but still he begged to be shewn another room less damp, pleading his subjection to rheumatic pains. The alcaide shook his head incredulously, and said—"Well, Captain, you

seem to have found out my lame leg.* Humanity, ay, a fine thing, no doubt; but a matter that has brought me into many scrapes with my superiors. Still I will risk meeting their displeasure once more to oblige you, and if three pesetas a day is not an object with you, I'll shew you something good."

So saying he led the way to the place he boasted as so good, and which was on the passage above this, at the opposite extremity of the hall; but previous to their entering it, he struck a light; for that of day had never entered that cell since it was built. On opening the door their olfactory organs were assailed by the confined and fetid air of the place, and by the putrid emanations arising from some dead rats and a cat that had been shut up in it to destroy those animals, and had himself fallen a victim to their united attacks. Besides these disgusting objects, the walls were covered with

* *De que pierna cojeo*, equivalent to the French saying, *mon côté foible*.

spiders of an uncommon size, and the ground, with beetles, grubs, and other reptiles that fed on each other, and on the unwholesome and corrupted atmosphere of the dungeon.

“Here at least,” said the alcaide, “you’ll have company without the annoyance of being subjected to their impertinent questions or remarks; and, as you appear a little moody, you’ll be able to pursue your meditations, undisturbed, either by any excess of light or of noise.”

“But,” replied Sandoval, “I might disturb my companions, and ’tis better avoided, if you can lodge me in some other place, where I may have a little more light, and less of this kind of company. I am willing to pay the usual fees for such an indulgence.”

The alcaide muttered something about his being very hard to please, and taking him back to the hall; but continued showing him other cells, certainly improving in salubrity and accommodation as they advanced, but immoderate or rather extravagant in price. At last they came to

the floor which was on a level with the alcaide's apartments, where he found a cell, which it was agreed he should occupy at the rate of three dollars a day; and *item*, one more to enjoy the pleasure of being unfettered. The furniture of the room consisted of a tolerable bed, without sheets, quilt, or pillows, a small ricketty deal table, and one chair, which had already seen its best days; the window was well barred, and the door sufficiently strong to resist any attempts from inside. Here, then, he was furnished with pen, ink and paper, that he might inform his brother of his actual situation, and request his assistance; and here too we shall leave him to go back to the nunnery, where we left the unhappy Gabriela under the care of the Dominican sisters.

We must, however, be allowed, before we dismiss altogether this chapter of human miseries, to answer a question, which doubtless will arise in the minds of most of our English readers;—viz. “can such an account of Spanish prisons as is given here be depended upon? is it not over

charged? nay, is it not a fiction of the author's brain?" To this we reply, would to God it were so! We should not then have to lament the loss of hundreds, nay thousands of innocent victims, who have perished in those dreadful places, since the restoration to the throne of his ancestors of that monster of ingratitude, who so tyrannically domineers over the thinking class of the nation. No colours of ours can be sufficiently strong to paint the horrors of those abodes, the miseries endured in them, or the inhuman and barbarous conduct of the keepers. Independent of the rigour with which the prisoners (particularly those confined on account of their political principles) were ordered to be treated by the men in power, the custom prevalent in Spain of contracting for the entire management of prisons, by auction, was of itself a measure sufficient to create all the abuses and miseries we have just glanced at; for it is natural to suppose that those who obtained the contracts, their object being to enrich themselves, had recourse to every imaginable extortion to obtain

it, and seized the readiest means in their power to wring from the unhappy sufferer his last penny; namely, unwholesome dungeons, corporal punishments, bad food, and sometimes no food at all, fetters, chains, and degrading insults. This will suffice to show that our sketch, instead of being overcharged, must fall far behind the horrible reality.

CHAPTER VII.

Thou hast not ear nor soul to apprehend
The sublime notion, and high mystery
That must be uttered to unfold the sage
And serious doctrine of virginity.
And thou art worthy that thou should'st not know
More happiness than this thy present lot.

MILTON.

IN Catholic countries the females confined in nunneries may be divided into three distinct classes; namely, those who enter the convent *willingly*, those who are *seduced* into it, and those who are *unwillingly* dragged there. With respect to the willing votaresses, the following may be taken as the motives that instigate them in adopting the monastic life;—first, being aware that their stock of personal beauty, or

fortune is too slender to procure them a suitable match during their mortal career, and too proud to remain in the world, to subject themselves to that hateful appellation, the bare mention of which provokes the mirth, sneers, winks, and inuendoes, of those who, more fortunate than they, have succeeded in reaching the altar of hymen, they prefer to assume the nominal, yet sweet, title of *wives of Jesus Christ*, to that just hinted at; secondly, that being crossed in love, tired of the world, or repenting their follies, their romantic imaginations suggest the cloister as the only place where they may forget the unworthy objects of their flame, or regain that peace of mind which they seek in the world in vain; thirdly, because there are some pious women, who really believe, that the life of the cloister is more acceptable to God, and more likely to ensure their eternal salvation than any other; and, lastly, there are others, whose means of existence being precarious, or insufficient for enjoying such comforts as they could wish, are glad to secure a permanent and com-

fortable competency, by entering into the religious state;—such are the *willing* nuns, who are certainly the happiest of recluses, or at least who look upon such a life with predilection. The second class is composed of those young and inexperienced females, who are induced to take the veil through the pious seductions of their confessors, the importunate instigation of maiden aunts, or the flattering pictures of a convent life, which they receive from the religious sisters themselves; such we term, the *seduced recluses*; and these often lead the most miserable life of all, though, indeed, some die resigned.—Thirdly, and lastly, come those unfortunate girls who are sacrificed to parental dislike, family interest, or barbarous feelings of bigotry and superstition; these are the *unwilling* victims, few of whom long survive their incarceration; but, if any one does, she lingers through the monastic life like the exotic plant of the tropics under a northern sky, which, however tended, withers, and falls at last, to rise no more!

Thus a nunnery must naturally present as gre at

a variety of characters as there are recluses ; some will be found to be all meekness, piety, and submission ; others proud, unfeeling, and fanatical ; others fretful, morose, and petulant ; others, in fine, a mixture of all that is amiable and disagreeable, good and bad, wise and foolish. But the uniformity of their manner of living, the effect produced on their minds by a similarity of pursuits and situations, and the contemplation of the same objects, operating in all alike, produce a sameness in their ideas, wishes, and expectations, which by considerably modifying the diversity of their tempers and dispositions, makes them appear like models cast in the same mould, though of different materials.

Such are in general the chief points of character in the females who compose a Spanish nunnery ; and such were those by whom Gabriela found herself surrounded, when she recovered from the swoon in which we left her. Removed by the command of the superior from the choir, four of the youngest nuns contrived to take her in a chair, through a long cloister, to the mother

abbess's apartments, which were at one of the angles of the convent, and looked into a well cultivated garden belonging to it. These apartments consisted of an elegant suite of rooms, in the first of which a multitude of flower-pots were tastefully arranged, placed in graceful stands, the balcony, in particular, exhibiting a trellis, formed with the branches of a vine, round which wound the passion flower, the indian cress, the jasmine, and the honeysuckle. The second room, larger than the first, had its walls decorated with a number of small prints and pictures of saints and virgins, medals and little relics, enclosed in tasteful frames of gilt and coloured paper, cut in the shape of flowers, which had been presented to the abbess by those nuns who possessed this amusing art, and who employed their leisure hours in it, by way of pastime. In the corners of the room were seen gilt triangular tables with marble tops, on each of which there was a glass case, or, as it is called in Spanish, an *escaparate*, containing a variety of religious curiosities and relics, en-

chased in silver and gold. The third room was still more splendid than the second, the walls being hung with good-sized pictures of the best masters in rich frames, and the middle of the room being adorned with an altar, on which the united efforts of the nuns had been exerted to render it a master-piece of its kind. The virgins and the saints, and the angels, had all been dressed by the hands of the nuns. There the Virgin Mary appeared, not in the humble apparel of a carpenter's wife, as she did in the stable of Bethlehem, but decked in a magnificent silk gown, richly embroidered, with a lace veil on her head, and a profusion of pearls about her neck and arms; the child was no longer the poor naked babe lying in a crib, as he is usually represented; here, on the contrary, he was swaddled in gauze and gold tissues, and had round his waist a silver band, from which hung a little relic, as also the gospels, like those worn by children, as an amulet against Satan and the witches. Here, also, the elegant Mary Magdalene was seen dressed in the Spanish

fashion, with a *basquiña* and a *mantilla*, a skull in one hand, and a fan in the other, doubtless to denote that hankering after the vanities of the world which our ladies feel, even after they have repented of their sins. Saint Catherine, with her wheel, and Saint Cecilia, with her monochord, were arrayed in the very pink of Parisian *bon ton*; for there was a nun among the sisterhood, who now and then received from a friend of her's the *figurines*, as they called the prints, in which the dresses of the Parisian belles are exactly sketched, and which she copied whenever she could obtain the favour from the abbess of dressing one of her saints. Various other virgins were likewise decked in weeds not holy but profane; though, indeed, the monastic garb was also observable, particularly in St. Brigida, St. Teresa, St. Clara, St. Ursula, and several other founders of religious orders. When we say that even a crucifix, which had no business there, was adorned with a beautifully embroidered petticoat, we presume we say enough to convince any reasonable person that

the most elaborate efforts had been made to render this altar the *beau idéal* of Paradise, according to a nun's ideas. The rest of the room was stored with silver cased relics, virgins, and angels in an adoring posture. Two small book-cases also decorated the side walls, full of mystic and culinary books, the gifts of the spiritual directors of the nunnery. A profusion of flowers enlivened the balconies, and spread a sweet perfume all around. The last room of all was a small closet, which contained a bed with elegant hangings, and an ivory crucifix above the pillow, with two small basins by its sides, full of holy water. A prayer desk stood on one side of the bed, and a full length looking glass on the other. The whole breathed an air of elegant refinement, neatness, and comfort, which manifested that the mother abbess was no stranger to taste, nor an enemy to the "vanities of the world."

When our heroine, Gabriela, was carefully placed on a sofa of the third room, the whole community, for whom this scene possessed a

high interest, both on account of its novelty, and because it afforded ample subject to gratify their well known propensity for prattling, commenced an animated discussion respecting the cause of her swooning. As they all spoke at the same time, it was not easy to follow up the exact thread of the arguments employed; though in justice to some we ought to remark, that, notwithstanding the din thus raised, they continued to obtain an especial hearing, as the shrill trumpet will make itself audible amidst the roaring of the artillery. There was one in particular who pitched her tones so high, as to set at defiance the tongues of all her companions; she related with surprising volubility all she had observed from the moment Gabriela entered the church till her accident; noted down every look and step she had taken, with a prolixity and a precision which would have conferred honour on a Chinese master of ceremonies, while she embellished the whole with hundreds of conjectures, hints, and reflections on the actual state of Gabriela's heart. It is not to be

taken for granted, that because she talked loudest, and faster than the rest, her companions paid any patient attention to her harangue; on the contrary, every one did her utmost to drown her clamorous tongue, by giving their own opinion on the subject in as high a voice as became the presence of the mother abbess, who, on her side, was no less obstreperous than her community, only that being somewhat older, her voice partook a little of the treble, and now and then wandered into the falsetto. In this confusion of tongues, the task of reporting their speeches would be as difficult for us as to count the stars of heaven; all we can say is, that they all agreed on the fact, that Gabriela's fit was owing to the gentleman who had rushed towards the grating with such wild looks as nearly to frighten half of them out of their senses. The sooner to obtain possession of the causes of this strange occurrence, each came forward with her smelling phial of aromatic vinegar, essences, and so forth, to contribute to the recovery of our heroine; and by

dint of applications, frictions, and washings, she at length opened her brilliant eyes, now overcast with a dimness through which every object appeared "like the fleeting vision of a dream." The sight of the mother abbess, sitting beside her, her head leaning over her, and watching every motion with the utmost intensity, brought to her mind, which was solely occupied by the sense of confinement, the image of one of those duennas of old who were entrusted with the care of spying and controuling every action, checking every thought, and contradicting every word of the unhappy maidens who were placed under their tutelage. But when her eyes wandered about, and she saw herself surrounded by all the nuns, who were eagerly gazing at her, some of the elderly ones with their forefinger on their lips, intimating silence to those who could hardly suppress their curiosity, she became gradually conscious of her situation, and gave vent to her grief by a long continued flood of tears. This excited the sympathy of most of the nuns, who wept with her;

wiped away her tears, kissed her pale cheeks, called her by a thousand endearing names, and tried to console her by every soothing discourse in their power. "My dear child," said the mother abbess, taking Gabriela's hand, and kindly pressing it in her's, "do not be so distressed. You are not here among enemies; on the contrary, we are your best friends. Do not then regret having lost the deceitful pleasures of the world, they are insufficient to produce that felicity which is only to be found in our cloisters. Fifty happy years spent in this convent, enable me to speak positively on this subject; but were your aversion for our life so insurmountable, that even after one or two years of probation it should remain unconquered, then, my dear child, you can still return to the world, to enjoy the vain pleasures you regret, though, I hope, long before that time comes, you will have been convinced, that our spiritual comforts are far preferable to those the world affords."

Gabriela shook her head sorrowfully, and heaved a deep sigh, and the abbess, who was

one of those few who had entered the cloister by an early inclination to the monastic life, and who had not been disappointed in the expectations she had formed of its being the most desirable and happiest state of all, continued enforcing in mild language the doctrine of ascetism and celibacy as the only one acceptable to God, and likely to secure the eternal joys of paradise. When she had performed the task of consolation, which she conceived to be an indispensable duty on her part, she came to another no less imperious, and of the two, perhaps, the most pleasing, both to herself and her community, who no sooner heard her put the question, than they all lengthened their necks visibly, the better to hear Gabriela's answer.—“And pray, my little dear,” asked the inquisitive nun; “did you know anything of that wild man, who shouted your name within the very church, that you should have been so much affected at it?”

Gabriela nodded, sighed, and said nothing; but one of the young nuns, who was close to the abbess, took upon herself to answer that

question for her, and she did so the more readily as she knew that whatever she said would give no offence, the mother abbess acknowledging her as her favourite—"I am certain, my beloved mother," she said, "the wicked man must have been her lover; for before she fainted away in my arms, she said, 'Heavens, 'tis my love!' which you know clearly proves it."

The mother abbess smiled, and intimated by a little inclination of the head, that she entertained the same opinion. "But," said she, observing how shocked some of the sisters appeared at this impertinent remark, "my dear, you ought not to reveal here what you heard at such a time. 'Tis not proper."

"Well, if he were," said another nun, "he is a very handsome man, and I should not have called him wicked."

"Handsome!" ejaculated the unabashed favourite, "a man with eyes starting from their sockets, pale as a plaster figure, and with hair as erect as the quills of a porcupine?"

“But,” observed another, “it was the agitation that caused him to look so. However, sister, it does not become you to talk of these things, nor ought you to interrupt our mother abbess every moment as you do. Surely you should follow the example of those who are older and wiser than yourself.”

To this last observation the young nun only laughed, remarking pertly—“Of yourself, for instance, sister, who can eke out in years what you want in wisdom.”

“My dear child,” said the indulgent mother abbess, “it is not right in you to allude to such a subject. Age, wherever it is found, ought to be respected, for it begets wisdom, and this is always a precious gift, which compensates for the loss of youth; by bringing us nearer to the gate of salvation.”

“In you, mother dear, I acknowledge, age has begot wisdom,” whispered the young nun in her ear; “but in others, you know it is followed only by dotage.” To this the mother abbess,

who by the mere fact of having a favourite, showed she was not insensible to flattery, listened with indulgence, and even complacency.

During this desultory conversation, some other nuns, whose feelings were too much interested to allow them to join in it, stood around the afflicted Gabriela, bestowing on her their consolations and advice, and now and then putting in an odd question or two, which might place them in possession of the secret they so much wished to learn.—“Worldly affection,” said one, making use of these indirect expressions to bring her to the desired point, “is never lasting; but the love we feel for our divine spouse never dies, not even when the tomb encloses our mouldering bones. Although it is natural you should now regret the loss of what you have loved well, believe me, time will efface even the remembrance of such an affection; and since your heart is susceptible of this tender passion, you shall not want worthier objects on which to fix it. The susceptibility of loving, indeed, is the first requisite for our avocation. ’Tis by

love alone we breathe in the cloister, we live and die in it; though it is a love, far more pure and delightful than that which swells the heart of a profane being. Think you, my dear sister, that there is any man, however noble and virtuous, handsome and wise, worthy to be preferred for an instant to that august spouse, you will shortly be betrothed to? Is Don what do you call him, my dear?"

"Him!" exclaimed Gabriela, "whom, Madam?"

"I am not a Madam, my dear, I am a sister," said the nun; "but I mean him whom you saw at church."

"For God's sake, Madam, do not tear my heart by such painful recollections," replied Gabriela; "what does his name avail now? Will my telling it you restore him to me, or me to him? If you have any pity in you, pray, do not question me about him or any one else. I feel a sickness at the heart, which renders it impossible for me to answer any questions. I wish to be alone; and if true charity actuates you, and

your companions, let me be carried to my cell, and be left there undisturbed, for I want repose and solitude. This is the greatest boon you can confer on a wretch like me." The mother abbess, who heard this request, and who saw by Gabriela's decided manner of speaking, that it would be more prudent to postpone her interrogatory to another opportunity, ordered she should be shewn to her cell, and desired the community to leave her there unmolested, at the same time dispensing her also from attending the devotional hours, until her mind should be more fit to fix itself on heavenly things. Gabriela was very grateful to the mother abbess for her kindness, and respectfully kissing her hand, proceeded, accompanied by two of the nuns, to the cell that had been prepared for her.

On coming to the door, the nuns dipped their fingers in a little basin of holy water that hung outside, and offered her some, which she accepted; and inside she observed another of similar size hanging about the same place. Similar basins are hung on the door of every cell, to deter the

evil spirit from entering the abode of these spouses of Jesus Christ. The cell, which was as clean and bright as a silver cup, consisted in a small room with a closet, which contained the bed, hid from the sight by a damask curtain. There were three chairs and two tables, one for common purposes, and the other to hold Gabriela's spouse, as the nuns call a carved image of the infant Jesus, that lay in a recumbent posture on a silk cushion carefully covered over with cambric sheets, and a silk quilt beautifully embroidered. Every nun has one of these images, on which she lavishes the greatest attention, and frequently her tenderest caresses, changing its linen often, and embroidering new quilts, sometimes, too, dressing it up in the gayest clothes her imagination can suggest; in a word, it is her doll, which she has the greatest pride in keeping as splendidly arrayed as all her art and ingenuity can contrive. The walls of the cell, too, were covered with little prints of saints, angels, and virgins, none of which resembled each other; a few books stood on a shelf, and lastly the two

windows of the room were decked with flower-pots well garnished with flowers.

In this cell, resembling in everything those of her companions, whose confined wants required nothing more to live comfortably, the two young nuns, having first detailed and praised everything which it contained, left Gabriela to her own meditation, which as our readers may probably guess, turned on the melancholy events of the day. As it invariably happens to those who have gone through a series of harassing incidents, which by their quick succession have constantly kept the mind on the stretch, and unfit for reflection, Gabriela now recapitulated the painful occurrences which had at last brought her there. Her filial devotion caused her to consider the sacrifice made of her by her mother in the most favourable light, attributing it rather to an excess of piety, than to the want of the natural feelings of a parent; but she lamented her father's weakness, on whom she had built a hope that he would have stood by her when things reached their last crisis. Attached as

she was to him, and conscious of being beloved by him, she could hardly reconcile to herself a conduct which partook of so great a want of feeling and energy, and which, in fact, bespoke almost a total absence of paternal affection. She, however, endeavoured to palliate it by the reflection, that situated as he was, between an imperious wife, who had always ruled over him, and ever would, and a crafty, hypocritical monk, who exerted an unbounded influence on his mind, and who would not have stopped at any villany to compel him to subscribe to his wishes, it would have been impossible for him to have long resisted the united efforts of two such powerful associates. The next subject that occurred to her mind, was of a still more painful nature than the first. Since the night Sandoval surprised her in the garden with Fermin, she had seen nothing of him, and then the injurious suspicions which that incident must have given rise to in Sandoval's mind, she feared, might have increased the torments of his already sufficiently painful situation. Her endeavours to

discover his residence having also been fruitless, she had not been able to explain the motives of such a meeting, or to remove whatever injurious impression it might have left on his mind. Thus to her other troubles had been added that of falling under his displeasure, and to this, that of being dragged to a convent, where it would be as difficult for him to see or speak to her as if she were in her grave. His sudden presence at the church, also, occurred to her memory, with all its attendant heart-sickening circumstances. The agony of Sandoval's shriek, which went to the very core of her heart, and which still rung in her ears; his pallid countenance, wild looks, and distorted features, all came to add a bitterness to her affliction, which the uncertainty of his fate was not calculated to allay.

These embittering thoughts crowded and goaded her mind almost to madness, unable to shed tears, she threw herself on her couch; but her reflections pursuing her every where, she rose again, and went to the window, the height of which she measured with a rapid glance. A

thought flashed across her mind—it was a sinful one; but it passed away as rapidly as it came, and she endeavoured instantaneously to atone for the criminal impulse by falling on her knees before the image of the infant Jesus, and, amidst a flood of repentant tears, implored the pardon of heaven. Engaged now in fervent prayer, she remained kneeling for a considerable time; after which she rose, her heart greatly lightened of the heavy weight which had oppressed it, and her mind strengthened against such rash resolves, and much more resigned to her present situation than she could ever have dared to hope; but such are the effects of *true* piety on innocent minds.

Having thus recovered some of her serenity, Gabriela approached the window, attracted by the sounds of a voice, which now was loud and hurried, and now plaintive and slow, and which seemed to issue from among a thick orange grove, that extended from beneath the window of her cell to the other extremity of the garden. In looking out, she discerned through the apertures

of the trees a nun, with wan and emaciated countenance, sitting on one of the stone benches, holding in one hand a locket that hung from her neck by a green ribbon, and striking her breast with the other hand fast clenched, while she gazed intently on the picture. She muttered something about mortal sin, and everlasting punishments, heavenly joys, and spiritual love, and then kissed the locket, wept and laughed hysterically. From her often repeated word "*escrupulos*," Gabriela judged that the melancholy figure, who now rose, and walked hurriedly and wildly to and fro, was one of those unfortunate females who are affected by a mental disease, which originates in an excessive tenderness of conscience, if we may so express ourselves, and which, combined with physical complaints, arising from perpetual confinement and a sedentary life, affect more or less the generality of nuns, among whom there are some whose fervid imaginations, dwelling constantly on scenes of future bliss, or eternal punishments, become gradually disturbed by doubts, fears, and hopes,

which causing all their powers of thought to be concentrated on the same subject, produce at last that mental aberration, so common among weak and bigotted individuals, and which, being incurable, usually terminates in an untimely death.

Gabriela, who though aware of the existence of this dreadful malady, had never seen a person affected by it, gazed with a melancholy interest on the thin form that glided through the grove. Now with arms folded across her breast, and her head devoutly bent on her chest, now extending them and falling on her knees, the nun raised her eyes to heaven, and fervently implored God's mercy, for having, on the previous night, fallen asleep in the act of pronouncing the name of Saint Peter instead of that of Jesus.—“ Thus,” said Gabriela to herself, “ this poor unhappy being, with an imagination haunted by the horrors of a future existence, discovers in every word, in every thought, however innocent, a deadly sin, which, notwithstanding all her painful sacrifices to obtain the blessing of heaven, is to

doom her to everlasting torments! And yet, they say that it is in the cloister only that the mind enjoys an undisturbed peace, and that happiness alone is to be found! Am I to judge so from this? or am I to judge from the honeyed words of those who an hour ago surrounded me, and whose pale and discontented countenances belied their own affirmations?—Yet this is the life to which I am doomed! Here I must pine away my days and wait the hour of death, against my will, and unrelieved even by the conceit of a vocation!—But why anticipate what may not happen? Who knows if before my year of probation be over, I may not yet be released from this place? Many have returned to the bosom of their friends, who were in a situation similar to mine. Must I then lose all hope? I might as well resign my life at once. But, no, no, the day will yet come, when I shall breathe another atmosphere than that of a convent. My heart feels confident of it.”

Thus did Gabriela encourage a hope, which, her mother's character considered, was likely to

prove fallacious ; but which, nevertheless, the vicissitudes of human life rendered not impossible. Without, however, anticipating events which will appear in the sequel, we shall now leave her in a somewhat more tranquil state of mind to return to our hero.

CHAPTER VIII.

I'll read you matter deep and dangerous,
As full of peril and advent'rous spirit,
As to o'erwalk a current, roaring lead,
On the unsteadfast footing of a spear.

SHAKESPEARE.

