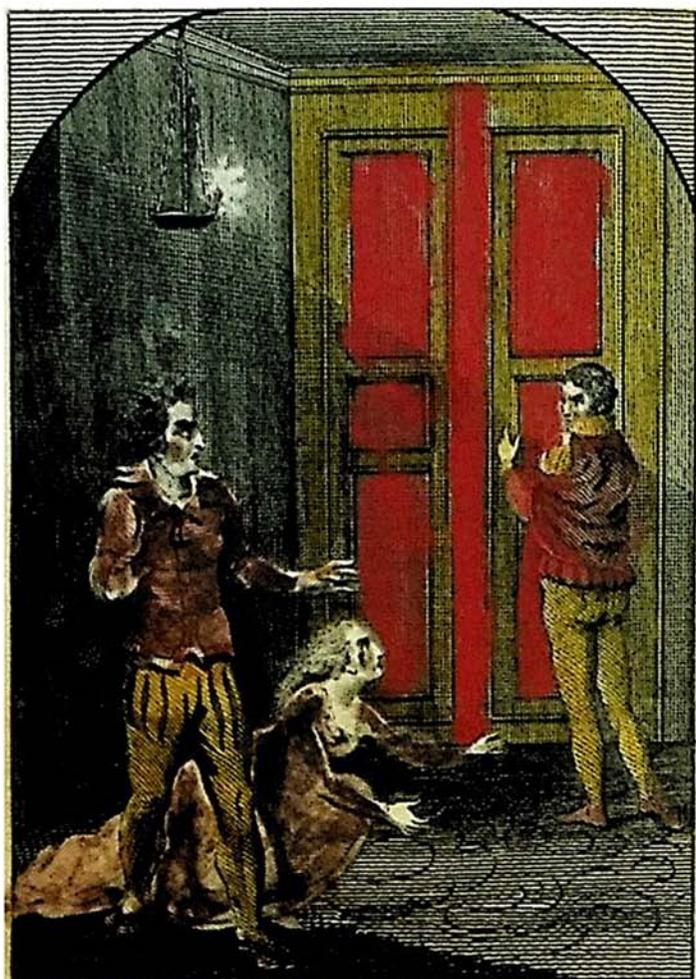


The William and Geoffrey Press
Templeton, California
2020



J. Shorne Del. & Sc.

THE
GREAT DEVILS TALE,

Page 14.

Published for Kees. 25 June 1602.

CANTERBURY TALES.

CONTAINING

THE GREAT DEVIL'S TALE;

OR,

The Castle of Morbano.

THE OLD ABBEY TALE;

OR,

Village Terrors.

THE BRITISH SAILOR'S TALE.

AND

THE KNIGHT'S TALE.

When aught that's wonderful is told,
It shall for ever hence be call'd
A Canterbury Tale.

ANON.

London:

Printed by T. Maiden, Skerborne-Lane,
FOR ANN LEMOINE, WHITE-ROSE COURT, COLEMAN-
STREET, AND SOLD BY T. HURST,
PATERNOSTER-ROW.

1802.

[Price Six-Pence.]

THE GREAT DEVIL'S TALE.

BY C. F. BARRETT.

FATIGUED with the sports of the field, Count Ludovico was conducted to the Castle of Morbano by his cousin the Baron Rudolpho, with whom he agreed, as it had been his custom for several years, to spend the sporting season at his castle, where they found every thing prepared against their arrival, that could alleviate the cravings of an appetite rendered keen by the wholesome excursion they had taken. Thus situated, they did not stand for ceremony, but immediately fell to; and whilst the heart-cheering goblet passed round the table, they amused each other by relating the various stories they had heard of Satanio, who, aided by a gang of thirty desperadoes, had performed deeds of valour which rendered him at once the admiration and terror of the neighbouring peasants; amongst whom, on account of his undaunted behaviour, and the hair-breadth escapes he had made from the officers of justice, he had obtained the appellation of The Great Devil.

With tales of this nature they pass away the tedious moments till the hour of rest arrived, when having bade each other a good night, they retired to their respective chambers. The Count Ludovico being extremely fatigued, soon sunk into the arms of sleep. Not so the Baron; the foul machinations of his polluted heart kept him awake: an incestuous flame corroded his breast; and he spent those hours which others dedicate to repose, in planning schemes, and those of the most horrid nature, to obtain the object of his wishes; to which he was still farther stimulated, by an ardent desire of becoming revenged of the lady for having preferred the Count Ludovico to him. The story of this circumstance was simply as follows.

During the latter part of the last war in Germany, Count Ludovico and the Baron, who at that time bore arms under one of the Austrian Princes, obtained leave of absence, in order to revisit the place of their nativity, which lay a few leagues to the southward of the city of Genoa. In their way thither, they were attacked by a violent storm, which raged with such fury as to render it impossible for them to pursue their journey; whilst, to add to the horror of their situation, they had to cross an extensive plain, where not the smallest vestige of a house, shrub, or traveller,

CANTERBURY TALES.

could be discovered. However, inured to hardship and fatigue, they resolved on proceeding, and accordingly bent their steps over the trackless waste, uncertain whither it would lead them. For several hours they wandered wrapt in impenetrable darkness, without being able to discover the nature of the ground they had to pass over, or the dangers which they every moment expected to encounter, excepting when, at intervals, an uncertain gleam of lightning would for a moment illumine the dreary prospect; and even then the transitory view of the gloomy scene before them only served to add to the despair which had already taken possession of their care-worn bosoms.

At length, after being completely drenched with the rain, which fell in torrents from the blackened sky, they, to their no small joy, discovered a glimmering light at a little distance from them, as they thought. Encouraged by this pleasing sight, they made the best of their way to the wished-for haven; but their hopes began to fail them when, after walking rather better than a league, they found themselves on the banks of a rapid river, and the object they were in search of at a considerable distance on the opposite shore. Uncertain how to proceed, they halted for a few moments, in order to recover their drooping spirits, when a vivid flash of blue lightning presented to their enraptured eyes, the distant towers of an ancient castle, from the watch-tower of which they were now convinced the light proceeded that had brought them to the banks of the river. This pleasing circumstance gave them fresh spirits; and, regardless of the rapidity of the torrent, they plunged into the flood, and, with some difficulty, gained the opposite shore.

Having halted a few moments, in order to recover themselves from the extreme fatigue they had undergone, they proceeded onward; and at length, after many weary steps, arrived on the brink of the lake which surrounded the castle, the latter standing on a verdant rock in the centre thereof. Inured to disappointments, this fresh and unexpected obstacle did not in the least daunt their resolution; but, summoning up that patience which in common minds, on such an occasion, would have been exhausted, they walked on the margin of the lake, consulting together on the most desirable means of gaining the wished-for haven. A thousand stratagems alternately presented themselves, and were each in turn rejected as impracticable; for the lake was so violently agitated by the fury of the contending elements, as to render it totally impassable, excepting by means of a boat; and, as there were nothing of the kind near, they despaired of being able to obtain the object of their wishes. However, just as they were about to throw themselves on the ground, overwhelmed with sorrow and fatigue, a tremendous clap of thunder burst over their heads, which threatened to rend the earth to its very centre; and a ball of fire falling near them, tore up a clump of trees which stood nearly opposite to the gates of the gothic mansion, under

whose hospitable roof the Baron and Ludovico wished to obtain an asylum. The huge trunks yielded to the fury of the tempest, and falling with an horrid squash into the water, formed a kind of temporary bridge from the banks of the lake to the rock on which the castle was situated. Elated with this fortunate event, our travellers rushed on the fallen fragments, and, directed by the glare of the forked lightning, which became now more vivid and frequent than before, they at length succeeded in attaining the summit of the rock, where finding a huge horn hanging at the gate, they blew a blast so loud, that but for its being damped by the furious howling of the tempest, must have awakened even the dead themselves. They paused—all was silence. Again they repeated the summons, and again had the misfortune to receive no other answer than what the contending jure of elements afforded. Driven to desperation, the Baron seized the horn, and blowing with all his strength, a centinel appeared on the ramparts, who demanding their name and business, the Baron informed him of his rank and title, and that, in returning from the Austrian camp, they were overtaken by the storm, and had lost their way. The name of the Baron Rudolpho had no sooner reached the ears of Count Berengoch, the owner of the castle, than the gates were thrown open, and Ludovico and the Baron were conducted by the centinel into the ante-chamber, where they found the Baron waiting to receive them. The hospitable board was soon covered with refreshments; and, after an hearty repast, they were conducted to their chamber, where, fatigued with the toil they had sustained, they soon fell into the arms of the somnific deity.

The sun had illumined the eastern hemisphere with his golden rays some hours before our travellers unsealed their wearied eyelids; nor would they then, had not a domestic entered their apartment, to inform them that the Count and his family waited breakfast in the saloon. The Baron and Ludovico immediately arose, and having dressed themselves, they followed the attendant, in order to join the family party.

The Count Berengoch, who was just turned of fifty, was descended from one of the oldest families in Germany, and reckoned one of the richest nobles in the province where he dwelt. He had married the widow of a Russian officer, to whom the castle belonged under whose roof our travellers had found so hospitable a reception, by whom he had three children, namely, a son and two daughters. The two latter only were living, the son having died in his infancy. Aurelia and Matilda had just attained the one her eighteenth and the other her nineteenth year at the time of the Baron and Ludovico's arrival: they were tall, well made, and of a most majestic mien: the roses and lilies were blended in their face; while their pouting lips resembled two ripe cherries suing to be preit by the beholder: in short, the *total ensemble* of their charms was such as might have tempted the most rigid anchorite to have deviated from his vow. To this amiable family

our travellers were conducted, as we have before mentioned, by the old domestic; and no sooner did the blooming beauty of Aurelia and her sister meet their eyes, than they became, as it were, transfixed with astonishment. However, recovering from their emotion, they seated themselves at the breakfast table, where, though they joined in the conversation with seeming indifference, they drank plentifully of the insinuating passion; the charms of Aurelia having captivated the heart of Ludovico at the same instant that those of Matilda, her sister, had secured that of the Baron. Thus situated, their time past away so cheerfully, that two months had elapsed before they once recollected the original intention of their journey, during which period they found an opportunity of making their passion known to the fair objects of their wishes, whom, to their infinite satisfaction, they found to be equally enamoured with themselves. Elated with the success of the amour, they ventured to solicit permission to request the Count's consent to their union, which, after some small demur on the part of the ladies, was readily granted. Thus assured of their affection, the Baron and Ludovico retired to their chamber, their bosoms glowing with the rapturous expectation of the auspicious moment, when they should be joined to their mistresses for ever. But love, in this instance, with regard to the Baron, proved only a secondary object; for learning from one of the domestics, that Aurelia had, independent of an equal share with her sister of her father's property, an estate of one hundred crowns per annum in right of her mother, he resolved to satisfy his avarice at the expence of honour, love, and veracity. Thus determined, he found an opportunity of sounding the disposition of Count Berengoch, when finding him totally averse to the idea of marrying his children against their inclination, he next attempted to draw the affections of Aurelia from the Count, his cousin, by setting before her the great superiority which his rank and vast possessions gave him over his cousin; thinking by that means to awaken that vanity which is so natural to the sex, and triumph over her credulity. But even in this point his scheme proved abortive; and finding her inflexible, he took his leave, pretending he had done it only as a trial of her constancy.

From that moment he conceived the most inveterate hatred against Ludovico; whilst his pretended passion for Aurelia became not only real, but so violent, as to throw him into a fever, from which he did not recover for several weeks. At length youth and a naturally good constitution triumphed over the disorder; and in a short time he became nearly as strong as ever. He had no sooner recovered, than, piqued at the refusal which Aurelia had given him, he demanded the hand of Matilda from the Count, her father; as did Ludovico at the same time that of Aurelia. The Count listened to their proposal, and returning them thanks for the alliance which they offered, he sent for his daughters, when having taken them apart, he interrogated them respecting the state

of their affections. A crimson flush, the constant attendant on virgin bashfulness, illumined the cheeks of the lovely sisters, who, with a faltering voice, and downcast eye, owned their partiality for the strangers. The Count, overwhelmed with joy at finding their wishes coincide with his, pressed them to his bosom, and then leading them forward, presented them to their delighted lovers, who received the inestimable gifts with rapture. The castle now became a scene of bustle and confusion; the day was fixed, and the hearts of the surrounding peasantry beat high with expectation of the sumptuous treatment they should meet with on that occasion. The auspicious day at length arriving, the Baron and Ludovico were united to their lovely mistresses amidst the acclamations of the spectators. For several days the castle resounded with festivity, whilst some artless peasant chaunted an air illustrative of the blessings of love when founded on the firm basis of honour and truth.

Three months had now elapsed, and the Baron and Ludovico were every day in expectation of being summoned to the regiment they belonged to, when one morning a messenger arrived with the welcome news, that peace had been concluded between the contending powers. Elate with joy at this unexpected event, the Baron and his cousin resolved to visit the place of their nativity; and accordingly a few days after set off with their blooming partners for their respective mansions; the latter having taken first an affectionate farewell of their parents, whose affliction was in some measure moderated at parting, by the assurance of receiving frequent visits, as the seats of their lords were situated at only a few leagues distance from the Castle of Caroski; a circumstance with which the Baron and Ludovico were totally unacquainted at the time of their arrival. The Baron and Ludovico, accompanied by their ladies, pursued their journey; and at the expiration of the second day from their leaving the Castle on the Lake, they arrived in safety at the Castle of Morbano, where, at the earnest request of the Baron and his lady, Ludovico and Aurelia spent a month previous to their departure for the Chateau Altados, the family mansion of the Count, during which period the Baron drank deeply of the incestuous passion he had conceived for his fair sister-in-law. Frequently did he endeavour to obtain an interview, but in vain. Aware of his treachery, she always shunned him; and the time appointed for their stay expired, without his being able to accomplish any thing.

At length the morning of their departure arrived; and the Baron had the mortification to see his cousin Ludovico leave the castle with his fair bride in triumph; and concealing his emotion under the feint of sudden illness, he took an hasty leave, and retired to his chamber, where he gave vent to the contending passions which oppressed his troubled bosom. In the mean time Ludovico and his lady pursued their journey, and arrived in safety about sun-set at the Chateau Altados, where they were received

in such manner by the vassals of the Count, as must have convinced the spectator the mildness of his manners had rendered him beloved by all who knew him. Nor did Aureli's behaviour, after his union with the Count, give them the smallest reason to regret the moment when she became mistress of the Chateau Altados. Thus universally esteemed by their tenants, and beloved by each other, they led a life of continued happiness; while the Baron, on the other hand, not only rendered himself obnoxious to his vassals by his tyranny, but, hurried on by the impetuosity of his passion for her sister, made the life of his consort, the hapless Matilda, truly miserable. Nor did his brutality end here; for when the trying moment drew near, that she was to bring forth the pledge of their affection, he caused her to be conveyed to a gloomy chamber in one of the southern turrets belonging to the castle, where he suffered no one to wait on her but himself, and two female attendants, who were not permitted to leave the apartment; threatening her with the most ample vengeance, in case she did not produce him an heir to his possessions.

Thus situated, the Baroness spent the tedious hours of her captivity in a state of anxiety that can be better imagined than described; and the horror she conceived on that occasion was so great, as to make her bring forth a daughter some time before the expected period. The unwelcome stranger no sooner met the eyes of its distracted mother, than she snatched it to her bosom, and giving it a maternal embrace, sunk back on her pillow in a state of insensibility. That instant the Baron entered the chamber, and sternly demanded what the blooming minion had brought him. A long silence ensued. Irritated at the behaviour of the attendants, he undrew the curtains of the bed, and no sooner beheld a female infant smiling in his face, than driven to desperation by the frustration of his wishes, he would have plunged his sword into the bosom of the Baroness and her infant, had not the latter, as if moved by instinct, stretched out its little arms towards him. Ruthless as he was, this artless action awakened in his bosom a sensation which he never felt before; and, yielding to the impulse of the moment, he was about to take his smiling daughter to his arms, when the painful recollection occurring that it was not a son, he turned from the bed with disgust; and ordering the attendants to leave the apartment, he locked the door, and took the key away with him. From that time no one was allowed to visit the southern turret but himself; and soon after it was given out, that the Baroness had died in child bed.

The Baron received the condolence of the neighbouring gentry with every appearance of the most violent and heart-rending grief; amongst the foremost of whom was Count Ludovico and his lady, who used every endeavour to comfort and support the Baron in the affliction he pretended to labour under. At length his sorrow became more moderate; and the Count, finding that time would reconcile the Baron to his misfortunes, the former and his lady re-

turned to the Chateau Altados, where soon after their arrival, Aurelia presented him with a blooming boy, who soon after was christened at the Chapel of St. Nicola, by the name of Augustus Rudolpho Ludovico; at the especial desire of the Baron, who stood godfather on the occasion. The pleasing manners of the infant seemed to win the affections of the latter, who carried his fondness to such an extreme, as scarcely to be able to bear it out of his sight. The Count viewed this alteration in his cousin's manners with rapture; and his lady being not sufficiently recovered to make one of their parties, their time was spent in a reciprocal intercourse of friendship. In this manner their time past for several months, alternately giving and receiving visits from each other: in short, fortune seemed to promise them eternal happiness, when one evening, whilst the Baron was on a visit at the Chateau Altados, the female attendant, whose care it was to take the young Count out for the benefit of the air, was discovered to be missing. An universal alarm spread over the Castle: the domestics were dispatched in different directions; whilst the Baron and Ludovico set out together for the Castle of Morbanc, flattering themselves with the pleasing hope that, as the afternoon had proved rather hazy, the maid might have stopt at the abovementioned place: but, alas! they proved abortive; for, on their arrival at the Castle, no one was able to give them the smallest information, as she had left the Castle in the fore part of the afternoon. On her return home, Ludovico and the Baron, finding all their researches fruitless, returned to the Castle with their hearts overwhelmed with affliction, where, on their arrival, they found the domestics returned; but without being able to gain the smallest intelligence respecting the objects of their search. The Count now gave himself up to such despair and anguish as threatened to rend his heart in twain. As for Aurelia, she no sooner learnt that all the endeavours to recover the fugitives had proved abortive, than she sunk into a state of insensibility, from whence she only recovered to become more miserable. Fit on fit succeeded each other in rapid succession, whilst the Castle resounded with her cries. At length she became more calm, and soon after fell into the arms of the poppy crowned deity; but it was only the forerunner of a more violent conflict, her sleep was short and agitated; and the next morning the Count, on entering the apartment, to enquire after her health, found her attacked by a fever. A delirium succeeded, during which period she called incessantly on the name of her husband and the infant Count.

This scene proved too much for the afflicted Ludovico. Agitated by the occurrences of the preceding evening, he sunk beneath this new addition to his woes; and in a short time he was reduced to the same helpless condition as the Countess, and for some time their lives were despaired of. The Castle now became literally a house of mourning; every one deplored the misfortunes of this noble pair, and looked forward with anxiety to the

moment that was to decide their fate; but no one apparently more so than the Baron Ruololpho, who, from the moment of their illness, took up his residence in the Castle, and could scarcely be prevailed on to leave their chamber to take that refreshment which nature required: but though he seemed to feel equally for the critical situation of the Count and Aurelia, it was in reality only the fate of the latter that engrossed his attention. At length youth, and a good constitution, triumphed over the disorder which had nearly brought them to the brink of the grave, and restored Luovico and the Countess to the arms of their friends. A fettered melancholy, however, took possession of this unfortunate pair, and they pass their future hours with gloomy resignation to the inevitable decrees of Providence. Deprived of their only hope, they scarcely ever left the Chateau, excepting when, at the shooting season, the Baron prevailed on them to pass a few months at his Castle. A period of nearly one-and-twenty years had elapsed, when Luovico, as we have already mentioned at the commencement of this narrative, visited the Castle on one of those occasions, and, contrary to his usual custom, Aurelia being indisposed, had come alone.

'Twas this circumstance inspired the Baron with an idea which must have chilled the heart of any one less savage than himself. His heart had long panted for an opportunity to remove this obstacle to his fancied happiness: it now presented itself; and, inspired by the remorseless spirit of revenge, the clock of the Castle had no sooner announced the midnight hour, than, drawing his poignard, he stole with silent tread to the chamber of the sleeping Count, and plunging his weapon into his body, left the apartment, exulting in the success of his infernal stratagem. This horrid deed being committed, he directed his steps to the chamber of Nicola, who, having lived in the Castle from his infancy, was of course the confidential keeper of his secrets. Him he awoke; and informing him of what he had done, ordered him to arise, and bury the body where no one should be able to discover it. The domestic immediately dressed himself, and left the room, in order to execute the orders which the Baron had given him; whilst the latter retired to his apartment, ordering him to return, and inform him when the business was completed; which injunction was strictly adhered to by Nicola, who, in a short time after, entered the Baron's chamber. The latter applauded him for his diligence; and presenting him with a purse, he commanded Nicola to repair to the Chateau Altados, and conduct the Countess, who was recovered, to the Castle, in order to inform her of the death of the Count by degrees. Nicola bowed assent, and leaving the chamber, mounted his mule, and set off to discharge the commission which the Baron had assigned him. He had got nearly half way on his road to the Chateau, when arriving at the cottage of Barbara, his mother, he halted for a moment, in order to take a little refreshment, and then pro-

ceeded on his journey, when he had not proceeded many leagues, before he heard a trampling of horses, and, on looking forward, perceived Satanio (the Great Devil) and a party of the banditti descending a hill with Aurelia, bound on a horse, before them. Nicola no sooner perceived this, than he turned about, and rode back to the cottage full speed, where having arrived, he put on a disguise which he kept there, in order to watch the actions of the Baron, whom he had long suspected of harbouring evil designs against the interest of the Count his cousin. As he had long held a secret intercourse with Satanio and his associates, for this purpose he had entered into their society, where, owing to the prowess which he had displayed on several occasions, he soon obtained the friendship of the Great Devil. In this double capacity he acted without being once suspected by either of his masters, and by this means was enabled to counteract their malicious purposes. He had no sooner put on his disguise, than he remounted his mule, and resumed his journey; but he had not proceeded far, before he met Satanio and his troop, who instantly hailed him; and the Great Devil, on finding it to be his old comrade and confidant, ordered Nicola to conduct them to the cottage of Barbara, which he instantly complied with; where, after they had taken some refreshment, Satanio delivered the ill-fated Aurelia into the custody of Nicola and two of the banditti; with a strict charge to convey her in safety to the retreat which they had among the rocks, as he began to feel an affection for her which he never had felt before. This done, Satanio and his party set out in quest of fresh adventures; and soon after Nicola and his comrades left the cottage, in order to convey their captive to the cave of the Great Devil. They moved on slowly, till at length, coming to a retired part of an extensive forest, Nicola plunged his poignard in the breast of the hindmost bandit, and then attacking the other, he soon laid him by the side of his lifeless comrade: this done, he pulled off his disguise, and concealed it in an hollow tree: he then released the lady, and placing her on his mule before him, rode off to the Castle of Morbano, where he arrived in perfect safety. The Baron received the lady with every possible mark of attention; and as the evening was far advanced, ordered her to be conducted to her chamber. In the mean time Nicola returned to the forest, and reassuming his disguise, he wounded himself in the arm, and then repaired to the cave, where he informed Satanio, who was just returned, that, having been met by some of the Baron's rascals, they had attacked them; but, owing to their numbers being superior, his two comrades fell beneath their blows, and that being wounded in his arm, he was obliged to leave the field, and suffer the enemy to bear the lady off in triumph. Satanio, convinced of his fidelity, took him aside, and having consulted together, it was agreed that Nicola should endeavour to gain a situation in the Castle; and on the first favourable opportunity to convey Aurelia from thence. This Nicola

promised to perform; and taking leave, set out for the Castle where arriving in safety, he went to perform a benevolent visit, as he was accustomed to do every evening previous to retiring to rest.