SANDOVAL, having written to his brother apprising him of what had happened, and requesting his assistance to bring about his liberation, (for in such an emergency, he thought there would have been more folly than dignity in not availing himself of the influence possessed by the latter,) waited till the alcaide should come to fetch his letter, as in such places of public accommodation as that where he now found himself, bells to call the servants are not in fashion. However great his patience really was, several

hours elapsed before he saw anything of the alcaide, who at last entered his prison, bringing with him Sandoval's supper, which consisted of a loaf of bread, a piece of cheese, and half a bottle of very indifferent wine, which he pronounced superior to the best Valdepeñas; for which sumptuous meal he resolved to make him pay a price not rated from the quality of the articles, but from the conscience of a gaoler. On being left to himself, Sandoval, who had not tasted anything during the whole of that most harassing day, felt sufficiently the want of food to relish even what we have described, after which he threw himself on his bed to compose his mind a little to rest.

He had been about an hour in this recumbent posture, and his eyelids began to drop gently, when he heard some footsteps pass his door. It was the alcaide going with his men to the hall to perform his nightly task of securing all the prisoners with a long chain, which he fastened to their ancles by iron rings, and secured outside with a huge iron bar. This chain prevented

those prisoners who were loose from giving any assistance to the more desperate ones who were fettered, and rendered nugatory any attempt that might be made at escape during the night. For some time back, however, the prisoners had been plotting an escape, and at last had come to the resolution of trying their fortune on that very night. The plan was formed by only a few of the most resolute, and corresponded with the ferocity of their character. It was agreed among them, that immediately on the appearance of the gaoler and his men, they should fall on them, and with their chains beat out their brains, seize their keys, liberate every prisoner, and then set fire to that infernal edifice.

Whether the alcaide had received a hint from some of the prisoners, or whether he suspected that some such plot was in contemplation, or whether it was by mere chance, on that night, instead of entering the room as usual to see that his men performed their task properly, he contented himself with remaining at the door, and giving them his directions from thence. The

conspirators, who observed this, fearing that their plan was impracticable on that night, were on the point of relinquishing it, when one of them, who could not brook delay, suddenly snatched from one of the turnkeys his bunch of keys, and flung them with such force and good aim at the alcaide, that it struck him a blow on the head, which made him reel and fall. The rest of the conspirators no sooner observed this, than they all fell on his men, who were soon stretched lifeless on the ground, one excepted, who had the good fortune to escape their fury. Before, however, they could rush out of the room, it was absolutely necessary to break their chains and unlock their fetters, which operation gave the alcaide time to recover from the stunning blow he had received, and to run upstairs before them. Unfortunately for him, the turnkey who escaped had bolted the door at the top of the staircase, and he lost much time in forcing it open.

Sandoval, who a moment before had heard the quick footsteps of the turnkey rustle close

by his door, and who now heard the loud and repeated blows of the alcaide, followed by a distant murmur, which was increasing every instant, listened with the utmost anxiety, hoping, yet fearing, the escape of his fellow prisoners. Presently a tremendous rush in the passage below, accompanied by fearful yells, shook the very walls of the prison, and immediately after the door, which the alcaide had been endeavouring to force, fell with a tremendous crash. Sandoval now heard his rapid footsteps pass his door, pursued by the heavy and loud trampling of a multitude of people, some dragging chains along the ground, and others shouting—"Death to the alcaide!—kill him!—send him to hell!"—These words were soon after followed by blows, and some struggling, during which some one fell with a deep groan, to which a shout of triumph succeeded. Meantime the passage seemed to be every moment crowding more and more, the shouts, oaths, and imprecations became louder, and the doors of the different rooms in their way fell in before their tremendous blows. At length

they came to his door, the lock of which flew to the other extremity of the room after two or three violent strokes, and a crowd of men, with fierce looks and grim countenances, rendered still more horrid by the red glare of a single torch, entered, rifled his pockets, in which, however, they found little to gratify their rapacity, having been previously examined by themselves or their companions, and huddled him out without further ceremony.

It is impossible to describe the noise and confusion which prevailed in the passage. Unhappy wretches, whose limbs, half palsied by long confinement, just permitted them to drag themselves, implored their more able fellow sufferers to assist them in quitting that dreadful place. By some these earnest entreaties were attended to, and they dragged them by the arms or supported them on their shoulders, while those unfeeling ruffians who were only eager about securing their own freedom, pushed them aside, or trod on them, regardless of their age or helplessness. The unhappy young woman whom

Sandoval had seen in the crowded dungeon was also there, endeavouring to push her way through the multitude, and bearing her aged father in her arms, surrounded by her little brothers. Her efforts to reach the court excited the liveliest interest in Sandoval, who honoured the impulse of her filial devotion and generosity. He snatched from one of the prisoners a long iron bar with which he was armed, placed himself before the young woman, and, requesting her to follow him, endeavoured to open a way for her, and her little brothers, threatening to knock down whoever attempted to obstruct their progress. As they came to the door of the alcaide's apartments, whose last groan Sandoval had heard, they saw his mangled body lying on the ground weltering in blood, and close to it lay that of another man in the last agonies. Having passed these apartments, a rush was then made down the narrow winding staircase, leading to the court, which they no sooner reached than they all hastened towards the vaulted passage communicating with the gate.

Presently an alarm spread that some troops were close to the outer gate, and on the point of entering the prison. The cries and screams of the frightened females and old men now became terrific ; but the most daring and desperate, who saw nothing but ruin in the failure of their attempt, rushed towards the gate to dispute the entrance with the soldiers, who were now seen firing, and driving back some of the first prisoners who had reached the gate. Sandoval pushed forward, followed by a party of resolute fellows, and with his iron bar levelled with the ground the first soldier that came in his way, in which he was imitated by those whom he now headed. Aware that they were fighting for their lives, the prisoners threw themselves on their enemies with the determined bravery of desperadoes, and succeeded in snatching from some of them their muskets. The conflict then became extremely violent, both parties standing firmly on their ground ; but the soldiers, who were not excited by the same fury that impelled their antagonists, gradually gave

way, and were at last driven back as far as the little square where the prison stood. On the prisoners clearing the outer gate, they all dispersed in every direction, the better to evade the pursuit of the military, who, having rallied again, were now returning accompanied by fresh troops, who were every instant arriving on the spot, to oppose the further progress of the fugitives.

Sandoval, seeing that his life was in imminent danger, and that there was but one way for him to make his escape, namely, to gain the city ramparts, which were not very far off, let himself down them, and swim across the river, ran with all speed towards its nearest point. Unfortunately for him, however, he had just reached the battlements, and was in the act of climbing to their top, when an officer on horseback, by whom he had been observed and followed, arrived at the foot of the wall, and struck him a sabre blow on the head, which stunned him, and made him roll to the ground, where for two or three minutes he lay senseless, stretched at the horse's feet. On recovering he made an effort to

rise, but by the moonlight that shone brightly, he observed the officer's sword pointing at his breast, and heard with a surprise mixed with joy and dismay, Fermin's voice, threatening to run him through if he attempted to stir. As the dark shade of the ramparts fell upon Calisto, and he was still in the same sort of undress in which he had been left by the prisoners, it was not easy for his brother to recognize him. Undecided whether he should make himself known to him, Calisto continued in the same posture, with his head just raised, watching Fermin's motions; until the shouts of his brother, calling upon the soldiers to hasten to the rampart, drew him from his momentary surprise, and made him start up, exclaiming—"Fermin! surely, you will not deliver up your brother to his enemies?"

The effect produced on Fermin by these words was equally sudden and overwhelming; he remained motionless as a statue, his eyes fixed with a sort of death-like gaze on his brother's countenance, and his features dis-

torted by the horror of the discovery. Gradually, however, assuming the deepest concern, he leapt from his horse, and was on the point of folding Calisto in his arms, when some of his men arrived, and proceeded to secure the fugitive. Immediately Fermin, recovering his usual presence of mind, ordered them to fall on the right and pursue the other fugitives, who, like Calisto, had directed themselves to the rampart, as he could dispense with their assistance to secure the one who was before them. The men obeyed, and Fermin approaching his brother, drew from his pocket a handkerchief, which he bound round the wound he had inflicted on his head, after which pointing silently to the battlements, aided him to mount them, and by means of his cloak, to descend to the other side of the walls.—“And now,” said he, breaking the silence for the first time, “plunge into the river, and swim across without delay; for I have given orders for boats to come around to prevent the further escape of prisoners; but for God and the Virgin’s sake,

fly this land immediately. Never more be seen here, and place me not again in the horrible alternative of being a fratricide, or violating my duty to God and my king."

Calisto, who was an excellent swimmer, did not hesitate an instant in plunging into the river, which he crossed with ease, aided by the strong current of its rapid waters, and disencumbered of most of his clothes, though not without danger; for some of the soldiers, who were now approaching in the boats, observing by the moonlight his head moving on the surface of the water, sent random shots at him, some of the balls of which, now dropped with a hissing noise into the water near him, and now passed whizzing over his head. His appearance on the opposite banks, also produced a discharge of musquetry from the nearest boats, the effects of which remained imprinted on the trunks of the trees with which the shore was there covered, and which speedily made him hasten out of sight. As he penetrated further into the thickets, the occasional plunges which

he had distinctly heard when in the water, followed by the whoops and shots of the soldiers, became gradually more faint, till at last only one or two discharges were audible, and then all was still.

Having thus cleared every danger by which he had been assailed, he began to consider whither he should direct his course; and Anselmo's hut occurred to his mind as his best asylum. He hastened to it, and arrived precisely at the moment when those friends he had met there on a previous occasion were consulting about the best means of procuring his deliverance; for his imprisonment, having become public soon after it took place, through the men who had carried him to prison, had reached their ears. Their debates, which were still held in their secluded cave, were extremely animated, opinions being considerably divided on this subject. One was of opinion, that they ought to employ the powerful agency of gold, with the alcaide, whose avaricious soul would never be able to resist a handsomely garnished purse; another thought

that to procure his escape by such means, was the most likely way to subject Sandoval to the necessity of expatriating himself, which he recommended should be avoided, as his enterprising and energetic character might be of service to the country, when his efforts should be wanted; he was therefore of opinion that they ought to try to engage his brother to work his deliverance by his influence or by legal means. Another, a military man said, that nothing was easier than to carry their point by force, and deliver not only Sandoval, but all the unfortunate individuals who were pining in that prison; for as it contained no other garrison than the alcaide and his men, an attack made on them, after getting admittance to the first court of the prison by some stratagem, must secure success to the enterprise, and at the same time would screen Sandoval against the consequences to which his single escape would subject him. Lastly, Anselmo thought, they were all wrong; for in the first instance, the alcaide would take the purse, and only keep the better eye to his prisoner; in

the second, his brother, he was sure, would not stir an inch to release him, not so much because he might be wanting in inclination, as on account of his insurmountable religious prejudices; in the third, the employing force, he thought the wildest plan of all, because even granting they succeeded in the attempt, the unfortunate men who might afterwards be taken would atone with their heads for having escaped from the prison under such circumstances. In his opinion the best and most feasible plan was that of bribing Father Lobo, who alone could procure Sandoval's liberty, and whose dissolute and extravagant habits of life, placed him too much within the influence of money to resist the means for gratifying his propensities.

Such was the state of the debate, when a loud knocking at the door made them start from their seats.—“A knock at this hour of night!” exclaimed the surprised party, “we are betrayed. To our arms, gentlemen, we must not yield without a struggle.” Saying this, they all drew out their weapons, and prepared themselves to

act on the defensive, should an attack be made against them; but Anselmo desired them not to stir from their places until he should call upon them, and to let him manage the affair. He then lifted the trap-door as silently as possible, shut it again carefully, and waited until the blows at the door were repeated, which happened almost immediately.—“Who is there?” inquired he, cautiously approaching the door, and applying his ear to the key hole, to discover whether there was any noise of arms.

“A friend,” cried Sandoval, whose voice Anselmo immediately recognized. Having ascertained that he was alone, he drew back the bars and bolts which secured the door, and welcomed him with warmth, inviting him to go down and see his friends who were assembled there for the express purpose of agitating his deliverance. The surprise of the party may be conceived when they saw Sandoval enter in the same state he had been left by the prisoners, without hat, coat, waistcoat, or boots, the rest of his clothes dripping wet, and his face covered

with the blood that flowed from the wound on his head. Their greetings, however, were as hearty and sincere as the pleasure they felt at his escape, the particulars of which they expressed themselves anxious to learn.

“I myself,” said Sandoval, “am but imperfectly acquainted with them; for I have been hurried away through such a scene of confusion and bloodshed, that I have had hardly time to enquire into their origin; but you shall have a full description of everything I witnessed, though before I commence I must request a little brandy to wash the wound on my head.”

This was immediately procured by Anselmo, who dressed the wound for him, and saw that, though severe, no danger could be apprehended from it, as it had only penetrated the skin. He also furnished him with a suit of clothes, in which he appeared as completely disguised as Anselmo himself, and afterwards brought out some refreshments, to which our hero paid ample homage, the various exertions of the night having increased rather than diminished the

natural excellence of his appetite. This duty performed, he went through a succinct narrative of his adventures since their last meeting, and concluded by asking their advice as to his future conduct.

“The news we have received from Galicia,” said Anselmo, “are such as to promise an immediate rising there. The brave Lacy, notwithstanding the failure of Mina’s attempt, still entertains the idea of asserting our rights by force of arms, and though he has been deprived of many brave officers and troops, upon whose co-operation he had reckoned, he has still with him a knot of patriots, whose number increases daily, and who, if nothing immediately intervenes to prevent it, will bring about the desired change. As for yourself, exposed as you are, in these parts of the kingdom, and little known in Galicia, I would advise your instant departure for that province, where you may yet be of service to the country, and likewise sheltered from the persecutions raised here against you. By travelling in a suitable disguise, you will be

able to reach Coruña without much impediment, and in time to participate in the glorious enterprise about to be accomplished by the brave and skilful general of whom we speak."

Nothing could accord more harmoniously with Sandoval's wishes than such a plan. The treatment he had experienced from the agents of the ruling faction, was too freshly imprinted on his memory, not to add a new impulse to his ardent wish of serving a country that groaned under every abuse which the most heartless and senseless tyranny could devise. Moreover, his imagination, always prone to create and magnify glorious deeds, pictured this new enterprize in the most fascinating colours. Conducted by so energetic, brave, intelligent and disinterested a patriot as Lacy, success must follow every stage of it. Filled with these sanguine hopes, he resolved, without a moment's hesitation, to undertake his journey early on the following morning. This determination was warmly approved of by all his friends, who to demonstrate the necessity and justice of it, gave him an ac-

count of the infamous proceedings carried on against the patriots, who had most distinguished themselves by their talents and activity during the late struggle against the French, and who were still crowding the dungeons of the Peninsula, suffering there indescribable miseries, and in hourly expectation of the sentence which was to banish them to the sultry climates of Africa; to endure for many long years the most unheard-of barbarities.

His mind wrought up to the highest pitch of indignation by the statement of those proceedings, he left Anselmo's hut, more resolved than ever to avenge the wrongs heaped on a party, which alone had aided the country when she stood in need of their efforts and sacrifices; and directing his course to Hypolito's farm, where he expected to meet his faithful servant Roque, he reached it before the dawn, while the family were still slumbering. As nothing but a latch secured the door at the back of the house, he entered it unnoticed by any person, and went directly to his room, where he found his servant

lying on the bed: enveloped in his cloak, and fast asleep. Roque, who had himself returned from town only a few hours before, and who knew his master was in a place where there was little chance of his getting out in a hurry, on being now awakened by him, and seeing him standing before him in that apparel, rubbed his eyes, and stared with such a grotesque expression of doubt and amazement, that Sandoval could not refrain from bursting out into a hearty laugh.—“Holy Virgin of the Pillar of Zaragossa!” exclaimed the servant, “what a strange dream is this!—Yet that is his look, I am sure of it.—He laughs! It must be him,—but why that dress? why”

“Rouse yourself, man,” said Sandoval, shaking him by the shoulders; “and let me repose there a couple of hours; after which call me up, and have my horse ready saddled, and your own, if you wish to follow me.”

Roque jumped out of bed.—“God of mercy!” he cried, “it is he! How came you to be here in such a strange dress, my dear, dear master?”

I had already made up my mind to see you hanged!"

"A very consoling reflection, truly," said his master. "But you shall know the whys and wherefores very shortly. Do the people here know anything of my last adventure?"

"Not through me," replied Roque, "for I arrived at the farm when they were all in bed, and I would not disturb them to tell them any such news."

"Then say not a word, and do as I have already directed; for I cannot continue in this province."

Saying this, he threw himself on the bed, and composed himself to rest, while Roque, who observed his fatigued look, checked his inclination to question him respecting his escape, and following his example, lay himself on the heap of peas in the corner of the room, and went to sleep.

Two hours after they were both on their legs, and Sandoval went down just at the moment when the honest landlord was preparing to go out with his servants to his daily labours. The

news of the occurrences of the previous day having not yet reached the farm, tio Hipolito only noticed the change of dress in Sandoval, (the wound on the head being concealed by the montera he wore) at which he expressed some surprise. Sandoval told him he intended taking a long journey, and had adopted that dress as the least likely to attract the notice of the numerous banditti who infested the country. Curiosity, however strongly cherished by the females of Castile, is not an attribute of the men, particularly if they have no reason to suspect the veracity of the person who might excite it, consequently tio Hipolito readily believed what Sandoval said, but expressed his regret at losing him so soon, for he had expected to have enjoyed his company during some months.—“If God grant my return,” said Sandoval to him, “I give you my word tio Hipolito I shall spend many a happy day with you, not only at your farm, but at my father's country-house too. We shall then sit in our great hall, round our *brasero*, taking our cup of chocolate, happily

and in peace, my poor father relating to you what he has seen and suffered during his exile, and I, what I have accomplished in my peregrinations. You shall listen to our tales and struggles, as to those of days long gone by, and you will say in wonder and surprise—"and these things really passed in my time!"

"That is like you, Señorito," said the tio Hipolito, giving him a hearty shake by the hand, "never down-hearted; always kind and generous; brave as a lion; your head always upon your shoulders. God bless you, and may he grant that the happy day of your safe return, and your father's, may not be far distant!"

Saying this, he gave him a close embrace, and left the farm, wiping with the sleeve of his coat the big tears that rolled down his cheeks. Meantime, the tia Agustina, who had listened as devoutly to this farewell, as she could have done to a friar's discourse, arranged within her own mind the questions that were to put her in possession of his destination, and the objects of

his journey; but Sandoval, who guessed her intention by the preliminary coughings and hems, with which she usually precluded her interrogatories, spared her the trouble of beginning them, by taking his leave abruptly, and returning many thanks for her hospitality; after which he mounted his horse, and followed by Roque on his French nag, disappeared from the sight of the disappointed tia Augustina, who on re-entering, flogged all her children *pour s'endedommager*.

CHAPTER IX.

Dear nature is the kindest mother still,
Though always changing, in her aspect mild,
From her bare bosom let me take my fill,
Her never-wean'd, though not her favour'd child;
Oh! she is fairest in her features wild,
Where nothing polished dares pollute her path.

Childs Harold.

“So, *nous voilà en campagne* once more,” said Roque, who had picked up some French words, during his residence in that country, “but, if I am permitted to ask a question, in which city is the bull-fight to take place? or where is the arena in which we shall break our lances or our necks? Do you anticipate as brilliant success in this adventure as in that of Navarre? Faith!

we ought readily to volunteer our services; for we have particular reasons to feel confident of being carried to the gallows."

"Hark, sirrah!" cried his master, "if you are afraid of coming to a glorious end, the road we have travelled through is still free for your return. Go back, then, place your neck under our oppressor's yoke, and walk upon four legs: you may find that exercise congenial to your nature; but for me, if I cannot walk upright, as becomes a free-born man, the gallows shall be welcome."

After this rebuke, Roque thought it wise to drop altogether this delicate topic; but to show his disapprobation of the measure, and beguile the tediousness of their journey, he amused himself with abusing everything he saw, and more particularly those objects which his master most admired. Sandoval, who knew how to appreciate the motives that impelled him to act and speak as he did, proceeded on his journey, laughing at the numerous absurd remarks of his servant.

In order the more effectually to escape suspicion, they bartered their horses for a pair of mules, loaded them with a couple of skins full of the wine of the country, and then assumed the dress of *arrieros*,* consisting of a small crowned and large brimmed hat, with a little silver image of the Virgin Mary instead of a buckle, a tight jacket of brown cloth, a velveteen waistcoat, of a dark colour, with hanging brass buttons, and curiously shaped towards the neck, a pair of breeches of brown cloth, with a broad leathern belt round the waist, spatterdashes of leather, and a strong and thick pair of shoes well studded with hob-nails. With respect to their manner of living, they were obliged to comply in every respect with the rude habits of the class to which they wished to be thought they belonged. They always used the precaution to take up their quarters in the inferior inns; they dined and supped in the kitchen with the rest of the *arrieros*, on whatever could be procured, now

* Muleteers.

gorging themselves with broths, omelets, hashes, fricassées, and drinking like fishes, and now contenting themselves with a dish of *sopas de ajo*, a few vegetables, and a draught or two of *vinagrilla* or bad wine. Besides they were obliged to swear very loud, and with the same breath invoke every saint in Paradise; to pull their rosaries out of their pockets, and fall asleep as they began to tell their beads; kiss the ugly wenches of the inn, and chuck the hostess under the chin, sleep on their pack saddles in the stable, under the shade, or in the straw-loft, &c. &c.

It must be confessed that this mode of life had no great charms for our hero, who, had it not been for Roque's ingenuity in covering the egregious mistakes which he was apt to commit, must soon have been discovered; but he bore the whole with remarkable patience and good humour, considering the heavy load of misery that weighed on his mind, and the numerous and strong motives he had for sorrow and lamentation.

Their road, as far as the mountains of Santander, lay along the delightful banks of the Ebro, and presented a country varied by hill and dale, the fertility of which is almost proverbial; but when they commenced ascending those steep and frowning mountains that separate Castile from Biscay and Asturias, the whole aspect of nature suddenly changed, and nothing was to be seen but frightful abysses yawning fearfully below their feet, a multitude of enormous rocks unmarked by any trace of vegetation, heaped one above another till their tops lost themselves in the clouds, on the precipitous sides of which even the firm and sure footed mules could hardly keep their hoofs; deep ravines, whose sinuous windings when viewed from the summit of distant cliffs, assumed the appearance of huge snakes gliding into the recesses of the mountains; and rapid torrents, which they were often obliged to pass by bridges formed by a few thick trees just thrown across the abyss, and covered with brambles and a little earth, which vibrated to their footsteps in

such a fearful manner, that even Sandoval's stout heart beat quick with apprehension as he led his mule across. As for his less courageous fellow muleteer, his terror was ludicrous; before he attempted to go over, he stood for some minutes tearing his hair, trampling his hat, and cursing his master's folly that brought him thither; then, having made the sign of the cross half a dozen times, he trembled till his knees knocked together when he reached the middle of the chasm, and capered and laughed when he saw himself safe on the other side.

The inhabitants of these mountains resemble in every respect their native soil; their movements are as rapid and impetuous as the torrents that sweep through their valleys; in their passions they are as quick and changeable as the atmosphere of their mountains; as open and firm as the rocks on which their huts are built. The variety of scenery, and the constant exertions they are obliged to make, store their heads with a greater number of ideas, and their hearts with warmer feelings, than if they

resided in a plain, where all is sameness and uniformity. Remote from large towns, and living in primitive simplicity, their habits and morals are pure; they are given to reflection, and attentive to their duties; there is in their actions, language, mien, and manners, something unusually interesting; while the cordiality, good-will, and even affection with which they receive strangers, and the good humour and natural gaiety of their looks, render them objects of esteem and respect. There was one thing which Roque disliked in them, and that was the frugality, and even parsimony of their entertainments, which consisted chiefly of the produce of their dairies, of cakes made of maize, potatoes, chesnut puddings, honey, and brown bread made of oats.

As the two travellers proceeded on their journey, the wildness of the soil continued the same until they entered Asturias, and even then there was at first no material difference in the face of the country, though gradually the mountains began to assume a less rugged and

barren aspect, and industry was no longer confined to narrow vallies and small spots, in which the eagles only would have thought of fixing their habitations. Numerous plantations of oak, beech, chesnut, and birch trees crown the Asturian mountains, from which, in former days, gigantic trunks were felled to cover with the fleets of Spain the seas of both hemispheres. Now, however, thanks to the total extinction of her navy, and to the imbecility of her government, our travellers passed through those silent plantations undisturbed by the harsh grating of the exterminating saw, although now and then they observed one or two peasants seeking there materials to form their huts, and implements of husbandry; but as if aware of the value of those gigantic trees, they contented themselves with stealing from them a few planks. These trees then offered a phenomenon well worth remarking, and which frequently presents itself in the chesnut plantations of Asturias, where a great number of trees, from the trunks of which half their diameter have been in this manner

sawed away, remain unwithered, notwithstanding such a severe amputation, and continue year after year to yield abundance of fruit.

On the other hand, the Asturian valleys, which bear a striking resemblance to those of Switzerland, and we may add, on more than one account, the one being the cradle of Tell, and the other of Riego, are fertilized by numerous rivulets, whose pure waters intersect them in every direction. Sometimes, too, these streams, many of which have their origin in the mountains, form natural cascades, and spread afterwards through the meadows which the industrious agriculturist has prepared before hand for his flocks to feed upon. Further on are seen, artificially arranged in various grades, the *bancales*,* in which the natives sow what they call the *escanda*,† which affords them food for

* Oblong plots of ground for raising pulse, roots, fruit trees, &c.