In the mean time, as soon as the Castle was buried in silence the Baron repaired to the chamber of Aurelia, to whom by degrees he broke the news of her husband's death. Aurelia no sooner became acquainted with the fatal secret, than she fell back on her pillow in a state of insensibility, in which situation the Baron was about to gratify his base desires, when a hollow groan appalled his coward heart. The figure of Matilda glided before him, and looking sternly on him, vanished in air. For some moments he remained transfixed with horror; but at length recovering from his terror, Aurelia, having become sensible, he made a formal declaration of his passion; but she rejected his proposal with scorn. Enraged at her firmness, the Baron seized her with savage fury, and was about to force her to his wishes, when a secret panel opening in the chamber, the deceased Count Ludovico stood before him, and keeping his eyes fixed sternly on him, retired through another panel in the chamber. Aurelia no sooner recognized the well-known features of her husband, than she gave a loud scream, and fell with her face to the ground; whilst the perfidious Baron stood immovable, his eyes distorted, and each particular hair upraised "like quills upon the fretful porcupine." From this state of torpidity he was soon roused by the sudden entrance of Satanio and his party, who having taken the Castle by surprize, bore him and Aurelia captives to their cave.

In the mean time Nicola, having, as we have before mentioned, gone to pay his usual nocturnal visit, entered the chamber, where he had conveyed Ludovico on the night of his supposed murder in pursuance of the Baron's orders.

Here it will be proper to inform the readers, that Nicola, on entering the apartment, to remove the body, found the Count, who was slightly wounded, in a state of insensibility, owing to the quantity of blood he had lost. Convinced, therefore, of the possibility of his recovery, he removed him to the chamber adjacent to that which Aurelia occupied, where he kept him close, and brought him such necessaries every evening as he might stand in need of for the ensuing day. As soon as the Count was recovered, he informed him of the perfidy of his cousin, which intelligence he received with astonishment and horror; and it was with the utmost difficulty that Nicola prevailed on him to remain in obscurity. In this solitary manner he past his days for nearly four years, without once enjoying the sight of day, or any living creature, besides the faithful Nicola, who, as soon as the inhabitants of the Castle were buried in the arms of sleep, used to lead him into the garden, where they were wont to walk together for several hours, in order to enjoy the benefit of the air; at the expiration of which period he conducted him back to his chamber,

and having taken leave, would return to his own apartment for the remainder of the night.

Nicola, on entering the chamber, to his no small astonishment, found it empty. Alarmed at this unexpected circumstance, he called on his name, but in vain. A thousand ideas, each one more alarming than the first, presented themselves to his disordered fancy; and he was just about to leave the apartment in search of the Count, whom he naturally concluded to have fallen into the hands of the Baron, when Ludovico entered from the adjacent chamber, pale and disordered, and throwing himself on an ancient couch, (which, together with a broken table, and some tattered hangings, was the only furniture the room had to boast of,) he remained for some moments totally silent; but at length recovering from his emotion, he told Nicola, that being unable to sleep, he had left his couch with the view of fetching a book from the library, when, on opening the secret pannel which he had shewn him, he beheld the Baron in the action of forcing a lady to his wishes, but whose features he was unable to recognise, as the room, which was large and spacious, was illumined only by the glimmering of a solitary lamp. "At first," continued the Count, "I shrunk back, appalled with horror; but recollecting that the circumstance of my death was universally believed, I resolved on passing the Baron in such a manner as to make him imagine he had seen my spectre. The attempt, I own, was bold and hazardous; however, as I never relinquished a resolution when once formed, I crossed the room with slow and solemn steps, keeping my eyes fixed sternly on his face. This had the desired effect; the guilty monster became transfixed with horror, nor moved from his position, but kept his eye fixed for several moments on the pannel through which I retired on the opposite side. After he had lost sight of me, which I plainly perceived through a crevice in the wainscot, I should have staid longer, to watch his motions, had not the trampling of feet, and the sound of many voices, which seemed drawing near the chamber, alarmed me. Unwilling to be discovered, I turned from the pannel; and must own that the sight of you, on entering my apartment, afforded me no small consolation. The Count had no sooner finished his narration, than Niccla proposed his leaving the Castle immediately, and repairing to the cave of the Great Devil, lest the Baron, on recovering from his surprise, and suspecting some stratagem, should cause the Castle to be explored. The Count, convinced of the justness of his apprehension, readily acquiesced, and finding all quiet, they set out immediately, to put their scheme in execution. Nicola being perfectly acquainted with all the secret avenues of the Castle, they soon past the gate of the gloomy mansion in safety, which having effected, they pursued their journey; but had not proceeded far, before they found themselves surrounded by a party of Satanio's banditti, who instantly hurried them off to their cave, without

giving Nicola an opportunity of discovering himself. On their arrival, Satanio having retired to rest, Nicola and Ludovico were confined in separate recesses in the rock until the morning, when they were summoned before the tribunal; Satanio always making it a practice to try the prisoners he had taken on the over night the ensuing morning. As soon as Nicola and Ludovico were conducted into a rude kind of hall, carved out of the solid rock, which Satanio termed the Hall of Justice, they found the Baron and Aurelia also in the power of the Great Devil. The surprise was mutual on both sides: but Aurelia no sooner saw the Count, than she gave a scream of joy, and rushed into his arms. Satanio ordered his attendants to part them, which they at length with some difficulty effected: but they had no sooner done this, than the Count and Aurelia threw themselves at the feet of Satanio, and having informed him of the affinity they bore to each other, they laid open the whole of the Baron's perfidy, at which Satanio became so much enraged, as to order the avengers of justice to proceed to the immediate trial of the captive Baron, against whom Nicola proved the most substantial witnesses. The charges against the latter being fully proved, Satanio passed the following sentence; that the Baron should suffer immediate death from the hands of the Count and Aurelia, who should obtain their liberty on condition of becoming his executioners.

The sentence was no sooner pronounced, than two of the banditti put a loaded pistol into the hands of the Count and his lady, whom they placed in the middle of the hall at equal distances, which done, they bound an handkerchief over the eyes of the Baron, and leading him into the middle, bade him make his peace with God, which having done, Satanio gave the signal, when the Count and Aurelia both fired at once. A ball entered his left side, and he fell to the ground. The Count immediately took the handkerchief from his eyes; they were distorted with the agonies of death. The guilty wretch squeezed the hand of his injured cousin, and giving him a written manuscript, he implored his pardon, and that of Aurelia, which they having granted, he was seized with violent convulsions, and soon after expired. As soon as the body was removed, the Count, at the request of Satanio, opened the manuscript, which the deceased Baron had given him. It was a full and ample confession of the enormities he had been guilty of, and stated, that, in consequence of having conceived an incestuous passion for her sister, he had condemned his ill-fated consort, and her infant, to an untimely end, and had buried them under the stairs of the southern turret. Not satisfied with this, it farther stated, that the Baron, stimulated by revenge, had caused the young Count and his servant to be seized by Storambrino, the Chief of the Banditti, with whom, ever since his return from the war, he had held a secret correspondence; and that the latter, having taken a liking to Bianco, (the servant,) he married her; and having no children of their own, Augustus was brought up as their son; and on the decease of

Storombino, succeeded him as Chief of the Banditti. The Count no sooner came to this part, then Satanio gave a loud cry, and exclaiming, "Oh, my father! Oh, my mother!" fell on the ground before Aurelia and her astonished husband, who could scarcely give credance to the words they had heard; but, on looking into the manuscript, every doubt was removed; as they found that, on assuming the situation of his reputed father, he had taken the name of Satanio, or, The Great Devil, for the reasons which has been assigned in the foregoing part of this narrative. Convinced of the reality of their happiness, they raised Satanio, now Augustus Rudolpho Ludovico, and alternately embraced him. At length, their transports being subsided, it was agreed, that Satanio should resign his commission in favour of some of his comrades, and return with the Count and Aurelia to the Castle of Morbano, which, as the Baron had died without issue, of right devolved to them. This being settled, Ludovico and his Lady, Satanio and Nicola, set out on their return to the Castle, and arrived about noon at the cottage of Barbara, who congratulated them on the happy issue of their adventures; and gave the following Tale into Satanio's hand.

Near Genoa's fam'd city, in rocky retreat,
 A Banditti redoubted did dwell;
 They laugh'd, and they sung, they drank, and they eat;
 Full oft their foe worsted, but never were beat;
 And tho' robbers by trade, yet the poor ne'er did cheat,
 But made the rich pay for it well.

Satanio their chief was, the talk of the day;
 No one with him for worth cou'd compare;
 He was valiant, true-hearted, good-natur'd, and gay;
 But, tho' nam'd the Great Devil, was good in his way;
 And if you'll believe what old Barbara doth say,
 Of some great man no doubt is the heir.

Then let's hope that the Devil may yet have his due,
 That each tub on it's bottom may stand;
 That all slanderous tongues may be forc'd to speak true;
 A Lawyer be honest, and upright a Jew;
 The foe of his country be doom'd to look blue,
 And peace and good-will hail the land.

The verses of Nicola's mother received the approbation of the whole company, who, after they had taken a little refreshment, resumed their journey, and arrived in safety at the Castle of Morbano. In a short time after this, Satanio having, thro' the interest of his father, obtained a free pardon from the Neapolitan court, he was declared sole heir to the possessions of the deceased Baron Rudolpho, and marrying soon after a lady of rank and fortune, he domesticated himself at the Castle, and, by the whole of his conduct, proved that a *great Devil may become a good Man.*

THE OLD ABBEY TALE.

BY DR. DRAKE.

THE last rays of the setting sun yet lingered on the mountains which surrounded the district of — when Edward De Courtenay, after two fatiguing campaigns on the plains of Flanders, in one of which the gallant Sidney fell, re-entered his native village, toward the end of August 1587. He had lost his father a few months before his departure for the continent; a loss which had occasioned him the most severe affliction, and had induced him, thus early in life, to seek, amid the din of arms, and the splendour of military parade, a pause from painful recollection. Time, however, though it had mitigated the first poignant emotions of grief, had not subdued the tender feelings of regret and sorrow; and the well-known objects of his early childhood, and his opening youth, associated as they were with the salutary precepts and fond affection of the best of parents, awakened in his mind a train of melancholy yet soothing thoughts, as with slow and pausing steps he moved along the venerable avenue of trees which led to his paternal mansion. Twilight had, by this time, wrapt every object in a veil of pleasing obscurity: all was hushed in the softest repose; and the massiness of the foliage under which he passed, and the magnitude and solitary grandeur of his Gothic halls, impressed the imagination of Edward with deep sensations of solemnity and awe. Two grey-headed servants, who had lived for near half a century in the family, received their young master at the gate; and, while the tears trickled down their withered cheeks, expressed with artless simplicity their joy, and blessed the return of the son of their ancient benefactor.

After some affectionate enquiries concerning the neighbouring villagers, and the families of these old men, Edward expressed his intention of walking to the Abbey of Clunedale, which lay about a mile distant from the house: his filial affection, the pensive retrospect of events endeared to memory, the sweetness and tranquillity of the evening, and that enthusiasm so congenial to the best emotions of the heart, gave birth to the wish of lingering a few moments over the turf which covered the remains of his beloved parents. Scarcely, however, had he intimated this resolution, when the ghastly paleness which overspread the countenances of his domestics, and the dismay that sat on their features, assured him that something extraordinary was connected with the determination he had adopted; and, on enquiry, his terrified servants informed him, though with some confusion and reluctance, that for some months past, they and the country round had been alarmed by strange sights and noises at the abbey, and that no one durst approach the place after sun-set. Edward, smiling at the superstitious fears of his attendants, which he attributed

solely to their ignorance, and their love for the marvellous, assured them he entertained no apprehension for the event, and that he hoped shortly to convince them that their alarms were altogether unfounded. Saying this, he turned into the great avenue; and, striking off to the left, soon reached the river, on whose winding banks a pathway led to the abbey.

This venerable structure had been surrendered to the rapacity of Henry the Eighth in 1540; and, having been partly unroofed during the same year, had experienced a rapid decay. It continued, however, along with the sacred ground adjoining to it, to be a depositary for the dead; and part of the family of the Courtenays had, for some centuries, reposed in vaults built on the outside of the great west entrance of the church. In a spot adjacent to this ancient cemetery lay also the remains of the father of Edward; and hither filial piety was now conducting the young warrior, as the gathering shades of evening dropped their deep grey tins on all around.

The solemn stillness of the air; the tremulous and uncertain light through which every object appeared; the soothing murmur of the water, whose distant track could be discovered only by the white vapour which hovered on its surface; together with the sedate and sweeping movement of the melancholy owl, as it sailed slowly and conspicuously down the valley; all had a natural tendency to produce a state of mind more than usually susceptible of awful impressions. Over Edward, pre-disposed to serious reflection by the sacred purport of his visit, they exerted a powerful dominion; and he entered the precincts of the abbey in deep meditation on the possibility of the re-appearance of the departed.

The view of the abbey, too, dismantled and falling fast to decay, presented an image of departed greatness admirably calculated to awaken recollection of the mutability and transient nature of all human possessions. Its fine Gothic windows and arches streaming with ivy, were only just perceptible through the dusk as Edward reached the consecrated ground; where, kneeling down at the tomb of his father, he remained for some time absorbed in the tender indulgence of sorrow. Having closed, however, his pious petitions for the soul of the deceased, he was rising from the hallowed mould, and about to re-trace his pathway homewards, when a dim light, glimmering from amid the ruins, arrested his attention. Greatly astonished at a phenomenon so singular, and suddenly calling to remembrance the ghastly appearance and fearful reports made by his servants, he stood for some moments rivetted to the spot, with his eyes fixed on the light, which still continued to gleam steadily, though faintly, from the same quarter. Determined, however, to ascertain from what cause it proceeded, and almost ashamed of the childish apprehensions he had betrayed, he cautiously, and without making the least noise, approached the west entrance of the church: here the light, however, appeared to issue from the choir; which being at

a considerable distance, and toward the other end of the building, he glided along its exterior, and passing the refectory and chapter-house, re-entered the church by the south portal near the choir. With footsteps light as air, he moved along the damp and mouldering pavement: while pale rays, gleaming from afar, faintly glanced on the shafts of some pillars seen in distant perspective down the great aisle. Having now entered the choir, he could distinctly perceive the place from whence the light proceeded; and, on approaching still nearer, dimly distinguished a human form kneeling opposite to it. Not an accent, however, reached his ear; and, except the rustling noise occasioned by the flight of some night-birds along remote parts of the ruin, a deep and awful silence prevailed.

The curiosity of Courtenay being now strongly excited, though mingled with some degree of apprehension and wonder, he determined to ascertain, if possible, who the stranger was; and from what motives he visited, at so unusual an hour, a place so solitary and deserted. Passing, therefore, noiseless, among one of the side aisles, separated from the choir by a kind of elegant lattice-work, he at length stood parallel with the spot where the figure was situate, and had a perfect side-view of the object of his search. It appeared to be a middle-aged man, who was kneeling on a white marble slab near the great altar, and before a small niche in the screen which divides the choir from the east end of the church. In the niche was placed a lamp and crucifix. He had round him a coarse black garment, bound with a leather girdle, but no covering on his head; and, as the light gleamed on his features, Edward was shocked at the despair that seemed fixed in their expression. His hands were clasped together, his eyes turned toward heaven, and heavy and convulsive sighs at intervals escaped from his bosom; while the breeze of night, lifting at times his disordered hair, added peculiar wildness to a countenance which, though elegantly moulded, was of ghastly paleness, and had a sternness and severity in its aspect, and every now and then displayed such an acute sense of conscious guilt, as chilled the beholder, and almost suppressed the rising emotions of pity. Edward, who had impatiently witnessed this extraordinary scene, was about to address the unhappy man; when groans, as from a spirit in torture, and which seemed to rend the very bosom from which they issued, prevented his intention, and he beheld the miserable stranger prostrate in agony on the marble. In a few minutes, however, he arose; and, drawing from beneath his garment an unsheathed sword, held it stretched in his hands toward heaven, while his countenance assumed still deeper marks of horror, and his eyes glared with the lightning of frenzy. At this instant, when, apprehensive for the event, Edward deemed it highly necessary to interfere, and was stepping forward with that view, his purpose was suddenly arrested by the sound of distant music, which, stealing along the remote parts of the abbey, in

notes that breathed a soothing and delicious harmony, seemed the work of enchantment, or to arise from the viewless harps of spirits of the blest. Over the agitated soul of the stranger, it appeared to diffuse the balm of peace! His features became less rigid and stern; his eyes assumed a milder expression; he crossed his arms, in meek submission, on his bosom: and, as the tones, now swelling with the richest melody of heaven, now tremulously dying away in accents of the most ravishing sweetness, approached still nearer, the tears started in his eyes; and, coursing down his cheeks, bathed the deadly instrument yet gleaming in his grasp. This, however, with a heavy sigh, he now placed in a niche; and, bowing gently forward, seemed to pray devoutly. The convulsions which had shaken his frame ceased; tranquillity sat on his brow; while, in strains that melted into holy rapture every harsh emotion, the same celestial music still passed along the air, and filled the compass of the abbey.

Courtenay, whose every faculty had been nearly absorbed through the influence of this unseen minstrelsy, had yet witnessed with sincere pleasure the favourable change in the mind and countenance of the stranger, who still knelt before the lamp; by whose pale light he beheld a perfect resignation tranquillize those features which a few minutes before had been distorted by the struggles of remorse: for such had been the soothing and salutary effects of harmony, in allaying the perturbations of a wounded and self-accusing spirit, that Hope now cheered the bosom so recently the mansion of Despair.

While Edward, in sacred regard to the noblest feelings of humanity, forebore to interrupt the progress of emotions so friendly to virtue and contrition, the music, which had gradually, and with many a dying close, breathed fainter and fainter on the ear, now, in tones that whispered peace and mercy, and which sounded sweet as the accents of departed saints, melted into air, and deep silence again pervaded the abbey. This, however, continued not long; for, in a few moments, was heard the echo of light footsteps; and presently, Courtenay, by the glimmering of the lamp, indistinctly beheld some object which, gliding rapidly up the choir, moved toward the spot where the stranger was yet kneeling. His astonishment was increased, when, on its approaching nearer, he could perceive the form of a young and elegant woman! She was clothed perfectly in white, except where the vest was bound by a black zone; and over her shoulders flowed, negligently, a profusion of light brown hair. A smile of the most winning sweetness played on her features; though the dewy lustre of her eye, and the tears that lingered on her cheek, revealed the struggles of the heart. The stranger, who had risen at her approach, embraced her with the most affectionate emotion: they were both silent, however; and both, now kneeling on the marble slab, employed some time in prayer. Nothing ever appeared to Courtenay more interesting than the countenance of this beautiful

young woman, thus lighted up by all the sensibility of acute feeling: her eyes bathed in tears, and lifted toward heaven, beamed forth an expression truly angelic: while the exquisite delicacy of her complexion and features, over which the pensive graces had diffused their most fascinating charms, together with the simplicity and energy of her devotion, as with clasped hands and trembling lips she implored the assistance of the Divine Spirit, formed a picture worthy of the canvas of Raphael.

Edward now saw before him the cause of those rumours and fears which had been circulated with so much invidiousness in the neighbourhood: for, since the appearance of this amiable young woman, he had been perfectly convinced that the music, to which he had lately listened with so much rapture, had its origin with her. In a still night, these sounds might be heard to some distance; and, together with the glimmering of the light, would occasion no small alarm to the peasant who should happen at that time to be passing near the abbey, and whose apprehensions, thus excited, might easily create some imaginary being, the offspring of ignorance and terror: or, perhaps, some pilgrim, more daring than the rest, had penetrated the interior of the ruin, and had probably beheld one of the very striking figures now present to his eyes. This, without farther enquiry, he had deemed—what, indeed, would at first be the surmise of any spectator—some vision of another world; and had thus strengthened the superstition of the country, and protected the seclusion of the strangers.

As these reflections were passing through his mind, the interesting objects which gave them birth had risen from their kneeling posture; and, after interchanging looks of mingled gratitude and delight, were arm in arm retiring from the sacred marble; when Edward, whose eagerness to discover the motives of the elder stranger's conduct had been greatly augmented since the appearance of his fair companion, determined, if possible, to trace them to the place of their abode. Entering the choir, therefore, by one of the lateral doors, he followed them with slow and silent footsteps; preserving such a distance as, he thought, might prevent the lamp from revealing his person. He had pursued them in this manner, unobserved, through the choir; but, on their suddenly turning, at an acute angle, to enter the cloisters, the light, streaming faintly on his figure, discovered him to the younger stranger; who, uttering a loud shriek, leaned trembling on the arm of her friend.

Courtenay, now immediately rushing forward, endeavoured to allay their apprehensions, by informing them of his name and place of residence, and the motives which had, at this time of night, led him to visit the abbey. He told them, that filial piety having drawn him to the tomb of his father, he had very unexpectedly perceived a light in the interior of the building, which strongly exciting his curiosity, and corroborating the reports of the country, he had endeavoured to ascertain its cause, and in so

doing had discovered the attitude and employment of the elder stranger, who, together with his fair attendant, rather increasing than mitigating his astonishment, he had attempted, by following them at a distance, to ascertain their abode, it being his intention, at some future period, to solicit an explanation of what he had now witnessed.