† Spelt wheat, a sort of wheat, the husk of which adheres so tenaciously to the grain, that it is necessary to grind both together, and the flour of which makes a nutritive and savoury bread.

the whole winter, and not far from those spots are the hamlets, in which the commodious house of the curate, and the freshly white-washed church are the two most prominent buildings, though it would be unjust not to add to these the half ruined family mansion of the indolent and impoverished hidalgo, on the front of which is seen the family arms, rudely carved on stone.

As our travellers came nearer Oviedo, the capital of the principality of Asturias, the Pora de Siero, a plain of about seven leagues in length, and the only one in Asturias of this extent, offered to their view one of the most fertile, rich, and well cultivated districts of the Peninsula. The Asturians call this plain, which extends to the gates of Oviedo, the Andaluzias of Asturias; and it must be owned, that if nature has not been so prodigal there of her gifts, their own industry, which has rendered it a little Paradise, justifies the epithet they have given to it.

At length they came within sight of that city,

whose name alone awakens so many glorious and classical recollections. Oviedo was the city where Don Pelayo, and the first kings of Spain Regained, held their court. As the capital of a province, where that hero, with a few brave followers, maintained the honour of Spain, so ignobly trampled under foot by the invading Saracen at the fatal combat of Guadalete, it is an object of deep veneration and curiosity to every lover of his country. Its church obtained at that time the denomination of the Church of the Bishops, because it received into its bosom all the prelates who succeeded in escaping the scimitar of the triumphant Moor. In its university shone many learned men; and there, too, Campomanes and Jovellanos made their studies, while in its benedictine convent, wrote and died the learned and enlightened Feijoo.

The city is seated on a gentle elevation between two rivers, the Ove and the Deva, whence its name is derived. It has to the south the fertile plain above mentioned, and to the north, a high mountain. Its sky is cheerful, and its climate

temperate, though rains are frequent at certain seasons; but it is seldom visited with fogs, or falls of snow. The fruits and vegetables reared in the gardens are tender and savoury; and in the walks along the water-side grows the white buckthorn, beside the oriental plantain tree.

In this city Sandoval proposed they should remain a few days, in order to repose themselves from the fatigues of their long and sufficiently painful journey. He had brought with him letters from some of his Logroño friends to the brother of a patriot, whose name, fame, and his own valorous deeds have registered in the annals of Spanish history in indelible characters, and which is, and will ever be, dear to every man whose bosom glows with the flame of patriotism. The gentleman to whom those letters were addressed was a Canon of the Cathedral of Oviedo, and was living in all the affluence of the class to which he belonged. In justice, however, to his character, we ought to observe here that, though by no means an enemy to the good things of this world, his life

was not *wholly* spent in seeing that his *ama** and his steward were attentive to the duties of their station; the one by keeping the pantries well stored, and the other the wine cellars, and the trunks which contained his Havanna segars. Neither did our Canon attend so much to the sports of the field as to lose the whole of the day in hunting and racing, nor was he so passionately fond of the card table, that on returning from his afternoon lounge, he sat down to play till midnight or supper time; nor did he keep two pretty nieces for the innocent amusement of romping with them at those moments when the above more important duties permitted; all which serious occupations are usually deemed inseparable from a canonship. Our uncanon-like acquaintance, however, having received both from nature and education a genius turned to poetry, passed that time which was not employed in the duties of his office in sweet converse with the muses, and

* A clergyman's housekeeper.

with those, who, though themselves long dead and gone, have bequeathed to posterity their knowledge and intellect, "light and weighty thoughts, and truths immortal as the universe."

When our hero entered the comfortable dwelling of this truly estimable and enlightened Canon, he met there, besides the host, a venerable old man, whose well formed features though somewhat impaired both by age and care, preserved, nevertheless, that pleasing cast which distinguishes the man of genius and philanthropy from the common every day faces that surround us. This elderly gentleman was Don Eugenio Antonio Riego, father of the canon Don Miguel Riego, and of a military man who was then in the room, and whose countenance, though not particularly handsome, struck Sandoval as being very remarkable for the energy of expression which it displayed. There was in his high forehead, shaded as it was by the natural ringlets of ebony hair, something which indicated at first sight a mind full of intellect, candour, and enterprise; his dark

sparkling eyes, too, expressed an intensity of feeling, and the vigour of an ardent lover of truth; and his mouth a refined and delicate sense of all that is amiable and good. This was the immortal and ill-fated Don Rafael del Riego.

By these gentlemen, our hero was received with that unaffected politeness and cordial hospitality which characterized every one of them, and which are a prominent feature in the character of the Asturian gentry. No sooner had they learned that it was his intention to spend a few days in that city, than they insisted on his coming to take up his abode with them—an invitation which he accepted with double pleasure, as there was quartered in the town a regiment which had belonged to the third army, most of the officers of which knew him personally, and by whom he might have been easily recognized, had he continued at an inn.

Once settled at the canon Riego's,—an arrangement, by the bye, which did not at all displease our friend Roque, who had too correct

an idea of a Canon's pantry, to regret leaving the miserable inn where they had originally taken up their quarters,—our hero, who perceived from the first instant that he was among congenial minds, informed them of the object of his journey to Galicia, and of some of the principal events of his life, which rendered him a fugitive and a homeless wanderer. Don Rafael del Riego, then Captain of the Regiment of Asturias, who was himself on a visit to his family after the long captivity he had endured in the north of France, heaved a sigh when he heard Lacy's name mentioned.—“ My friend,” said he, “ the brave General has already been deprived of his post, most of his officers sent to other parts of the kingdom, and by this time, Lacy is at Madrid, where he has been ordered to appear before the minister of war, to give an account of his proceedings, and answer the accusations brought against him. I know positively that the idea of a rising has been given up; consequently I would advise you to proceed no farther for the present, and

wait here until those patriots, who remain still in Galicia, shall have concerted some plan in which we may have the glory to participate."

This intelligence was the most painful Sandoval could have received. His mind, which had already confidently anticipated the success of Lacy's enterprise, could not easily reconcile itself to abandon those hopes which he had so assiduously encouraged, and which now constituted the chief of his earthly enjoyments; but the fact that his regrets could not mend this disappointment, made him strive to keep up his spirits, and still look forward with hope and confidence, in which his kind friends aided him as much as lay in their power. Finding the object of his journey thus frustrated, and perceiving how unsafe it was for him to continue at Oviedo, he accepted the pressing invitation of Don Eugenio, to go down with him and his son Don Rafael to their family mansion, in the valley of Tuña, where he would run no risk of being discovered were he to remain there all his life.

As the sympathy manifested by Englishmen,

for that victim of French perfidy, General Riego, was universal in this country, when the black and sanguinary deed that closed his mortal career was perpetrated, we shall attempt to describe the romantic place of his birth, convinced that whatever relates to him and his family will be a matter of interest, to those who admiring his enthusiastic devotion to the cause of his country, his valour, generosity, disinterestedness, in a word, all his civil and military virtues, like us, now mourn his unmerited and cruel death.

CHAPTER X.

Whoe'er thou art, thy spirit is ennobled
By the great King of kings, thou art ordain'd
And stamp'd a hero by the sovereign hand
Of nature!

Douglas—HOME.

WHEN our party left Oviedo, it consisted of Don Eugenio, Don Rafael, Sandoval, Roque, and two more servants belonging to Don Eugenio, the Canon having remained behind to fulfil the duties of his station. The old gentleman, whose extreme simplicity of manners, cheerful and philosophical turn of mind, and excellent heart had already endeared him to our hero, and who, from his earliest infancy, had,

with no inconsiderable success, courted the muses, retained still much of his poetic fire, and displayed in his conversation a lively, rich, and vigorous imagination, which while it delighted Sandoval contributed also to add to his own stock of knowledge. Every object that presented itself, and which awakened some historical recollections, was sure to be remarked by him, and as in this province every step offers some ancient monument, and almost every stone is a record of the olden time, Don Eugenio had an ample field for the display of those historical treasures he possessed, though he was naturally too simple and modest to make a parade of his erudition.

With Don Rafael, Sandoval had now formed the closest intimacy. Indeed it was impossible that men who thought so much alike, whose qualities and dispositions assimilated in every essential respect, and whose very natures seemed to have been cast in the same mould, should remain long without feeling for each other the warmest and sincerest attachment. Both en-

thusiastic advocates of freedom and of truth, bold, frank, and manly in the expression of their opinions, and in their feelings warm-hearted, benevolent, and generous, they sought each other's society, and suffered their thoughts to mingle, as it is asserted, the scattered particles of the same nature, that swim in the vacuum, collect and become incorporated with each other.

On leaving Oviedo their road lay to the west, over a high mountain called Escampero, from the top of which a rich and highly cultivated valley, watered by the rapid Nalon, whose waters mingle with those of the river Nora, which they had previously passed by a stone bridge called de Gallegos, is seen spreading to the south, and offering a picturesque contrast to the craggy mountains by which it is surrounded. On descending to the fertile borders of that river, they followed its margin till they came to a splendid bridge of remote origin, the arches of which are supported by two projecting rocks. The name of this bridge is familiar to

every man; who has read that inimitable and entertaining novel of Le Sage, "The Adventures of Gil Blas." It bears the name of Peñafior, and is made the scene of one of the most notable adventures of the hero of that work. When Sandoval compared the scenery of the country, with the idea he had formed of it from the perusal of that book, he saw it was completely erroneous, none of its wild and rough features appearing in it, though, indeed, Le Sage does not profess to be a scene painter.

Beyond this bridge is the delightful valley of Grado; the back ground of which presents another frowning mountain, bearing the name of the Fresno, or ash-tree, probably from the abundance of these trees to be found there. Here our travellers took leave of the proud Nalon, which had till then followed their steps, with rapid and murmuring course, and which continues to flow on through the marshy valley of Candame, where the Narzea and other mountain streams bring to it the tribute of their own waters in their way to the ocean.

At the foot of the above-mentioned mountain, is another fertile dale, beyond which flows the limpid Narzea, whose delightful borders have been sung by Don Eugenio del Riego, in a poem of considerable merit, entitled "*Los Pastores del Narzea*," consisting of eclogues in various metres, in which a happy mediocrity, and the pleasures of a rural and retired life, are eulogized, in accents not unworthy of his favourite poet, Lope de Vega. There is in this poem, as indeed in all the productions of this excellent man, a strain of deep moral feeling, adorned by poetical images, full of animation, force, grace, and simplicity, which are conveyed in rich, flowing, and harmonious numbers. Some of the first literati of his time bestowed on this deserving poem their warmest eulogies, as well as on the modesty of the author, who in his retirement resembled a brilliant among the rocks, sending radiant sparkles from its recess, without the wish to deck a royal crown, or a courtly sycophant.

The valley above mentioned is called Cor-

nellana, and has a town, in which there are still some relics of the power formerly possessed by the Counts of Miranda and Valdecarzanas. There is also a rich monastery of Benedictines, which for more than two centuries gave a sterile renown to this district. It has now, however, higher claims to immortality from the successful efforts made there to impede the progress of the French eagles, which were shamefully defeated in several attempts they made to penetrate further into the country.

On traversing the valley through which the Narzea flows, and which adjoins that of Cornellana, our party began to ascend a high mountain, called Espina. From this place till they reached the heights of Berbesha, they lost sight of that river, and with it the fertility it engenders. For two leagues and a half, barren and chilling mountains, which unite themselves to those that separate Leon from Asturias, present no living object, save the wild boar, the wolf, or the bear, who with stealthy pace retired behind the precipices as they saw the party approach.

Neither the plough, nor the hand of man has yet broken this virgin land; the heath, the gorse, and the *algas** alone hold an exclusive dominion here, though, now and then, an oak tree raises its lofty head, and seems to watch over the wilderness.

On descending from the summit of the harren and elevated Berbesha, and passing by awful precipices, they left on one side the small hamlet of Bevares built among rocks, with huts which seem as if about to slide down their perpendicular sides, and little gardens formed by the industrious inhabitants, with the earth they have scraped together from the recesses and crevices of the mountains. Numerous palisades surround and support these terraces, which otherwise would roll down into the abyss below, on the first thaw of snow. Having descended to the bottom of the mountain, the road became gradually more narrow, till they arrived at the verge of a terrific precipice, from which they

* A sort of wild grain, called in Latin, *alvea*.

beheld, at an immense depth beneath their feet, a sight which made them at once forget all the fatigues of their journey.

It was a delightful and rich valley in the shape of a basket, * enclosed by two lofty mountains, the one to the south, called Fasherrua, forming part of a chain, which extends as far as Leon, and the other to the north, called Cruz de Caldera, at whose base flows the proud Narzea, whose waters are there swelled by two crystal streams coming from opposite directions, and having their source in the high mountains, from which they glide gently through the valley, and unite at the foot of the Fasherrua. From this point spreads a beautiful plain, two miles in length, terminating in a narrow ravine, which the torrents of the mountains have gradually furrowed. Towards the centre of this valley is the village of Tuña,

* This valley is appropriately called by the inhabitants Tuña, which means a long and deep basket, or pannier, made of splinters of wood, of which they make use to hold and preserve their corn, and which is generally kept in their houses.

whose neatly built houses, among which there are a few extensive mansions belonging to the gentry of the place, are all surrounded by beautiful gardens. A fine church of excellent architecture rises in the middle of it, and is shaded on every side by walnut trees. The southern acclivities of the mountains are covered from their foot to their summit with the luxuriant vine, the northern with picturesque plantations of different trees, whose leaves present a rich variety of colours; and when in the cheerful days of April and of May, Flora spreads her variegated mantle around, the whole valley shines with a thousand different odoriferous flowers, whose brilliancy of hue gives it the semblance of enamel.

In this delightful and romantic dale, then, the immortal Riego drew the first breath of life. This was his cradle, and in it is still to be seen the extensive and magnificent family mansion of the Riego's Nunez, seated on the banks of the river, and a little below the stony bridge by which it is crossed. From it have issued men, who;

though they did not shine in the highest post of a corrupt court, have distinguished themselves by the useful services they have rendered to their country, while others have left to their descendants examples of high-mindedness, rectitude, and benevolence to imitate. They, however, could boast of their ancestry, were it in the power of dignities and high rank to confer virtue on their progeny. In the time of Philip the Fifth, the third grandfather of the Asturian hero was Governor of Oviedo, and military Commander of Asturias; another of his ancestors, Don Nicholas José de Nuñez, was *Auditor de la Sacra Rota*. * Several other Riegos served with honour both in the career of arms and of letters; and were we further inclined to trace the genealogy of this family, it is certain, materials would not be wanting to establish their illustrious lineage beyond every human doubt. But, in our opinion, we have

* One of the twelve prelates who compose the Rota at Rome,—a Court which enquires into and decides appeals in ecclesiastical causes, from every kingdom where the Roman Catholic religion is professed.

already dwelt too long on the noble origin of a man, whose valorous deeds, ardent love of his country, and tragic death, would be of themselves sufficient to ennoble a plebeian. In doing this, however, we had the double object ; first, of exposing the malignant impostures of his sanguinary executioners, who caused him to be dragged in a hurdle to the scaffold, to render his execution more degrading, under the plea that he was of plebeian birth ; and, secondly, of showing that all those who, from 1812, have manifested the greatest eagerness for a political reform belonged to that privileged class, whose members, had they consulted their personal interests alone, would have been the most zealous advocates of a form of government, whose leaders are incessantly labouring to secure and enlarge their feudal privileges, and bring things back to that state in which they were in the dark ages. This undeniable fact, which confers so much honour on that patriotic and virtuous class, is of itself sufficient to explain why the Spanish revolution differed so widely from the French. Men who

have property and a name to lose, will not disgrace their actions by atrocious excesses; it is only spoilers and assassins who wish and seek for anarchy—who erect their thrones on the bleeding bodies of virtuous citizens. This is the reason why Riego was carried to the scaffold, and hence Spain is now reeking with the blood of victims, as France was in the days of terror.

But to proceed with our party. Having stood awhile contemplating, from the top of the precipice, the beauties of the valley beneath, they hastened through a difficult and winding path to reach the bridge, and leaving the old family mansion behind, proceeded to the village, where Don Nicolas del Riego, an elder brother of Don Eugenio, usual resided. As the chief object of Don Rafael's journey to the place of his birth, was to pay this uncle a visit before his intended departure for Madrid; and as, moreover, he had seen nothing of the old gentleman since his second departure from Asturias, which happened at the beginning of the war with Napoleon, when

chosen by General Acevedo for his aid-de-camp, he marched with the army of Asturias and Galicia to Guipuzcoa, to fight for the independence of his country, he was very anxious to embrace his relative.

Don Nicolas del Riego differed in character from his brother Don Eugenio inasmuch as the latter was of a contemplative turn of mind, and retired habits of life, and the former, having always pursued a more active course, and gaily mingled in the pleasures of the world, without, however, having entered into its dissipations, was of a cheerful, contented disposition, kind-hearted and convivial, with sufficient knowledge of society to laugh at its follies, though somewhat prone to indulge in its pleasures. He had, however, arrived at a good old age, was highly respected by his countrymen, to whom he had been useful in more than one way, particularly in what related to rural economy, upon which he had written some valuable tracts, and was now gliding smoothly to the grave, carrying with him the consoling reflection of having done some good

during his transit through life, and no injury to any of his fellow creatures.

When our party reached his house, they found him confined to his room by indisposition, and lying on a sofa. The room being half darkened by its drawn curtains, the good old man's face was overcast by a dubious light; but when he sat up to receive his guests, and the servant drew the curtains back, his good-natured countenance shone with an expression of half suppressed pleasure.—“Hold, hold,” said he to Don Rafael, who was hastening with his open arms to embrace him, “you are not worthy of an embrace from me. You and your companions in arms have driven liberty from our land. You have brought on our heads ruin and misery, I will never forgive you.”

A tear trickled down his cheek as he said this; but he added, throwing open his arms,—“yet I must not forget you are my nephew. Let me embrace you once more before I die. 'Tis not right I should leave this world in anger with any human being; but promise,” said he, as he

held him tight in his arms, "to do your best to recover what you have thrown away, and do justice to the country that supports you. Let me at least carry to my grave the consolation of knowing you will do your duty."

Don Rafael could hardly suppress the tears that rushed to his eyes at these words, and pledged his faith that no effort of his should be wanting to assist in re-establishing a more rational system of government;—"but," he added, "dear uncle, you are unusually severe with me. What could a single arm do, when after a painful captivity, during which my only solace was the idea that my fellow soldiers were fighting for freedom as well as independence, I succeeded in breaking the fetters * that kept me

* Riego was made a prisoner under circumstances which redound much to his credit. We have already hinted that he was at the beginning of the war with Napoleon, chosen by Acevedo for his aid-de-camp. Shortly after their arrival at Guipuzcoa, the French advanced with a numerous army towards the Ebro, and after various engagements, in which Acevedo's division maintained the honour of the Asturias, that General was severely wounded at the battle of

from my country, and hastening back through innumerable perils, on my arrival I found the

Espinosa, where he also lost his sight. General Blake, unconscious that a division of the enemy had already advanced as far as Burgos, directed that he should be taken to Aguilar de Campo, there to be cured of his wounds. Placed on a waggon, drawn by oxen, and escorted by a small party of cavalry, and some of his aid-de-camps, among whom was Riego, they commenced their march. On the following morning, as the party were descending the hill of Quintanillas, which is about three leagues distant from Espinosa, they discovered a party of French dragoons rapidly advancing upon them. Riego, who observed that the enemy's party was not superior in numbers to theirs, called upon his comrades to halt, and defend their General. His eager exhortations awoke Acevedo from the mortal lethargy in which he had been sunk during their journey. The unfortunate General raised his drooping head, and stretching out his hand, which Riego clasped in his, called upon his soldiers in a dying voice, and as if foreseeing the barbarous death that awaited him, to do their duty. A panic, however, seized the soldiers, and his other aid-de-camps, and both the poor blind General and Riego were abandoned by them all. Tears of shame and rage flowed from Riego's eyes, while he stood motionless gazing on his General; but the dragoons were advancing, and there was no time to lose. He, with his usual presence of mind, alighted from the horse he rode, and assisted Acevedo to mount it, after

whole system of liberty undermined, and my fondest hopes and expectations defeated? Does

which, giving the bridle of the horse to the boy who conducted the oxen, he ordered him to get into the wood which spread along the road side. The boy obeyed his orders quickly, and they were soon out of sight. Meantime some of the French dragoons rode down at full gallop upon the brave Riego, whose sword they demanded, enquiring, at the same time, which way the General had escaped. Riego gave up his sword, but refused to answer their questions. Two horsemen then secured him, and the rest entered the wood; but his anxiety for his beloved General made him forget his own miserable situation. What must his horror have been, however, when shortly after he beheld two of the dragoons bringing by the bridle his own horse with the sash of his murdered General soaked in blood, and fastened to the tail of the steed! Conducted to France, the generous Riego lost his liberty, and Spain his services. There he pined away for five years, till at last he made the bold attempt to escape from his depot, at Chalons sur Saône, and join the allied armies, who were then upon the Rhine. In this he succeeded, notwithstanding the vigilance of the French police, and the obstacles that an enemy's country offered. Having traversed the mountains of Switzerland, and reached the borders of the Rhine, he embarked at Holland for England, where he remained at Plymouth some months, organizing a battalion of prisoners, who, like

not your reproach then apply better to yourselves, who saw our enemies openly labouring to overturn our free institutions, without making an effort to impede their machinations?"

"True, my dear Rafael, we are all to blame," said the good-natured old man, kindly pressing his hand in his: "you have done your duty, and I am perfectly satisfied you would have done something more, had you been present; but since events have been otherwise disposed, remember there are other deeds to be accomplished, —remember we have lost all which renders life valuable, and that it must be recovered."

Such were the words uttered by this venerable man, on the above occasion, and such the reception he gave his nephew. Little did he think that a day would come when Don Rafael would accomplish literally what he now enforced; but human events are wisely veiled from mortal

himself, had succeeded in escaping, and whose command he received from the government of this country, and then sailed for Spain, which he reached soon after Ferdinand's return.

sight, else the inhuman death with which Riego's patriotic efforts were afterwards rewarded by the united tyrants of the Continent, would have outweighed in the mind of Don Nicolas the pleasing reflection, that Providence had reserved for his nephew the glory of being the first to raise the shout which thrilled with joy the heart of every Spaniard.

After this short conversation, Don Nicolas welcomed Sandoval to his house, and prevailed on the party to remain a few days under his roof before they proceeded to Don Eugenio's house, which was in the same valley, at a short distance from the village.

The pleasures enjoyed by our hero, while he remained under the roof of this excellent and hospitable family, are of a nature which may not be described; such, doubtless, being the charms of a life spent amidst rural scenes, and in the society of people, whose innocence of mind and extreme simplicity of manners, seemed bent only in rendering every instant of their lives one of happiness and tranquillity.

The inhabitants of the valley of Tufia, most of them honest husbandmen, though certainly not wealthy are by no means needy, thanks to their own industry and economy. Their habitations, therefore, though humble, are cleanly, and present an agreeable exterior; each having a small garden adjoining it, with orchards and alleys of trees extending to the water side, and forming pleasant promenades. As the houses in which they dwell are either inherited by them from their ancestors, or purchased in freehold from the produce of their economy, which they have been able to collect at Madrid, (where they usually repair in their youth to serve during a few years, for the purpose of procuring themselves a moderate competency for the rest of their days,) they are not under any apprehension, either for themselves or their children, of being driven away from their little estate by the caprice or covetousness of some large proprietor; consequently they endeavour to improve it as much as lies in their power. Hence the remarkable

difference which is observed between their neat habitations and the wretched hovels which are seen in the mountains of Castile and Galicia, where the unhappy labourer hardly finds shelter against the inclemency of the seasons.

Among the humble dwellings that are scattered about the valley of Tuña, there are a few more capacious, high-roofed, and stonebuilt, whose escutcheons rudely cut over the principal door clearly show that their inhabitants belong to the class of *Señores*. In justice, however, to the nobles of Asturias, we ought to remark here, that the name among them does not, as in most of the other provinces in Spain, mean a *proud idler*. The Asturian nobles do not owe the consideration which they enjoy among their countrymen, either to ill-gotten riches, or to burthensome privileges, but purely to their own virtues. Having only just wherewithal to live respectably in the place of their birth, and obliged in consequence to hold a constant intercourse with their neighbours, they are strangers to that aristocratic

pride which wealth engenders, by the distance which those who possess it generally observe towards their less affluent neighbours.

But there is another circumstance which contributes powerfully to soften in that province the pride of birth; namely, that there is hardly an individual, however humble, who does not lay claim to remote ancestry and illustrious blood; thus compelling those who are called Señores to make use of some other means to distinguish themselves from the multitude, than by a vain boast of their long pedigree. Hence we see them exercising with pleasure the municipal duties, recommending themselves to their fellow citizens by their kindness and benevolence, and aspiring to the title of Patriarchs, instead of that of Bashaws.