While Edward was yet speaking, a ghastly paleness overspread the countenance of the elder stranger: it was momentary, however; for, soon resuming his tranquillity, he addressed Courtenay in a low but firm tone of voice. "I am sorry, Sir," said he, "to have occasioned, by my partial residence here, so much apprehension among the inhabitants of your village; but as I have reasons for wishing concealment, at least for a time, I have thought it necessary, though acquainted with their fears, not to undeceive them. But, with you, I know already I can have no motives for disguise; for, though, from great change of feature, brought on by deep sorrow, and great change of apparel, I have hitherto escaped your recognition, you will find, by and by, that we were formerly better acquainted. In the mean time, I will conduct you to the spot we inhabit; where, should you wish for an explanation of the extraordinary scenes you have been a spectator of this night, the recital, though it will cost me many struggles, shall be given you; and I do this, strange as it may now sound to you, actuated by the recollection of past friendship." Having said this, he and his beautiful partner, who had listened with almost as much surprise as Edward to an address so unexpected, moved slowly on; and Courtenay, occupied in fruitless conjecture, followed in silence.

They passed along a large portion of the cloisters, whose perspective, as seen by the dreary light of the lamp, had a singularly awful effect; and then ascending some steps, entered what is called the dormitory, and which was carried over this part of the abbey to a considerable distance. Here, in two small chambers, where the roof remained sufficiently entire, were a couple of beds, and a small quantity of neat furniture; and here the stranger, pausing, invited Edward to enter. "These rooms," observed he, "are my occasional habitation, for at least twice a week, during the night. But, before I commence the melancholy narrative of my crimes and sufferings, I will endeavour to recall your recollection to your companion in arms on the continent: for this purpose, I will retire for a few minutes, and put on the dress I usually come hither in; the habit you now see on me being merely assumed, after reaching this place, as best suited to the situation of my mind, to the penitence and humiliation that await me here." His tone of speaking, as he thus addressed Courtenay, was perceptibly altered, being much more open and full than before; and brought to Edward's ear a voice he had been accustomed to, though he could not at the moment appropriate it to any individual of his acquaintance. During his absence, his amiable

companion, who had not perfectly recovered from the alarm into which she had been thrown by Courtenay's intrusion, sat silent and reserved; until Edward, observing some manuscript music in the room, ventured to enquire if the exquisite performance he had listened to with so much delight in the abbey had not originated with her? A deep sigh, at this question, escaped her bosom; and her eyes filled with tears, while in tremulous accents she replied—That, owing to the great relief and support her brother experienced from music, she always accompanied him to this place, and that it was a source of the purest happiness to her to be thus able, through the medium of her harp and voice, to alleviate and soothe his sorrows. For this purpose, the instrument was left at the abbey; and was placed in that part of the ruin where it's tones were best heard, and produced the most pleasing effect. At this instant, the door opening, the stranger entered, clothed in a mourning military undress, and bearing a taper in his hand. He placed himself, the light gleaming steadily on his countenance, opposite Courtenay, who involuntarily started at his appearance. "Do you not remember," he exclaimed, "the officer who was wounded by your side at the battle of Zutphen?"—"My God!" cried Edward, "can it be Clifford?"—"The same, my friend, the same," he replied; "though affliction has anticipated, on my features, the characters of age. You behold, Courtenay, the most unfortunate, the most miserable of men! But let me not pain my sweet Caroline, by the recital of facts which have already wounded, almost to dissolution, her tender heart. We will walk, my friend, into the abbey; its awful gloom will better suit the dreadful tale I have to unfold." Saying this, and promising his sister to return in a few minutes, they descended into the cloisters, and from thence, through the choir, into the body of the church.

The tranquillity of the night, and the light and refreshing breeze that yet lingered amid the ruin, and swept through its long withdrawing aisles, were unavailing to mitigate the agitation of Clifford, as with trembling footsteps he passed along the choir.

"Oh, my friend!" he exclaimed, "the spirits of those I have injured hover near us! Beneath that marble slab, my Courtenay, on which you saw me kneel with so much horror and remorse, repose the relics of a beloved wife, of the most amiable of her sex, and who owes her death—God of mercy! register not the deed—to the wild suggestions of my jealous frenzy!" While thus speaking, he hurried rapidly forward toward the western part of the abbey; and here Clifford, resuming more composure, proceeded in his narrative. "You may probably recollect, about a twelvemonth ago, my obtaining leave of the Earl of Leicester to visit England. I came, my friend, on a fatal errand. I learned, through the medium of an officious relation, that my wife, my

beloved Matilda, of whose affliction and accomplishments you have frequently heard me speak with rapture, had attached herself to a young man who had visited in the neighbourhood of my estate at C——n; but that she had lately removed, for the summer months, to a small house and farm I possess within a mile or two of this abbey; and that here, likewise, she continued to receive the attentions of the young stranger. Fired by representations such as these, and racked with cureless jealousy, I returned to England in disguise, and found the report of my relation the theme of common conversation in the county. It was on the evening of a fine summer's day that I reached the hamlet of G——; and, with a trembling hand, and palpitating heart, knocked at my own door. The servant informed me, that Matilda had walked toward the abbey. I immediately took the same route. The sun had set, the grey tints of evening had wrapt every object in uniform repose: the moon, however, was rising; and in a short time, silvered part of the ruin and its neighbouring trees. I placed myself in the shadow of one of the buttresses; and had not waited long, ere Matilda, my beautiful Matilda, appeared, leaning on the arm of the stranger. You may conceive the extreme agitation of my soul at a spectacle like this: unhappily, revenge was, at the instant, the predominating emotion; and, rushing forward with my sword, I called on the villain, as I then thought him, to defend himself. Shocked by the suddenness of the attack, and the wild impetuosity of my manner, Matilda fell insensibly on the earth; and only recovered recollection, at the moment when my sword had pierced the bosom of the stranger, through whose guard I had broken in the first fury of the assault. With shrieks of agony and despair she sprang towards the murdered youth; and, falling on his body, exclaimed—"My brother! my dear, dear brother!"

"Had all nature fallen in dissolution around me, my astonishment and horror could not have been greater than what I felt from these words. The very marrow froze in my bones; and I stood fixed to the ground, an image of despair and guilt! Meantime, the life blood of the unhappy Walsingham ebbed fast away, and he expired at my feet, and in the arms of his beloved sister; who, at this event, perhaps fortunately for us both, relapsed into a state of insensibility. My own emotions, on recovering from the stupor into which I had been thrown, were those, I believe, of frenzy; nor can I now dwell on them with safety, nor without a partial dereliction of intellect. Suffice it to say, that I had sufficient presence of mind left to apply for assistance at the nearest cottage; and that the hapless victims of my folly were at length conveyed to the habitation of Matilda. Another dreadful scene awaited her—the recognition of her husband, as the murderer of her brother! This, through the attention of my friends, for I myself was incapable of acting with rationality, was for some time postponed. It came, at length, however, through the agonies of my remorse and contrition, to her knowledge; and two months have scarce elapsed, since I placed her by the side of her poor

brother; who, at the fatal moment of our rencounter, had not been many months returned from the Indies, and was in person a perfect stranger to your friend. Beneath that marble slab they rest, my Courtenay; and ere this, I believe, and through the medium of my own lawless hand, I should have partaken of their grave, had not my beloved sister, my amiable and gentle Caroline, stepped in, like an angel, between her brother and destruction.

“Singular as it may appear, the greatest satisfaction I now receive, is from frequent visits to the tomb of Matilda and her brother; there, over the reliques of those I have injured, to implore the mercy of an offended Deity. Such, however, are the agonies I suffer, from the recollection of my crime, that even this resource would be denied me, were it not for the intervention of the powers of music: partial I have ever been to this enchanting art; and am indebted to it for the mitigation and repression of feelings that would otherwise exhaust my shattered frame. You have witnessed the severe struggles of remorse which at times agitate this afflicted heart; you have likewise seen the soothing and salutary effects of harmony. My Caroline’s voice and harp have thus repeatedly lulled the fever of a wounded spirit; the workings, nearly, of despair. A state of mind friendly to devotion, and no longer at war with itself, is usually the effect of her sweet and pathetic strains: it is then I think myself forgiven; it is then I seem to hear the gentle accents of my Matilda, in concert with the heavenly tones; the whisper of eternal peace, and sensations of unutterable pleasure, steal through every nerve.

“When such is the result, when peace and piety are the offspring of the act, you will not wonder at my visits to this melancholy ruin. Soon as the shades of evening have spread their friendly covert, twice a week, we hasten hither from our cottage; a scene similar to what you have been a spectator of to-night takes place; and we retire to rest in the little rooms which we have rendered habitable in the dormitory. In the morning, very early, we quit the house of penitence and prayer; and such is the dread which the occasional glimmering of lights, and the sounds of distant music, have given birth to in the country, that none but our servant, who is faithful to the secret, dare approach near the place: we have consequently, hitherto, save by yourself, remained undiscovered, and even unsuspected.

“Such, my friend, is the history of my crimes and sufferings; and such are the causes of the phenomena you have beheld to night. But see, Courtenay, my lovely Caroline!—she, to whom, under Heaven, I am indebted for any portion of tranquillity I yet enjoy, is approaching to meet us. I can discern her, by the whiteness of her robes, gliding down yon distant aisle.”

Caroline had become apprehensive for her brother; and had stolen from the dormitory, with the view of checking a conversation, which she was afraid would prove too affecting for his

spirits. Edward beheld her, as she drew near, rather as a being from the blessed, the messenger of peace and virtue, than as partaking of the frailties of humanity. If the beauties of her person had before interested him in her favor, her conduct towards the unhappy Clifford had given him the fullest conviction of the purity and goodness of her heart, of the strength and energy of her mind; and, from that moment, he determined, if possible, to secure an interest in a bosom so fraught with all that could exalt and decorate the lot of life.

He was compelled, however, though reluctantly, to take leave of his friends for the night, and hastened to remove the extreme alarm into which his servants had been thrown by his unexpected detention. They had approached, as near as their fears would permit them, to the abbey; for, to enter its precincts, was a deed they thought too daring for man! and had there exerted all their strength, though in vain, in repeatedly calling him by his name. It was, therefore, with a joy little short of madness, that they again beheld their master; who, as soon as these symptoms of rapture had subsided, found great difficulty in repressing their curiosity, which was in full stretch for information from another world.

It may here, perhaps, be necessary to add, that time, and the soothing attentions of his beloved sister, restored at length to perfect peace, and to the almost certain hope of pardon from the Deity, the hitherto agitated mind of Clifford. I can add, also, that Time saw the union of Caroline and Edward; and that, with them, at the hospitable mansion of the Courtenays, Clifford passed the remainder of his days.

THE BRITISH SAILOR'S TALE.

IN his third summer, Henry Randolph was left an orphan. His uncle, to whose charge he had been consigned, possessed a mind suited to his calling: a calling he disgraced not, by attending to the dictates of justice or humanity, which he considered as having no right to stigmatize the practice of those, whose mansions display to the tearful eye of misery and want, the *honourable* badge of THE THREE BLUE BALLS.

At the age of fourteen, Henry was placed behind the counter; where, with a disposition which bore not the smallest affinity to that of his employer, his feelings were outraged every hour; and as he was a stranger to artifice, those feelings were sure to call forth the resentment of his uncle.

One day, in particular, a poor woman entered the shop with a thread-bare coat, the only one belonging to a distressed husband,

at that time afflicted with a fever, and requested a trifle on it to purchase something that had been ordered to relieve his complaint. The youth, shocked on the petition being refused, stole round to the door, and, as the poor creature came to it, put a shilling into her hand, which was all the pocket-money he had; promising, at the same time, to devote his allowance from his uncle to the relief of the unfortunate man, till released from the pressure of sickness. The fervent "Heaven bless your goodness!" reached the ear of his relation, who, in terms of the utmost severity, reproached the humane Henry, and informed him, that from that moment his door should be shut against an undutiful boy, who had dared to act against the inclination of those who had kept him from beggary. Thus dismissed by his unfeeling kinsman, who had been a considerable gainer by the death of his brother, Henry, with no earthly tie to prevent him, formed a resolve of throwing himself upon the chance of war. A solitary guinea was all that his unprincipled uncle gave him on his departure: the poor woman was nevertheless remembered, to whom he directly hastened, and to relieve whose distresses he bestowed a part of the little in his possession.

At this time Randolph had reached his eighteenth year. Embarked in a glorious cause, and possessed of that firmness of mind which bids defiance to danger, he looked forward to the hour of engagement, and anticipated the glory of victory. Poor youth! unaware that those unblest with rank or fortune, must never expect to become famous for their valour, or to be rewarded according to their merit. But fatal experience at length brought home to his disappointed breast the fallacy of building on bravery or worth. He fought—he conquered—and well merited the name of a brave British seaman—yet, notwithstanding the wound of honour, and the claims of dangerous services from a nation who owed him much, at the conclusion of the war, he had the mortification of finding himself discharged—neglected, moneyless, and friendless! His uncle, during his absence, had paid the debt of nature. The old man had been detected in dishonest practices; the consequence proved his utter ruin; and he died of a broken heart in the workhouse of the parish to which he belonged. Previous to his departure from the British shores, Henry cherished an affection for the bloomy Nancy Abbot, who being likewise left an orphan, while but a child, the neighbours of her departed parents, who had lived with credit, though unblest with fortune, took pity on her helpless innocence, and raised a subscription among themselves to procure her board, cloathing, and education. Their benevolence was not extended to the unworthy; the little Nancy, virtuous, amiable, and thankful, proved the delight and pride of her friends, who, at length, assisted her in establishing a day-school, for which, from her good qualities, and excellent understanding, she was so well suited.

Unlike the world, ever prone to shrink from the unfortunate, the Henry of Nancy Abbot returned to enrapture a heart, a stranger to false refinement, and too honest to disguise its feelings.

The persuasions of the man she loved to unite their fortunes, were not long resisted; and they very soon confirmed those vows at the sacred altar, which no doubt heaven had smiled upon, and virtue had approved.

Henry, possessed of strong natural parts, assisted by a common education, and bearing a mind fraught with principles which revolted at the idea of idleness, and too independent to think of subsisting, even by the means of the dearest object of his affection, and partner of his future days, while health and means of application for employment were not withheld, soon procured to himself an engagement as a porter in the warehouse of a wealthy trader in the city, who, pleased with the fidelity of his domestic, very soon procured another under him, by which means his situation became easy and profitable.

About a twelvemonth after their marriage, the amiable Nancy presented to the arms of her Henry a smiling cherub! To visit the mother and the little stranger became the first attention of the fond father on his return from his daily employment—Enraptured would he hang over the pillow which gave rest to its lovely cheek, and trace in his sleeping babe the features of his beloved; then, with clasped hands, and eyes raised to heaven, while the full tide of gratitude overwhelmed his heart, would he look up with thankfulness to that Power who had thus enriched him. Oh! these are joys, known only to the husband, the parent, and the man! The white hours of domestic peace and innocence bestow a felicity unknown to the golden ones of wealth and pomp—The raptures of a little family, arising from a surety of reciprocal affections, are more to be prized than all the pleasures of the dissipated great; procured from opera sounds, masquerade extravagancies, scenic munimery at their own splendid mansions, and other expedients equally light, vain, and contemptible.

Frequently would Henry clasp his infant daughter to his arms, and often would he supplicate heaven to pour down its blessings on her head, while his amiable partner united with him in the act of petition, thankfulness, and praise.

Thus comforted with mutual felicity, year after year passed on in a series of calm and uninterrupted content; while their Harriet grew up the darling of her parents, and the admiration of their friends, until her thirteenth year closed upon that happiness which was fated never to return! Farewell now to innocence and tranquility! The cup of woe was preparing, and they were condemned to swallow the draught of bitterness.

It had been a custom with Randolph to celebrate the anniversary of the accession of his gracious Monarch to the throne of Great-Britain. The *last* he had to observe arriving, this happy family were innocently engaged among themselves. Harriet had

been indulged with the company of a neighbour's daughter, about her own age, and the two young folks were taken up in those little amusements which enliven the sportive and blissful hours of health and youth, when a loud rap at the door made them start from their seats; and an immediate repetition aroused their apprehension; which Henry perceiving, he told them to fear no harm, as heaven would guard the innocent; and instantly repaired to learn the cause of so rude an alarm.

Picture, ye who can picture, distress and agony, at that sad moment when misery macks the powers of description, the feelings of Randolph, when, on opening the door, he found himself surrounded by a press-gang! Instantly they seized upon their defenceless prey, and, notwithstanding the piercing cries of his wife, the little Harriet, and her companion, hurried him away from a home of peace and comfort, which no self-reproaches had ever embittered. In vain did he entreat for a little time to reconcile his Nancy to the bitterness of her fate; strangers to humanity, and authorised by the cruel custom of their country, it did not belong to the horrid business of these protected plunderers to attend to the wailings of the wife and child. The husband, the father, had become theirs, and no other idea than that of instantly conveying him away employed their thoughts.

Denied the mournful privilege of even a parting embrace, Henry could only look back on the convulsions of his wife, and hear the screams of his child—without the power of assisting the one, or comforting the other. He was soon hurried to the tender, in the unwholesome confines of which he remained till the vessel dropped down to the Nore, where this miserable wretch was put on board a man of war, which had received sailing orders, and immediately departed on its destined expedition.

The afflictions of Henry were still farther embittered by the cruel treatment he experienced from his commander, who, wanting a mind to discriminate between sorrow and sullenness, was continually charging him with neglect and inattention. The afflictions of the soul had so weakened his constitution, as to render him unable for a time to attend to the imposed duties of his miserable station; a little insuigence was therefore requested, till he should be recovered from an illness that at that time endangered an existence, which it was his duty, notwithstanding his sufferings, to endeavour to preserve: intelligence of his incapacity was therefore conveyed to his captain, who—to the disgrace of manhood—after severely accusing him of idleness and artifice, commanded punishment as a cure for an emaciated frame, and an almost breaking heart. Pause, ye who have shed your tears for the fate of the enslaved African, and drop one here for Henry—Slavery, with all its supposed and real ills, may truly be deemed “sunshine to the colour of *his* fate!”

The cruel orders of his commander were instantly obeyed, and the disgrace of public discipline bore hard upon the spirit of Ran-

dolph ; and hard it ever must bear on the spirits of those who are thus made *slaves*, in order that they may fight for *British freedom*.

And now the fatal moment arrived, when the rectitude of his mind began to waver : disgrace unmerited, had affected more than misery : the standard of honour had been shaken—and, but for this last disgrace, he had prepared his mind to meet his country's foe as a Briton ought, notwithstanding his private griefs, which he had hoped to medicine by valour, victory, and reward.

The expectation of a Christian and a man had just begun to cheer his bosom ; he trusted Providence would protect his Nancy, and his Harriet, till it should again restore him to their embraces. Dawnings of comfort, how were ye overcast ! Blossoms of hope, how were ye blasted ! On the seas of Britannia, the throne of slavery was established—and her own sons crushed by the cruelty of unfeeling power,

The first departure from that irreproachable conduct he had preserved through life did not fail to affect him much on recollection. In the bitterness of his grief he had accused heaven with injustice—while the profligacy of those around him had poisoned his principles. One of his shipmates had found out a way to purloin liquor from the purser's stores, and had made Randolph acquainted with his scheme ; advising him, at the same time, to follow the example. At first the unhappy Randolph started at the idea of theft ; but, when its criminality was softened down by the sophistry of false argument, he listened, and became guilty !

It was not long before his practices were discovered, and he was condemned to be handcuffed, and chained by the leg on the fore-castle, where he was kept on short allowance. The petrifying powers of accumulated disgrace at length hardened his heart against the sense of shame. It had been rendered hopeless by the cruelties of his countrymen ; and he soon became reconciled to the Hebrew mode of requiting evil with evil. In a short time, a demand was made on his courage by the hour of action and of danger : giving, therefore, one sigh to the remembrance of those of innocence and peace, he rushed forward on the deck, but not to his death ; his trials were not yet over, and the severity of his destiny was as yet unfulfilled ! Victory fell to the lot of the enemy ; and Randolph was conveyed, with others who survived the desperate action, with numbers three times superior to their own, to a loathsome prison, where they remained till the conclusion of the war. Then they were released ; but their enlargement procured them only an exchange of misery. They were obliged to apply to a magistrate for certificates ; with which, unaccused, unfriended, it was their lot to “ beg bitter bread through realms their valour had contributed to save.”

Randolph, once more on his native shore, applied to his captain for a certificate of his services, who readily recognized him, and it was granted : he therefore made application to the proper

office at the Navy, to receive his wages; upon which the clerk turning over his books, informed him that his wages had been already paid to a person who produced what now appeared to be a forged will and power: of course he must remain with his claims unsatisfied, until he could take the proper steps for obtaining redress. This stroke, heavy as it fell, did not, however, entirely overcome him. Emaciated with want, anxiety, and fatigue, but more by those misgivings of the mind, respecting the fate of those he loved, and from whom he had been so long separated, he proceeded, a poor forlorn beggar, with trembling steps, towards that mansion where he had left his wife and child. Unhappy man! he knocked at the door, but strangers opened it; Mrs. Nevill, the person who then kept the school, informed him, that all the neighbourhood had kindly administered to Mrs. Randolph's relief; but her afflictions becoming too powerful for her mind, in the course of a few months, bereft of reason, she gave up that being whose existence had been thus imbittered by the cruelties of war, falling a martyr to enormities which the very laws of her own nation consider as such.

The spirit-broken Randolph, after a heart-felt groan for the death of his wife, ventured to inquire after his child, his Harriet! "Name her not!" replied Mrs. Nevill: "she was a bad girl, and unworthy your attention."—"Oh!" continued Henry, "do not rack me thus! Say she is dead, and I will strive to bear the dreadful intelligence!—But pity, O pity my poor brain! My lost wife was virtuous and good; O say not her child has been otherwise."

Mrs. Nevill, who was an advocate for justice without mercy, perceiving the state of his mind, with a look of great sagacity observed, that it was needless to mince the matter; that every good-parent was not blessed with good children; and that it was partly owing to sparing the rod while they were young. "A lady at Richmond," continued this prudent teacher, "took your daughter as a companion, and foolishly indulged her love for music and reading. The consequence was, that in the course of a few months, Harriet thought fit to run away from her protector, who has never heard of her since. You know your daughter appeared some years older than she really was: it was no doubt her beauty attracted regard: several gay young fellows visited at the house, and it may naturally be supposed the villain was among them who lured her from such a heedless and improper guardian." Randolph could hear no more; he stamped on the ground, and beat his aching forehead. At length, after a pause, he looked on his intelligencer, perceived her spirit, and left her.