As we have already observed, the life which our hero led in the company of such men as are here described, was one of happiness and tranquillity, so long, however, as his mind was occupied only with the objects that surrounded

him ; but when it wandered to those he had left in his native town, he stood in need of all his fortitude, to bear patiently the weight of his misfortunes. During several months which he had now spent at Tuña, for reasons which we explain below, he had received no news from Logroño respecting his Gabriela, that could sooth the grief which his heart felt on her account. All he had learned was, that she continued in the convent, so closely watched and beset by the nuns, that all the efforts of Anselmo, to whom our hero had entrusted the matter, had been unavailing to obtain a private interview with her, even in the locutory. As to the monk and his nephew, it was evident their object had now been accomplished, since the latter had been duly adopted as a son by Gabriela's parents, and was living with them as such, squandering away their property in conjunction with his uncle. Not so Fermin, whose conduct, particularly since his promotion to the higher post of commander of the province,

was a model of honour and integrity ; but who, unfortunately, continued as blind a bigot and as great a dupe to the monk as ever.

Sandoval's departure for Galicia, (where, according to the communications he had received from his friend Anselmo, there were still sufficient elements to bring about a revolution,) had been delayed principally by the return of Napoleon from Elba. This circumstance also had obliged the patriots of Galicia to suspend their labours, until the fate of the Emperor was decided, as it was likely that the ultimate results of his expedition might have considerable effect on the policy which the ruling faction would be compelled to adopt. The battle of Waterloo, and the wavering and contemptible character of the French people, who would support their great hero only so long as he was successful, soon convinced the patriots, that they must act independent of circumstances, and trust only to their own efforts and resources. Consequently they now recommenced their labours with fresh vigour, and turned their eyes to the heroic

Porlier as a chief worthy of directing their new enterprise. This General was at that moment confined in the Castle of San Anton, having been condemned by Ferdinand to four years imprisonment in that fortress, for having served his country faithfully during the late struggle, and contributed to that despot's restoration to the throne; but the patriots of Galicia, by means of their masonic friends at Madrid, obtained permission from the government for Porlier to visit a small watering place called Artejo, which is a few miles from Coruña, for the benefit of his health, which had suffered considerably both from his toils in the field, and his severe confinement.

This news raised a little the spirits of our hero, who determined, without loss of time, to proceed to Galicia, in order to assist in raising the standard of the Constitution, and proclaiming the rights of the nation. Having formed this resolution, he imparted it to his venerable friend Don Eugenio, who encouraged him in his design, and then took an affectionate

leave both of him and of his brother Don Nicholas, Don Rafael having left them to join his regiment some months previous to this period.

CHAPTER XI.

To horse ! to horse ! he quits, for ever quits
A scene of peace, though soothing to his soul.

• • • • •
Onward he flies, nor fix'd as yet the goal
Where he shall rest him on his pilgrimage ;
And o'er him many changing scenes must roll
Ere toll his thirst for travel can assuage,
Or he shall calm his breast, or learn experience sage.

Childe Harold's Pilgrimage.

OUR hero, having now left behind the mansion of this kind and hospitable family, directed his course towards the enchanting strands of the Asturian Ocean. As he advanced on his journey, accompanied by his servant, his spirits became more exuberant, and the dreams with which his imagination was always filled more and

more wild and improbable, the glorious associations of those romantic mountains, contributing in no small measure to produce an extraordinary degree of excitement. "Perhaps on this very spot on which I now stand," thought he, "the valiant Pelayo once waved the Christian banner, and called around him that knot of heroes who drove the invading Infidels to one extremity of Spain. Perhaps these same rocks have more than once echoed to his voice, as with his companions he invoked the blessing of God upon their glorious undertaking.—Here, Roque! do you see that massy bank overhung by a projecting rock in the shape of a shell?"

"I do, Sir," said his servant.

"Who knows but Don Pelayo once sat there to meditate on his country's deliverance?"

"Ay, true enough, who knows? But what would you say to our going to sit there too, to disencumber my bags of some of the good things with which our friends of Tuña have crammed them, and see what they are made of?" said Roque. "You know it would strengthen our

stomachs, and give us greater courage to perform the exploits which may fall to our share, and the dance on the tight rope with which most likely they will be crowned."

"Is your soul bent solely on eating you unthinking brute?" said his master.

"A brute, as much as you please," returned Roque, "but unthinking, I defy you. For I would ask, who thinks more and better, the man who dreams of things that are for ever gone, or he who foresees and provides for future contingencies?—he who rushes with an empty stomach into a wilderness, or he who first prepares himself by a good morsel or so?"

If Roque's reasoning had no influence with his master in inducing him to go and sit down beneath the projecting rock, the idea of reposing awhile in the very spot where perhaps Pelayo had once meditated his country's deliverance was too flattering to be resisted; accordingly, he took his place on the bank, and while Roque employed himself in a manner more to the purpose, Sandoval continued recalling Pelayo's

glories, and weaving imaginary laurels for his own brows; after which they both rose and proceeded on their journey.

As they approached the sea, the high mountains that are found in every part of the Asturias became gradually less elevated, their successive summits, when seen from one of the highest, offering to the eye a succession of steps, the last of which terminated on the verge of the sea by a gentle descent, though sometimes their abrupt sides presented a kind of parapet bounding the rich valleys beneath, which skirt the coast in many places. These valleys, being open to the invading waves, are frequently inundated by them, and present a variety of wide canals some of which extend two and three leagues, and are either dried up or filled with water, according to the state of the tide. At the furthest extremity of the land are seen numberless coves, near which rise an infinity of hamlets, (some entirely agricultural, and others exclusively devoted to trade) from which the various productions of the land are exported in great quantities to the

neighbouring provinces. The sea, however, does not every where find free access to these vallies; for in many they are repulsed by high and steep rocks, whose tops are crowned by a multitude of variegated plants, and in whose fissures are found a vast number of shell-fish, polypi, and zoophites. La Gasca, the celebrated botanist, discovered in those rents more than sixty different kinds of zoophites, of which the natives make use to manure their lands when they have dried them in their yards. Along this coast are seen also a great number of islets, which add to the picturesque effect of the scene, and appear to form a line of centries along the shore. Among the shrubs with which they are covered, thousands of singing birds find an asylum against the net and gun of the sportsman, and here they chirp away their little lives in security and peace.

These valleys our travellers left to the right, as they pursued their way towards Galicia, through the romantic paths with which the Asturian mountains are embellished, and which

continue through that province as far as Betanzos. Beyond this town the country presents an aspect less wild and sublime; but it is still sufficiently diversified now by hills crowned with chesnut plantations, vineyards, and orchards, and now by dales teeming with every production of a fertile soil, and a mild and temperate climate, which render the road highly agreeable. The numerous farms embosomed among clusters of fruit trees of every kind, and surrounded by well cultivated gardens, in which the robust peasantry, both male and female, are perpetually working, render the scene full of life and animation. It is chiefly the sturdy Galician woman, however, who is seen in the most distant fields employed in rural labours, desisting only now and then to suckle her little babe, who is lying meantime under the shade of a tree, inhaling the fresh air, kicking up its little legs in the sunshine, and rolling about the ground. It is not at all improbable that the Galicians owe the great strength of frame, for which they are so noted, to this hardy manner of rearing. Be this as it may, it is certain they

are in general a tall and well made race of men, whose extraordinary strength (we do not hesitate in asserting) surpasses that of any people in Europe.

Our hero was now fast approaching the spot which the valiant Porlier had been permitted to visit for the benefit of his health, and where, as Sandoval had been informed, he was at that moment residing. The road that led to the hamlet was here and there shaded by apple trees, loaded with fruit, which became more thickly planted as the travellers proceeded. At last they entered a valley, surrounded by two lofty hills, in the middle of which is the small watering-place called Artejo, consisting of a few huts and three or four large mansions, belonging to the gentry of the place. To one of these Sandoval directed his steps, his heart throbbing at the near prospect of an interview with the hero of the Asturias, and the future liberator of his country. His expectations, however, were disappointed; for the General had left that place only the day before, for a farm,

belonging to Don Andres Rojo, in a village called Pastoriza, close to the sea-side, whither our hero immediately proceeded. The distance being very trifling, he reached this village shortly after, and went to Don Andres's house, which was guarded by a sentinel, who so far from making any difficulty about admitting him and his servant, called a comrade of his, that he might show Sandoval the General's apartment, which was on the ground floor at one of the extremities of the house.

At the moment our hero entered, Porlier was engaged in familiar conversation with his lady, and a short gentleman, the landlord and friend of the General, a merchant of La Coruña, who had embarked his whole fortune in the meditated enterprize. The appearance of Porlier bore ample testimony to the sufferings he had endured, both from his exertions in the field, and from subsequent confinement; but his spirits, of which he always possessed a great flow, were unimpaired either by ill-health, or

the unjust and barbarous treatment he had met at Ferdinand's hands.

The General having read the letter of introduction which Sandoval had brought for him, rose, and welcomed him affectionately.—“Your name,” added he, “is not altogether unknown to me. I have heard of your exertions, when you were with the army on the frontiers. That was the most favourable moment that ever presented itself, for asserting the justice of our cause; and would to God, those Generals who had such men with them, had done their duty as well as our gallant General Lacy did his! But we must not despair; the spirit of the people of this province is highly favourable to our plans, and ere many days are over, the whole of it will be up in arms to claim their rights, and compel Ferdinand to shew the gratitude he owes to the people.”

He then gave him an account of the state of things among their friends, informing him that the chiefs of the regiments of Santiago, Lugo,

Mondoñedo, and Marines, had already agreed to act in concert, and occupy the posts which were to place him in possession of La Coruña and Ferrol; that Don Jose Maria Peon, the valiant Colonel who commanded the regiment of Mondoñedo, and whose energetic character and ardent zeal for the patriotic cause, were of themselves almost sufficient to ensure its success, was to march with his regiment from Ferrol to Santiago, in which city there were elements to form the revolution, and check any efforts to arrest its progress that might be attempted by the clergy, who had a great influence there; and lastly, he congratulated Sandoval upon his timely arrival at Pastoriza, as it had been settled that he should enter Coruña on that very night at ten o'clock, which was the reason of his removal hither.

The joy manifested by Sandoval at this good news, exceeded any he had ever before felt. Even Madame Porlier could not help smiling at the fervour of his enthusiasm; which showed itself in a most extravagant manner. When the first

burst of exultation was over, he sat down again to converse further on the subject in a more composed manner, though now and then, he would give further indications of the ecstasy with which he contemplated the prospect before them.

At length the sun sunk beneath the waves of the ocean, and night and darkness came gradually on, when everything for the execution of their plan being ready, Porlier, accompanied by Sandoval, and Captain Castañeda with his small escort, proceeded towards the town-gate of Madrid in Coruña, which they reached at the appointed hour. Here a numerous party of officers and friends welcomed their leader, and conducted him to the barracks, where the troops were quartered with some of the officers. He addressed the officers and soldiers separately, declared that no injury was intended towards the person of their sovereign; and explained the motives which had induced him to come forward; exhorting them, moreover, to observe the strictest moderation and discipline;

and concluding his harangue by informing them that the plan of their rising, far from being isolated, had a thousand ramifications in every province of the kingdom.

These addresses, energetically delivered by the General, produced a great sensation among both officers and soldiers, who, however, were prevented from giving vent to their enthusiasm by the particular desire of their commander, who afterwards directed a few rounds of ball-cartridges to be distributed among the troops, and requested that two small parties should proceed to the arrest of the Corregidor, and the colonel of the regiment of Military Com-manderies; while he himself went with a company of soldiers and some officers to the Palace of the Captain General, to put him under arrest. The latter had already withdrawn to rest, and Porlier entered the palace without meeting any obstacle. He now commanded one of the officers who accompanied him to go to the Captain General's sleeping apartment, and with all possible respect to request him to dress himself,

and give up his sword in the name of the nation, while he himself would wait his return in another room, ready to give his encouragement, or his orders. On entering the room in which the Captain General was sleeping, the officer awoke him, and delivered his message with all the politeness he had been ordered to use. "Who arrests me?" enquired the Captain General; "are you not aware that I hold my post by the king's nomination, and that it is only at sight of a warrant signed by his majesty's own hand that I can give up my baton? But, I suspect General Porlier is at the bottom of this."

The officer again repeated the orders he had received, assuring him he had nothing to fear, for their object was not the gratification of private vengeance, but rather to see justice done to the nation. Upon this assurance he got up, and was conducted, together with the two other prisoners, to the Castle of San Anton.

This necessary preliminary step being happily accomplished, the rest of the night was

passed by Porlier and his friends in concerting those measures which were to insure the success of their enterprise. An officer was sent to Ferrol with orders that similar arrests should be made there, and men of liberal principles be provisionally nominated to the offices they made vacant; after which, the troops who garrisoned that port were to come to Coruña; another commission was sent to the post office to examine the packets that might be sent by the servile party to other cities; orders were issued to set at liberty all persons accused of political offences, and an embargo laid on all vessels then in port. A proclamation for the troops, and a Manifesto* to the nation were ordered to be printed; in a word, every measure required by circumstances was quickly resolved upon and adopted.

* These documents are too well known in this country to require any further mention of them. The latter, however, was a masterpiece of reasoning and eloquence. It was written, as we have been informed on good authority, by Count Toreno, who sent it over from Paris, where he was then a refugee.

These manifold occupations employed the General and his friends till seven or eight in the morning; but so great had been the tranquillity that prevailed all night, that even several of those who were in the plot, but who were unacquainted with the hour of its execution, knew nothing of what had happened till that time. Their joy, however, was not lessened by the admirable manner with which things had been managed. It offered also a wonderful contrast to the horror and dismay manifested by the king's partisans, who finding in the morning the total change that had taken place during the night, stared at each other with a ludicrous astonishment, mingled with affright, which seemed to intimate a suspicion that it must have been brought about by magic, or the devil's agency.

At ten o'clock, Captain Castañeda, in compliance with orders issued by the General, proclaimed the Constitution of 1812 throughout Coruña, at the head of some companies, or as the Spanish expression is, *por bando militar*,

with drum and fife. A multitude of people, preceded by bands of music playing patriotic airs, surrounded the troops and marched in the rear shouting *vivas* to the Constitution, to the constitutional king, and to their valiant chief. That these lively demonstrations of joy on the respectable part of the inhabitants were sincere, we have every reason to believe; but that the capricious class, usually denominated the rabble, felt an equal pleasure at this new change, we must be allowed to doubt; though, as it invariably happens, they were the most obstreperous in their vociferations of triumph. Our sanguine hero, however, who followed the military for the purpose of observing the spirit of the people, and participating in their delight, was too much blinded by his own enthusiasm to stop to make any distinction between the joy which was real and that which was feigned. *He* was sincere, and therefore all who cried *viva* appeared so to him, although Roque, who was also among the crowd, stepped out towards him and whispered, "My master, there is some sub-

ject of congratulation for you in all this, but I fear the noise is greater than the nuts."

"You bird of ill omen!" said his master, "think you that all here are as cold-hearted as yourself? See you not those rapturous looks, reflecting the delight which agitates the heart within? Hear you not those ecstatic shouts, the echoes only of those that swell the bosom?"

"Those looks and those shouts I see and hear as well as you do," said Roque; "but I have seen and heard others for which you have neither eyes nor ears, and which make me think that the tail of the beast is not yet flayed."*

"There goes the tail, then," said Sandoval, observing the members of the Criminal Tribunal, those of the municipality, and the rest of the authorities, with some of the heads of religious communities walking towards the Palace of the General, where, they had been sum-

* *Aun falta el rabo por desollar.* A Spanish proverb, said when there is still the principal difficulty to overcome in an affair.

moned to take their oath to the Constitution, "I'll go and see it flayed."

Saying this he left Roque and proceeded to the Palace, where Porlier and his friends were waiting to receive the oath of the civil authorities, who entered soon after. The countenances of these gentlemen exhibited such looks as might be expected from men who saw themselves on the eve of losing all their beloved places, offices, and benefices. They came in, casting surly, sidelong glances around them, and then stood in sullen silence before the General, who, to the great astonishment of his friends, and particularly of Sandoval, began by declaring, that as he only wished for men who were willing to act in concert with him, he would not force any to swear to the Constitution; on the contrary, he intimated that those who did not concur in his views, were at liberty to go as soon as they liked, and wherever they pleased, without the fear of incurring evil consequences. At these words the greater number scampered out of the room as swiftly as

if their feet were actually winged, while the officers remained staring at each other in mute astonishment.

Porlier, who saw his friends' displeasure, endeavoured to shew that no bad results could ensue from such a conduct; but his arguments being unsatisfactory, his friends remonstrated against such an impolitic step, which they said could not fail to bring on their conduct the accusation of weakness and folly. At length the majority insisted, that those men who had refused to take the oath, should be immediately arrested and taken to prison, to which the General was obliged to subscribe. Orders, therefore, were issued for the arrest of about thirty of them, who were conducted, some to the Castle of San Anton, and others to that of San Felipe at Ferrol.

During the whole of this day, the manifestations of joy were unequivocal, and the evening closed with brilliant illuminations, balls, and bands of music serenading in the streets. But on the following day, many of the doors of the

houses were shut, the bustle of trade was suspended, and there was evidently less enthusiasm shown by the inhabitants, the groups on the public places consisting chiefly of officers.

This sudden apathy, coupled with the fact, that when the General gave orders for the formation of a provisional junta, some of the gentlemen proposed excused themselves on frivolous prettexts, and others were no where to be found, made it appear as if this movement had been purely military, and was supported rather by force of arms than by public opinion. The lenity of the General, too, who,—on one of his aid-de-camp's surprising several of the members of the former municipality (who had been left unmolested,) drawing up a manifesto, in which the people of the province were called upon to rise in mass to exterminate the liberals, and another document, which they were on the point of sending off to Madrid—contented himself with putting them under arrest, contributed in no small degree to destroy in those

gentlemen who had taken active steps in this revolution, the confidence they had reposed in his firmness. The fourth regiment of artillery, composed of youths, natives of Coruña and its district, and who were much looked up to by the inhabitants of the town, shewed also signs of discontent arising from the same reason, and it was even rumoured that their separation was likely to be the consequence.

Porlier being informed of this, immediately requested an explanation from the colonel and officers of the regiment; but their answer was such as to increase rather than allay the suspicion entertained against them. They said, that they would be ready to act in concert with him when they saw that the nation gave less equivocal proofs of its participation in the proposed change; but that, meanwhile, they must be allowed to remain neuter. This threw a damp on the enthusiasm of many of the officers of the other corps; but Porlier still hoped to rekindle it on the arrival of the troops from

Ferrol, who had been detained there by unforeseen obstacles, but were expected on the evening of that day.

To dissipate a little the prevailing gloom, notices were posted up in various places, intimating the arrival of those troops, and requesting the inhabitants to illuminate their houses, in order to give them a suitable welcome; and the bands of the regiments were ordered out to meet them on their approach. But, though the spirit of the troops from Ferrol was as favourable to the cause they had espoused, as that of their gallant Colonel Peon, and though they entered the town singing patriotic hymns, they met with a less cordial reception from the inhabitants than they had anticipated, the *vivas* being fewer and less rapturous than on the previous day.

We ought to remark here, that no sooner was the Constitution proclaimed at Coruña, than Porlier sent an officer to the military governor of Santiago, apprizing him of the events that had taken place, and requesting that similar

operations might be there resorted to. The reception of this officer by the governor (who was an Italian of the name of Pezzi,) was by no means encouraging to the liberal party of that city. Two hours after his arrival, he was arrested at the instigation of the clergy, who placed at the governor's disposal ample means to bribe the battalion of grenadiers on garrison in that city, and induce them to assume a hostile attitude towards their fellow soldiers of Coruña, whom they branded with the epithets of traitors, enemies of God and the throne, &c. &c. By dint of gold, threats, and prayers, the clergy accomplished this object; the patriotic intentions of the soldiery were turned aside, and they were induced to take a military position to defend the city against an attack from the constitutional troops, if any such were contemplated.

This news was brought to La Coruña, by the physician of the battalion of grenadiers, who had left Santiago in disguise, to request Porlier to march immediately upon that city at the head of some troops, or send some patriotic

officer with them, to thwart the measures of the clerical faction. This duty Colonel Peon begged to be allowed to perform; and certainly, if his wishes had been granted, there is every reason to believe, the excellent spirit of his troops considered, that the success of their glorious enterprize would have been insured; but Porlier, whose greatest delight was in danger, claimed for himself the honour of leading the troops, and resolved to march upon Santiago, at the head of eight hundred men, and two pieces of artillery, on that very night.

“There was some truth in what you said the other day, Roque,” said his master, as he assisted him in packing up his own portmanteau to accompany Porlier in his expedition; “things have assumed an unfavourable aspect, and I am anxious about the final issue of our march.”

“Oh, no, Sir, I am only a bird of ill-omen. Believe nothing of what I say. You are a Solomon, and I am a jack-ass—a fool,—a most cold-hearted fellow, who neither sees nor hears,” said Roque, with a most triumphant sneer.

“To judge from the extreme humility of your language, I suspect, Roque, you now expect I shall hereafter put a blind confidence in all your anticipations,” said his master.

“About that, you may do as you please,” returned Roque, “though it is doubtful to me if you have again another opportunity of discovering the truth of any of my omens.”

“What! do you intend giving up your avocation of conjurer?”

“If, as there is every reason to suspect, you are destined to give up the ghost ere you return from this expedition, what necessity will there be for my continuing it?”

“That is spoken like a true oracle, Roque; an *if* is not amiss there,” said his master.

“May you find it so!—but at all events I recommend you to look to yourself, and you will have a better chance of proving me a false prophet.”

“There will be time enough to look to ourselves, when we have done our duty to our country; so adieu till we meet again,” said our

hero, as he mounted his horse, to join General Porlier.

The march commenced early in the morning. There was something ominous from the moment the troops started. It was observed that the enthusiasm which is generally felt by a sallying party was confined to the officers, and to a small number of the soldiery, the rest appearing, some lukewarm, and others even sullen. In this disposition of mind, they marched for the three first leagues, when some symptoms of insubordination began to manifest themselves. Some of the soldiers began to slacken their pace, and lag behind the column, others, contrary to the orders of the General, and to military discipline, entered the vineyards and gardens belonging to some of the farms that skirted the road, and committed sundry acts of depredation.—“There is no doubt,” said Sandoval to the General, as these facts came to their knowledge, “that the minds of these men have been worked upon by the *serviles*. An example or

two might be very salutary; it would restore discipline."

"Or more probably cause a mutiny," said Porlier, "we are in a delicate situation, and we must be cautious how we displease them. I will, however, enjoin the officers to exhort them to observe discipline; for we must not allow the peasantry to be disturbed; they show an excellent spirit."

Accordingly he spoke to the officers, and they to their men, who, however, minded them no more than before; notwithstanding which, the farmers showed every civility to them, and hailed the General, whenever he approached their dwellings, with every testimony of joy and good will. During the course of their march, Porlier dispatched, in every direction, letters and copies of the proclamation and manifesto already mentioned, to the authorities of the different towns, calling upon them to proclaim the Constitution. Indeed he displayed every where great presence of mind, knowledge, and activity,

though his indulgence towards the soldiery Sandoval disapproved, as he feared it might be interpreted into weakness.

The troops had now been marching the whole day, and it was eleven o'clock at night, when the General ordered them to halt, to receive their rations, and take some repose. This halt was near a village called Ordenes, distant two leagues from Santiago. The soldiers having formed bell-tents, with their muskets, the General went with some of the chiefs to an inn close by, to take some refreshments, while the rest of the officers proceeded with the same intent to another house, distant a few paces from the camp, which they visited now and then, to see that all was right. During these visits they observed nothing among the soldiery, which might indicate any extraordinary measure in contemplation. A group here sitting round a cheerful fire, and cooking their suppers, another there standing conversing noisily with each other; the sergeants and corporals messing or talking together,

or with the soldiers of their respective companies; in a word there was apparently very little discontent, and still less any symptoms of an approaching mutiny.

Meanwhile, the unsuspecting Porlier, and his officers, who had sat down to an indifferent and hastily cooked supper, were endeavouring to make up by wit and good humour for the coarseness of their fare, when loud cries of "Long live the King, our Lord!"* were heard in every direction outside the inn.—"These are the troops from Santiago," said Porlier, rising hastily from the table, "to arms, my friends, to arms!"

In a moment the swords of the officers glittered in their hands, and they rushed towards the door; but the assailants made a discharge on those who attempted a sortie, by which only the unfortunate innkeeper fell. A

* The word "absolute" was not then known, or at all events never made use of, when the loyalists shouted for the king.

violent struggle now ensued between the officers, and some of their own soldiers, headed by a serjeant of marines, of the name of Chacon, who called upon his superiors, to surrender in the name of the king. The contest was too unequal to last long, the officers surrounded by overwhelming numbers, retreated into the house, where they were disarmed and secured, while only an aid-de-camp of the General and our doughty hero succeeded in cutting their way through the assailants.

As for the unfortunate Porlier, impressed with the idea that the attack was made by the troops from Santiago, and impatient to put himself at the head of his troops, he leapt from the window in the room, and found himself surrounded by about sixty men belonging to his own troops, who immediately handcuffed him, placed him on a donkey, and, followed by the other officers, similarly secured and mounted, was led towards Santiago, amidst the bayonets of his own soldiers, who blindly obeyed the orders of their new chief, Chacon.

Early on the following day, the captives entered Santiago amidst cries of death, brutal insults, peltings, and blows, from an infuriated rabble, headed by priests and friars, who, with fiendish joy, led their unhappy victims to the dungeons of the Inquisition, where they met with the most barbarous and infamous treatment. After these arrests a solemn *Te Deum* was chaunted in the Cathedral by the whole chapter, and a sermon preached by a frantic friar, who roared out like a mad bull, and poured maledictions and anathemas on the rebels, damning them in *secula seculorum*.

CHAPTER XII.

Then speak, O Sparta, and demand my life;
My heart exulting answers to thy call,
And smiles on glorious fate. To live with fame
The Gods allow to many! but to die
With equal lustre, is a blessing Heaven
Selects from all the choicest-boons of fate,
And with a sparing hand on few bestows.

GLOVER'S *Leonidas*.

SANDOVAL, having got clear of his enemies, with only some scratches and bruises not worth mentioning, retraced his steps to Coruña, where Brigadier General Romay had remained as military commandant, and Colonel Peon as governor of the town. Their force, it is true, consisted only of about four hundred men; but Sandoval, whose imagination was apt to

magnify a few patriots into invincible hosts, thought that the General might yet be rescued, every misfortune repaired, and the cause once more redeemed. On his arrival there he found, that an attempt had been commenced on the same night of Porlier's arrest by the servile party, to surprise the posts occupied by the troops left in garrison in the town; which had it not been for the energy and activity of Colonel Peon, who, accompanied only by one officer of tried bravery, of the name of Don Cesar Turnel, went round the ramparts at midnight, and succeeded in quashing it at the very moment of its intended execution, would have left the liberal party no further hope.

This was a discouraging circumstance; for it showed that their enemies had greater strength and influence than it was generally believed; but our hero, unappalled by this intelligence, continued encouraging those officers, whose spirits had been depressed by the melancholy news which he himself had privately communicated to them. This news began soon after to

be spread about the city by some soldiers and peasants, who were now arriving from the field of action, and particularly by the *aid-de-camp* of Porlier, who had escaped from the fray, and who had the indiscretion to communicate it to the officer on guard at the town gate in a manner equally imprudent, exclaiming, within the soldiers hearing—"All is lost!—They are all a set of traitors and knaves!—Porlier and his officers have been betrayed!"

As this intelligence gained ground, the different posts occupied by the remaining troops began to be deserted; and the officers, seeing the number of their adherents diminishing every instant, assembled to consult on the measures to be adopted in this painful crisis. Their debates were long and boisterous; but nothing important was resolved upon, and they were on the point of separating without coming to any decision, when Sandoval, who had till then refrained from giving his opinion, suggested, that all the officers and soldiers who were willing to do so, should immediately proceed to the Castle of San

Anton, and defend it as long as they found it tenable.—“There,” added he, “we shall be able to defend ourselves against the attacks of our treacherous enemies. The prisoners who are in the castle shall be our hostages, should their friends attempt to take the life of Porlier. We can always obtain provisions from the serviles themselves, by threatening to set fire to their dwellings from the castle, which they are well aware may be done; and, lastly, should we be reduced to extremities, we can force any vessel lying within the fire of the castle to take us on board, and convey us to England or America; or else, at the very last, we can die gloriously, and sell our lives dear.”

This proposal was unanimously applauded, and approved of by the meeting, and an officer was immediately dispatched to seek out the *capitan de llaves*;* but all search after him was useless, the officer who filled that post and the keys having disappeared. The gates of the

* An officer intrusted with the keys of a fortress. The town major.

fortress being shut, and the measure proposed by Sandoval of battering them down with a field piece being objected to, it was finally resolved that the officers and soldiers, who wished to remain faithful to their oaths, should all assemble in the square called *Plaza de la Harina*, and there defend themselves to the last, should they be attacked by their enemies, or else march out of the town, and throw themselves into the mountains.

In order to carry this plan into execution, and assemble all their friends, it was necessary to go about the town with some force; but when they sent for a picquet of about fifty grenadiers, who had till then shown an excellent spirit, neither the men nor their captain could be any where found; they had all dispersed, and disappeared. At this moment, too, the servile party caused all the bells of the town to sound to arms, and this measure alone seemed wanting to complete the ruin of the liberals. The cowardice, however, of their enemies, who not-

withstanding the debilitated state of their antagonists, dared not come forward to attack them, gave the latter time to seek safety in flight.

The serviles, who were watching every step taken by the liberal party, no sooner observed their dispersion, than, assembling a multitude of ragamuffins in a distant part of the town, proceeded with the *capitan de llaves*, who now re-appeared, to the Castle of San Anton, to liberate the Captain-General, and the other members of the absolute government, in which they succeeded, as everything had been previously arranged between them and the officer who had been intrusted with the care of the prisoners. This done they re-entered the town shouting, "Death to the liberals!" and venting their loyalty in threats, which even then they dared not execute.

Sandoval, who heard the distant shouts waxing louder and louder, and who was still with Colonel Peon, asked him what his intentions

were.—“Follow me and you shall see,” said this brave chieftain, with a look in which undaunted courage struggled with despair.

He did so. On reaching the middle of the street, they observed a crowd of the lowest rabble hastening towards them with hostile intentions,—“Draw, Sandoval,” said the Colonel, unsheathing his sword. The rabble halted on seeing these preparations, and the two friends continued their way with a slow pace, now and then stopping and turning themselves towards the rabble, who followed them at a respectful distance, and who stood still as the two champions cast a look behind. Their steady and firm step, bold and fixed gaze, and slowly progressive movement, made them appear like two lions, followed by a pack of timorous hounds, who ready to take to their heels on the first onset, dare yet walk trembling and howling in their train.

In this way they passed through several streets unmolested, and arrived at a convent which had, during the war of independence, been turned into

barracks, and in which there were still about a hundred and twenty men belonging to the Colonel's regiment; Peon requested them to take their arms and form, and then spoke to them in these words.—“My friends! It would be no less cruel than rash in me to engage you further in the support of a cause, which has been totally ruined by masked assassins and traitors. Its principles, however, remain unchanged,—they would have constituted the happiness of the nation,—perhaps they may be secured at a future period,—I devoutly pray that it may be so. But at present, nothing more remains for us than to avoid the persecutions of our enemies.—You, however, who came here invited by me, ought not to suffer for obedience to my orders.—’Tis I alone, who being the originator of the plan, must take the consequences of this failure. Consequently, to shield yourselves from future evils, and at the same time free me from the fury of a vile rabble, let twelve of you step forward and follow me.”

Saying this he walked firmly to a corner of

the same yard where his men were formed, followed by a dozen of them, and anxiously watched by the rest. Then turning his face to them, and pointing to his breast, commanded them, with a powerful voice, to take well their aim and fire, adding, that by such an act they might be certain of a pardon, and perhaps of a recompense.

The soldiers, who had till then preserved a sullen silence, struck by the magnanimity of their chief, burst out into enthusiastic shouts of "Long live our Colonel!—Our lives sooner than his!" &c. Peon entreated them again and again; but seeing that they were resolved to defend his life, he added, that since they would preserve him, even in spite of himself, he must request them to accompany him a league beyond the town. Then placing himself at their head, and assuming a military voice, he ordered them to screw their bayonets, shoulder their muskets, and march; adding, when he came within hearing of the mob, who had assembled in front of the barracks, casting threatening looks around

—"Woe to those who shall attempt to impede our progress!"

The drums and fifes then sounded a march, and without the least insult or molestation from the mob, the party left the town, though, as the city walls vanished from their sight, they heard the triumphant shout of the rabble dying gradually away.

At about a league from Coruña, the Colonel halted his men, before whom he clothed himself in a peasant's dress, procured for him at a farm by one of the officers, and took leave of the party almost with tears in his eyes. The soldiers then proceeded to their former station of Ferrol, carrying as prisoners their own officers, who generously insisted on it that no private should at all suffer from the persecutions which undoubtedly would follow this unfortunate attempt.

As for our hero, contrary to the advice of his friend Colonel Peon, and to the suggestions of prudence, he resolved to re-enter Coruña in the dusk of evening, where, being little known, he hoped to escape the pursuit of his enemies, by

concealing himself in the house of an honest citizen, (a man whose insignificance placed him beyond suspicion, and who, he knew, would not betray him) more effectually than by rambling about the country. "Well, then," said Peon to him, unable to make him desist from his intention, "since, in spite of reason and prudence, you will run your head into the lion's mouth, farewell, and may you escape the dangers that await you. For my part, I intend immediately to proceed to Portugal, where I hope to embark on board some vessel bound for England. There at least I am certain of finding freedom and sympathy."

"Adieu," said Sandoval, embracing him warmly, "I almost envy you; but I am spell bound to our native land, and could not survive a day's banishment from it."

Saying this, the two friends parted, and Sandoval followed an irregular path leading to a small farm-house, the door of which the cautious farmer, who had heard of the failure of Porlier's attempt, shut as soon as he saw our hero approach,

saying, in the dialect of his province, to his better half, who was then employed in broiling some pilchards, with which the coast of Galicia abounds, and which constitute the principal food of this frugal class,—“ Here comes one of the runaways. We must'nt let him in, wife, lest our neighbour the beneficiate should hear of it, and deny us the use of his woods for our pigs.”

“ You are right, husband,” said the wife, who fully appreciated the argument, “ bolt the door well, for I'll wager we shall lose more than we shall gain by his coming in.”

Then approaching the door, she looked through the key-hole to gratify her natural curiosity—“ I say husband,” she said, “ he has got two of those gold things—what do they call 'em?—on his shoulders, and a cocked hat, with a loop and gold tassels. Perhaps it is the General himself. Do you remember when the French came to our country, how we used to kill them, to get such things as those from them, eh?—What if we invited him in, eh? He has

a gold chain hanging at his girdle; could we make no money out of it, eh?"

"For shame, wife! We never killed our own countrymen; and if we did, we might be hung for it."

"If he were a liberal we would'nt. Did'nt you hear the priest yesterday tell us so? Why, he said we would get more indulgences by killing these traitors, as he called 'em, than if we went on a *romeria** to our lady of Las Augustias at Betanzos, or to Santiago de Compostela. At all events, if he were the general, or some of the big ones, we might get something by taking him to Coruña, and give him up to the Captain General."

"Hark!" exclaimed the indignant husband, "if I hear you again say that, I'll break every bone in your carcase, you incarnate devil!"

"Will you?" said the wife, seizing a large spit, which she brandished over her head, "come

* A pilgrimage.

on, come on. Zounds! if I don't stick you for a goose!" added she, making a pass at him, which he adroitly turned off with a thick stick, which, like almost all his countrymen, he played with much skill.

"Are you at it?" said the incensed husband, knocking the spit from her hand, and seizing her by the throat, "by Santiago de Compostela! I'll squeeze the soul out of your throat, if you have one."

This threat, however, was not so easily executed, for besides the doubt he very justly entertained, his dutiful half fastened her claws, which were none of the shortest, round his eyes, and kicked so vigorously against his shins with her wooden shoes, that he was compelled to quit hold in tenderness for his optics. However, to show that he had not been conquered, he went to the door to let in the stranger, who on hearing the struggle, repeated his blows to prevent its becoming more serious.—"I'll even open the door, to throw you more into a rage," said he, drawing the bolt away.

The hostess, who did not choose to let the stranger know she had been quarrelling with her dear husband, kneeled on the hearth to turn the pilchards, which by this time were not only broiled, but burnt.—“Why, Paco!” said she, in a gibberish which she thought good Castilian, “while we have been dancing the *muñeira*,* the fish have burnt away, and I am afraid they are not worth the gentleman’s acceptance.”

Sandoval thanked her, and said that he had neither time nor appetite to become their guest; but wished only to know if the landlord could accommodate him with a suit of clothes, for which he would leave them his own.—“What!” cried the delighted landlady, “will your *señoría*† leave us the hat too, and those things on your shoulders?”

“Everything,” said Sandoval, “and even my sword; but this I must request you to keep, until I send for it, or fetch it myself.”

* A Galician dance.

† Your Honour.

“ Give him your old Sunday suit,” said she to her husband, in her own dialect ; “ bless me, what a nice exchange ! We shall make out of it money enough to buy you another suit, and me two complete ones. Make haste, lest he change his mind, and we lose it.”

The landlord immediately opened a large chest which contained their wardrobe, and took out a short jacket, formerly sky-blue, a red waistcoat, a pair of black velveteen breeches, a pair of long gaiters of brown cloth, a shirt of coarse cloth, a low crowned wide brimmed hat, with a broad velvet band, a large steel buckle, and a cock’s feather stuck in it, and, lastly, a pair of wooden clogs ; the whole in a condition that would have puzzled a painter to have assigned names to their various colours.—“ Here,” said the host, “ is a new suit of clothes which I have worn only seven years. They will fit you well, too ; for though I am a little stouter than yourself, they are rather tight for me.”

Sandoval, whose object was to enter the town without exciting suspicion, did not much

care about their fitting tight or looking well, and therefore put them on, without making any observation on what his host said, though he could not be prevailed upon to exchange his own shirt for the farmer's, notwithstanding the cogent reasons that this last brought in support of the exchange.—“ You'll be discovered to a certainty, if you don't put on the shirt, too,” said he, “ those frills will never do. But if your Señoria thinks it too coarse for your skin, at least allow my wife to cut off the frills of your own.”

Without waiting for his answer, he called her, to perform this task, which Sandoval could not well prevent, so great was their eagerness for his safety; though he suspected from what he heard her say about caps, that the idea of having some cambric to trim them with, was foremost in her head. Aware of the cunning and interested character of this people, he gave them also a pecuniary reward, and made them understand he was going towards Betanzos, which is precisely in the contrary direction to Coruña;

and wishing them happiness and prosperity, proceeded through bye-ways to his place of destination.

In entering the house of his humble friend at Coruña, which he reached without inconvenience, he found his servant Roque engaged in making his funeral orison, and lamenting most bitterly the infatuation which urged him to enter into such mad projects as could only bring him to the gallows. He expatiated on his good parts, which, were it not for that obstinacy in following his own plans, in spite of the good advice and wise remonstrances of one, (meaning himself) who had received from heaven a greater share of foresight, would have ensured his happiness in this world, and probably in the next, to which he thought he was likely soon to migrate, having heard that he had been taken with Porlier.

This elegy Sandoval soon cut short, by his re-appearance, which, while it delighted them all, rendered them somewhat apprehensive, both for his safety and their own; for no sooner had the Captain General regained his full power, than

he issued a furious decree in which he divided the conspirators into two classes; namely, seducers and seduced, according to which classification the military commissions formed to try them were to direct their judgments. It was not difficult to guess to which of these two classes our hero belonged, nor the punishment that would be awarded to him, were he to fall into the hands of his enemies, who were making the most strict searches after the conspirators. Indeed during the whole of that day domiciliary visits were made and scores of officers and gentlemen imprisoned. The castle of San Anton, and the public prisons were scarcely sufficient to contain the victims who were taken there on mere suspicion of having aided in or approved of the measures of the rebels.

On the following day the whole garrison was changed, and the prisoners who had been conducted to Santiago were claimed, while a council of generals was immediately formed to try Porlier. Meantime, many severe measures were

adopted to prevent the escape of those whom the constituted authorities suspected were concealed in the town, which obliged our hero to keep within doors for several days together.

At length the unfortunate Porlier and his companions entered Coruña on the 25th, loaded with chains, and under a strong escort. Whether the terror spread among the respectable class of society, by the violent and numerous arrests which had taken place, had even reached the mob, or whether the fate of the prisoners really excited their sympathy, it is certain there was not a voice uplifted against them, from the city gates to the prison. There even prevailed among the crowd that accompanied them to this place a melancholy silence, which showed that even a hired mob felt the reverence due to unsuccessful patriotism.

The prison whither they were conducted is situated near the sea, and for unwholesomeness and filth, does not yield to any in the Peninsula. Here, however, a deep, dark dungeon, into which the sea water penetrates to the depth of

between two and three feet, was selected for the unhappy General, whose ill health and extreme debility rendered the gratuitous inhumanity of such confinement still more odious; but this was not all, for according to a barbarous custom practised in the dark ages, by which those accused of treason, murder, and other capital crimes, were obliged to take off their clothing from the waist downwards, Porlier was stripped of half his clothes, fettered, and loaded with a chain of excessive weight.

It is not our purpose to detail here the unjust and illegal mode adopted by his enemies in the proceedings instituted against him: they have been already accurately given in Mr. Blaquiere's interesting work, entitled "A Historical Review of the Spanish Revolution," we shall therefore refer our readers to that gentleman, and merely confine ourselves to circumstances which have not been noticed in the work alluded to, and which more peculiarly belong to our province.

When the high-minded Porlier was taken before his judges, and interrogated by them, he

declared with his wonted boldness, that he had nothing to say before a council of war, which he considered incompetent to try him ; because, an article of the ordinances forbade those who had in any way suffered, or been concerned in the charge advanced against any individual, from being at once prosecutors and judges. This made a deep impression on one of the members of the council, who, with more zeal for justice than prudential foresight, rose, and declared the culprit was in the right, and that a new council of war ought immediately to be formed to fulfil the ends of justice. No sooner was this opinion delivered, than the other members, who, understanding the nature of their functions far better than their colleague, knew they were assembled there not to try, but to assassinate their prisoner, commenced an instant attack on the subversive and revolutionary doctrines advanced by this imprudent Aristides, who, afterwards, to avoid incurring further suspicions from his colleagues, retracted what his better feelings had suggested him to declare.

The interrogatory then proceeded, but Porlier's only answer was, that if the king would grant him an interview, he would tell him what it greatly imported him to know, and he would then die with still greater pleasure; after which, rising from the wooden stool assigned to him as a culprit, he added, "Now, gentlemen, the affair is over, and I must wish you farewell."

On being reconducted to prison, the jailor led the way to his former dungeon; but Porlier seizing his arm, bid him take him to the condemned cell, "for," added he, with a smile, "I can hear the remaining formalities there quite as well as in my former dungeon, and it will save you some trouble."

The jailor, who knew his office too well to deviate from its forms, and who, moreover, feared that the vengeance of Porlier's enemies would fall on his head were he to take him to a place, which, though small and confined, was a little paradise compared to the other, pleaded his incompetency to assume a right which he did not possess, and took him back to

the well assigned for him, against the walls of which the roaring waves were heard beating furiously, every moment threatening to break through, and bury under their ruins the many unhappy inmates who pined within the gloomy building.

At last the hour arrived when the *fiscal** came to notify the sentence of the council. It is the custom in Spain for the culprits to hear it on their knees, but Porlier requested the fiscal to dispense with such idle formalities, and give him the substance of it in as brief a manner as he could. The latter, who, while he remained in Porlier's presence seemed to be under a kind of spell, read it accordingly, and the patriot chief heard it with the utmost composure, though when the fiscal came to that part of the sentence where the word "traitor" occurred, he smiled scornfully, and said, casting a look of contempt on the paper, "Traitor indeed! yet I would have defended the Constitutional King

* Answering to Attorney-General, or an officer who prosecutes criminals in the king's name.

as I did when he was a captive ; but let him know that the only way to save his life and his throne, is by fulfilling his promise to the nation."

When the fiscal had read the sentence, he began to stammer out the admonition generally used on such occasions, to remind the prisoner of his approaching end.—“Withdraw, Sir, withdraw,” said the General, “I know how to die, and am not ignorant of the duties of a Christian.”

After this, he was conducted to the condemned cell, where he found two, stout friars of a religious order, called *agonizantes*,* who had gone there with the charitable intention of embittering his last moments ; but Porlier dismissed them politely, saying that he could not avail himself of their spiritual comforts, as he had a friend who was a monk, and who

* Literally, agonizing friars, and it must be owned that the agonies they create by their excessive bellowings, are the most painful part of the sentence.

being his usual confessor, he was anxious to see. The friars, much to their disappointment, withdrew; for in these cases the culprit is allowed the option of admitting them, or naming others, hence Porlier's friend was, accordingly, requested to attend.

During the whole time he remained in this cell, he was as serene and cheerful as he used to be when sitting with his friends in his own house. He conversed with his confessor without any of that affected heroism which little men are apt to assume, when placed in similar circumstances, and which very often serves as a cloak to hide the agonizing fears by which they are tormented. He wrote letters to his wife, in which the regret of losing for ever a woman to whom he was so tenderly attached, was tempered with every consoling thought which religion and philosophy could suggest. It is impossible to read those letters, and the will and epitaph, which he dictated with the coolness of heroism, without tears. A dignified

tone of patriotic feeling, deep-felt resignation, and pure and tender affection pervade them all.*

When the final hour arrived, an adjutant, with a company of grenadiers, entered the prison, and requested Porlier to dress himself in complete uniform. This done, two soldiers took his hat and sword, and the General was

* Some of these documents were published in this country shortly after that martyr's death, and may be seen also in the work above alluded to.—How highly gifted must the soul of that man have been, who, at the twenty-seventh year of his age, could bring his mind to look calmly on death, when he had just accomplished so many glorious deeds, and attained the highest honours and reputation, the love of a truly estimable woman, the friendship of every one who knew him; in a word, when he had but just begun to taste every earthly blessing, attendant on high renown, valour, love, and friendship! Let the myrmidons of power say what they will, the man who could thus die is a hero, if any deserve the name. His political opinions, the partisans of absolute monarchies may rail at; but even they, if they have hearts to feel, cannot refuse their sympathy to one, who, during the few years he was permitted to live, always showed himself generous, brave, virtuous, patriotic, and benevolent.

then conducted to the prison's gate, where a multitude of troops were so closely formed, that they presented an impenetrable barrier to the anxious eyes of the people. No sooner he showed himself, than the two same friars above mentioned rushed towards him, each holding a crucifix in his hand, and vociferating the most stunning cries. "Hold, fathers, hold! I am provided with a confessor, and my head aches a little," said Porlier with his usual composure. The two champions were again obliged to retreat, and the mournful procession began now to move at a slow pace. Porlier walked with firm steps the whole way, from the prison to the square, holding a crucifix in one hand, and leaning on the confessor's arm. There was a calmness, a resignation, a firmness in his look and demeanor, which indicated, that even at the approach of death, his conscience approved of the past actions of his life, and enabled him to look forward with confidence to that reward which the God of justice apports to disinterested patriotism

and exalted virtue. The people, who came out to witness this political martyrdom, followed the victim with eyes moistened with tears, every countenance manifesting the deepest affliction and sympathy. To the foot of the scaffold nothing was heard but the trampling of the feet, and now and then the voice of the monk, administering the last consolations of religion. Arrived at the place of execution, the fiscal requested the General to kneel before the unfurled standards, and the military who were formed round the scaffold, and then read in a loud voice the charge and sentence pronounced against the culprit. This done, he ordered the soldiers to put the hat on the General, and gird around him the sword, which they had brought with them from the prison, after which the drums beat a double time, and then the deepest silence reigned around.

“By the generous mercy of the king,” said the major of arms to Porlier, in a loud and distinct voice, “you were permitted to put on your hat before his royal standards, thinking

that you might, by an honourable conduct, be entitled to such a mark of distinction ; but now his justice commands, that you be deprived of it."

Here a soldier took the hat, and threw it down, and the major ordered, that the sword should also be taken from him, adding,—
"This sword, which you girded in honour of the king, was given to you to use against his enemies, and defend his justice and authority ; but now it shall be broken, on account of your crime, to serve as an example to all, and a disgrace to yourself."

The sword was then thrown down to be broken, and the major, making a sign to the soldiers, said—"Let him be stripped of his uniform, which served to confound him with those who wear it worthily."—Then turning to the grenadiers, added,—
"Since his majesty's justice does not permit that this man's heavy crime should remain unpunished, let his body suffer the penalty of death, and may God have mercy on his soul."

This said, the tunic usually worn by malefactors, was brought to the culprit, that he might die in it; but Porlier begged to be allowed to put on instead a great coat, which a servant of his had brought there, and which he had worn during the whole of the late campaign. This request being granted, he walked with a firm step to the foot of the scaffold, where he knelt down before the monk, who covered him with his cloak, while he made his last confession, or as it is called reconciliation. It was while he was thus covered that he delivered to the monk his dying injunctions* for

* These were given in a letter, the contents of which are known only to Madame Porlier. This lady, who was passionately attached to her husband, had the firmness and resolution to spare her husband the agonizing scene of a last farewell. Aware to what extremes her affection might have carried her, she remained at home fervently praying for him; but notwithstanding her apparent resignation, when the executioners of her husband brought to her the key of the coffin, which contained his mortal remains, she tied it round her neck, and from that hour to this, she has remained in a state of insanity.

his widow, after which he rose, and, hastening to the scaffold, mounted the steps, with the courage and alacrity of one who goes to resign his life for his country. The rope being fastened round his neck, and the last prayer ended, his assassins uttered the cry of, "Long live the King!" the drum beat loudly, and the hero was precipitated from the beam to which he remained suspended.*

* The horrible manner of executing criminals in Spain by hanging, corresponds with the barbarous form of its government. The height of the scaffolding is about twenty-five feet from the ground. It consists of a beam laid over two posts, against the middle part of which are two flights of steps, one for the culprit and the other for the clergyman. When the former reaches the top, he sits two or three steps below the beam, and the executioner on the beam itself, with his legs over the shoulders of the culprit, to whose neck he fastens one end of the rope, and the other end to the beam. No sooner the usual prayer is over, than he hurls the culprit from the gallows, and throws himself after him, and mounted on his shoulders rises and falls for some instants, while his son or his apprentice pulls the legs of the convict, after which he slips down, leaving the man's face uncovered, and horribly distorted.