He immediately repaired to Richmond; but there his griefs were rendered still more poignant. Arriving at the mansion belonging to the former protector of his ruined and lost child, the servant took in his name, but quickly returned, with orders for him to depart instantly from the door, as his lady had nothing to

say to him. Alas, hapless parent! thou wert destitute of money, and no doubt the unfeeling domestic had given his own account of thy miserable appearance, picturing thy countenance, rendered pale and squalid from an almost breaking heart, as that of a wretch deeply dyed in the mysteries of villainy. Thus repulsed, comfortless, a stranger in a wide world, without a single hope to console him, he determined to apply to his former master for some relief to his sufferings. But even this hope was frustrated. Disappointments in payments from abroad, aggravated by many severe losses at home, having created much uneasiness in the mind of Mr. Cartwright, he had given up all his connexions, and retired into a remote part of Wales.

Destitute of the means to procure a change in his appearance, which bespoke the extreme of wretchedness, excluded every hope of getting employment, nothing was left for the miserable Randolph but beggary! For some days he placed himself in different parts of London: but the aid of passengers was very small. He determined, therefore, to see if he could experience more humanity without the town than he had found within it, and had wandered on as far as Hampstead. It was the close of autumn; night made its swift approaches, accompanied with rain and a chilling wind. He had gained the heath, where he was suffering cold, hunger, and fatigue. In this evil moment of want and desperation, he heard the sound of a carriage upon the road, and approached the person who was placed within it, in order to supplicate relief; but seeing only a lady, he resolved to change his supplication into a demand, which procured him a few guineas, and the offer of a watch; but that he refused; and told the driver, who was but a lad, to proceed. He then quitted the road, and speedily found himself pursued by two horsemen. Finding swiftness and resistance of no avail, he surrendered himself. The lady proved to be a woman of fashion, who was coming to town for the winter season; her servants, at the moment of the robbery, happened to be too far behind to prevent it, but in a few minutes they came up, when they were informed of the circumstance; on which two of them, following the directions of the postboy, who had marked Randolph's course, rode off, and took him as related. It would prove a painful and unpleasing task to dwell on this part of Randolph's mournful history. It is sufficient to inform the reader, that he underwent imprisonment, and a trial which doomed him to an ignominious death. Circumstances, however, having been represented as favourable as possible, and this being his first offence, he was recommended to mercy, and obtained the king's free pardon. On his enlargement, he found his miseries as great as ever, and knew not where to turn for the support of life; when happening to meet a fellow-shipmate, who was at that time in good circumstances, owing to the death of an uncle, who had left him a farm in the country, the generous tar heard with candour the relation of Randolph's

sufferings, pitied his sorrows, and pardoned his guilt. Mr. Wilkins was then going down to his farm, about two hundred miles off; and told Randolph, that if he chose to exchange want for plenty, and approved of a removal from a spot he had so little cause to be attached to, there was a house at his service, where he might, if he pleased, spend the remainder of his days. "Come, my boy!" continued Wilkins, "you were young when I first knew you, but I liked your spirit. I have ploughed the sea, and am now going to plough the land. Thank heaven, I am not a novice as to the management of a farm, having spent the first fifteen years of my life with this very kinsman, who, bless his soul! has been so good to me, and had never left him, had not I, like an ungrateful young dog, quarrelled with my bread and butter: but no matter, I have bit of the bridle; and, after all, have met with goodness when I had no right to expect it. This experience has given me a heart to feel for a fellow-creature, much more for a fellow-sufferer, and old shipmate."

Thus providentially preserved from threatening evils, Randolph, with grateful sensations, embraced the offer of his friend. They departed from London in a few days; but not before Randolph found himself clothed, and in possession of money. Wilkins was not very rich in that quality which the world is fond of distinguishing under the term *refinement*: he had not a tear to fall for every trifle; but he possessed a heart ready to burst on the relation of human misery—a heart which prompted him to relieve with delicacy; and wherever his obligations fell, to let them fall as light as possible on those who experienced his bounty.

The two friends soon arrived at the humble though neat mansion of rural felicity and domestic peace. The daughter of Wilkins ran to embrace her parent; she was a blooming girl, and her countenance was that of innocence. Randolph looked upon her, and at the happy father, by turns; and then, with a deep sigh, fell senseless to the ground! Nature, who had formed the heart of Wilkins, was his only prompter on this melancholy occasion; he sent his daughter away, and suffered not his wife to administer. In a little time Randolph recovered, and, clasping his hands, exclaimed, "O, my lost Harriet!" Then turning to Wilkins, he continued, "Pardon the unhappy man who dares to envy his benefactor; but I will yet look up: I once, my friend, was blessed with a daughter lovely as your own; I have been led by misery into guilt, but live to own the mercies of a protecting God! My poor child too has erred; but that Being, who permitted her to behold a wretched father torn from her infant arms, and a despairing mother expire in madness, has, no doubt, taken their wretched offspring to himself." Wilkins, in return to this affecting address, looked far more than he could utter. At length, clapping his gait gently on the shoulder, he exclaimed, "Poor fellow! in this harbour rest secure. The blasts of misfortune have borne hard upon thee; but now the

storm is over ; then do not let thy spirits be cast down. I am a rough seaman, my actions must comfort thee more than my words, there I fall short. But come, let me lead thee to my good dame, and perhaps her conversation will cheer thee : a good heart like her's will ever be a glad one : she has taught me to honour religion : and, but for her, I should never have been what I am, nor ever have known the happiness I have felt in performing my duty as a Christian."

Randolph experienced in the society of Mrs. Wilkins the truth of the above observation ; her manners were mild ; and her heart was guided by the pure precepts contained in that volume, which administers comfort to all who seriously turn to its sacred pages.

From the same source Randolph procured balm for his disordered mind, and deeply felt how much he was indebted to a preserving Providence.

Two years had elapsed, when Wilkins, having some business to transact, which would keep him from his family about a week, at the distance of near fifty miles from their dwelling, he proposed for his friend to bear him company, in hopes that change of air might remove a severe indisposition under which Randolph had laboured for some months, and which threatened a decline. The offer was accepted, and they set off on their journey ; but when they were within five miles of the place they were going to, a sudden and violent illness obliged Randolph to stop at an inn on the road ; and, finding himself unable to proceed, he desired to be left there until Wilkins should return.

As the business which had caused the journey was urgent, Wilkins left, though unwillingly, his sick companion, with a strict charge to the master of the inn to procure every assistance his malady required.

Randolph was immediately put to bed, and no attention was spared on the part of the people of the house. A medicine, which had been ordered on his going to rest, performed its part so happily, as to enable him to rise the next day. Towards the evening, which was remarkably fine, he imagined himself so far recovered as to be able to walk out. He proceeded about a mile ; a beautiful setting sun enriched the appearance of every surrounding object, and tempted him to extend his walk still farther, when he was seized with a sudden delirium, and sunk to the ground. Fortunately, two servants, belonging to Lady Middleton, whose seat was situated near the spot, were at that moment passing by, and hastened to his assistance ; but poor Randolph was unable to answer the inquiries they made ; on which, with great humanity, they bore the unhappy man between them to her ladyship's mansion, where every aid his situation required was extended towards him.

Recovering by degrees, he looked around him ; then fixing his eyes on Dr. Spencer, her ladyship's physician, " Tell me, worthy Sir," said Randolph, " to whom I am indebted for this

preservation of a life which has been marked by varied misery.” Dr. Spencer replied, “It is enough, my good Sir, to know that you are among friends. Lady Middleton, who owns this seat, is at this time engaged with her attorney on some business of consequence, respecting the affairs of the late Sir Charles. A few months ago, all was happiness and serenity in this now mournful mansion; but death has robbed it of its master; and heaven knows how much, and with what reason, all within it have mourned their irreparable loss! But more of this in the morning, when I hope to find you able to converse with me. I am a man, Sir, who have had my misfortunes, which have led me strongly to feel for human afflictions.” Upon which he withdrew; and Randolph, laying his head upon the pillow, fell into a gentle slumber.

The next morning Dr. Spencer re-visited his patient, and found him perfectly sensible, though extremely low. The good old man seating himself by the bedside, after feeling the pulse of Randolph, thus seriously addressed him: “Tell me, my dear friend, if you are connected with any one whom you are anxious to see. Do not be alarmed; but your illness is of such a nature as to mix along with my hopes a degree of doubt; therefore, ill could I answer it to my conscience, were I to say there is no occasion to provide for the worst that may happen.” Randolph, clasping Dr. Spencer’s hand, exclaimed with great energy, “Blessed intelligence! O, Sir, I have had my connexions, from whom being rudely torn, misery and want have made me guilty of crimes. The former are gone where I trust I shall meet them; and the latter, through the atonement which I have shewn to, I am sure are forgiven.”

He then went through the whole of his unhappy history, which was heard by the person to whom it was told with candour and humanity. Dr. Spencer then prevailed on Randolph to be as calm as possible, and undertook to inform the family of Wilkins of every circumstance necessary for them to know, and likewise to leave a letter for him on his return to the inn where he had left his friend.

Dr. Spencer immediately waited on Lady Middleton, with intelligence of every thing that had been done: but when he came to Randolph’s eventful story, his hearer gave a long convulsive scream, and dropped senseless from her chair. Dr. Spencer had the presence of mind not to alarm the family, and in a little time her ladyship revived; when casting her eyes wildly around the room, she exclaimed, “Where is he, where is my father!” “Your father!” rejoined Dr. Spencer. “Yes, my father! Reply not, but bear me to him.”

Dr. Spencer was scarcely able to support the petrifying effects of this discovery. At length, advancing to Lady Middleton with a collected look, he thus addressed her: “Madam, permit an old man to advise you how to act on an occasion which requires the

exertion of all your resolution. If you mean to save your parent, you *must* restrain your impatience. Pardon me, madam, for this boldness: and let my age, and my affection for you and yours, cover me from your resentment. I will go instantly to your restored parent, if such he is, and prepare his mind to receive you." Without waiting a reply, he returned to his patient's chamber, requested his attention, and thus addressed him: "Your destiny, Mr. Randolph, has been indeed severe; but, notwithstanding the heavy evils you have endured, reflection on the past must bring back to your mind certain blessings, the recollection of which, no doubt, fill your heart with thankfulness; for have you not been an object of heaven's peculiar mercy? and that mercy, my dear friend, is not yet exhausted. It is in my power, through the means of a mysterious Providence, to comfort you even beyond your hopes: receive then my intelligence with calmness and thankfulness. You have a good and innocent child yet living; and who, in a little time, can be brought hither to receive her father's blessing." The venerable Spencer waited for Randolph's reply, who, clasping his hands together, held them up for a time, in silent adoration; he then turned to his worthy friend, saying, "The heart which ought to bound with ecstasy is now broken: I am sensible that I have not many hours to live; but, that heaven should sweeten those hours with such an earnest of future bliss, exceeds all human comprehension."

Doctor Spencer, though much afflicted in knowing himself that Randolph's last hour was swiftly coming on, yet repressed his emotions, went to the apartment of Lady Middleton, and, approaching her with a tender respect, said, "Your parent is now prepared to see you; but do not be alarmed at beholding him pale and very low: it is the duty of good hearts, like yours, to bear with submission the decrees of Providence. I have some reason to imagine, my worthy lady, that you and I must very shortly mourn his loss; but, consider we shall indeed have occasion to mourn, but not like those who have no hope. Your father may perhaps become inquisitive concerning your story; I think it needful, therefore, to be indulged with so much of it as you think proper to disclose, in order to remove from yourself a task which may prove rather severe."—"Kind and generous Sir," replied the weeping Lady Middleton, "Receive in a few words my unhappy story, and then lead me to the restored parent whom I am prepared to give up to that heaven, where, I trust, Sir, you and I shall shortly join him."