Thus ended this dreadful drama, worthy in every respect of the French reign of terror, and of that of Ferdinand VII.

CHAPTER XIII.

What equal torment to the griefe of minde
And pyning anguish hid in gentle heart,
That inly feeds itself with thoughts unkinde,
And nourisheth her own consuming smart ?
What medicine can any leech's art
Yield such a sore, that doth her grievance hide
And will to none her maladie impart ?

SPENSER.

IN detailing, as we have done, the last moments of Porlier, we are aware of having deviated from the common track of novel writing, in not connecting that event with the rest of our narrative, by introducing our hero, or even his servant, in some shape or other to those scenes; but the truth is, that we do not

see how this could have been effected, for the good people in whose house he had taken shelter were so anxious about his safety, that they would not allow him to stir abroad, and the better to remove all temptation, had taken the extraordinary precaution of locking him in a room, at the door of which Roque had been requested to keep sentry, and repel any effort his master might make to escape from his confinement. Thus then the one a prisoner, and the other his keeper, we must have altogether omitted those details, which we did not think it proper to do, or have committed the sin of representing facts otherwise than they really occurred, which neither our established character for veracity and accuracy, nor the strictness of our principles at all permitted. Our readers, therefore, will do us the justice to believe, that we are not ignorant of the nature of the task we have undertaken, and moreover that we will not again commit such a deviation from the established rules of this species of writing,

except when compelled to do so by extraordinary cases like the above. With this assurance, we shall now proceed with our narrative.

We hear it often asserted, that the exercise of authority is very sweet. For our part we have not had the pleasure of proving this axiom by personal experience; but if we may judge by the self-satisfied looks of our friend Roque, and the self-importance which the power of controuling his master's actions seemed to confer on him, there must be some truth in it.—“He will be far happier under my controul than under his own,” said he to himself, as he paced leisurely before the door of the room in which his master was locked. “Had I thought of bolting him into some place when we reached Logroño the first time, neither he nor I would have been incessantly wandering about the country to come to Galicia to eat pilchards, drink bad wine, and run our necks into a halter.”

“Roque,” cried his master, “for God's sake let me out of this den. My services may be

wanting somewhere else. You have now kept me here a whole week, and I know nothing of what has happened to the General since his arrival at Coruña."

"Things which you can neither controul nor mend," said Roque; "it matters little whether you know them or not. As for your services, nobody wants them, and 'tis better for you to be where you are."

"But, sirrah! I will stay here no longer," cried his master, striking the door with his foot.

"Don't you make a noise, I beg of you," said Roque, in an authoritative tone, "'tis better you should be our prisoner than the king's."

"You are an insolent rascal," said his master, "and I'll break all your bones for you, the first instant I come out."

"I'll take good care you don't come out in a hurry, though," returned Roque.

"And by what authority do you presume to keep me here, and dictate to me as you do, you scoundrel?"

“By my own sovereign will,” answered Roque, “which you must also know I can enforce.”

“Is there any wretch more unfortunate than I am? Persecuted by the whole world, must I endure also the impertinence and tyranny of a servant?—By heavens you shall rue your insolence, traitor and slave!”

“If you are persecuted it is your own fault,” said his guard. “Nobody asked you to come to Galicia to play off the champion of liberty. Had you remained in that snug place in Asturias, where you could fear neither king nor devil, it is certain you would not be in jeopardy, nor I a centinel at this door. But since you have courted danger, you must bear with the consequences.”

“Well, Roque, I will allow you would have spent a pleasanter time of it in Asturias than in Galicia, and ate and drank to your heart’s content, which is all you seem to care about,” said his master; “but, for heaven’s sake let me out, and I promise you we shall immediately set off for Tuña —Come, you need not be afraid of

my breaking your head, I give you my word for it."

This was indeed a bribe ; but whether Roque had now taken a *gusto* for playing the lord, or whether he really consulted his master's safety, both of which impulses might very well exist together, it is certain he would not listen to any proposition that might suspend his functions. Accordingly he assured his master, that the search made after him was very strict, and he must make up his mind to remain concealed till the storm had a little abated, which he hoped would be the case shortly, as the unfortunate Porlier had fallen a victim on that very day.

This melancholy intelligence, Roque endeavoured to preface in words which he meant should alleviate its bitterness ; but as he was rather unfortunate in the manner of executing his task, it produced the contrary effect. Then his account of Porlier's last moments, too, was given with all the minuteness of detail, in which he was so fond of indulging, as well as with nume-

rous reflections of his own, with which he invariably embellished his narratives, and which could not fail to render the sad news more painful to his sensitive master.

After paying an abundant tribute of tears to worth and patriotism thus sacrificed, Sandoval burst out into bitter reproaches against his host and servant, for having kept him confined, when he might have been employed in finding the means of preventing his friend's execution, which he, in his despair, thought might easily have been done, by a bold effort at a rescue, from a few brave patriots.—“’Tis only you and the host who are his assassins,” said he, as he paced hurriedly the room, “my vengeance shall first fall on your heads, traitors and slaves that you are ! I’ll tear your cowardly hearts from your bosoms, and cast them at the villains who have commanded that patriot’s assassination ! By heavens ! let me see your mean faces once, and the world shall be rid of a couple of monsters far more hurtful than the tyrants who domineer over the land !”

Of course such an insinuating discourse as this, was not the most likely to produce his release; on the contrary, Roque, who knew his master well, was of opinion that a confinement of a few days more, during which no communication ought to be held with him, was the most effectual way to cool his anger, and bring him to his senses; "for," said he, "though they are greatly scattered, reflection will aid him in picking them up."

This regimen prescribed, it was adhered to with scrupulous steadiness, and the issue proved the physician's skill and knowledge of the disease.

A few days after, when Sandoval's anger had so materially subsided, that Roque thought proper to resign the important post he had assumed, after exacting from him a promise that he would not show himself in public during the day-time, a letter arrived for our hero from his correspondent at Logroño, the contents of which we shall lay before our readers.

“ Logroño, October 1st, 1815.

“ MY DEAR FRIEND.—Agreeably to your wish, I write again to send you all the information I have been able to collect on the subject which so deeply engages your thoughts. It would have been for me a real pleasure, had my news been of a more cheering nature; but as this is not in my power, you must be content with my sincerest sympathy, and take things as Providence ordains them.

“ Having sought an interview with Rosa, who still continues at Don Antonio’s house, I found that the poor girl had been unable to see Gabriela alone, to deliver the letter you had sent for her. Consequently, I determined to try what I myself could do to serve you. I confess I was much perplexed how to act, for I had to tread on forbidden ground. However, I went often into the church of the convent, and placed myself close by the grating, with the hope of fixing Gabriela’s attention, and by some sign intimate to her that I had something

to impart, after which, I thought I might trust to her own ingenuity to find out the means of procuring me an interview; but a difficulty arose, which rendered the experiment in some degree hazardous. In casting a rapid glance at the two files of nuns who composed the community, I was puzzled to discover the object of my quest; for I had seen her but twice or thrice previous to her entering the convent, and the uniformity of dress, together with the alteration which the attire makes in the features, rendered my imperfect knowledge still more uncertain. My eyes often fixed themselves on a young nun, who was the last but one among the novices. The air of meekness and fervent devotion that riveted her eyes to the ground, without permitting them to be lifted once during her orations, and the resignation observable in her pale countenance, seemed to indicate that it was Gabriela. Still I had my doubts, for I could hardly conceive how so gentle and pure a being should stand in need of that fervour, that intensity of devotion, that abstraction from

earthly things, in which she seemed plunged, and which more peculiarly belonged to those who had given up all thoughts of re-appearing on the stage of the world ; a resolution which, knowing her affection for you, I had some pain in believing she could have formed.

“ In rising from the ground, though the general outline of her shape was concealed by the scapulary, I thought I could see in her light and slender figure, and in her deportment full of grace and dignity, some further indications that led me to believe it could be no other than Gabriela herself. The melancholy softness of her pale countenance, that threw over her oval face and delicate features an inexpressible charm, and the brilliancy of her large dark eyes, convinced me at last of her identity. I left the church, my mind much struck with this sainted beauty, certain that it was your beloved mistress, but a little apprehensive for you, lest the nuns had actually made a proselyte of her.

“ Next day I returned, and did all I could to attract her attention ; but so completely was

she wrapt up in her meditations, that I failed in my endeavours. On the following day a fit of coughing seized me, and she looked for the first time towards the place I occupied. Immediately I seized the moment, and made a sign to her with my hand, which, however, she did not observe; but having now found the means of announcing myself, on the following morning the fit seized me, and she persisting in not looking towards me, my cough grew considerably worse, till I succeeded in giving her to understand that her eyes alone could soften its inveteracy. The first time she observed it, her pallid cheeks assumed a most vivid rose colour, and her eyes were cast down for a long half hour; but then they turned themselves towards me of their own accord. I did not neglect to shew her the letter; her cheek became more flushed than the first time, and I observed her eyes wander about in such a manner as indicated the agitation of her mind. It was impossible for her to mistake my purpose. An elderly man, dressed in a peasant's attire, could not be

himself the swain ; he must be a messenger, and his message—from whom could it come but from you ?

“ Thus, doubtless, she reasoned ; but I saw by her agitation, that she had no means in her power to procure me an interview, or even an opportunity of delivering the letter. Consequently I lost no time in seeking the means myself, and after various deliberations hit upon one which appeared to me the best, and which certainly succeeded beyond my expectations. I had observed that the apartments of the *demandadera** of the convent were so placed that one could have access to them at any time ; and besides, looked into an interior yard of the convent. As events might render it necessary for me to introduce myself into it, to explain to, and receive explanations from Gabriela, a visit to the *demandadera* was indispensable, and I went immediately to her lodging.

“ To give you an idea of what these women

* A female servant of the nunneries.

are, I shall transcribe here the little dialogue I held with her. 'Ave Maria Purissima,' exclaimed I, as I entered her abode.

" ' *Sin pecado concebida,*' was the answer.

" ' May I, sister, beg a favour of you, if it should not interfere with your duties?'

" ' Speak, brother, and I'll tell you.'

" ' I bring a letter for a young lady of the name of Doña Gabriela Lanza, which I wish should be delivered to her without the knowledge of the mother abbess, or of any one else.'

" ' And what does that letter contain which requires such extraordinary precautions as render it a sin for me to deliver it? I wager it is nothing good,' said she with a malicious smile, and then added, ' besides, it is the last person to whom I would dare to convey a message; for Father Lobo—you know Father Lobo—has forbidden it under pain of excommunication.'

" Here she gave me a detail of the steps taken by that wily monk to prevent the least communication between Gabriela and the world,

to which she added numerous anecdotes respecting him and the nuns, not very creditable to either ; and, lastly, the whole history of her life, which I do not repeat, because I have no mind to inflict penance on you ; but by which I found that an immoderate fondness for flattery, and a cupidity still more immoderate, were her ruling passions. I took care to profit by this knowledge, and gave her as much of the first as might have surfeited a mind even accustomed to the largest doses, and afterwards, pulling out my purse, and emptying its contents into my hand, I took a gold doblon and presented it to her. ‘ Here, sister,’ said I, ‘ take this, for I see you are not fed like the mother abbess, and you look to me in want of a new scapulary. At the same time, you are such a kind-hearted creature, that I know you will deliver this letter to Doña Gabriela unknown to any one, a thing as easy for you to do, as to gain one’s good opinion.’

“ ‘ Jesus ! brother,’ exclaimed she, her eyes dancing with joy at the sight of the gold, ‘ you

are such a flatterer, that there is no refusing you what you ask ; but I must know first what the letter contains.'

“ ‘ I cannot tell you, for this simple reason,—that I don't know it myself ; but be sure, that another gold doblon awaits you if you procure me an answer to that letter.'

“ ‘ You are so pressing, that I fancy I must obey you. Well, then, return this evening, and I pledge myself you shall receive an answer, or I am not worthy of being a demandera.'

“ ‘ I see, sister, that your prudence has been more than once put to the test, on little occasions of this kind.'

“ ‘ Bless your soul, I wish I had as many dobloons as I have taken billet-doux from the community ! Between you and me, few, except the novices and very young nuns, are without their bit of a love ; but then, it is always with their confessors, preachers, and such saintly characters, and never with gay and profane libertines. Even to-day my feet ache already

with carrying *recados** from the various nuns to the different convents, but they are unprofitable enough for me. Would you believe that none of the fathers had the common civility to say, there is a real towards buying you a scapulary? 'Tis a fact; but it is always so with those fat friars, who think of nothing but filling their bellies, and gratifying their appetites, without ever thinking, even as it were by mistake, of rewarding our services. I wish to God I had always such customers as you.'

“ ‘What! notwithstanding the excommunication?’ said L, as I wished her a good morning.

“ ‘Even so,’ she replied, looking complacently on the dobloon, ‘for I’ll take good care no one knows it, much less Father Lobo.’

“ Ah, my dear friend, what easy morality gold begets: If there were in the very bowels of the earth a dungeon, whose gates were

* Complimentary errands and love messages.

guarded by mortals, gold would soon cause them to be opened.

“ In sending your letter to Gabriela, I took care to enclose one which I had written apprising her of the friendship that unites us, and of your desire that she should grant me an interview. The answer which I received from her was couched in language which I found very difficult to understand. She talked of you as of a being who was still dear to her ; but whose caprice and injustice towards her had nearly driven her to despair, and induced her to yield at last to her mother’s wish, and take the vows that would consign her to the cloister for the remainder of her days. What that injustice was, she did not explain ; indeed there was a vagueness, nay a wildness of expression, which rendered the whole almost unintelligible. From that, and several abrupt transitions from tenderness to anger, I feared her mind had fallen a prey to some of those fatal influences with which the atmosphere of a convent is infected. After

much hesitation, however, she permitted me to find out the means of seeing her alone.

“ I went immediately to the demandadera’s, to try if I could prevail on her to allow me to draw out, during the night, the nails that fastened the small iron grate of the window of her apartments, and by means of a rope ladder make my descent into the interior yard of the convent, to which access may be had by a door adjoining the cloister.

“ The demandadera, to enhance the favour, made a great many difficulties, but they all gave way to the eloquence of gold, and I informed Gabriela of the success of my operations, entreating her, by the love you bore her, to meet me at the end of the cloister on the following night at twelve o’clock. My request was granted, and an hour before the time appointed, I took to my boat, and rowed away to that part of the town where the convent is situated.

“ Unfortunately a sentry had been posted on the quay where I intended landing, and I was

compelled to take a circuitous route, which delayed me at least half an hour. On reaching the convent, I found the demandadera true to her promise, and she admitted me into her apartment. Having fixed the ladder, I descended and walked towards the door that communicated with the cloister. I lifted the latch, and pushing the door gently, it opened. This was a proof that Gabriela had already been there. Notwithstanding the obscurity of the place, I did not hesitate to enter, and groped about in the dark, whispering her name; but no one answered. In turning one of the angles of the cloister, I perceived the glimmerings of a light at the farthest end, and directed my steps towards it in hopes of finding her there. As I passed along the colonade, feeling now on one side, and then on the other, I touched some of the statues of saints in their niches. I have never had many superstitious notions; but I confess that the gloom of the place, the deep silence that reigned around, which only the rustling of the leaves of some trees in the garden of the

cloister occasionally interrupted, and more than all, the fact of finding myself in a convent of nuns, a sacrilege to which the inquisition would award its choicest torments, filled my imagination with a thousand vague terrors. I continued, however, to advance towards the light, whose glimmerings now became more visible. It hung before a carved figure of Christ, as large as life, the eyes of which followed me whether I moved right or left, and seemed to forbid my intruding any further.

“ At this moment I heard cautious steps advancing towards the place I had reached. I stopped a while to ascertain who was coming, and heard distinctly the footsteps of two persons. I hastened to hide myself behind one of the columns adjoining the garden, and to my utter surprise and dismay, saw from thence Father Lobo, holding a lantern in one hand, and with the other leading by the arm your brother Fermin, who at every step he made, shook so violently that I thought he must have sunk to the earth. As they came opposite the crucifix,

Fermin cast his eyes on it, and exclaimed—"I can go no further, father, let me go back, for God's sake.—See, see, father, he stares at me with angry and reproachful looks!

" 'Who does, foolish youth?' enquired the monk.

" 'He who is on the cross. Ah! I hear him talk! What does he say? Tell me, father, tell me.'

" 'You are mad,' said the monk. 'I command you to tarry not an instant, but follow me.'

" 'I cannot, father, I cannot!—Hark! He says I am a monster of sin!—a fratricide!—God of mercy! he points, he points!—the gates of hell stand open, I see the torments of the damned!'

" At these words I perceived him tremble violently, heave a deep groan, and fall heavily on the stone floor. I could hardly repress the impulse of rushing to his assistance, particularly when I heard the brutal monk say, 'curse the superstitious fool!' while endeavouring to

raise his head from the ground, he let it fall again, finding he had fainted away; but the danger of my own situation flashed across my brain, and I remained in my concealment, breathing painfully.

“ Meantime the monk paced about the cloister uttering wrathful expressions against the unhappy Fermin, who lay stretched on the ground, and cursing his own folly, for having brought him there, to run the risk of having all his plans discovered. Presently, however, he took Fermin’s hat and fanned his face, till he saw him gradually recovering from his swoon. He then knelt one knee on the ground, and raising up his body supported it with the other, entreating him to collect his senses, and consider he laboured under a delusion—‘ Am I not with you,’ added he, ‘ why then should you fear the wrath of Him who directs our actions? Are they not rightful and innocent,—nay, worthy of his true servants? Believe me he approves of them. Moreover, Gabriela will listen favourably to your wishes. She begins now to see the sinfulness of her

former passion, thanks to the good nuns, who have incessantly laboured to convince her of her errors. The time of her probation will soon be over, and then you may confidently look forward to years of happiness; but, meantime, the plan agreed to is indispensable, the better to ensure her affection.'

“ ‘Your words, father, are a balm to my wounded heart,’ said Fermin faintly; ‘but my conscience disapproves the selfishness that impels me to act contrary to brotherly affection, and Christian charity. Is it right to sacrifice to my own passion that of my brother?—Is it right to seduce from him the love of a woman who was his plighted spouse?—Is it right or generous to take advantage of his misfortunes to press upon her my own suit?—My conscience whispers—no! though my heart would fain persuade me to it.’

“ ‘And is it right,’ cried the monk, to permit the pure, the innocent Gabriela, to become the prey of Satan, by encouraging her to persevere in nursing a passion pregnant with

danger to the future salvation of her soul? Do you boast of being a Christian, and yet hesitate in making a sacrifice to which the finger of God is pointing?—Shame on your weakness, worldly youth.'

" 'Alas, father, I could lay down my life without an instant's hesitation. But this seems not a sacrifice to me, it is rather the treacherous deed of a masked assassin. It is stabbing a brother to the heart, whilst he slumbers in security.'

" 'Time presses,' said the monk; 'resolve either to advance and snatch Gabriela from the grasp of Satan, or retrace your steps, and sink into irretrievable perdition.'

" Fermin sighed deeply, and then rising said,—'To our trial, then; and do thou, divine Christ,' (uplifting his joined hands to the crucifix) 'guide me through this dubious path, and enlighten my weak and fallible judgment.'

" Saying this, they both proceeded in the same direction I had just come, and I took the opportunity to regain the cloister. But whither

to direct my steps? was the first reflection I made. To go back by the same way I came was to expose myself to meet the monk and Fermin. Besides, I was not quite certain I should find the door through which I gained admittance. The wisest plan appeared to be that I should see if there were not some other door leading to the yard. I then walked forward in search of it, and in coming to another angle, observed a little door opening into a long and narrow passage, lighted by a few lamps that hung from its vaulted roof at various distances. It immediately struck me that it must be the way through which Fermin and the monk had entered, and by which I might easily leave the convent. Full of this idea I entered the passage, and reached the other end of it, when I saw another door, communicating with the lower choir of the church. In entering it, I perceived by the large lamp that burned in the middle of it, that the little door, through which the new nuns are admitted, was open. Rejoiced at

this discovery, I hastened to it, and soon after found myself in the nave of the church. I lost no time in proceeding to the principal entrance, but to my great disappointment. I found the door shut; I tried the side one; but it was only to meet a second disappointment.

“I now began for the first time to reflect on the imprudence I had committed in penetrating so far into the convent. I dared no longer retrace my steps to the cloister, for fear of meeting the monk on his return; but there was danger also in my remaining in the church. Uncertain how to act, I stood leaning against one of the pillars that support the upper choir, when I heard the light and hasty tread of some person above my head. I listened with breathless anxiety, and my ear caught the plaintive and broken sounds of a female voice. I could distinguish these words—‘Beset on every side by enemies, give me, oh divine Jesus! fortitude to bear their repeated insults. Friendless, and forsaken by all the world, be thou my comforter. Save

me from the snares of the wicked, and from the latent and insidious suggestions of the evil spirit, since a cloister does not suffice to shelter me from evil machinations, nor the workings of my own passions.'

“ Thus far had the recluse proceeded in her prayer, when the footsteps of more than one person fast approaching, interrupted her, and I heard the tremulous voice of Fermin saying, — ‘ Gabriela, forgive this second intrusion ; I am wretched and distracted. I hardly know what I said to you just now ; but, believe, that in thus disturbing the quiet of your retreat, I am actuated only by the purest motives. Heaven knows that your future welfare alone has urged me to do and say that which everything the world contains, its pleasures, and its joys, could not have tempted me to.’

“ ‘ Enough, enough,’ said Gabriela, ‘ I pity you, and believe you incapable of an evil thought. I wish I could say as much of others.’ (Here I heard a humph! and a stamping of the foot, which if I am not mistaken

proceeded from Father Lobo)—‘But withdraw,’ added she, ‘and presume not again to intrude into my seclusion. I must take time to reflect on what has fallen from your lips, and you shall then receive an answer.’

“‘Heaven bless you! Gabriela,” said Fermin, as he retraced his steps, accompanied by those of the monk, both of which died gradually away upon my ear. Gabriela then continued praying fervently; but the idea that the monk and Fermin were probably on their way to the church, made me take the resolution of getting into one of the side chapels, to avoid being seen, and her voice became inaudible. Presently I heard their distant footsteps gradually approaching, and the creaking noise of the doors turning on their hinges, and their locks fastening, till at last they reached the last door of the choir, which they also locked, proceeding afterwards towards the sacristy, from which I now recollected there was a door that led out; but that too was shut soon after, and I remained locked in without the possibility of escape.

“In this unpleasant situation, I had no alternative but to remain concealed where I was until morning, when the door of the church should be opened; but on hearing still Gabriela’s whispers, I thought of profiting by this opportunity to speak to her. Accordingly, leaving my retreat, I hastened to that part of the church in front of the choir, where my voice could be best heard.—‘Doña Gabriela!’ whispered I as gently as possible.

“‘Heavens!’ exclaimed she, ‘a voice calling me!’

“‘Be not startled, it is Anselmo’s.’

“‘Profane man!’ she cried, after a little pause, ‘if it be you, let me say that this is not the place to talk to me. You failed in your appointment, though I suspect you meant to add fresh insults to those of him who sent you. God knows I did not deserve it at his hands; and he, too, knows that he wrongs me by his unfounded suspicions. But since his wish is to be forgotten, tell him I’ll do my utmost to obey him, were my heart to break in the attempt,

and that it will break he may be certain. Tell him so; it will be a consolation to him. Oh, my God! could I ever have believed this of him.'

"Her sobs now mingled so much with her words that I could not catch their meaning; but when I perceived them abate a little I tried to explain the motives that had delayed my arrival, and the extraordinary mistake under which she laboured respecting your affection towards her; but no sooner had I mentioned your name, than she bid me not profane the place by uttering it again.—'I have his own words,' she added, 'and they suffice for me. I can say no more,—nay, I will say no more; and do not attempt again to disturb the little peace I enjoy, by intruding your presence or your letters upon me!'

"Saying this she left the choir, and I remained perfectly bewildered at what I had heard.

"As I do not know what you may have said in your letter to her, I cannot judge how far she is right in thus giving vent to her indigna-

tion, nor what other secret motives may urge her to express herself in terms of such deep affliction and despair. From your letters to me, I suspect there is no foundation for anything of the sort; and that some deep laid plan of the wily monk alone has produced this strange and fatal change. I'll endeavour to discover it before my departure for Madrid, which is now settled; but meanwhile keep up your spirits, and do not waste your time in useless regrets. Her affection for you seems to me unimpaired, whatever the monk may have done to crush it. Therefore, while this is the case, you ought not to give way to despondency; and recollect, that your father and your country, now more than ever, require your services, and the full use of your faculties.

“Your sincerely attached friend,

“ANSELMO.”

CHAPTER XIV.

Alas! 'tis morn, and here I sit alone—
 Be strong my soul, and part without a groan!
 Ruffians, proceed! Adala'ne'er shall swerve,
 Prepare the rack, and strain each aching nerve!

The Complaint. An American Eclogue.

GREGORY.

THE perusal of the foregoing letter excited in Sandoval's breast the most anxious forebodings, respecting the final issue of the villanous machinations set on foot by that most inveterate of all his enemies, the Friar Lobo; but the most distracting thought for him was, the total impossibility of his immediate return to Logroño, to prove to Gabriela, that, since his brother's explanation, he had never harboured or uttered the least complaint against her, nor entertained the least suspicion. After torturing his mind

for hours together, to devise some plan by which he might inform Gabriela of his unaltered and unalterable attachment, he came to the resolution of writing to Fermin, and making a forcible appeal to his conscience, honour, and brotherly affection. This idea he thought a happy one, for his brother's heart was always alive to generous impulses; and his sense of justice and principle was too great to sacrifice to his own passions, the happiness of one whom he so tenderly loved; he, therefore, lost no time in writing to him a letter, in which his feelings were pathetically displayed, every energy of his soul being bent on producing the deepest impression.

Having fulfilled this task to his satisfaction, he turned in his mind what he was to do next. The execution of Porlier had been followed by numerous arrests. New searches were making every day, to discover the rest of the fugitives, and it was not improbable that he might himself fall into the hands of his enemies, were he to continue a resident in that city. To avoid this, he resolved to depart for Madrid, where he was

more likely to escape the enquiries made after him. Having formed this resolution, he liberally rewarded his patriotic and faithful host, and taking an affectionate leave of him, set off on his journey, accompanied by his trusty squire, in the same disguise as they had used on coming to Galicia.

During their long and tedious journey, nothing occurred that may deserve honourable mention in our narrative, their simple mode of travelling preventing the suspicions which they would otherwise have raised.

Having left behind them the lofty hills, and deep valleys of Galicia, the former crowned with oak, walnut, chesnut, and hazel trees, and the latter so generally well cultivated, picturesque, and beautiful, producing abundance of wheat and oats, maize, millet, flax, hemp, pulse, lemons, apples, and other fruits, and in some places vine, our two travellers entered the kingdom of Leon, more level and fruitful than Galicia, though somewhat less cultivated; but containing a great number of beautiful fields,

good pasturages, large fertile valleys, which produce a quantity of grain, wheat, barley, wine, flax, vegetables and good fruits. Its mountains are also covered with trees of different kinds, and contain mines of iron, copper, lead, mineral waters, &c. while in its meadows pasture a great number of mules, famous throughout the kingdom, as well as sheep and black cattle. On quitting this province, they entered the wide extending plains of Castile, with the agreeable feelings of those who breathe again the air of their native soil.—“Thanks to heaven,” said Roque, “that we have got clear of those eternal mountains, fit to be inhabited only by wild cats, foxes, wolves, Asturians and Galicians. We shall hear no more of their jargon, nor live upon the contents of the *pote*, nor drink execrable wine, nor eat rye bread as brown as the face of a Portuguese, nor their so much boasted Indian corn cakes, and chesnut puddings, nor their messes of boiled potatoes, beans, and lard. Give me the pure Castilian, the snowy bread, and sparkling wine of these fine plains, abundance

of savoury rashers and eggs, sausages and black puddings, a tender well-baked lamb, or a turkey, and above all, the substantial *olla podrida*, with every necessary ingredient to solace the stomach of an honest Christian, which is enjoyed by everybody here. Here, too, we may eat without being watched at every morsel we take, and without any hints about the great scarcity of those things, and the necessity of sparing them; on the contrary, we may cram our mouths, throats, and stomachs till we swell like wine skins, and still the honest folks will press us to eat on till we are fit to burst.*

These plains, however, are varied by a long chain of mountains which extends throughout Castile, and separates it from the other provinces. The celebrated Humboldt, in his Personal Narrative, says, that when he travelled through them in his way from Madrid to Coruña, he found them every way bereft of vegetation, waste, and

* It is a custom among the Castilian peasantry to gorge their guests as a proof of their hospitality and politeness.

barren ; and this too, extraordinary as it may appear to those who have visited that province, in the month of May, when even the most sterile districts present a verdant and animated sight. But we suppose, that, as is the case in more instances than one, this famous traveller, either took a long nap from the moment he entered Castile till he reached Galicia, or else he saw the country through the eyes of somebody else, which he, now and then, does not find much scruple in doing.

The high and difficult pass of Guadarrama,—a branch of the mountains that separate Old and New Castile—being now left behind by our travellers, they hailed the numberless towers and steeples and glittering crosses on their tops, that grace the capital of Spain, with almost as rapturous feelings as the companions of Columbus did the New World they were in search of, when it first burst upon their sight.

As Madrid has been too often described, we hope our readers will consider themselves under no small obligation to us, if we abstain from giving

them an exact account of the numerous churches and public places it contains, with an accurate description of the height of their columns, porticos, domes, windows, doors, and other interesting particulars, which every good traveller never fails to enumerate, and with which we might easily adorn these pages. But as our limits will not permit it, we spare our readers the infliction, and will proceed to give them an idea of the state of affairs in the society of which our hero was a worthy member.

Immediately after their arrival at Madrid, our travellers re-assumed their ordinary dress, and took up their quarters at the house of a liberal lady, an old acquaintance of Sandoval's father, who received the son with the tender solicitude of a mother, and the warmest demonstrations of unfeigned friendship and affection. Being thus happily settled, he lost not an instant in looking out for his friend Anselmo, whom he rightly supposed to be now at Madrid, and for those comrades of his, with whom he was connected by a similarity of principles and the

ties of masonic confraternity. The reception he met with from them was as cordial as the exertions he had made to ensure the success of their cause, and the warmth and sincerity of his patriotism entitled him to expect; but this satisfaction was not a little damped by the check which his sanguine expectations, respecting the progress of their association, received from the news he now heard for the first time.

The lodge, which had been established at Madrid a few months before, and which was to have been the great nucleus of Spanish Freemasonry, had received a blow, which threatened the most serious results to its ultimate success. A secular friar, who inhabited the house where the meetings were held, in the capacity of servant, having become an object of suspicion to the government, was one day pursued by some police officers into the said house, the apartments of which were carefully searched, and the existence of the lodge discovered. Fortunately the papers seized on this

occasion were too vague and unimportant to produce all the mischief which they might, had they been of a different nature; but they led to the arrest of several useful members of the association, and to that of its president, Don Domingo de la Vega, who suffered horribly in consequence of the discovery. This untoward event had alarmed the other members of the society, and paralyzed for a time the labours which had been commenced to give it force and regularity.

Things being in this state when Sandoval reached the capital, he urged its immediate reorganization with so much energy, that the measure was at last resolved upon, and he was entrusted with several important commissions, which obliged him to absent himself from the capital for weeks together. In these excursions, generally directed to those towns where it was thought proper to establish a lodge, he went always provided with good recommendations for some of the principal inhabitants, who either belonged to the society,

or were known as men of liberal principles. His duty was to feel his ground with caution and sagacity, find out persons to whom the secret might be confided, and afterwards convoke, with every imaginable precaution, some of the principal masons to a meeting, which invariably opened with the labours and formalities common to lodges of the first rank. These were followed by a discourse, more or less animated, bold or mysterious, according as he judged prudent, in which some flattering hopes for the future were held out, and which prepared the audience to take a solemn oath never to reveal the secret, that such a meeting had taken place, nor anything which had been said or might be said there, even should any member disagree about it. This oath once taken, he proceeded to give an account of the establishment of this new masonic institute, of its statutes, regulations, &c.; but taking great care never to hint the place in which it existed, or the names of those who composed it. Every man who attended the meeting was free to take

the oath of adherence, among the various clauses of which there was one that enjoined *an irreconcilable hatred to tyranny*. On the other hand the first word used in the *regularization** was that of *Regeneration*, which was thought of itself sufficient to predispose the minds of the *elect* in favour of liberty. There was also a tendency to it in the written communications which he made, but so carefully worded, that no important inference could be drawn from it, the regulations expressly forbidding the introduction of political matters into their proceedings. The object of this prohibition, however, was rather to guard against a surprise, or the perfidy of a spy, who might get admittance into the society, than to reduce the minds of its members to the forms of a pure liturgy.

The greatest care was enjoined by the society with respect to the admission of a new mem-

* A word used by the Spanish masons to express the admission and initiation of members, their organization into lodges, &c.

ber to the participation of the secret ; and Sandoval, aware that upon this depended the fate of numerous individuals, was scrupulous to the highest degree, the precautions he observed in this respect being proportioned to the state of the nation and nature of its government. In a country where religion was made an engine of political persecution, and where its ministers held the most absolute dominion over the minds of the generality of people, the liberals could never be too cautious in the measures they adopted to increase their members, and gain the strength necessary to carry their plans into execution. It would be impossible to detail the obstacles opposed by the clergy to the efforts of their undaunted adversaries, who, notwithstanding the numerous and fatal checks they had received, continued with unabated ardour in the work of emancipation.

Some months after the dissolution of the Madrid Lodge, a patriotic individual of the name of Beramendi formed the plan of esta-

blishing at Granada a Grand Orient, in order to straiten the ties of union among the various masons of the Peninsula, and labour in concert for the completion of their great work. Several circumstances favoured the first steps towards this project. The Marquis de Tapa, a young nobleman, well known for his liberal principles, induced his brother Count Montijo, at that epoch Captain General of that province, to co-operate with him and his friends in establishing the Grand Orient in that city. For this purpose it was necessary to obtain a knowledge of all the existing lodges throughout Spain, and open a correspondence with them all, which they succeeded in doing by the readiness with which every one of them entered into the plan, so that in a few months afterwards the Grand Orient was established in due form. The principal members who composed it were Don Carlos Beramendi, the Marquis of Cam-poverde, Don Jose Gonzalez, who acted as secretary, the Count Montijo, the Marquis de Tapa, Don Facundo Infante, and several

other distinguished personages. But there was another individual, whose co-operation added greatly to the credit and strength of the party; this was Don Juan O'Donoju, who had obtained the highest degrees and reputation in this society, during the time of the Constitution, though on Ferdinand's return, he adhered to the royal party.

The formation of this society consisted in the establishment of a masonic authority purely national, with all the necessary departments and sections to direct the individual efforts of the patriots towards the same great end. It soon became a point of union with the party, who till then had been dispersed without order, regularity, strength, or confraternity. Meantime, however, those of Madrid were labouring hard to reorganize themselves, and no sooner had they succeeded in this than they spread the regularization throughout the kingdom, with astonishing rapidity. The lodge of the capital became then the centre of communication, and that of Granada remained only with the masons of the two Andaluzias.

At this epoch too an unfortunate accident happened to the latter, which nearly laid open all their projects to their enemies, and obliged them to renounce the direction of the undertaking in favour of those of Madrid. As the particulars of this affair are in a great measure connected with the future operations and history of our hero, and as, moreover, they are romantic in themselves, and will give an excellent idea of this epoch, and of the sanguinary character of Ferdinand and his friends, we will give them here in full; though, perhaps, the severer critic, who adheres to rules so firmly as some friends of ours, advocates of the old regime, to their pig-tails, may deem our manner of introducing the subject an innovation.

Colonel Don Juan Van Hallen, president of a lodge established at Murcia, under the immediate auspices of that of Granada, and a man not overstocked with prudence, though of sufficient address to fill satisfactorily the post assigned to him by the society, made a journey to Ronda, where he became acquainted with a man

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of the name of Don Antonio Calvo, who represented himself as a liberal, though in fact he was only a spy. Here he left buried in the nose of another person a bundle of papers relating to the society. Calvo, though not an initiated mason, became acquainted, through Van Hallen's indiscretion, with more than it was prudent he should have known; and no sooner had the colonel returned to Murcia, than his treacherous friend disclosed to the ecclesiastical authorities of Granada everything he had learned, and whatever else his own imagination made him suspect.

The clerical party, who only wanted a pretext to gratify their views of vengeance, caught at this information with eagerness, and directed Calvo to proceed to Murcia under some pretext or other, in order to discover more of the secret, and obtain some fact or document which might enable them to increase the list of victims. This, Calvo accomplished beyond their most sanguine expectations, and the result was, that the Inquisition obtained possession of the papers left

by Van Hallen at Ronda, and of some letters given by him to Calvo on his return to Ronda, (when his commission had been terminated,) which were addressed to some of the masons of Granada.

The Inquisition now lost no time either in arresting Van Hallen, or in throwing into the dungeons of the Holy Office almost all the masons of Murcia, and those of Granada, whose names were in any way hinted at in Van Hallen's letters.

The documents seized on this occasion were of the highest importance to the society, and of an alarming nature to government, whose fears were roused still higher by some letters of General Torrijos, (which, however, bore no signature) found among other papers taken from Van Hallen. The inquisitors of Murcia now proceeded to take from the latter the declarations that were to place them in possession of the whole plot; but their prisoner, who was seldom without resources, had planned a stratagem by which he hoped to disappoint the ex-

pectations of his enemies, and refused to explain the mysterious contents of his papers, unless he was permitted to do so to the king himself. The inquisitors, unable to prevail on him, either by prayers or threats, informed Ferdinand of Van Hallen's determination, and his majesty having agreed to receive his disclosures, the prisoner was sent to Madrid under a strong escort.

On his arrival at the capital, Ferdinand immediately sent one of his confidential friends to sift to the bottom the secrets of the prisoner; but Van Hallen, who imagined it would be much easier for him to deceive Ferdinand than any of his commissioners, wrapt himself up in mystery, (which by the bye was one of his characteristics) dropped some slight indications which might excite the king's curiosity, and did not neglect to feign an unbounded affection towards the royal person. The favourite courtier, on the other hand, endeavoured with all the art of a man skilled in the cunning devices of his post, to induce him to make a full and

open declaration of all he knew, the better to ensure the clemency of his royal master; he flattered him with the hopes of future rewards, nay, of enjoying the king's friendship, and sharing the favours in which he himself participated. But for once, at least, he found his match in Van Hallen, who, as if penetrated with gratitude for the kind manner he treated him, overwhelmed him with protestations of friendship, and engaged him in a conversation of several hours, during which many apparent mutual confidences passed between them, and several little secrets of no import were disclosed, in one of which, however, the courtier assured Van Hallen that he himself had belonged to the society, and had still an uncommon fondness for them all. At last the courtier retired as wise as when he entered, but took leave of the prisoner in the most affectionate manner, offering to employ his mediation with his royal master, and leaving him an abundance of Havanna segars to smoke away the dullness of his confinement; while Van Hallen squeezed

out a few tears, and protested he was ready to throw himself at his majesty's feet, give any explanation that might be wanted, and do everything in his power to obtain the good graces of royalty.

This visit, which produced no effect whatever, was followed by others equally fruitless, Van Hallen persisting in his resolution of having a personal interview with the king, who, on his part, was very reluctant to grant it, as he laboured under the apprehension that some personal injury was meditated. His fears, however, were overcome by his favourites, who, impressed with the necessity and importance of finding the clue to this mighty conspiracy, thought they could not fail to procure it by granting Van Hallen's request. It was, therefore, agreed that he should be introduced to the king's private apartment, and that the same courtier who had held these conferences with the prisoner should be present, both to watch the motions of Van Hallen, and assist his

majesty in going through their investigation with *éclat*.

The night and hour fixed for this interview being arrived, the courtier went in his carriage to the Inquisition, and took Van Hallen to the palace. On their arrival there, the former led the way through various private passages to the king's cabinet, where they found him alone, waiting impatiently for their arrival. Dissimulation is a quality possessed by most cowards, and consequently Ferdinand received Van Hallen with every appearance of confidence and familiarity. He requested him in his usual uncouth way to sit down, and tell him openly everything he knew. Van Hallen, convinced he had to gratify the expectations raised in the king's mind, as also to respect the honour that bound him to keep the secrets of the association, employed the most ingenious stratagems, tortuous ways, and mysterious words, pronounced with emphasis, an abundance of sophisms and subterfuges ; in a word, every means

which his sagacity could suggest to bewilder the king's mind, since convincing him was out of the question. Impressed besides with the idea that Ferdinand would catch at frivolities, and be satisfied with words only, Van Hallen, who possessed astonishing volubility, poured out feely and rapidly the whole of the account which he had framed to explain the enigmas of the papers which had been seized from him, adding a circumstantial history of his own life, from his earliest infancy to the moment of his arrest, to withdraw their attention from the principal topic. This plan, with which he expected to come off triumphantly, did not at all answer. Van Hallen, then, perceiving his mistake, and having heard that Ferdinand, while luxuriating at Valençay, had been accepted a mason, expatiated on the excellence and philanthropy of freemasonry, little dreaming that his benevolent brother's sole wish was to obtain a few thousand respectable names, to have the pleasure of exterminating them all at a swoop.

Ferdinand and his confident, convinced now

that their man would not speak out what he knew, questioned and requestioned him about his accomplices, the extent of their plot, and object of their plans ; but he, like the fox closely pursued by a couple of hounds, whirled about, bounced, run round and round, stopped, and bolted in every possible direction where there was a chance of escape. At last, the "twa dogs," who saw the fruitlessness of their chace, if it continued as hitherto, endeavoured to obtain by threats and terror what good words and prayers had not produced. This plan, however, was still less successful ; and it was resolved between them that the prisoner should be reconducted to the Inquisition, which was no sooner said than done. The courtier, who also accompanied him back, urged him in the most pressing words to reveal the secret, and accomplices of the plot, as otherwise the most horrible fate awaited him. Van Hallen, whose mind now exhausted and bewildered with so much cavilling, wished to gain time to explore new resources, requested to be allowed to state by

writing in a more clear and orderly manner all he had wished to explain before the king. This being granted him, he was left for some days unmolested, in the gloomy repose of a dungeon; where, according to his promise, he wrote a long memoir, purporting to explain the whole conspiracy, and which in reality contained only an account of his own life, and a few pompous indications respecting the plot, which seemed rather to excite than gratify curiosity. Ferdinand, convinced now that the ordinary mild means would never induce the prisoner to disclose the secret, removed his protecting arm, and the victim remained at the complete mercy of the members of the tribunal of blood, in the prisons of which he was immersed.

Before the judges of this tribunal Van Hallen was conducted to give his declarations. The charges brought against him were of the most serious nature. The fact, however, that he belonged to the masonic society was what his judges deemed most trifling, their inquiries being chiefly directed to the formidable con-

spiracy to overturn the present order of things, to the members who constituted the Grand Orient, and to the letters of Torrijos, in which some glimpses of the storm that was gathering, and which threatened to burst, were discernible. Van Hallen's answers to these different questions did not satisfy the Inquisitors;—they wished for victims to quench their thirst for blood, and he gave them words only;—they then had recourse to remonstrances, but they remained unheeded;—they came at last to threats, and they found him equally inflexible. The countenances of the judges now assumed their most stern aspect; their language was also harsher; every look, every word, every motion of theirs, indicated that some violent measure was on the point of being adopted, and Van Hallen perceived at last, that he was amongst irreconcilable enemies. Immediately after this examination, he was sent to a different dungeon from that which he previously occupied. It was one of those subterraneous caves, where the unhappy man who is immured is almost compelled to suppose

that the order of nature has been disturbed, that its movements have suddenly ceased, that those luminaries, which spread light and splendour over the universe, have altogether disappeared from it, and that no one but himself, the judges, the executioner, and the poisonous and impure reptiles by which he is constantly tormented, have remained on the face of the earth.

Here, as he was one night reclining on his chains, pondering over the wretched situation to which he was reduced, recalling to his mind, with the minute accuracy of a prisoner, even the most insignificant remembrances of his infancy, and preparing an infinity of answers to the questions that might be put to him, previous to the tortures that were certain to follow them, the fearful and terrific creaks of huge bolts drawn aside, waxing more clamorous as the furthest doors which secure the entrance of those sepulchral abodes were left behind, fell on his startled ear, like the sounds of muffled drums on that of the unhappy soldier who has forfeited

his life to the offended laws of the field. At length, amidst the darkness which night and day reigned in his dungeon, he heard two persons approach him, and while the one held his arms fast, the other unlocked the chain that pinioned him to the wall; after which he was conducted in silence through a labyrinth of dark subterraneous passages to a room, which though still involved in obscurity, he suspected to be that in which the victims of the tribunal undergo the dreadful agonies of a cruel death. Here, however, his eyes were bound, and he was led to another room, which proved to be the chamber of torment; but the description of which he could not give, as the bandage over his eyes was never taken off. He, however, observed, that on entering it, he mounted a few steps to a platform, where he was stripped naked to the waist; after which they extended his arms, and placed under each arm-pit a sort of forked stick or crutch, lined with cloth, and thick enough to support any weight; the right arm was then bent, and fastened tightly to the crutch, and the

left, which remained horizontally extended, as well as the hand and fingers, was locked into a sort of iron case, lined inside, and not unlike the gauntlet and bracelet of the ancient armour, but fitting so close, that there was not a hair's breadth between the case and the limb. This gauntlet, doubtless formed a part of, ~~the~~ communicated with another machine, the use of which we shall shortly explain. Meantime, the platform on which the victim stood was suddenly withdrawn from under his feet, and he remained suspended by his armpits on the two crutches.

In this state he heard the voice of one of his judges, who, after a mock apology in the name of the tribunal, for the unfortunate situation to which he had brought himself, announced to him that the holy office, having till then fruitlessly employed the mild and lenient means, recommended by the most merciful of sovereigns, to induce him to confess all his crimes, were now on the point of taking the rigorous measures used with pertinacious and refractory

sinners; but that the door to clemency was still open, provided he would but abjure his former errors, make a candid avowal of all he knew, and give up the names of all his accomplices. He then entreated him to answer frankly and sincerely the following questions—whether he was a freemason—who were the heads of that sect in Spain—who was the author of the letters which had been seized upon him—what was the nature of the conspiracy against the throne and the altar, specifying with clearness everything that might give a complete idea of the objects, means, proceedings, persons, &c. &c.

Van Hallen, notwithstanding the painful and dangerous situation in which he stood, and the idea of the tortures which might follow his actual sufferings, endeavoured to accommodate his answers so that they should satisfy his judges, and compromise none of his friends. The Inquisitors, however, found them unsatisfactory, and they ordered the officer entrusted with the torture to do his duty. This con-

sisted in turning a wheel, (the movement of which must necessarily have been graduated) which communicating with the gauntlet, twisted the arm gradually round. At each of these turns the movement ceased for a little while, keeping the arm in the position to which it had been brought, and the Inquisitors insisted on having direct answers to their questions, and redoubled their threats, but always with that clerical affectation of compassion and civility, which of all the wounds inflicted on a victim, whose heart meantime is bleeding within him, is the most dreadful. His answers were now rather more firm and decisive than at the beginning, and his cruel and exasperated executioners continued ordering the wheel to be turned. Van Hallen, notwithstanding his youth, robust frame, and singular presence of mind, began to feel that his herculean strength could not bear him out through the increasing sufferings of such a dreadful trial; a copious perspiration flowed from every part of his body; the mental functions began to lose their vigour, the languor

of death overspread every limb; he sunk from one paroxysm into another; but in those intervals when the agonies of the torture were suspended, he recovered some of his strength, and burst out into bitter reproaches against such barbarous treatment. Nothing, however, could soften the brutal insensibility of those monsters, who call themselves the ministers of a God of justice; on the contrary, they ordered the executioner to reiterate the movement of the wheel. The victim then shuddered in every limb, his hair stood on end, his voice completely failed him, and all his faculties, enfeebled by each successive application, now ceased to perform their functions, while his head dropped on one side with the paleness of death stamped on his countenance, the eyes and livid lips half closed. In vain did the authors of this atrocious inquest continue to writhe and dislocate the bones of their miserable victim; he gave no signs of vitality; a cold sweat moistened his frame, and his breathing ceased altogether.

From this moment Van Hallen knew not

what became of him ; but when he returned from this mortal syncope, his disturbed and confused brain could only allow him to know that he existed, though he could not recall anything of what had happened, nor imagine where he was. But when he gradually recovered his lost reason, he could have wished he had rather lost the few signs of life that remained in him, than have seen himself, reduced to the wretched situation in which he now was. A long bench, constructed of brick, served him for a bed, without either a straw mattress to lie on, or any kind of covering ; the trunk of his body, sore and exhausted, seemed to have been severed from both his arms, the right being inflamed, in a tumid and palsied state, and the left without action or vitality, disjoined from its place ; and to crown the misery of his most wretched situation, his naked waist was secured by a long and thick chain, whose angular links were the only pillow against which he might repose his shattered trunk.

In this inhuman manner he was kept during

several days ; but the weakened state of his frame, which every moment became more incapable of resistance, threatened to put at once an end to his existence, and the surgeon who attended him, though accustomed like all the other officers of the Inquisition to look with indifference on suffering humanity, seeing that if left in that lamentable state the victim must sink, reported him to the Inquisitors as in his last stage. These monsters, alarmed, not at the idea of his dying, but at the prospect of losing thereby the secrets which they had promised themselves to wring from him by dint of tortures, caused him to be removed to a place where he could have better accommodations, and ordered the chain that weighed down his body to be taken off.

CHAPTER XV.