Lady Middleton then recounted what the reader is already acquainted with: we shall therefore only pursue the relation from her situation with her Richmond friend.

"In this gay family I experienced every indulgence that gives pleasure to young minds: I was taught every polite accomplishment, and moved in a continual round of amusement; but my heart revolted at joy, for my parents were ever present to my

thought. Among the young gentlemen who visited at the house, Sir Charles Middleton was the most accomplished, and was just come to the possession of his estate. From the first moments that I beheld him, I felt a partiality in his favour: we soon became dear to each other; he likewise was an orphan; and often did we mingle our tears together.

“At length I consented to a private marriage, which he represented as absolutely necessary, as his uncle, who had no children, had declared he would leave his estate to strangers, if his nephew did not marry into a family of rank and title. My love was too great to object to his desire in this particular; and, unknown to the family, depending on that honour which never knew a stain, that worth which never will again be equalled, I came with him to this mansion, where we were united by the most sacred ties.

“You know the rest; you know his generous heart, too delicate to call me his in private, panted only for my honour and my peace! You soothed his wounded spirit, on the cruel treatment he received from his unfeeling uncle, on the discovery of our marriage; and you watched him during the course of that fever which took him from my widowed arms! But come, Sir; I am now collected, lead me to my honoured father, and let me receive that blessing which you have given me to fear will not often be repeated.” Doctor Spencer bowed, and led her to the chamber. On entering, they found Randolph still in a slumber, but it was broken with sighs. In a little time he awaked; and Doctor Spencer advancing to the bedside, took hold of his hand, and requested his attention to a short recital of his Harriet’s history, from the time he left her: on hearing which, Randolph exclaimed, “Blessed, and ever blessed Providence, my thankful soul bends to thy decrees; let me but see my child once again, and I shall die contented! On this, supported between two attendants, Lady Middleton advanced, and kneeling down, felt the hands of her father resting upon her head: then rising, she threw her arms around him in speechless agony. Doctor Spencer was too much moved to utter a word; but, looking for a time on the affecting scene, his heart became too full for his strength, and he sunk down on a chair, and wept aloud. At length, recollecting himself, he again struggled with his feelings, and advanced to the bed, where he beheld Lady Middleton still embracing her father with a wildness which alarmed him. On raising her up, she uttered a long and deep sigh, and fainted in the arms of the attendants, as they were conveying her away from the lifeless corpse of that parent, who had just lived to breathe out his departing spirit in the presence of a child he had for a long time considered as lost.

Doctor Spencer, after giving proper directions concerning the lifeless body, notwithstanding the depression of his own spirits, hastened to support those of Lady Middleton, whose religion for-

bidding her to despair, he found in the attitude of prayer. He withdrew unobserved to the adjoining chamber, when he could distinctly hear the pious ejaculation delivered from lips that had been early taught to express the dictates of innocence, from which her gentle spirit had never swerved.

But however resigned, Lady Middleton still found herself unequal to the task of combating with her accumulated and severe afflictions; and Doctor Spencer observed, with inward regret, that, although her griefs were silent, they were yet rooted in a heart too amiable to reconcile itself quickly to the loss of parents who had thus fallen the victims of misery; and of a husband, in whose love and attention alone she had hoped to experience comfort. The melancholy satisfaction of dwelling on the remembrance of those we have loved and honoured, is an enjoyment known only to the possessors of true refinement and pure sensibility. Lady Middleton had bestowed her affections on an orphan, as she then imagined herself, and who, like herself, had cherished in his bosom the strong and dear recollection of his departed parents.

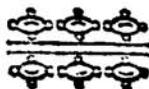
Wilkins, having completed his business, returned to the inn, where he had left his friend. His surprise may easily be imagined on receiving the letter which had been left for him; its contents induced him immediately to hasten to Lady Middleton, to whom he was introduced by Doctor Spencer. Without reserve, the child of Randolph embraced the honest and deeply affected seaman. Wilkins could only sob out, "Be comforted, my dear child: I loved thy father from the first moment I saw him: he was then a fine stripling, and possessed the heart of a lion; but heaven and himself only have known how it has since been broken down by the storms of adversity. Well, well, there is a great deal of injustice in the world; and my poor brother seaman has come in for his full share of it! But, as my dame says, the keen edge of heaven's just vengeance is never suffered to rust; and reflection will come home to the cruel-minded." The effusions of the honest heart of this generous Briton conveyed consolation to the afflictions he endeavoured thus to relieve; and Lady Middleton experienced every comfort she was capable of receiving in the society of the tender, humane, and refined Spencer, and the honest, manly, and feeling Wilkins.

A few weeks past on, during which Lady Middleton employed herself in settling her worldly concerns, in which she nobly paid back the debt of gratitude to those who had so richly merited every thing she had to bestow. That task performed, her thoughts were wholly turned to "the vast concerns of an immortal state," to which she knew she was hastening, and which she had ever happily considered was not to be left "to the mercy of a moment." The friendly warning of her release from life at length arrived: and perceiving the trembling tear glisten in the eye of Wilkins, on being summoned to take his last farewell, the child of Ran-

dolph for the last time kissed the hand of her father's friend, and thus delivered the acknowledgments of a heart that deeply felt its obligations: "Honoured friend of my departed parent, whose released spirit is now beyond the reach of human misery; bless me ere I die, as that parent would himself have done were he now leaning, like you, in tears and agony, over the death-bed of his suffering child. Words and my strength are too weak to express my gratitude, my esteem—and, oh, suffer me to add, my affection!"

After a pause, she requested Doctor Spencer to attend to the last words she most likely should have to utter: "I feel, my worthy Sir," she continued, "that your poor orphan has not long to remember the loss of those whom she may say she has been bereft by the *cruel policy* of the land from which she is departing. I have considered the first cause of all my sufferings, and in that cruel policy I find them to have originated. Unfeeling men tore my poor father from me; and I now again behold his anguish—again behold the convulsions of my distracted mother; and again experience the void in my own heart, which has never since been filled up! I am fully sensible that it will not be long before I meet them in that heaven where injustice will never again separate them from me. In the course of a few years, that death should mark the unfortunate, and claim them as his own, is not for you ~~or me to regret~~; for when and where could they have hoped for peace and comfort? To the heart-stricken and deserted, the source of all earthly good is dried up; and the grave is ever a friend to the weary and heavy laden, who wish to lay down the burthen of persecuted existence. A great part of my worldly possessions, which are considerable, I have by will bequeathed to yourself. The ~~conduct~~ *conduct* of my lamented husband's family, to him and me, has rendered it even unfit to remember the proud in spirit, and by that means increase the folly of human consequence. I am sensible your goodness will ever be prompting you to acts of continued mercy and occasional munificence. Perhaps some future Randolph may call forth your pitying tear; perhaps some deserted mother may plead at your heart, as at heaven's gate, for mercy; comfort them, oh comfort them, from the stores of her who was once poor, and let the daughters of affliction be relieved by the means of their sister in adversity!"

The talk is done: the writer can add no more, than that the mother, the father, and the child, rest under one tomb, raised by the venerable Spencer.



THE KNIGHT'S TALE.

IT was a beautiful autumnal evening, and the glorious orb of day had almost finished his diurnal career by sinking in the western sky; when the two Knights, anxious to reach some inhabited place before the shades of night should set in, spurred on their steeds with redoubled ardour. They had proceeded a few miles, and were discoursing on different subjects; when loud sounds of lamentation, which seemed to issue from a thick forest on their left hand, checked their speed. As their ears were ever open to the prayers of the unfortunate, and as the chief motive of their peregrinations was to succour the distressed; they, without hesitation, turned their horses towards the wood, fully determined, before they proceeded farther, to learn the cause of the cries which so lately had assailed their ears. They alighted at its entrance; and, having tied their horses to a tree on the skirts, walked round, in order to discover a path. After long search, they found one; but it was so choaked up with briars and thorns, that they frequently were obliged to open a way for themselves with their swords. With much difficulty they made considerable progress; but, being perplexed which way to conduct themselves, Sir Albert cried out with a loud voice. No answer being returned, except a thousand echoes, which repeated his words on every side: he was preparing to cry out again; when, in a moment, the whole spot was involved in total darkness. Instead of the gentle Zephyrs, which had before fanned the trees, a cold damp wind blew, that pierced the Knights to the heart. They stood some time, lost in amazement at the sudden and dismal change which had just taken place; but, re-assuming that firmness which had sustained a momentary suspension, they consulted for a short time what course to take. To proceed, or to retreat, appeared equally difficult: the reflection, however, that they might be the means of rescuing a fellow-creature from distress, soon determined them in favour of the former. Scarcely had they taken this resolution, when they perceived a large blue flame sailing in the air; and which, throwing a dismal glare on every object, served only to render the "darkness visible." After moving about for some time, the Knights perceived it rest on a ruin at a little distance; which, owing to the thick gloom, they had not before observed. They advanced towards it, with all the haste possible, and by the flame descried a castle; which, though apparently once a place of strength, was now mouldering into decay. "Hence, I conceive," cried Sir Godfrey, "proceeded the lamentations; therefore, without hesitation, I will explore this ancient building. The shield of Virtue is our protection; against it, the powers of hell are unable to prevail!—Let us, Sir Albert, endeavour to approach it."

The two Knights instantly advancing, soon came to a draw-bridge; on which, apparently, though let down, no human foot had for ages trod. They were both preparing to cross it; when slow and solemn music, which seemed to proceed from the vaults beneath, stole on their ears; they crossed, however, and entered the gate with ease; but were immediately involved in greater perplexity and wonder than ever—the music suddenly ceased; and the light, which had fixed itself on the top, in a moment vanished, leaving them in total obscurity! Sir Albert again raised his voice as before; but, instead of being answered by any human articulation, thousands of birds, leaving their nests, added much, by their discordant screams, to the awfulness of the scene. Uncertain what to do, the Knights seated themselves on the stones; where they had not sat long, before they were greatly alarmed by the clanking of chains, and the most dreadful howlings, from the vaults beneath them: at the same time, they beheld the flame rise from the middle of the hall, and settle itself on the top of a winding stair-case. Sir Godfrey and Sir Albert, rousing themselves, advanced towards it; when a hand, stretching itself from the centre, dropped a huge key, and instantly vanished. Sir Albert snatched it up; while the flame, moving from its station, descended down the winding stair-case: they followed, and again beheld it fix itself on a door which ended a long range of vaults. Venturing boldly forward, Sir Albert applied the key to the lock, which they opened; and perceived, at the upper end, a coffin, over which twinkled a small blue light. A momentary sensation of terror now seized them; from which they had scarcely recovered, when, lo! the lid of the coffin was suddenly lifted up, and a figure of more than mortal size arose; and, approaching them, thus exclaimed—"To you, O Knights! it is decreed to reveal the mystery of this forest, which has lain concealed for ages past. Take this scroll, and it will inform you." The Knights fell into a kind of trance; and, on recovering, found themselves in an open plain, with their horses feeding by them. No trace of the castle or forest was to be found.

FINIS.

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