'Twas dark and winding, and he knew not where
That passage led—nor lamp nor guard were there;
He sees a dusky glimmering—shall he seek
Or shun that ray so indistinct and weak?
Chance guides his steps—a freshness seems to bear
Full on his brow, as if from morning air.

The Corsair.

WHILE the unfortunate Van Hallen endured in the inquisition, the horrible treatment we have above attempted to describe, his masonic friends of Madrid, aware of the perilous situation in which he stood, and afraid that (his fortitude sinking under repeated tortures,) he might be induced to disclose the secrets which he possessed, thereby endangering their own safety, as well as that of hundreds of their friends, and

more particularly of the unhappy men who were already under arrest, had held repeated meetings, to concert some plan to snatch the victim from their enemies' grasp. But when they turned their thoughts to the dark and impenetrable mansion where he was pining, and to the labyrinth of subterraneous dungeons which they must traverse, ere they came to that in which he was buried, they parted without coming to any resolution, their hearts overpowered with grief and despondency.

One Sunday morning, while Sandoval was slowly pacing about his room, his head full of the subject, which since Van Hallen's arrest had almost entirely engrossed his thoughts, and his imagination bent on devising some plan to liberate their friend from the Inquisition, Roque entered, and informed him that a pretty and interesting looking damsel wished to speak two words in private with him.—“ I told her,” continued he, “ that she might freely communicate her errand to me, as I was the right ear in which you usually deposited all your secrets ;

but the little witch said more pertly than justly, — ‘ If it be so, I am sorry for it, as you appear to me a chattering coxcomb, and a blockhead to boot.’ I, of course,”

“ Show her in immediately,” said his master, interrupting him, “ for she must be a sensible thing to see that at first sight.”

“ Humph !” ejaculated Roque, as he left the room, “ then I should like to know what she thinks of such a hair-brained gallant as my master ?”

The girl, who was certainly an interesting *grisette*, being ushered in, took the extraordinary precaution of locking the door of the room, and then withdrawing to a distant corner of it; beckoned Sandoval to approach.—“ Doors, and even walls, have ears now-a-days,” whispered she, when the surprised Sandoval placed himself by her side, “ do you know the owner of this ?” added she, as she showed him a gold watch, on which some initials were engraved.

Sandoval examined them carefully, and then fixing his penetrating eyes upon the girl with

such intensity as made her shrink back, inquired how she came by it.—“Don't look so hard, Sir, else I shall not be able to deliver my message,” said she. “I came by it in a rightful way; it was put into my hands by the colonel himself, who, poor fellow! though he be such a handsome man, has suffered enough, God knows!—But, as I was saying, he put it into my hands that you might be convinced I am to be trusted; and as a further proof of this, he desired me to say these words, which, though pure gibberish to me, he said you would understand.”

She then uttered some masonic expressions, which clearly indicated she had received them from the mouth of Van Hallen himself. However, he examined and cross-examined the girl respecting the prisoner with great prolixity, till convinced there could be no fallacy in the case, he gave her an answer for the prisoner, couched in such mysterious words as were unintelligible to her, and should convince him of her having fulfilled her commission faithfully.

Through this girl, Sandoval learned how things stood with Van Hallen, who, during the time he was undergoing a cure, had had the good luck to excite the compassion of the alcaide, and to engage him to enter, particularly at night, into familiar conversation with him,—a singular instance in the history of that tribunal. As, besides, Van Hallen had been transferred to a room not very far from the apartments of the alcaide, the delicate state of his health requiring this indulgence, the young girl just mentioned who was a relation of that man, and in whom he reposed implicit confidence, led by curiosity or compassion, gradually extended her sweeping duties as far as the door of Van Hallen's dungeon, in which there was a little trap, now and then left open for the purpose of ventilation, through which she occasionally made bold to take a peep. This did not pass unnoticed by Van Hallen, who immediately conceived the idea of profiting by the circumstance. Endowed with a peculiar faculty for exciting the sympathies of the fair sex, by degrees he suc-

ceeded in engaging her attention, and leading her to listen to his gallantries. These conversations became more and more interesting to her; till at last he prevailed on her to take the above mentioned message to Sandoval.

Through her means, and with every imaginable precaution, a correspondence was immediately established between the prisoner and his brother masons. Inconceivable efforts were also made to acquaint all those who had been imprisoned in various parts of the Peninsula, at the same time as Van Hallen, of the state of the proceedings against the latter; and though in some places the difficulties appeared insurmountable, they were nevertheless overcome. On the other hand as the Inquisitors laboured with amazing activity, it was reasonably apprehended, that torments and bribery would be employed everywhere to extort the secrets which they were so anxious to obtain; but as these proceedings were linked with and depended chiefly on those of the capital where the papers seized from Van Hallen, (who alone could ex-

plain them) were undergoing investigation, his friends resolved to make the bold attempt of liberating him from their enemies.

In the first instance, it was agreed between them and the prisoner, that he was to follow their directions implicitly, while they traced a plan to penetrate into the dungeons of the Inquisition through a subterraneous passage, which was to be opened from a cellar of a house contiguous to the prison, However gigantic and hazardous this undertaking may appear, when the many main walls which they had to penetrate are taken into consideration, it came, through the united efforts of several engineers and architects, who had a share in the business, to a degree of maturity, which seemed to ensure a favourable issue. But soon, the hopes of procuring the prisoner's escape through the principal door, induced them to give up their first plan.

Van Hallen having obtained an exact knowledge of every passage and door leading from his dungeon to the outer gate, as well as of

every other circumstance which might facilitate his flight, his friends sent him all the information which they had been able to collect, and which he was likely to want. Among other things, there was a plan in which the courts, streets, lanes, &c. in and about the Inquisition were carefully sketched ; as well as the road which he was to follow, and the different points and intervals where he would find his friends stationed, following silently the steps of each, till he should reach the house where he was to take refuge ; they named the watch-word which he was to utter, that he might be recognized by them, and the precise day and hour when he was to leave his dungeon, with a thousand other remarks and precautions which the importance of the case required.

Matters being thus disposed, Van Hallen, who to counteract the effects of the torture was following the regimen prescribed by his surgeon, was in the habit of taking, between six and seven o'clock in the evening some lemonade, which was usually brought to him by the alcaide

himself. During the few minutes this man remained with the prisoner, they carried on a conversation, which sometimes was prolonged for half an hour; in one of which, the alcaide manifested a wish to learn the French language, Van Hallen offered him his assistance with the greatest pleasure. While the pupil was occupied in saying his lesson, his master had observed that the first door of his cell was left open, and the second only bolted inside, thus offering him an opportunity to execute his plans with greater ease.

The day appointed having now arrived, and even o'clock in the evening being the hour fixed upon, his friends, all of whom were military men, well armed, and resolute, proceeded, a quarter of an hour before that time, to occupy the posts assigned to each, two of whom placed themselves close to the gate of the Inquisition. It was then about the middle of February, and was sufficiently dark to avoid being much noticed. Meantime Van Hallen, who was at that moment occupied in teaching the alcaide

how to pronounce the French vowels, using the privilege of a master, rose and commenced walking backwards and forwards, though with cautious steps. Suddenly his ear caught the sound of the clock, which was to direct his motions. It tolled the hour of his liberty, and his heart beat so violently against his bosom, that for a minute or two he remained panting for breath. But no sooner he recovered, than with the velocity of an arrow, he darted to the door, the bolt of which he drew back, then rushed to the next, locked it, and put the key in his pocket, (as a precious relic) leaving the alcaide shut up within. Once in the dark passage, he followed the intricate labyrinth with precipitate steps. The obscurity, however, and his own agitation, and more than all, the astounding cries of the new inmate of his cell, blotted out altogether from his memory the idea of the road which he was to follow. For a minute or two, he endeavoured in vain to collect his thoughts; at last he made an effort, and mentally running over the sinuosities of that cavern, rushed forward, uncertain

still whether he was right in his path. Presently he fell against some steps, and this accident reminded him that he was arrived at the staircase, which led down from the alcaide's apartments to a passage on a level with the court. He rose, and with fresh ardour descended them, and then rushed along the passage, at the end of which he perceived the glimmering of a light, which seemed to be moving towards him. Resolved to be stopped by no impediment, he rather hastened than checked his steps, and on coming near the man who carried the light, pushed him down, and treading upon him, pursued his way with increased swiftness. Indeed so great was his impetuosity, that on arriving at the door which opens into the *portal*, he unconsciously overthrew two men, one who was at the moment opening the door, and the other in the act of entering it; after which he gave a leap, which placed him at the outer gate of the Institution, which was always open. The friends stood there, who were impatiently waiting his arrival, hastened to close him in their arms; but

he, unconscious of everything around him, pursued his way mechanically and with great swiftness. In turning the corner of the first street, two more friends, who were posted there, and who saw a man coming at that rate, challenged him to stop; Van Hallen paused, and after a short interval, during which he endeavoured to recall to his disturbed mind the watch-word, gave it, and the fears of his friends vanishing from this instant, the victim remained safe in their arms.

This bold and successful blow to the power of the Inquisition, the only one of the kind which from the first moment of its establishment ever happened, threw the ruling faction into the utmost surprise and confusion. They made the most strict search after the liberated prisoner, and left no spring untouched by which they might discover his asylum. But it was all in vain; the masonic association opposed an impenetrable bulwark to their inquisitorial artifices.

A woman of manly spirit, who, during the war of independence, guided by the purest flame of patriotism, had rendered distinguished

services to the national cause, and accomplished the most perilous undertakings, many of which placed her within a hair's breadth of losing her existence, undertook to hide in her own poor garret the precious treasure, so diligently sought after. There Van Hallen found in her the tender cares of an affectionate mother, the indefatigable attentions of a vigilant nurse, and the sweet consolations of a compassionate and benevolent being. The assistance and care, too, of a surgeon of considerable skill, contributed no less in removing the alarming results of the fracture. The dislocated arm gradually recovered its lost vigour, and three months afterwards it was no longer a useless or embarrassing member. During that time information was sent to all the prisoners confined, in consequence of Van Hallen's arrest, of the occurrence at Madrid, as well as directions how they were to act, notwithstanding the colonel's liberation had taken place. The search after him, however, continued unabated. At the gates of Madrid were posted commissioners to arrest the progress of the fu-

gitive, the streets were patrolled by others, numerous spies frequented the coffee-houses, promenades, theatres, and other public places, and some even gained admittance into the tertulias of those considered to be men of liberal principles. It was, therefore, thought prudent that he should immediately depart for a foreign country, and that Sandoval, who knew the country well, should accompany him as far as the frontiers of France, through byways and mountain paths. For this purpose several passports were forged, one of which in particular was countersigned by the Minister of the Home Department, and drawn up in a manner calculated to remove all suspicion, and insure to the bearer every local assistance he should stand in need of.

Everything being now ready, Sandoval gave instructions to his servant to await his return in Madrid, which, he thought, would take place in three months time, and then hastened to join Van Hallen, who was waiting for him at the house of his nurse. After taking an affectionate

leave of this benevolent and high minded woman, the two friends, both dressed in plain clothes, left the house at about nine o'clock in the evening, to proceed to one of the suburbs, where two good horses were in readiness for them. As they passed close to a coffee-house, in which the innumerable lights with which it was hung tenfold increased by the reflection of the mirrors that embellished it, the whimsical and imprudent Van Hallen, attracted by the gay and animated scene it presented, vowed he would not go a step further until he had taken a turn round the coffee-room, and enlivened his spirits by looking at happy faces. In vain Sandoval urged a thousand reasons to dissuade him from such a step, he persisted in his intention, and walked on to indulge his whim at the risk of losing his freedom and his life.—“By Jove!” said he to Sandoval, who reluctantly kept pace with him, as they entered the saloon, “I know those ladies who are sitting at that table. They have no cavalier with them, I must go and keep them company, at least while they take their ice!”

“You are mad,” cried Sandoval in utter despair; and then added, trying to detain him, “But, by heavens! you shall nor stir an inch beyond this place.”

“Fear nothing,” said the other very coolly, “I will only go and ask them how they do, they will not betray me.”

At the same time he whirled round suddenly, and disentangling his arm from Sandoval's grasp, hastened towards the ladies, and approached them with his fore-finger on his lips. Their surprise was evident, and one even pronounced the “Van” of his name; but checked by her companions, she suppressed the remainder. Here he soon made himself at home, called to the waiter to bring ices, laughed and talked with every one of the ladies as merrily and as happily as if no danger could possibly arise from such a frolic, and invited Sandoval, who stood motionless with surprise at one end of the table, to follow his example.—“I'll tell you what,” whispered our hero into his ear, “if you don't come away immediately, by my father's name, the

moment you are discovered I blow out your brains. I will not permit the lives of thousands to hang on your fate. Rely on it."

Van Hallen burst out into a fit of laughter, which attracted the keen look of a man dressed in black, who was walking silently backwards and forwards—"Do you see that man?" said Sandoval calling his attention to him.

"I do," said Van Hallen, "and, by all the Gods, I know his ugly face, too. This won't do:—Ladies, excuse my leaving you thus early. You are probably aware it is not safe for me to be seen in this place. So, then, adieu till we meet again, and be happy and merry for your own sakes, and for mine."

Saying this, he rose, and walked away quickly, attended by Sandoval, the man in black following their steps at a short distance.—"The dog is following the track," said Van Hallen; "but I'll soon make him lose it. Let us go to the Prado; people seem to be thronging there; I long for an evening's walk among the soul-robbing Manolas, and we shall thus evade his pursuit."

Sandoval now lost all patience;—"Heaven and earth!" cried he, "the man is stark mad! —To go to the Prado to amuse himself with the Manolas!—Hark! if you think your life not worth a groat, in which you may be very right, I shall not forget that the fate of thousands depends on it;—nay, the very cause in which we have embarked, So do not flatter yourself I will permit you to trifle it away. Do you mean, or do you not mean to follow me."

"Zounds!" cried Van Hallen, "did I leave the Inquisition to be placed under your tuition? —Besides don't you see the churl following us? —What else can we do?"

"If the Inquisitors have left no sense in you," said his friend, "you must submit to be led by the judgment of others; and as for that black vulture who seems to have marked us as his prey, wait here a moment, I'll make him desist."

Saying this, he walked towards the man, and pointing a pocket pistol at his head, commanded him on his life to retrace his steps. The fellow immediately turned upon his heels, and ran as if

a legion of devils were after him.—“Now,” said Sandoval to his friend, pressing him to walk fast, “let us hasten out of Madrid. We have not an instant to lose.”

Van Hallen followed him reluctantly. He could not hear the merry songs of the young people, who sat on the balconies playing on their guitars, and enjoying the coolness of the night, without occasionally joining in those which were most familiar to him. His long confinement had rendered him anxious for social enjoyments, and he could not pass as an unconcerned spectator near the spots where the pleasures of life went merrily on; but Sandoval, whose mind was wholly bent on the higher interests of his country, could with difficulty suppress his angry feelings at the imprudent tardiness, and fearless indifference which his companion displayed on an occasion of life and death. At last, after various other teasing whims on the part of Van Hallen, they arrived at the gates of the town, where a friend of theirs was impatiently waiting their arrival, to make use of a stratagem, by which the

passports of his friends should pass the ordeal of the commissioner stationed there. On their arrival, he himself went towards the gate with a passport, which, on examination, the police officer found not in due form, and which he took immediately to the commissioner, who was in an inner room. This officer, agreeing with his dependent, that the passport was not in due form, a dispute arose between them and the bearer, who tenaciously insisted that it was right. When the discussion became so animated that it grew almost into a dispute, Sandoval and his friend arrived, and submitted their passports with every mark of politeness to the inspection of the commissioner, who, too much engrossed with the subject under discussion to attend minutely to them, just glanced his eyes over, and returned the papers with—"All right. Let the gentlemen pass."

They bowed and hastened out of Madrid, leaving their friend to effect his reconciliation with the commissioner. This first impediment thus overcome, they immediately repaired to

the place where two fine horses were in readiness for them, mounted, and set off on their journey by moonlight. On the following day they entered the Somosierra mountains, and followed the long chain which extends from within a short distance of Madrid to the confines of Navarre, through paths with which Sandoval was well acquainted, and which are as craggy, wild, and dreary as they are unfrequented. During their journey, and as far as the valley of Bastan, nothing occurred worth recording, Van Hallen throwing no longer any impediment in the way of his flight; which he now rather hastened, as he said, in order to reach some place where he might see a human face, and enjoy the pleasures of society.

In the valley of Bastan, the innkeeper, at whose house they took up their quarters for the night, and for whom they had brought a letter of recommendation, in which he was requested to procure for them a guide to cross the Pyrenees, informed them of his having received one or two days before several war-

rants, the most important and peremptory of which was one against Don Antonio Van Hallen, who had made his escape from the Inquisition, adding that similar warrants had been sent to the officers of the preventive service, who guarded the passes of the mountains. It was very doubtful, therefore, whether they would be able to elude the vigilance of those men, unless the two friends would agree to make the desperate attempt of crossing the Pyrenees through the difficult and perilous pass, called Trochas, at which an officer was seldom stationed. On an occasion of such imminent risk, the two travellers would scarcely have hesitated at making an attempt even at flying; accordingly they requested the landlord to lose no time in looking out for a guide who should be well acquainted with the road. In this, however, he was unsuccessful, as all his own people were then abroad, and he would not trust any of his acquaintances with such an important secret. On the other hand, the news that two gentlemen of distinction had arrived at the village

spread through it like wild-fire, and it was even feared that a spy of General Espeleta, Viceroy of Navarre, who was then in the village, entertained some suspicions respecting them ; both which circumstances rendered a longer stay there highly imprudent. They, therefore, determined to set off early next morning (which fortunately happened to be Corpus Christi day) and make an attempt to pass the mountains through the passes of Elizondo and Amaya, the nearest and least difficult in that vicinity.

To have a better chance of success in effecting this, without being detained by the officers of the customs, who in both passes were very numerous, the two travellers rode as fast as the mountainous nature of the country permitted, in order to arrive at Elizondo about the time which people would be attending the religious festival of the day. In this they were fortunate enough ; for they reached the village just at the moment when the procession was issuing out of the church, attended by every one in the village, male or female, young or

old, sound or cripple, and by all the officers of the customs, who acted the important post of pall and standard bearers, much to the sorrow of the able bodied youths, who had looked forward with anxiety to that office for months before. The band of music on this solemn occasion consisted of two bag-pipes, a kettle-drum, and a fife, who relieved each other or played together, just as the sacristan directed, the unequal and unharmonious voices of the men, women, and children, mingling with those sounds, and producing a tolerable cacophony. While the custom-house officers, and the rest of the people were thus devoutly employed, our two fugitives made the best of their way out of the village, though not unobserved by the former, who, however, did not think proper to quit the august ceremony, in which they bore so distinguished a part, in order to stop them.

In Amaya, however, they were not so fortunate. Obligated to cross a narrow defile, at the extremity of which is a small bridge, which at the time of their arrival was occupied by a

party of custom-house officers, they found themselves suddenly surrounded by those men, who seizing their horses' bridles, demanded, in their usual tone of insolent command, their passports. These they examined with the most minute prolixity, after which their chief drew from his pocket a paper, the contents of which he began to read to himself, now and then fixing his steady and penetrating eyes on Van Hallen, who seemed to show the utmost indifference and serenity, now whistling a tune, and now pointing out to Sandoval some of the wild scenery of the mountains. The principal officer having made his own comparisons, called round him some of his men, to whom he spoke in a low tone of voice; they all turned their eyes on the colonel, and then listened to the remarks of their chief, contrasting them with the countenance and person of Van Hallen. After a short conference among them, the chief requested him to alight from his horse, which he did by leaping lightly to the ground, while the officers surrounded him, and examined his

height, person, and features in such a manner as was enough of itself to disconcert and alarm the most innocent, or impudent man on earth. But Van Hallen had tasted of the Inquisitor's wheel, and had not flinched even then; moreover, he was possessed of singular presence of mind, artfulness, and powers of dissimulation, and was fully resolved not to be borne down by the inquisitive and searching looks of men whom he inwardly despised. Accordingly he appeared as unconcerned as Diogenes before Alexander. The officers then put numberless questions to him, which he answered with careless indifference, though now and then, he affected a well timed surprise at their import. In a word, he went through his part with unparalleled skill, and succeeded in foiling the suspicions of the whole set.

Their passports being then returned to them, the two friends then rode off; at first leisurely, and without once turning back their heads, but on passing the angle of a rock which screened their persons from the officers, they commenced

a sharp trot. No sooner, however, had they disappeared, than the officers' suspicions were renewed, and they resolved to take to their horses, in order to overtake the fugitives, make fresh inquiries, and, finally, bring them back, if their answers should not be satisfactory. This resolution formed, it was immediately executed; but no sooner did the two travellers hear the distant trampling of horses, which those rocky and silent defiles re-echoed tenfold, than suspecting the cause that produced them, they clapped spurs to their horses, and galloping swiftly over the remainder of the Spanish territory, reached the top of a mountain, where the stony cross and pillar that marked the limits of his Catholic Majesty's dominions, seemed to welcome them to another land, where Ferdinand's despotism ended.

On the top of this mountain the two fugitive freemasons stopped their horses to breathe awhile, and cast their looks back, and saw the pursuing party appear, halt on perceiving their prey completely out of their reach, and soon

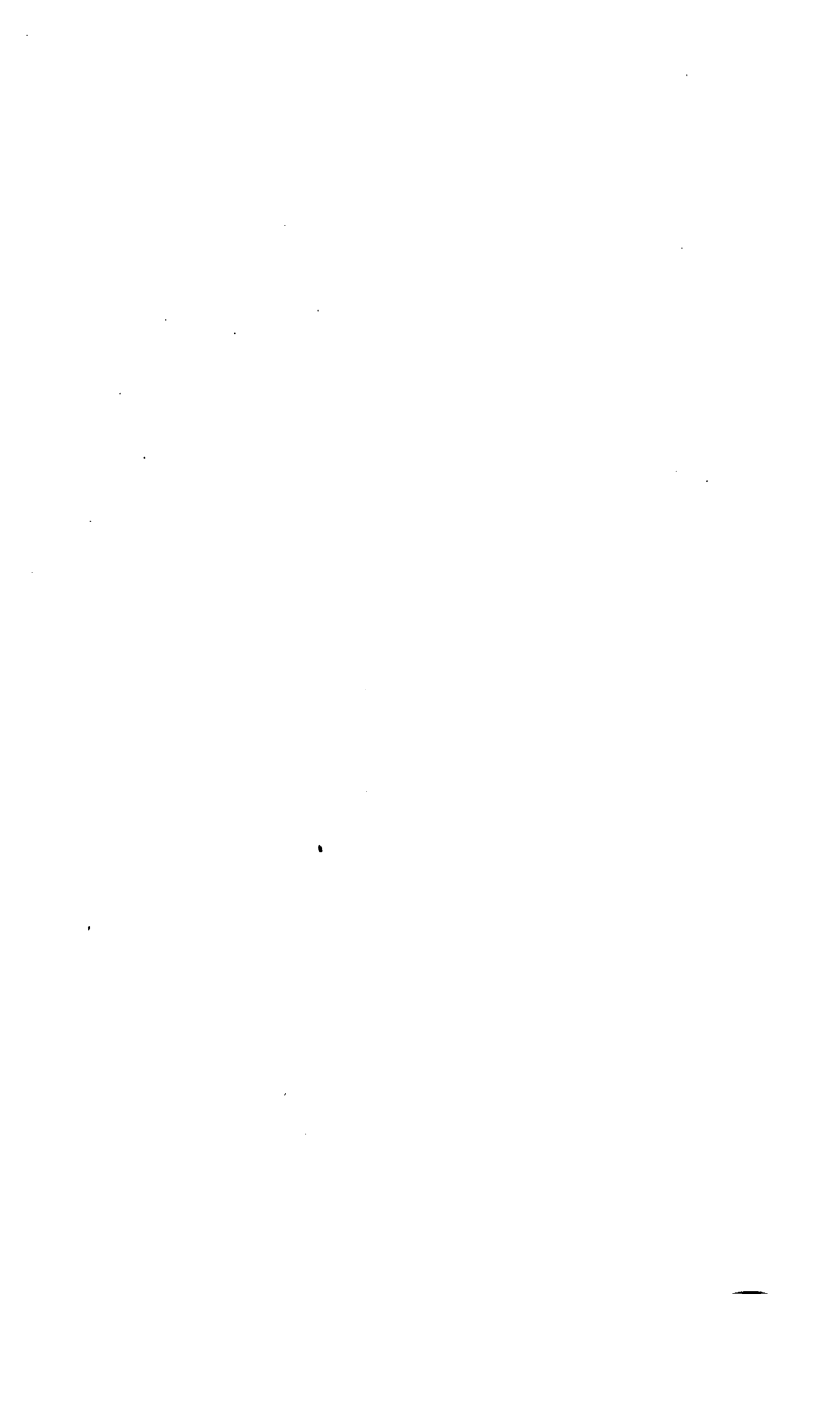
after turn their horses, and with a slow and disappointed pace, again disappear.

A close embrace of mutual congratulation between the two friends followed the happy conclusion of this singular, and almost incredible escape.

END OF VOL. II.

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